INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PRACTICES OF PRIMARY SCHOOL LEADERS IN PETALING PERDANA DISTRICT, SELANGOR

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FACULTY OF EDUCATION

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THESIS SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN EDUCATIONAL

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ABSTRACT

According to the Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013-2025, instructional leadership is seen as fundamental for school achievements. This is given high consideration in the preparation of school leaders through NPQEL, as well as through professional development programs for those senior school leaders who have not been through the NPQEL program. In view of the inadequate contribution to the knowledge base on instructional leadership in Malaysia, and the limited evidence base, this research examined the understanding and practices of Instructional Leadership among the primary school leaders in Petaling Perdana District, Selangor. Their view and roles as instructional leaders, description of instructional leadership practice in school context and the important aspects of instructional leadership as perceived among teachers is explored in this research. This study adopted a qualitative research design, semi-structured interviews with 24 primary school principals and 4 focus group teachers. Results showed that Hallinger and Murphy's Instructional leadership Model (1985) is moderately reflected in the principals' practice. On the other hand, evidence from the inductive analysis indicates that the dimension reflected in Murphy's Comprehensive Instructional Leadership Framework (1990) which derived from a comprehensive review of literature on instructional leadership of principals in effective schools where the quality of teaching and learning was highly reflected. Evidence from the inductive analysis also further indicate that Malaysian principals practice few functions of instructional managers such as fulfilling Ministry expectations, role modelling, having a sense of responsibility and employs managerial assertiveness towards an effective schools and improving teaching and learning. Findings from the focus group on the instructional leadership practices of the principals as perceived by the teachers during the focus co-relate with the

principal's responses. The findings of this study provides contemporary knowledge base about instructional leadership in Malaysia.

ABSTRAK

Menurut Pelan Pembangunan Pendidikan Malaysia 2013-2015, kepemipinan pengajaran dilihat sebagai asas pencapaian sekolah. Kepemimpinan pengajaran diberi perhatian yang tinggi dalam program penyediaan pemimpin sekolah NPQEL, serta program pembangunan professional. Memandangkan sumbangan yang tidak mencukupi dalam pengetahuan kepemimpinan pengajaran di Malaysia, serta bukti yang terhad, kajian ini meneliti pemahaman amalan kepemimpinan pengajaran di kalangan gurubesar sekolah rendah di Daerah Petaling Perdana, Selangor. Pandangan gurubesar sekolah rendah megenai peranan mereka sebagai pemimpin pengajaran, menerangkan amalan kepemimpinan pengajarannya dalam konteks sekolah dan menerangkan pentingya aspek kepemimpinan pengajaran seperti yang dilihat di kalangan guru telah dikaji. Kajian ini menggunakan reka bentuk penyelidikan kualitatif, temuduga separa berstruktur dengan 24 gurubesar sekolah rendah dan 4 temuduga kumpulan berfokus guru. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa Modal Kepemimpinan Pengajaran Hallinger and Murphy (1985) yang diamalkan oleh gurubesar menunjukkan penglibatan yang sederhana. Di samping itu, bukti daripada analisis induktif menunjukkan dimensi yang dipaparkan pada Kerangka Kepemiminan Pengajaran Komprehensif oleh Murphy (1990), menunjukkan penglibatan yang tinggi. Selain itu analisis induktif juga menunjukkan pengetua-pengetua sekolah di Malaysia mengamalkan beberapa fungsi pengurusan pengajaran seperti memenuhi harapan Kementerian, pemodelan, sikap bertanggungjawab dan bersifat pendesak untuk menentukan sekolah yang berefektif bagi meningkatkan pengajaran dan pembelajaran. Tinjauan dari temuduga kumpulan berfokus guru mengenai amalan kepemimpnan pengajaran gurubesar seperti dilihat

oleh guru berkait rapat dengan respons gurubesar. Penemuan dari kajian ini memberi

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	*Meaning*
IL	Instructional Leadership
NPQEL	National Professional Qualification for Educational Leaders
BLUEPRINT	Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013-2025
MOE	Ministry of Education Malaysia
SK	National School (Sekolah Kebangsaan)
SJKT	National Type Tamil School (Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan Tamil)
SJKC	National Type Chinesel School (Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan Cina)
PIMRS	Principal Management Rating Scale
PTA	Parents and Teachers Association
BOG	Board of Governors
EPRD	Education Planning and Research Division
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
UPSR	'*Ujian Pencapaian Sekolah Rendah*' (lit. Primary School Assessment Test).

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

In a time when schools are being held accountable to the highest level of academic achievement and standards, strong leadership is essentially important and critically needed. High level of school leadership competencies is attributed with the highest level of student achievement. The low level of school leadership attribute to the lowest level of student achievement. Principals, as school leaders are seen to have the greatest influence in all schools According to Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris & Hopkins (2006) as mentioned in the seven strong claims about successful school leadership, the quality of student learning and the quality of the school organization significantly depends highly on leadership. In fact there is no single documented research on school turn around that has happened in the absence of talented leadership. This explains that leadership serves as a catalyst for unleashing capacities exist in the organization. In order to unleash the existing capacities in the organization and to maximize the internal resources, school leadership serves as an significant catalyst (Frederick, Blumenfeld and Pari, 2004).

The key task of leadership is not just to influence student learning and academic achievement of students. The leaders are also expected to work towards improving staff motivation, staff performance, capacity building in terms of skills and knowledge, and improve the condition of the work place as whole (Leithwood et al., 2006). According to Leithwood, et al. (2006), recently emphasis are being placed on school leaders contribution in building staff capacities. In addition to that, successful

school leaders address changes particularly in relation to student performance. The following four sets of leadership qualities and practices in different context been pointed out by them in regards to accomplishing this goal. They are, (i) building vision and setting direction, (ii) understanding and developing people, (iii) redesigning organization, (iv) teaching and learning program management. These emphasis is reflected, in the term 'Instructional Leadership' and in the successful practices that school leaders possess (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006).

Our future generation as moved into dynamic era of change which has left the role of schools leaders becoming more complex then ever. Greater efforts and readjustment need to be taken by the school leaders to progress and to cater for the changing elements in the schools. Besides that, future school leaders are expected to be more innovative and creative in order to steer teachers towards school excellence. Therefore, having this in mind, the principal leadership is considered as a main measure to raise educational enhancement and a successful school. As indicated in the Education Blueprint, the school effectiveness plays a crucial role in the country's academic advancement plan (MOE, 2103).

