DETERMINING THE KEY ELEMENTS OF INSTRUCTIONAL COACHING STRATEGIES FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK OF MIDDLE LEADERS IN MALAYSIAN SCHOOLS VIA NOMINAL GROUP TECHNIQUE (NGT)

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ABSTRACT

Middle leaders (MLs) in Malaysian schools are expected to be effective in engaging teachers towards continuous pedagogical and professional improvement via instructional coaching. However, the scarcity of the instructional coaching continuous professional development framework specifically developed for Malaysian MLs hinders their understanding of the strategies and thus limits their full potential in mediating instructional enhancement effectively. Through the application of the Nominal Group Technique (NGT), this study aimed to establish an instructional coaching professional development framework for Malaysian MLs by exploring and synthesising the key elements of instructional coaching strategies practiced by the School Improvement Specialist Coaches Plus (SISC+) and experienced MLs in Malaysian public schools. Prior to the NGT session, semi-structured interviews with seven field experts (SISC+ officers and experienced MLs) to closely examine their instructional coaching practices were conducted in the first phase of the study. The thematic analysis had yielded four key elements, namely: i) coaching conversational strategies; ii) coaching content and procedures; iii) observations and feedback; and iv) continuous support and monitoring strategies that encompassed 12 sub-elements. The findings were then synthesised and verified by the expert consensus in the Nominal Group Technique (NGT) session and later mapped into an instructional coaching continuous professional development framework that could serve as empirical guidelines in planning and executing the instructional coaching continuous professional development specifically for MLs in Malaysian schools. This would empower them with essential instructional coaching strategies to thrive confidently in leading, managing and facilitating instructional improvement in schools.

Keywords: **Instructional coaching, middle leaders, professional development, nominal group technique (NGT)**

INTRODUCTION

The crucial role of instructional coaching as an effective and sustainable professional development approach in the education systems of developed and neighbouring countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Singapore, and China provided the impetus for centralizing its implementation in the Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013-2025. It has evolved further with the enactment of the New Narrative of Education Practice in January 2019, which highlighted the formation of a structured professional support team in the school, made up of senior leaders (SLs) and middle leaders (MLs) with experience, to mediate and support teachers' on-going professional development through the utilisation of instructional coaching strategies (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2019; Siaw et al., 2019a). These developments are concurrent with the findings of global scholars within the two decades of early 21st century who have endorsed that instructional coaching is one of the best professional development strategies that could enhance teachers' pedagogical and professional capital in sustaining schools' improvement and students' outcome (Balang, Zamri & Nor Aishah, 2020; Campbell & van Nieuwerburgh, 2018; Desimone & Pak, 2017; Kho Khemanuwong & Mohamed Ismail 2020; Knight, 2017; Salwati et al., 2019; Siaw, Saeed & Mohamad, 2019; van Nieuwerburgh, 2012).

However, the lack of empirical research on the practice of instructional coaching among local MLs in leading instructional improvements in schools has restricted our understanding of explicit and implicit instructional coaching knowledge and abilities possessed by competent coaches (Kho et al., 2020; Siaw et al., 2019). Moreover, in relation to the findings of local scholars (Salwati et al., 2019; Wan Fadhlurrahman, Al-Amin & Azian, 2020), the frequency of MLs' professional development in instructional coaching was considered insufficient when compared to their senior partners. This limits the capability of middle leaders in Malaysian schools to successfully enacting the instructional coaching strategies and thus led towards the inefficiencies of MLs in facilitating and supporting teachers' professional development for pedagogical improvement which was highlighted in the study of Abang Adam (2018) and Wan Norhasma & Nurahimah (2019). If this persists, the on-going supervision and instructional support for teachers in increasing their pedagogical competencies and expertise cannot be optimized in line with the specifications of the existing education policies.

Therefore, to equip Malaysian MLs with high-impact coaching capacities, it is vital to define and establish the key elements of instructional coaching strategies that may be specifically encapsulated in the design and implementation of continuous professional growth of the Malaysian MLs.

Study Objectives

Correspondingly, the empirical studies in identifying and determining the essential key elements that need to be mastered by MLs in enacting instructional coaching effectively as other instructional leaders in schools are vital for more flexible and holistic cycle of shared learning that fosters self-awareness, communication - focused, personal pace development, constant reflection and meaningful dialogues in between educators in unthreatened environment (Balang, Zamri & Nor Aishah, 2019; Knight, 2019; Siaw et al., 2019). Furthermore, unlike their superior who has executive administrative power, MLs need to depend solely on the strength of their instructional influence, communication, and collaborative strategies in encouraging their subordinates to focus on the schools' instructional aims and mission. Hence, the elements related to instructional coaching strategies must be considered in planning professional development of MLs in Malaysia.

In this regard, the objectives of this study are:

i.   To explore, analyse and synthesize the practices of instructional coaching strategies by the School Improvement Specialist Coaches Plus (SISC+) and experienced MLs in mediating instructional improvement in Malaysian schools.
ii. To prioritise the position of the strategies into the Framework of Essential Instructional Coaching Strategies for Middle Leaders in Malaysian Schools.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Empowering MLs in Mediating Instructional Improvement
In the 21st century, global changes have transformed schools into increasingly complex institutions, which have led to the significant practice of distributed leadership within different layers of school leaders. As time passed, the duties and accountability of MLs in navigating instructional effectiveness among teachers at schools have becoming increasingly complex. In this regard, De Nobile & Ridden had synthesised a literature framework in 2014 which established the primary responsibilities of MLs in the millennium era. The framework comprised of five broad categories that included (i) management roles; (ii) administration roles; (iii) supervision roles; (iv) staff development roles; and (v) leadership roles. As other school leaders who have vast experience in teaching and learning as well as proximity with teachers, MLs have been identified as a significant driver capable of garnering teachers' instructional and professional development in schools via a variety of collaborative teacher capacity-building initiatives, such as PLC and on-the-job workshops (De Nobile, 2018b; Fullan, 2015; Grootenboer, 2018; Leithwood et al., 2020a).

Furthermore, MLs are expected to be mediators in maintaining educational reform due to their intermediate leadership position between school administrators and teachers (Harris & Jones, 2017; Javadi, 2018). This means that MLs are juggling two contradiction duties: their traditional role as assessors of teachers' instructional competency and recent role as instructional coaches or facilitators. The practice of these roles, although possess formidable challenges and dilemma among MLs, are seen by many scholars as not only inspires the leadership capacity for learning among their teachers but can simultaneously develop MLs' professional capacity in leading educational transformation themselves (Grootenboer, 2018; Lipscombe et al., 2020; Lofthouse, 2019; van Nieuwerburgh et al., 2018). Hence, the current situation demands that the essential knowledge and skills of instructional coaching being seriously considered and embedded by relevant educational agencies responsible for the development of school leadership specifically for MLs' continuous professional development (CPD).

Essentially, since the second decade of the 21st century, the Western scholars, such as Korotov (2016) and Anderson, Feldman & Minstrell (2014), have pointed out that there are not much empirical research carried out in examining how one can provide coaching as professional development to individuals who lead without formal authority and to those who engage in joint leadership practises such as MLs. Despite a progressive number of studies in examining middle leader educators instructional roles and strategies in schools through instructional coaching practise (Russell, Correnti, Stein et al., 2019; Wan Norhasma & Nurahimah, 2019), more studies based on empirical research are necessary to gain a deeper understanding of how middle leader educators acquiring and instructional coaching knowledge and skills in equipping them as efficient driver in steering teachers' instructional and professional development for greater impact in sustaining the school performance and more importantly the students' outcomes.

Instructional Coaching Models
Throughout the years, there are many instructional coaching models adopted as professional development strategies that guide coaches or school leadership personnel to engage collaboratively with teachers in analysing students' behaviour and their pedagogical demands in order to identify impactful strategies that enhance current teaching activities that could fulfil different learning needs, preferences and complex situations (Anderson & Wallin, 2018; Desimone & Pak, 2017; Kurz, Glover & Reddy, 2017). Among the prominent ones are cognitive coaching model(Costa & Garmston, 2015), peer coaching (Showers & Joyce, 1996), literacy coaching (Mraz et al., 2016) and instructional coaching model such as Knight's Partnership Instructional Coaching Model (Knight, 2007). The researchers therefore had synthesized these models as shown in Table 1 to serve as a framework for examining the key elements of instructional coaching that the local MLs must be able to comprehend to coach their teachers effectively.