As Harvey and Holland (2011) mentioned, leadership is a process of influencing individuals and all members within the school organization towards the organization strategies. Thus effective leaders adjust their leadership style within the environment of their organization. On the other hand, skilled leaders play a key role in school effectiveness and improvement (Harvey & Holland, 2011). Even though the school leaders do not have direct effect on the students, it was noted that they are the most responsible people in the education system and for school improvement. School

leader and teacher being regarded as highly intellectual work forces, Hallinger's (2003) statement affirms the finding that school leaders indirectly influence school effectiveness. There were also a large body of research has agreed that teaching profession cannot be practiced in isolation (DuFour, Eaker, & DuFour, 2005; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Harris 2014). Through intra school cooperative relationships with colleagues the solitary nature of school also can be enhanced (Cha & Ham, 2012; Lee & Smith, 1996). On the other hand, the school leaders must keep up to date information on the events happening around the organization in order to cater the demand of students and other stakeholders of the organization.

It Principals are strongly encouraged to be instructional leaders (Hallinger & Murphy, 1987). It is generally known that there can be no successful school with an incapable principal, or an unsuccessful school with an efficient principal. As a results of leadership, the unsuccessful schools turn around to become successful schools and in shift outstanding schools also rapidly slide and decline as a result of leadership. This summarizes and illustrates that the rise and fall of the school performances are in the hands of the leaders (Goolamally & Ahmad, 2014).

Often principals are seen doing managerial and administrative tasks in schools though their main role and core task in school operations are the process of teaching and learning. Therefore, the tasks shouldered by principals are enormous that only skilled leaders may handle and get the people whom they lead to do the greatest things and bring the system they are working with to greater heights. Skilled principals has a dynamic influence upon change implementation, school improvement and the school's advancement (Hallinger, 2003).

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On the other hand, society strongly believes that educational institutions should focus on the holistic development of a student. Thus, parents are always sensitive towards successful schools in order for their children to develop intellectually, physically, emotionally, socially and spiritually (Lee, Smith & Croninger, 2000; Morris, 2001). These schools are popular and parents compete to get their children into these schools. It also gives greater focus on the students and heightens the school image and innovation. The duty and responsibility to fulfil these commitments are on the shoulder of the principal's leadership. Pioneered by the School Inspectorate Division in Malaysia, the High Standard of Quality Education (HSQE) has further established the underlining commitment in Malaysia (Chan & Kaur, 2009).

1.2   Background of the study

Principal instructional leadership is seen as the most important determinants in the midst of the constant pressure to ensure accountability in student learning outcome, school performance and educational change over the past few decades (Blase´ & Blase´, 1999; Hallinger, 2003; Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris, & Hopkins, 2006; Printy, 2008; Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008). Being collaborative in nature and for its effectiveness, principal instructional leadership heavily empowers teachers and foster trustful interaction between the teacher and principal in the school. (Blase´ & Blase´, 1999; Youngs & King, 2002). In the above findings, it is also stated that principals are responsible for the school's achievement and that they are expected to progress to become an instructional leader apart from just being a school administrator.

Since the 1980's, researchers found that effective schools have instructional leaders who keeps a high focus on curriculum and instructions. An effective instructional leader usually displays a high level of collaboration and a high team spirit among the staff members. They also influence and engage teachers toward achieving school goals (Ware & Kitsantas, 2007). It is also found that, teachers under a leader who practices instructional leadership are more committed to teaching (Mulford, 2003). Principal instructional leadership depends more on professionalism and influence, hence, bringing about a positive and permanent impact on staff motivation and student learning (Hallinger & Heck, 2010). Thus, this form of leadership has become relatively important across other parts of the world and particularly in Malaysia.

"No education system can succeed without the dedication and commitment of its school leaders and teachers. No true reform can occur without taking the needs of the school leaders and teachers into serious consideration and looking for ways to nurture and sustain excellence" (MOE, 2013; p.13).

Since instructional leadership are important to improve student outcomes (Bauer, 2013), this leadership practice is widely promoted in the Malaysian school system. One of the efforts taken is described in the Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013-2015 under the 5th shift to transform Malaysian education system where school leaders are required to complete the National Professional Qualification for Educational Leaders (NPQEL) program before leaders before they are appointed to lead schools (MOE, 2013). One of the major parts of the NPQEL is about instructional leadership, as the Malaysian education system sees the vital role of the

school leaders as an agent of change in the country's education system. Shift 5 of the Blueprint also emphasizes that every school will have high performing principals who will focus on student outcome in both academic and non-academic areas (MOE, 2013).

Drawing upon international evidence, the Blueprint (2013) highlights and illustrates how strong leadership generates and promotes student improvement and better outcomes. In high performing schools, school leaders tend to be instructional leaders rather than just being administrative leaders who aim to improve teaching quality (Hallinger & Heck, 1996). In fact, instructional leaders are expected to manage wisely the challenges before them and accelerate school transformation. Such transformation is expected to happen when principals execute and manage instructional activities and resources under their responsibility diligently. However, according to the Malaysian Ministry of Education, it is a challenge to require high calibre school principals to bring about reform at the school level today due to heavy load of administrative chores and other lack of skills (MOE, 2013).

With increasing recognition of the positive effects of instructional leadership and the increasing demands of the role, it is essential to identify the extent to which a school leader exercises the role as an instructional leader in their system. From a wide range of research undertaken on the subject of instructional leadership, it is undeniable that this practice has a relatively positive impact on school performance (Cuban, 1988; Ghavifekr et al., 2015, Hallinger, 2012; Hallinger & Chen, 2015). However, the relevance of the instructional leadership models in the local context is still uncertain

as the original context where the models are researched and created varies considerably from the context in Malaysia.

The emerging question in this research is whether principals in Malaysia have sufficient time to perform their role as instructional leaders in school. Besides that, to what extent principals are functioning as instructional leaders in the school in regards to the practical daily routine and tasks that are required to be done? These thoughts are the focus of this study.

Considering the context closely, in this research, it is the intention of the researcher to explore further the understanding and efforts taken in local context in terms of principals' instructional leadership practices coinciding with the internationally prominent Hallinger and Murphy (1985) instructional leadership models which is also known as PIMRS Model. The following section elaborates the problem statement of this research.

1.3   Statement of the problem

The importance of instructional leadership and the empirically based models of instructional leadership has been established by international scholars over the past three decades (Hallinger, 2011a; Hallinger & Murphy 1985; Leithwood, Patten & Jantzi, 2010; Hallinger & Wang, 2015). Yet, despite such strong evidences, the knowledge base about instructional leadership in certain countries especially in East Asia is limited and still emerging (Hallinger & Chen, 2015; Hallinger & Bryant, 2013a, 2013b). Scholars also noted that Western cultural context is the base for the

theories and empirical research that is currently available (Cheng, 1995; Hallinger & Leithwood, 1998; Walker & Dimmock, 2002; Hallinger et al., 2005). Much of the literature that are available on leadership and leadership practices, particularly in developing countries, is often inaccessible simply because of the issue of language (Harris & Jones, 2015; Harris, Jones, Adams, & Cheah, 2018). Malaysia is no exception. Therefore, it is identified that there is a problem of a lack of information on instructional leadership practices in Malaysia.

For instance, evidence base about leadership practices which includes instructional leadership remains inconsistent and patchy within Asia, with the exception of certain countries, remains under-developed (Harris & Jones, 2016; Hallinger & Chen, 2015; Walker, Hallinger, Kantamara, Bich, Ho, Law & Lu, 2015; Hallinger, 2011a; Kwan & Walker, 2008). Therefore, the empirical evidence from local context and setting is still in short supply while international knowledge base on instructional leadership continues to grow and flourish. Scholars has argued that further studies are urgently needed to strengthen the research based on instructional leadership, particularly in East Asian societies (Jamelaa & Jainabee, 2011; Hallinger & Bryant, 2013a & 2013b). Thus, this research will help address these plights.

In the Malaysian context, indigenous literatures on educational leadership practices stretching over several decades are available (Banjunid, 1996), however, because these research are written in the national language, Bahasa Malaysia, they are remain 'hidden' from the view of international scholars. In a recent literature analysis of leadership literature in Asia, Hallinger and Bryant (2013a & 2013b) only identified about eight articles from Malaysia that met their criteria for inclusion.

There are a significant number of doctoral and masters dissertations available in Malaysia focusing on instructional leadership however, there are concerns on the issue of quality. Hallinger (2011b) concluded that students were inadequate for the task of contributing either to the practical nor the theoretical knowledge base in the field upon reviewing the methodologies and conceptual framework used by doctoral student in the past three decades of studies using PIMRS. In that prospect only six doctoral studies were included from Malaysia in the review. In summary, Hallinger (2011b) concluded that the research quality represented, through the doctoral work analyzed, equated with 'weak knowledge accumulation' and an inadequate contribution to the instructional leadership knowledge base.

Besides that, the evidence base within the selected studies there is a clear implication that school leaders in Malaysia should be aspiring to be instructional leaders and that this brings a range of positive organizational benefits (Sharifah, Zaidatol, & Suhaimi, 2008). Yet, the extents to which Malaysian principals understand instructional leadership, genuinely subscribe to it and authentically represent the domains in it remain unclear. This is the focus of the research study outlined in this thesis.

1.4   Purpose of the research

According to the Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013-2025, instructional leadership is seen as fundamental for school achievements. This is given high consideration in the preparation of school leaders through NPQEL, as well as through professional development programs in the districts for those senior school leaders who have not

been through the NPQEL program. In view of the limited evidence base of Instructional Leadership in Malaysia, this research aims to fill in the gaps and contribute to the knowledge base in the area of instructional leadership in Malaysian context.

1.5 Research Objectives

The research objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To explore the principals' conceptual understanding of instructional leadership in Petaling Perdana District, Selangor.

2. To explore how primary school principals view their roles as instructional leaders in Petaling Perdana District, Selangor.

3. To explore teachers' general perceptions of principals as instructional leaders in Petaling Perdana District, Selangor.

1.6   Research Questions

The following are the research questions of this study:

1.   What are principals' conceptual understanding of instructional leadership in Petaling Perdana District, Selangor?

2.   How primary school principals' view their roles as instructional leaders at Petaling Perdana District, Selangor?

3.   What are teachers' general perceptions of principals as instructional leaders in Petaling Perdana District, Selangor?

Having articulated the problem, the objectives and aim of the research, the significance of the research will be outlined in the next section.

1.7   Significance of the study

Through an in depth and empirical investigation, this study aims to contribute to the knowledge base about instructional leadership in Malaysia. As mentioned earlier, the literature on instructional leadership, particularly in the Malaysian context is limited. Since the Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013-2025 emphasizes much on instructional leadership, this research will contribute to the knowledge base in the area of instructional leadership in Malaysia.

Based on literature reviews, Hallinger and Murphy's (1985) model of Instructional leadership which comes with three main dimensions and 10 sub dimensions is widely used in research and literatures. However, Murphy's (1990) systematic and comprehensive review of instructional leadership framework is not empirically tested. Therefore, this research will be based on these framework. At the end of the research, a new understanding of instructional leadership in Malaysia will be drawn. It is anticipated the readers will have a clearer picture on the relevance and certainty of the instructional leadership practices in the local context.

The researcher anticipates a new meaning to the commonly used instructional leadership research instrument (PIMRS) that will be derived from the findings. Though it is not the scope of this study to develop a substitute research instrument, future researchers may use the model to design an updated or a relevant substitute for the purpose of future studies.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Education (MOE) as well as District Education department may also create suitable professional development programs especially in the area of instructional leadership that are more appropriate to cater the need of the school leaders as described in the Malaysian Educational Blueprint 2013-2015. In that way, instructional leaders in Malaysia may also try new strategies and gain ideas that they may have not learn before in their teaching environment and expand their leadership horizon.

1.8   Operational Definition

1.8.1 Instructional leadership

Instructional Leadership is understood in this study as an leadership approach that propagates on the part of principal to educate all learners to a high level of academic achievement. It includes the following general functions a principal (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985).

Dimension 1   :   Defining the school mission which includes framing and communicating school goals.

Dimension 2   :   Managing instructional program, which includes, coordinating curriculum, supervising and evaluating instruction and monitoring learner progress.

Dimension 3   :   Promoting school climate by protecting instructional time, providing incentive for teaching and learning, promoting professional development and maintaining high visibility.

1.8.2 Principal and Headmaster

In the literatures and official documents in Malaysia (i.e MOE, 2013), the term principal is used to identify the head of the secondary public school, while, the head

of public Kindergarten and primary school is known as Headmaster or Headmistress. The term principal will used throughout this research for clarity purpose.

1.9   Theoretical framework

The most well-known theory of Instructional leadership was developed by Hallinger and Murphy (1985) from their model of Instructional Management by examining the instructional leadership behaviour of elementary principal and reviewing the literature on school effectiveness. For research purpose, this model has been widely used because of its high validity and reliability (Hallinger, 2011). Instructional leadership is also seen as a directive and strong leadership practice focusing directly on curriculum and instructional practices (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). Instructional leaders are seen as essentially important people in the schools' who brings about school effectiveness particularly in the area of teaching and learning (Hallinger, 2012).