Table 1: *The Synthesised Elements of Instructional Coaching Models*

Cognitive Coaching (Costa and Garmston, 1984)	Peer Coaching (Joy & Showers, 1982)	Literacy Coaching (Mraz et al., 2016)	Knight's Partnership Model (Knight, 2007)
Skills in creating and asking questions to communicate and modify thinking.	Establishing and maintaining trust.	Meaningful dialogues to stimulate reflective thinking.	Partnership Principles.
Skills in using body language to sustain trust and cognitive interaction.	Designing differentiated professional learning for all.	Behavioural modification stimulation: support, facilitate & inspire	Relationship building via effective communication strategies.
Capabilities in knowing their own ability and prefer clearly defined actions.	Establishing coaching configurations to maximize learning by involving teachers in creating the teams.	Negotiation and interpersonal management skills.	Collaboration in learning.
Mental maps - to guide conversations: a. planning conversation b. reflecting conversation c. problem-resolving conversation and d. calibrating conversation.	Calibrating individuals' skills and needs.	Observations and feedback.	Content-focused.
Beliefs dictated by social desires and an improvement in visual cognitive representations.	Using reflection to aid communication, critical thinking, and commitment to the goal and the process.	Critical partner.	Explicit modelling.
Values in appreciating differences.	Providing descriptive feedback.		Dialogical conversations.
Commitments.			Observations and feedback.
			Continuous support.

Overall, based on Table 1, all the elements contained within the prominent instructional coaching models were primarily designed by the Western scholars to empower instructional coaches or school leadership personnel of whom being held responsible for instructional improvement such as MLs with the knowledge and skills they need to support teachers via collaborative and on-going professional growth.

In Malaysian context, documents such as Malaysian Teacher Standards 2.0 (SGM 2.0), Malaysian Education Quality Standards (SKPMG KUALITI@SEKOLAH) and School Leader Competency Model (KOMPAS - IAB 2009) have generally provided guidelines to all teachers and teacher leaders on essential elements to work on in developing instructional and leadership competencies. Nonetheless, these documents are not providing specific guidelines in empowering the local MLs, who already need to succumb to multiple roles within the complex situations with instructional coaching strategies to competently leading instructional transformation in Malaysian schools(Abang Adam, 2018b; Wan Norhasma & Nurahimah, 2019). This also depicted significant scholarly awareness on the need for an adequate understanding how MLs may be furnished with experience, abilities, and the essential mindset to prepare, coordinate, and review teachers' professional accomplishments and progress in schools (Fullan, 2021; Hargreaves &

O'Connor, 2018; Harris & Jones, 2019; Leithwood et al., 2020b). Hence, there is a paramount need for empirical findings that could delineate essential knowledge, skills, and appropriate attitude for MLs to manoeuvre the calibre of teachers' pedagogical and professional improvement for the benefits of students' achievement.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a design and development approach which involved two phases of data collection. This approach revolves on the principle of pragmatism, which allows researchers to employ practical methods and a range of analyses that are congruent with the goals and purposes of the study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In achieving the objectives of this study, the researchers employed semi-structured interviews in the 1st phase and nominal group technique session (NGT) in the 2nd phase.

In the first phase, the interview protocol was utilised during the semi-structured interviews in exploring closely the instructional coaching practice of seven field experts (SISC+ officers and experienced MLs) who were chosen based on their professional experiences and coaching credentials. This phase focused on the mechanics of coaching that the experts applied in conducting instructional coaching with their clients. Based on Creswell & Poth (2018) qualitative data analysis framework and the utilisation of the Atlas.ti Version 9, a qualitative data analysis programme, the thematic analysis of the respondents' responses from phase 1 was determined. The findings were confirmed by three academicians from local universities, with a Cohen Kappa Index (CKI) of 0.96. According to McHugh (2012) who cited Cohen (1960), this implies a very high-reliability index.

Later, these elements and sub-elements were presented to nine NGT expert panels to be scrutinised and prioritised its position via NGT voting session. Based on the final voting of the expert panels in the session, the list of priority position of the elements had been established, presented, and discussed thoroughly with the NGT expert panels. In contrast to calculating the whole score of the experts' votes, the NGT session emphasises the experts' agreement percentage value in establishing the priority positioning of the sub-elements and elements. This finding contributes to the accuracy of the priority position of the items established during the second phase. In this research, to determine the priority positioning of the sub-elements, the researchers had applied the expert agreement percentage value calculation formula employed by Khairah@Asma'a (2018) and Nurulrabihah (2020) as stipulated below:

Number of Experts = 9
Highest Score = 7 (Most appropriate)
Number of Experts X Highest Score = 9 x 7 = 63
Total Score = Sum of the Expert Vote
Total score percentage = (Total Score / No. Expert x Highest Score) x 100%

Dobbie, Freeman, Rhodes and Tysinger (2004) had emphasised that the proportion of expert consensus on priority positioning based on field expert opinion must be at least 70% for an element to be accepted.

Meanwhile, as suggested by Delbecq et al (1975) the priority positioning of the elements may be established by calculating an average percentage from the total score agreement percentage of the sub-elements contained in the elements, as specified by the formula below:

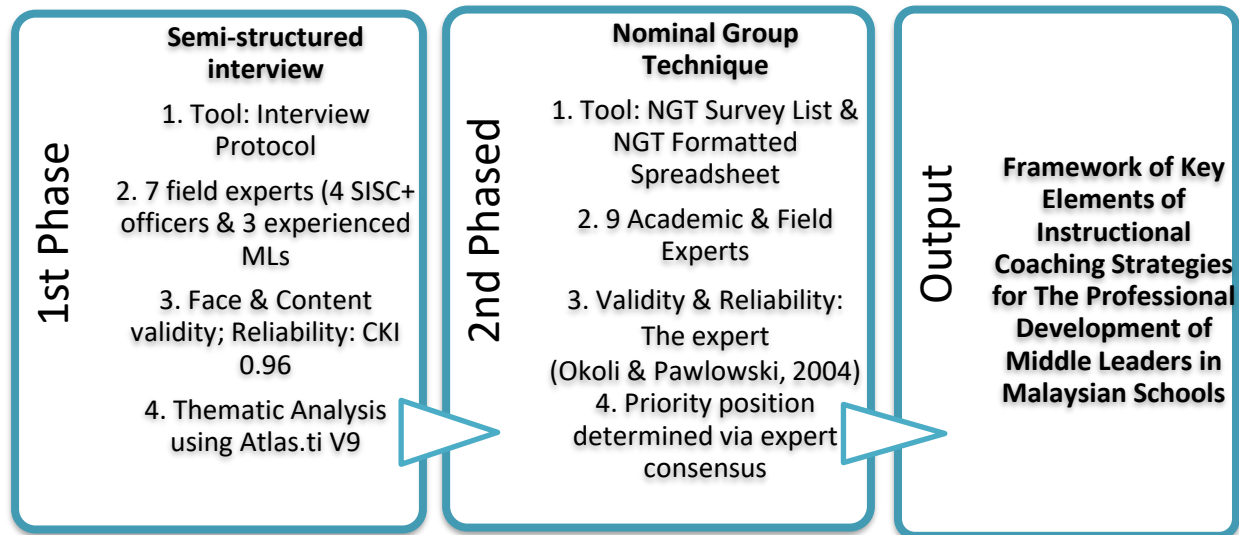**Total agreement percentage value for element**

= Total score percentage of sub-elements in Element XX

No. of Sub-elements in Element XX

Finally, at the end of the NGT session, the findings were reviewed, and the priority list was formed in accordance with the NGT voting result. The priority list empirically provides the order of importance of instructional coaching professional development elements that would empower local MLs to engage and facilitate teachers' instructional and professional development effectively. Essentially, Figure 1 depicts the research framework of this study.

Figure 1: *The Research Framework*

1st Phase

Semi-structured interview

1. Tool: Interview Protocol

2. 7 field experts (4 SISC+ officers & 3 experienced MLs

3. Face & Content validity; Reliability: CKI 0.96

4. Thematic Analysis using Atlas.ti V9

2nd Phased

Nominal Group Technique

1. Tool: NGT Survey List & NGT Formatted Spreadsheet

2. 9 Academic & Field Experts

3. Validity & Reliability: The expert (Okoli & Pawlowski, 2004)

4. Priority position determined via expert consensus

Output

Framework of Key Elements of Instructional Coaching Strategies for The Professional Development of Middle Leaders in Malaysian Schools

FINDINGS

Phase 1: The Elements Synthesised in the Experts' Instructional Coaching Practice