As indicated by Hallinger and Murphy (1985) and further explained and discussed by Hallinger (2011a), There are three main dimensions to this instructional leadership model. Namely, (i) defining school mission, (ii) Managing instructional programs, and (iii) promoting positive school climate.

Further to this, ten specific sub dimensions that refer to the principal job function is defined (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). Two job functions specified under the first main dimension of defining the schools' mission, (i) framing clear school goals and (ii) communicating school goals. Under the second main dimension of managing

instructional program, three job functions were described; (i) supervising and evaluating instruction (ii) coordinating curriculum and (iii) monitoring student progress. The third dimension of the model which focuses on promoting positive school climate consist of five specific job functions, (i) protecting instructional time; (ii) promoting professional development; (iii) maintaining high visibility; (iv) providing incentive for teachers; and (v) providing incentives for learning. Figure 1.1 describes the theoretical framework employed in this study. The details of the model and explanation of the specific dimensions and job functions are deliberated in chapter 2. In this study, this framework will be adopted for evaluation and discussion of the findings as it is an empirically tested model.

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                                    ┌─────────────────────┐
                                    │ Framing clear school│
                            ┌───────│        goals        │
         ┌──────────────┐   │       └─────────────────────┘
         │   Defining School│
         │     Mission    │──┤       ┌─────────────────────┐
         └──────────────┘   │       │ Communicating school│
                            └───────│        goals        │
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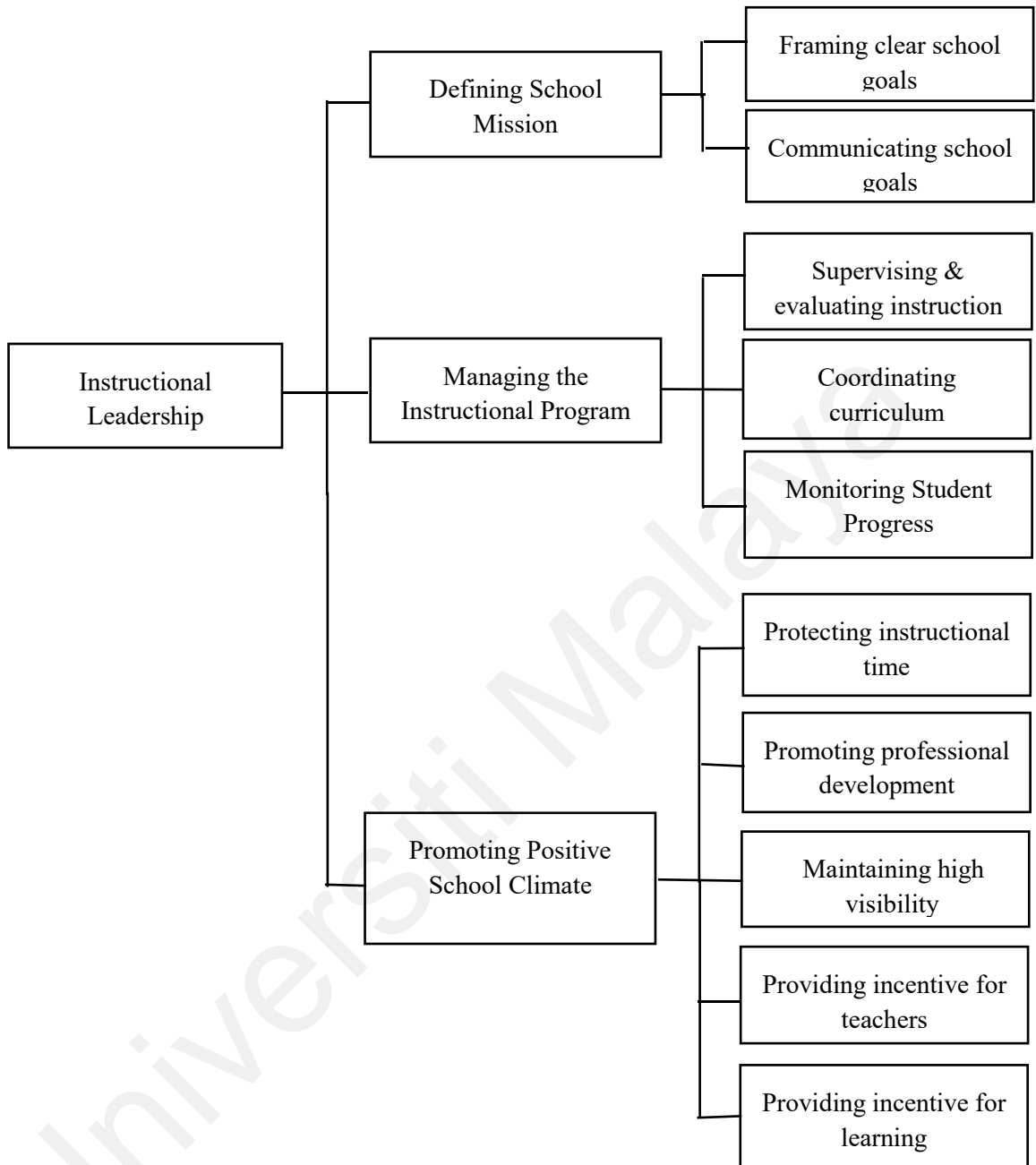
Figure 1.1 Hallinger & Murphy (1985) Instructional Leadership Model

1.10 Summary of the chapter

This chapter had described the outline of the purpose of the research, background of the study, statement of problem, the research objectives, research questions, significance of the study, operational definition and the theoretical framework as the groundwork for the overall study. In Chapter 2, a comprehensive reviews relevant local and international literature on instructional leadership. In addition, it will discuss on various instructional leadership models.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   Introduction

Instructional leadership has an emerging history since the 1980's in the USA as a practice based construct. Based on compelling empirical evidences, the early work on instructional management (Bossert, Dwyer, Rowan & Lee, 1982) at San Francisco's Far West Lab for research and development gave a basis for researchers to develop an idea of principal's instructional leadership (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Dwyer, 1986; Heck, Larson, & Marcoulides, 1990; Hallinger, Bickman, & Davis, 1996). Later Hallinger and Murphy (1985) developed a complementary model from there. Over the time, substantial progress steadily took place in providing a greater clarity in regard to conceptualizations of this role were made by scholars.