The focus of the semi-structured interviews were to derive the pertinent knowledge, skills, and appropriate attributes in manoeuvring coaching process with the MLs' clients. The thematic analysis performed in phase 1 via semi-structured interviews with seven local MLs had generated four key elements which specifically characterised the instructional coaching practise of the experts that included i) coaching conversational strategies; ii) coaching content and procedures; iii) observations and feedback, and iv) continuous support and monitoring strategies. In addition, there is a total of 15 sub-elements that support these main elements. The extracted elements from the first phase were provided to NGT experts for scrutiny and refining procedures in creating the final list that would be utilised for voting in the NGT's second session. The methods included providing background information on the theme, having experts come up with fresh concepts or incorporate preexisting ones, sharing ideas with other experts, and having discussions regarding the items that represented the elements and the corresponding sub-elements under study in addition to improving and adjusting the language of the items. Hence, the final elements and their respective sub-elements are summarised in Table 3 below.

Table 3: *Thematic Analysis on the Experts' Instructional Coaching Practice*

No.	Element	Sub-elements
1	Coaching conversational strategies	i) dialogical strategies ii) questioning strategies iii) attentive listening
2	Coaching content and procedures	i) understanding SKPMg2) ii) application of SKPMg2 standard as coaching outline iii)application of coaching stages iv)understanding coaching models/ frameworks
3	Continuous support and monitoring strategies	i) reinforcement strategies ii) encouragement and motivation iii) monitoring progress iv) supportive behaviours
4	Observation and feedback	i) classroom observation ii) feedback iii) reflection

The findings in Table 3 reflect the elements of instructional coaching strategies encompassed within the coaching practice of the local experts interviewed that had been reviewed and agreed consensually by all the NGT experts in the second phase of the research.

Phase 2: Priority Position Generated in Nominal Group Techniques (NGT) Session
Following the NGT experts' consensus, Table 4 provides the findings of the elements' priority position.

Table 4: *The NGT Voting Results*

ELEMENT	TOTAL SCORE	TOTAL SCORE %	AVERAGE TOTAL SCORE %	STATUS	RANK
A1. Coaching conversation strategies					
1.1 Dialogical strategies	59	93.7			
1.2 Attentive listening	60	95.2	95.2	Accepted	1
1.3 Questioning strategies	61	96.8			
A2. Coaching content and procedures					
2.1 Application of SKPMg2 standard as coaching outline	59	93.7			
2.2 Understanding SKPMg2	59	93.7			
2.3 Application of coaching stages	60	95.2	94.5	Accepted	3
2.4 Understanding coaching models/frameworks	60	95.2			
A3. Continuous support and monitoring strategies					
3.1 Reinforcement strategies	59	93.7			
3.2Encouragement and motivation	60	95.2	94.7	Accepted	4

3.3 Monitoring progress	60	95.2			
A4. Observation and feedback					
4.1 Classroom observation	61	96.8			
4.2 Feedback	58	92.1	94.7	Accepted	2
4.3 Reflection	60	95.2			

Based on Table 4, the findings revealed that Element A1 (Coaching conversation strategies) is the element with the top priority to be embedded in the MLs' CPD. This is followed by element A4 (Observation and feedback) in the second place, Element A2 (Coaching content and procedures) in the third place and Element A3 (Continuous support and monitoring strategies) in the fourth place of the priority list. Hence, Table 5 presented the priority list in its final order.

Table 5: *The Final NGT Priority List*

RANK	ELEMENT	RANK	SUB-ELEMENTS
1	Coaching conversation strategies	1	Questioning strategies
		2	Attentive listening
		3	Dialogical strategies
2	Observation and feedback	1	Classroom observation
		2	Reflection
		3	Feedback
3	Coaching content and procedures	1	Application of coaching stages
		2	Understanding Coaching models/frameworks
		3	Understanding SKPMg2
		4	Application of SKPMg2 standard as coaching outline
4	Continuous support and monitoring strategies	1	Encouragement and motivation
		2	Monitoring progress
		3	Reinforcement strategies
		4	Supportive behaviours

Output: Framework of Key Elements of Instructional Coaching Strategies for the Professional Development of Middle Leaders in Malaysian Schools

Based on the priority list formed in the NGT session, the elements were organised accordingly in forming a cohesive instructional coaching professional development framework specifically for the local MLs. In this respect, the configuration of the framework is presented in Figure 2.

Figure 2: *Framework of Key Elements of Instructional Coaching Strategies for the Professional Development of Middle Leaders in Malaysian Schools*
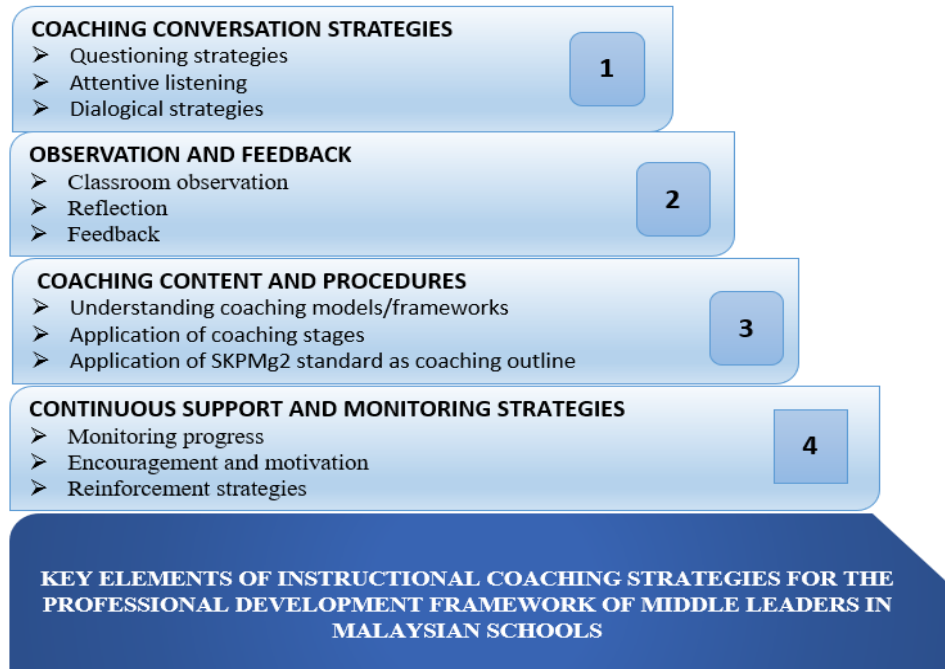
The first element, Coaching conversation strategies is made up of three sub-elements namely i) questioning strategies, ii) attentive listening and iii) dialogical strategies. Based on their credentials, the experts concurred that the ability to execute contextualised dialogue procedures, attentive listening, questioning and probing strategies would enable MLs to assist teachers in identifying instructional areas that require immediate improvement in a stress-free and unobtrusive manner.

In specific, by being able to engage in meaningful conversations and asking the appropriate questions that would evoke ones feeling, MLs would be able to streamline the teachers' focus on high impact pedagogical solutions as stated by Expert 2 in the semi-structured interviews.

"When dealing with rebellious teachers, you need to ask them eventually the suggestions for solutions to the problems. You must have the courage to have dialogues with them so they can eventually settle their problem. Do not scold them. Make them think instead. Use diplomacy skills to deal with them. Actions speak louder than words play".

(Expert 2 SI)

Besides, there is a necessity for the MLs to be present physically and mentally by listening attentively to their teachers with open hearts. The sincerity in being there for them is vital if the MLs want to win their teachers' heart and gain the teachers' trust and cooperation. Besides, MLs would also be able to focus on the objective of the coaching session. This was clearly stated by Expert 3 in the semi-structured interviews.

"I will listen to their problem. If you listen attentively, they will talk to you about their problem, the difficulties in facing different types of students, the teaching methods that they have used but did not work".

(Expert 3 SI)

Thus, these sub-elements should be able to be mastered by the local MLs in enhancing their capability to manoeuvre coaching sessions in a systematic manner, smoothly and confidently.

On the other hand, the second important element is the Observation and feedback. It encompasses three sub-elements which include i) classroom observation, ii) reflection and iii) feedback. These three elements are pertinent in enabling MLs to identify and analyse crucial instructional improvement areas that need to be worked on by their teachers. Correspondingly, the capability in making focused observations and giving accurate feedback also related to the MLs' in-depth understanding on the element of Coaching content and procedures.