In this era, the broader nature of instructional leadership role and the key conditions of school and student learning is in considerable agreement (Leithwood et al. 2006; Robinson, Lloyd & Rowe, 2008, Louis et al. 2010). Instructional leaders are described to be directive and strong leaders who had brought a turn around in the school (Bamburg & Andrews, 1990; Bossert et al., 1982; Edmonds, 1979; Hallinger & Murphy, 1985, 1986). Consequently, there was also an increasing interest among practitioners, scholars as well as policy makers around the world studying the dimensions stipulate in this construct at the same time to straighten its application in practice.

There are also several notable instructional leadership models have been proposed (Andrews & Soder, 1987; Bossert et al., 1982; Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Leithwood, Begley & Cousins, 1990; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982; Van de Grift, 1990; Villanova, Gauthier, Proctor & Shoemaker, 1981). In this research, the most frequently used model proposed by Hallinger and Murphy (1985) in empirical investigations is employed (Hallinger & Heck, 1996). This model consist of three dimensions of instructional leadership and are similar in many aspects to the other instructional leadership models and framework. The three main dimensions are (i) defining school mission, (ii) managing instructional program, and (iii) promoting a positive school climate (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). These three dimensions are delineated into ten specific functions of instructional leadership. These functions will be discussed in the next section.

Principal's instructional leadership which stresses accountability on educational change and student learning within school has been identified as one of the most prominent practices in school improvement over the past decades (Blase´ & Blase´, 1999; Hallinger, 2003; Leithwood et al., 2006; Printy, 2008; Robinson et al., 2008). For instance, Robinson et al. (2008) analysis reported that the average effect on student outcome of instructional leadership is three or four times more than that of transformational leadership.

According to Mark and Printy (2003) the transformational leadership practices is an insufficient condition for instructional leadership. Therefore for a better school performance, coexistence of both the leadership practice is essential. However, there is a substantial recognition given today by international researchers for the principal

instructional leadership (Hallinger, 2003; Gumus, Bulut, & Bellibas, 2013; Ham & Kim, 2013). Therefore, it is important that certain organizational conditions which facilitate instructional leadership in the context of school are created and sustained (Southworth, 2002).

Generally, instructional leadership can be defined as all kinds of actions and activities carried out by the principal to support and strengthen the process of teaching and learning in their schools (Hallinger & Chen, 2015). Since multi tasking is a tough effort, school leaders must be knowledgeable, able to connect dots with teachers on every level, and move strategies that are effective for improving student achievement in order to be effective (Hallinger 2012; Hallinger 2005). It's undeniably that principals need to be equipped with the concept of instructional leadership to assist them in their perception and interpretation of their environment so that they can manage their schools strategically to achieve their mission.

The body of knowledge on instructional leadership is extensive in the Western context (Cheng, 1995; Hallinger & Leithwood, 1998; Hallinger 1995; Hallinger, Walker & Bajunid, 2005). However, much is yet to be uncovered in the region of East Asia. A collaborative regional research has started in the last five years in seven East Asia societies that has yet to reveal more information on the country of Malaysia (Hallinger & Bryant, 2013). Therefore, it was a gap recognized that local researchers must embark on the similar challenge to explore deeper on this subject especially within the context of Malaysian schools so that future findings can expand the knowledge base in this area.

Recently, a research programme to explore the instructional leadership in seven East Asian countries (Vietnam, Malaysia, Midland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore and Thailand has been started (Hallinger & Bryant, 2013). In other occasion, another comparative research focusing on leadership development and preparation in certain Asian countries including Malaysia, Indonesia, Hong Kong and Singapore has also been done (Harris & Jones, 2015). Through a comparative and in depth empirical investigation, these studies aim to contribute to the knowledge base of educational leadership in this region. As far as possible both the studies intend to engage with the indigenous literatures on school leadership (Bajunid, 1996) particularly in countries where the evidences are hidden from the international literature since they are written in local languages (i.e. Bahasa Malaysia). In the next section, the contemporary researches done in the local context is reviewed.

2.2 A review on Instructional Leadership practices in Malaysia

Within the contemporary knowledge base about educational leadership, instructional leadership is being a present-day relevant and powerful force (Hallinger, 1995; Cheng, 1995; Hallinger & Leithwood, 1998; Hallinger, Walker, & Bajunid, 2005). However, much of the local evidence of Instructional Leadership were written in local language (Bahasa Malaysia) and frequently referred to the model by Hallinger and Murphy (1985) because of its popularity and perceived relevance to the Malaysian context (Jameela, 2012; Mohd Yusri Ibrahim & Aziz Amin, 2014; Sazali, Rusmini, Hut, Engkeh, & Zamri, 2007). In this part we shall explore some of the researches done in local context on the subject.

According to Bajunid (1996) indigenous educational leadership literatures in Malaysia stretches over few decades. However, since most of these literatures are written in Bahasa Malaysia, they remained hidden from the view of international scholars. In an analysis of literatures on educational leadership in Asia, Hallinger and Bryant (2013) were only able to identify 8 articles from Malaysia that met their criteria for inclusion. As a starting point in this research, the literature on principals' instructional practices in Malaysia was revisited and the relevant local or indigenous literature was included.

In a review of the empirical evidence in Malaysia, it was shown that the knowledge base varied by (a) types of schools such as Mara Junior Colleges (Mustafa, Radzi, Jaafar, Rohana, & Nawawi, 2015) boarding schools/ special model schools/ daily schools (Jamelaa & Jainabee, 2012), high achievement schools (Ghani, 2012), polytechnics (Nashira & Mustaphab, 2013), vocational/ technical schools (Ghavifekr, Ibrahim, Chellapan, Sukumaran & Subramaniam, 2015). It also varied by b) the States selected for study i.e. Pahang (Jamelaa & Jainabee, 2011), Johor (Sim, 2011) and Sabah (Abdullah & Laji, 2014). In addition, many of the quantitative studies reviewed used the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) (Hallinger, 2000) because of its perceived relevance to the Malaysian context (Jameela, 2012; Mohd Yusri Ibrahim & Aziz Amin, 2014; Sazali, Rusmini, Hut, Engkeh, & Zamri, 2007).

Looking across the research studies undertaken in Malaysia there is variation in the quality, definitions of instructional leadership, methodology employed and the representation of findings. However, through careful sifting and interrogation of the

empirical evidences, some important findings about principals' instructional practices in Malaysia have emerged. The main conclusions from the local evidence (in English and Bahasa Malaysia) are organized with reference to Hallinger's (2005) organizational framework for reviews of instructional leadership. The empirical data supports two main themes (a) personal factors of IL and (b) effects of IL on organization and school outcomes.