Being voted consensually as the third most important instructional coaching strategies to be mastered, the element of Coaching content and procedures comprised of three sub-elements namely, i) understanding coaching models/frameworks, ii) application of coaching stages and iii) application of SKPMg2 standard as coaching outline. For instance, a thorough understanding on the instructional standard encapsulated in SKPMg2 may help MLs to focus on specific areas during observations and may provide guidelines in distinguishing teachers' progress. as stated by Expert 1 in the semi-structured interviews.

"I always use the SKPMg2 Standard 4 instrument in doing classroom observations for teaching and learning and as guidance during coaching conversation".

(Expert 1 SI)

Moreover, the mastery in these sub-elements would enable our local MLs to utilise the coaching and instructional standards successfully as a framework in guiding, directing, and supporting the pedagogical and professional growth of their teachers toward the highest quality being determined by the Ministry of Education.

Furthermore, the NGT experts had unanimously rated Continuous support and monitoring strategies in the fourth position. It is made up of three sub-elements namely, i) monitoring progress, ii) encouragement and motivation, and iii) reinforcement strategies that laid out possible development in enhancing MLs ability in practising constant monitoring strategies, giving continuous support, motivation, and suitable reinforcement for their teachers to progress gradually in achieving their goal. The mastery of these sub-elements would present These dimensions were evident through the statements made by Expert 5 (P2) and Expert 3 (P2).

"You need to be sincere since people will be able to see right through you and your actual intention. To really help them or not. Only then they will be willing to open up and share their problems and thoughts with you".

(Expert 5 SI)

"Do not run away from the situations and leave your teachers to attend to them. I have seen a lot of things. So always be there for your teachers through thick and thin.".

(Expert 3 SI)

Essentially, the mastery of these three sub elements would enable MLs sending the signal of their existence and support alongside teachers under their guidance in any situation. This helps incredibly in increasing the teachers' trust while also facilitating and speed up the process of instructional improvement.

DISCUSSION

This study has empirically highlighted four important instructional coaching strategies that need to be mastered by MLs in enacting instructional coaching for effective instructional improvement of their teachers and students' outcome in the classrooms. This finding may add towards our existing understanding of how MLs could be more effective in driving the instructional transformation among their teachers. Besides, this study also addresses the issue

raised by international education experts (Abang Adam, 2018b; Lárusdóttir & O'Connor, 2017; Lipscombe, Grice & De Nobile, 2020) on the absence of framework for middle leaders in schools to empower them with instructional coaching capacity. Moreover, the elements and their sub-elements formed within this framework are seemed parallel with the suggestions of the prominent scholars on the essential elements in advancing ML's capacity in driving pedagogical improvement within the complexity of the school context and growing social demands in the twenty-first century (De Nobile, 2018a; Harris et al., 2019a).

Furthermore, the elements enlisted are consistent with the current roles, responsibilities, and needs of ML leaders in promoting instructional improvement in schools, as defined by Western and Eastern scholars such as Bryant (2019), Harris et al., (2019b), Lipscombe et al. (2020), as well as Wan Fadhlurrahman, Al-Amin and Aziah (2020). Thus, the mapping of these essential aspects would then be empirical guidance that can be referred to by divisions held responsible for the MLs' professional development.

In contrast to the elements present in the reference theory and models, the semi-structured interviews with the expert practitioners highlighted the uniqueness of the instructional coaching practises in ML's leadership and promotion of teachers' professional and academic growth in the context of Malaysian schools. To successfully enacting instructional coaching, our local MLs must have knowledge and skills in coaching conversational strategies and coaching content and procedures. They also should have capability in performing classroom observations and giving fair feedback as well as able to provide continuous support and constant monitoring in sustaining teachers' pedagogical quality.

For future studies, the researcher would like to propose that the scope of the future study be increased by considering the elements' impact within implementation phase in school context. The elements and sub-elements may be statistically investigated and examined, and additional alterations may be made towards the model's dimensions, elements, and sub-elements.

CONCLUSION

Essentially, the goal of this study was to establish the key elements of instructional coaching strategies synthesised from the good practice of the existing local instructional coaching practitioners in Malaysian schools. The elements synthesised from this research may be outlined as critical professional development elements to provide MLs of Malaysian public schools with the best possible capabilities in carrying out instructional coaching to effectively lead and facilitate teachers' instructional capacity building in accordance with the leadership policies outlined in the Malaysia Educational Blueprint 2013–2025.

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