On the personal factors of instructional leadership theme, Jameela and Jainabee (2011) highlight that following four domains are practiced highly by Malaysian principals. The four domains are (i) defining and establishing school goals, (ii) managing instructional programs, (iii) promoting learning environment, and (iv) creating a friendly and cooperative school environment. According to Sim (2011) there are seven dimensions of instructional leaders been implemented by princials in Malaysia. Namely, explaining school mission, vision and goals; manage curriculum and instruction, monitoring student progress, supervisoin of teaching and learning, fostering conducive learning climate, promoting professional development and colloboration with external parties. Additionally, Ghavifekr et al., (2015) concluded with four domains of effective instructional leaders role in the the technical and vocational school principals in Kuala Lumpur. They are (i) professional leadership, (ii) shared and clear vision and goal, (iii) continuous monitoring of teacher's progress, and (iv) teachers professional growth. Jamelaa and Jainabee (2012) in their study also highlighted the differences of instructional leadership practice of principals between special model schools, boarding schools and daily schools comparing them with religious and technical schools in the state of Pahang

On the other hand, the theme on the effects of instructional leadership on organization and school outcome by certain researchers stated that they found a positive relationship between instructional leadership practices and certain outcomes, such as teachers' efficacy (Yusof, Muda, Makmom, Bahaman, Basri, & Rashid, 2013) and teachers' competency (Mohd Yusri & Aziz Amin, 2014). Additionally, other studies concluded that principals' instructional leadership had a positive effect upon: (a) teachers' satisfaction (Abdul Ahmad & Hashim, 2004); (b) teachers' commitments (Mustafa et al. 2015); (c) school improvement (Sazali et al. 2007); and (d) academic achievement (Yasin, Pihie, Fooi, Basri, & Baki, 2013). Abdullah and Laji (2014) indicate that there is a strong positive relationship between instructional leadership and the effective domain of teachers' attitude towards change. Kiflee and Talip (2016) highlight a positive relationship between instructional leadership and teacher performance in History subject.

For the purpose of this thesis, a scoping literature review was done that used the following criteria for inclusion; firstly, published peer-refereed articles or conference papers (in English and BM) were included; secondly, only papers or articles from reputable sources were selected, thirdly, books and book chapters were included only where the focus was directly on the theme of instructional leadership. Doctoral and masters dissertations were not included in the scoping review, even though in Malaysia there are a significant number that have focused on instructional leadership. The main reasons for the exclusion of these body of research was concerns the issue of quality. In a review of doctoral studies done in the past three decades that used PIMRS, Hallinger (2011a) concludes that,

"The conceptual frameworks and methodologies used by these doctoral students were, on the whole, inadequate for the task of contributing to either the theoretical or practical knowledge base in this field" (Hallinger 2011a, p.3).

In summary, Hallinger (2011a) said that the research quality represented, through the doctoral work analyzed, equated with 'weak knowledge accumulation' and an inadequate contribution to the knowledge base on instructional leadership. Local studies highlighted the transformational process of instructional leadership in relation to the changing of school climate and culture (Ang & Ramiah, 2009; Ramzan, 2014; Sazali et al., 2007). The contextual elements portrayed in their study would also be used later as part of the inductive process of coding of this research.

Based on four dimensions, Abdullah and Kassim (2011) explored the practice of principal's instructional leadership. The four dimensions are (i) defining and establishing school goals, (ii) managing instructional program, (iii)promote learning environment, and (iv) creating friendly and cooperative school environment. The relationship between principal's instructional leadership and their attitude towards change based on cognitive, affective and behavioral aspects was the focus of this explanatory mixed method study. An initial quantitative data was collected followed by qualitative data among 123 principals using the PIMRS (Principal Instructional Leadership Management Rating Scale) developed by Hallinger & Murphy and the Inventory of attitude change developed by Dunham, Grube, Gardner, Cummings and Pierce (1989) was used as the research instrument. Following that, an interview session was done with the participant to examine the practice. It was identified from the research that the secondary school principals in Pahang, Malaysia exhibit a high

level of instructional leadership in four domain, which are (i) defining and establishing school goals, (ii) managing instructional programs, (iii) promoting learning environment, and (iv) creating friendly and cooperative school environment. Principals. The results also shows that there is a strong relationship between managing instructional program, promoting learning environment and instructional leadership with the attitude towards change as an effective domain. In this research the usage of PIMRS research instrument is questionable as the variables used by the researcher has four dimensions however, the PIMRS is constructed with three dimensions. Thus, a limitation is found in this research.

In another instance, Abdullah, and Kassim, (2012) explored the pattern of principals' practices as instructional leaders in six types of schools in the same state of Pahang, Malaysia. The instructional leadership practice of principals was based on four dimensions as before and was done among six principals and six teachers. Six types of schools in Pahang was found to practice instructional leadership. It was noted that, the dimension on managing the instructional program being practices are rare in all the schools. It was also found that there were wide difference in the instructional leadership practices of principals between Special Model School, Daily School and Boarding School when compared to vocational/Technical Schools and Religious School. All principals however agreed in this research that the capability to generate schools performance held in the hands of the effective instructional leader. Since only one school from each school type, one principal and one teacher are chosen it may not quantify the overall indication of Principals Instructional practice in the school type. This again may not be able to be taken as a reliable finding.

Sharma (2012) focused on principals from successful schools in four Asian countries (Malaysia, Thailand, India and United Arab Emirates) on instructional leadership of principals of successful schools. Fifty five principals from around this countries participated in this qualitative research study involving questionnaires and interview. In contrary to Hallinger and Murphy (1985) Model which advocates on class room observations all the principals from these Asian countries have put emphasis on (i) Incorporating teachers and students in leadership process, (ii) Committing leadership for student's overall development, (iii) Including clinical, development and collegial models of supervision for development, (iv) Continual professional development for all.

This finding is also very subjective as the reliability of the questionnaire is not mentioned in the writing. Since supervision is an intense process the principals are expected to to be experts in teaching and learning and committed to the school improvement (Hallinger, 2005). The purpose of supervision assignment in different context varies and it's not stipulated clearly. In some context it may be just to evaluate the teachers to mark their performance indicator and at the same time for rewarding purpose. In some schools it is also done for the purpose of professional development in the area of teaching & learning as well as for the purpose of PLC among teachers.

Using a quantitative research method, Ghavifekr, Ibrahim, Chellapan, Sukumaran, and Subramaniam (2015) identified leadership factors affecting principals in vocational and technical colleges from the perception of teachers. The findings in this research shows that, there are four domains seen as the most effective factor of

instructional leadership among vocational and technical college principals as perceived by the teachers. The four domains are, (i) professional leadership (ii) sharing of clear mission and goals (iii) monitoring teacher progress continuously, and (iv) developing professional growth of the teachers. It was also found that the four domains are influential in promoting teacher performance in the vocational and technical college. The finding also supports a research done by Enueme and Egwunyenga (2008) which indicated a relationship between principal's instructional leadership and the performance of teacher at work. However, the theoretical framework in this study was adapted from the Murphy's Instructional Leadership Framework (1990) which has four main dimension that influence instructional leadership practice. Whether the research instruments and the models employed in this research answered the research question and support the findings is disputable. In this study is was obvious that there was a lack of comprehension of the models of instructional leadership.

A research was done by Sim (2011) to examine the instructional leadership role and the preferred domain practiced by Malaysian principals. In this research where 220 school teachers participated, the level of instructional leadership and the level of student academic achievement was also examined using the PIMRS questionnaire. From the research it was identified that Malaysian principals successfully implement the seven dimension of instructional leadership role. They are (i) explaining school mission, vision and goal, (ii) managing curriculum and instruction, (iii) Monitor student progress, (iv) supervising teaching & learning, (v) fostering a conducive learning climate, (vi) promoting professional development, and (vii) collaboration with external parties. In the study it was shown that there is a concordance between

the level of instructional leadership and the student academic achievement level. Hence, the role of instructional leadership is vital for a better academic achievement. In this research, the qualitative gap is found. The view of the principal is not taken into account before making conclusion. The dimensions of instructional leadership analyzed also seem to be selective.

From a literature review done by Fooi, Asimiran, and Hassan (2015) to understand the relationship between instructional leadership of principal and teacher's readiness to implement change, it was concluded that, a principal must be wise and effective as an instructional leader to create a conducive working environment and increase teacher readiness toward change, so that every change may be successfully implemented. Further studies need to be done to enhance the findings from the literature. Minimal number of reference from Malaysian findings is used. Therefore, it does not give a holistic view of the principal instructional leadership practices and teacher readiness towards change in relation to education reform.

Ail, Taib, Jaafar, Mohamed, and Omar (2015), in a quantitative survey conducted to examine the principal's instructional leadership and teacher's commitment in three Mara Junior Science College (MJSC) in the state of Pahang has found there is a high correlation between the principals Instructional leadership and the level of teacher's commitment. Yasin, Pihie, Fooi, Basri, and Baki, (2016), in a qualitative research done, principals have indicated that instructional leadership is understood as giving clear vision and goals, being a role model, supervising classroom, providing support for teaching and learning and to be listeners. In their findings the school climate was not elaborated. On the other hand, the vision ad goals very focused on exam

orientation instead of the globalized perception. It was strongly believed that an instructional leader must portray to be a role model to the teachers and staff of the organization.

Masitah and Alias (2015), identified that principal's instructional leadership practices and teacher efficacy has a relationship. The factors in instructional leadership also influence teacher efficacy in the implementation of environmental education. The findings also showed a contrasting view between teachers and principals perception on the principal's demonstrated experience and confidence in instructional leadership. It also asserts that the Hallinger & Murphy Instructional Leadership Model (1985) is still relevant. According to the study, the excellence of the school and the effectiveness in implementing environmental education is based on the principal's instructional leadership.

Abdullah and Laji (2014) did a study in primary schools in Sabah to investigate between the teachers instructional leadership and the attitude of teachers who are teaching Malay language. A quantitative survey was done among a random sampling population of 429 primary school teaches in Sabah. The results indicted that one of the significant element for effective school is the teacher's instructional leadership. The strength and quality of Instructional Leadership depends on teacher's ability to institutionalize and realize the schools' vision and mission. One aspect that needs attention is the Teachers Instructional Leadership. There is no concrete evidence given in terms of literature review as well as from the research finding for the need of Teacher Instructional Leadership as emphasized. On the other hand, the instrument used is not fashioned towards the Teacher IL.

Across the three Asia Pacific countries (Malaysia, South Korea and Australia), Park, and Ham (2014) examined teacher's collaboration particularly on principal-teacher perceptual disagreement regarding instructional leadership practice of the principal. The OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey 2013 was based in this study. Meanwhile the results indicated that teachers establishes a positive collegial relationship with other teachers if there were little principal-teacher disagreement in regards to the performance of the principal leaderships. Across the three countries, a significant effect of principal-teacher perceptual disagreement was also found in this study. Despite the socio-cultural and socioeconomic background among the countries, there were fairly consistent results were found in this research. The finding from this study also yielded on the need of effective interaction between principal and teachers which is crucial. The consolidation of trust between principal and teacher may help recognize and resolve perpetual disagreement among them which in turn promotes the school's capacity become healthier learning organization while encouraging teacher collaborative inquiry and activities (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Reitzug, 1997).

In general, it was found that, there is very limited qualitative studies have been done systematically on the instructional leadership in Malaysia. In their recent analysis of the leadership literature in Asia, Hallinger and Bryant (2013b) were able to identify only 8 articles from Malaysia that met their criteria for inclusion. Published works are seen to have less reliability. A clearer understanding of instructional leadership models may be helpful for a consistent review and to establish a framework that fits the local context. Hallinger and Murphy (1985) model of instructional leadership is used but at many instances only part of the dimensions reviewed and conclusion is

made that such instructional practice exist or non exist. This may not be a holistic approach to define the effectiveness of a particular practice in a context. Besides that, the extent to which the concept of instructional leadership is understood by the principals as well as researchers are questionable. On the other hand, It is important that the knowledge base on the subject to be enhanced since the empirical evidence from some contexts and settings especially in East Asia countries particularly in Malaysia are short supplied while international knowledge base about instructional leadership continue to flourish and grow. The gap of variation in definition of instructional leadership also need to be standardized and there is a need to develop the evidence bases.

2.3   Instructional Leadership in the Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013-2025.

It has been identified by the Malaysian Ministry of Education that Malaysian principals fairly split their time in school between instructional leadership and administrative activities. It has been also agreed by MOE that school principals also generally understand the importance of instructional leadership. Out of three most important set of skills, the principals have identified two which are related to instructional leadership in a survey (MOE, 2013).

It is an aspiration of the Malaysian Ministry of Education moving towards excellence with an increased operational flexibility during the 3rd wave (2021-2025). The three main focus of wave 3 are (a) performance improvement path acceleration of the education system in Malaysia, (b) to bring forth the countries educations standard to the top three in the world, and (c) to start embarking on the journey of excellence

(MOE, 2013). During this phase it was anticipated to focus on cultivating peer led culture of professional excellence which is capable of innovations and a school based management to bring the school to a greater heights. A greater autonomy especially on implementation of curriculum and allocation of budget was given consideration in this phase. School leaders and teachers are expected to fully utilize the flexibility accorded to them. For the school leaders, the flexibility includes on matters such as instructional leadership, administrative leadership as well as curriculum and co-curriculum planning. On the other hand, for teachers, the flexibility will be given over issues related to profession development, timetabling of curriculum, organization of lesson and pedagogical approaches besides school based assessments (MOE, 2013).

To achieve this goal, and to ensure high performing school leaders in every school, the Ministry enhance selection criteria and succession planning processes for principals from 2013. This is the focus emphasized in shift 5 of the Blueprint. High quality principal and supporting leadership team will be ensured by the Ministry of Education Malaysia to every school regardless of location to provide instructional leadership which will thrive overall school performance (MOE, 2013). To fully utilize the decision-making flexibility accorded to them, all school leaders (Principals, assistant principals, department heads and subject heads) are expected to be prepared fully by MOE. The instructional matters such as planning of school improvement, planning of curriculum and co-curriculum planning and matters related to administrative such a managing of school funds and allocations (MOE, 2013).

It was indicated that prior to the appointment to respective school and throughout their service, all principals will have adequate training especially in thee key areas of instructional leadership. This process will be particularly done for a period of three years as it shown to be a critical years of principal leadership style and skills formation period (MOE, 2013). It is essential to develop instructional leadership skills as it pertains the ability to adapt the internal structure, procedures and identify the needs of the students and teachers teachers and students and work towards school improvement.

It is identical to note that, the ministry of Education also moving towards selection of principals who demonstrate leadership competencies rather than tenure based. The National Professional Qualification for Education Leaders (NPQEL) at *Institute Aminuddin Baki* (IAB) is required to be completed by every principal before their appointment. This initiative will drop the average age of the principals and this will also allow the principals to serve for a longer period in each school and the system as whole.

This transformational journey is anticipated to impact school leaders to become effective instructional leaders and to be an agent of change. This journey will also enhance the working relationship and support from federal, state and district education officers to intensify services (MOE, 2013). As a measure to strengthen the link between performance and competencies, the ministry proposed in the blueprint performance assessment framework which is based mainly on four dimensions which relates to (i) leadership, (ii) professional values, (iii) external relations, and (iv) contribution as core dimensions. It contributes to 70% of the overall weightage. It

also includes key aspects of school leadership such as instructional leadership in it (MOE, 2013).

The state of Johor has been made an ideal exemplar as it has been identified as a high performing state at the primary school level in Malaysia. In 2010 Johor was ranked second best state performed well in UPSR examinations in the country after Putrajaya. Its however is noteworthy to note that Johor made the journey from the bottom 5 to one of the top states within a span of five years. The success of the schools in Johor was credited to the ability and strength of the District and State level leaders (MOE, 2013).

According to the report presented in the Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013-2025, Johor seem to have identified the right things and practice them well. They have a clarity of shared vision, prioritized on programs to focus on academic outcome, strong performance culture and phases of professional development targeted on district and school leaders. Identically, the Johor state education department targeted the principals , deputy principals and district officers and revolved revolved a professional development program among them. In order to tackle and equipped the leaders to develop solutions to the challenges, the program begins with the fundamentals of fundamental of instructional leadership. Subsequently, the topic of instructional leadership was focused in all their professional development programs for 2-3 years in order that the principals and leaders have a strong grasp of the topic before venturing into new program on leadership development (MOE, 2013).

2.4   Instructional Leadership Models

Educational leadership researchers define instructional leadership in a variety of way. Alig-Mielcarek (2003) defines it in terms of principal behavior that leads a school to educate all learners to a level of high achievement. These includes the defining and communication of the shared goal, monitor and provide feedback on teaching and learning and promoting professional development school wide.

Yu (2009) defines instructional leadership as consisting of direct and indirect behaviors that significantly affect teacher's instruction and as a result, student learning. Leithwood and Louis (1999), define instructional leadership as an approach to leadership that emphasizes the behavior of teachers as they engage in activities directly affecting the growth of students. Hopkins goes on to argue that instructional leaders are able to create synergy between a focus on teaching and learning on one hand, and capacity building on the other (Hopkins, 1998).

Instructional leadership is defined as an influential relationship hat enables, supports and motivates teacher's effort to learn and change teachers instructions practice as mentioned by Spillane, Hallett and Diamond (2003). Gupton, 2003 on the other hand defines instructional leadership as a behaviour that affects teacher's instructional activities which brings about positive results in student learning. Glanz (2006) agrees with this and confirms that a good principal focuses on instruction because they know that it will directly improve student learning and achievement.

According to Sparks (2002) keeping the school focused on the core learning processes and organizational/ structural changes which in turn produces high level of performance and learning for all staff and student is the key responsibility of an instructional leader. It is always necessary for the principals as a school leader to play an important role to influence and improve the academic achievement of the learners in the school (Glanz, 2006). The principals are expected to be the "chief learning officer" and, in this regard, some researchers prefer the term "learning leader" rather than "instructional leader" (DuFour, 2002).

All the definitions of instructional leadership mentioned thus far emphasize the influence and effects that the principal as school leader has over teaching and learning process which leads ultimately to learner's achievement. Various researchers differ as to whether the influence is directly or indirectly related to learner achievement but agree unanimously that instructional leadership does influence learner's achievement. The question that would inevitably follow then is, what are the role of the instructional leader to influence learning and the learning environment? Thus, it is appropriate to discuss the conceptual models that have emerged on instructional leadership over the past decades.

Researches on instructional leadership in the past has been carried out mainly focusing the behavior of effective principals from improved and effective schools. The behaviors, traits and processes which are exhibited and followed by the effective principals are based to define instructional leadership. Numerous conceptual models have emerged from these studies and definitions (Alig-Mielcaric,

2003; Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Murphy, 1990; Weber, 1996). These four comprehensive and widely used model will be discussed in the next section.

2.4.1 The Far West Lab Instructional Management Model (Bossert et al. 1982)

Bossert et al. (1982) in a seminal literature review sought to define clearly the instructional management construct. This construct was conceptualized as an action and strategies employed by school principals with an intention and goal to improve learning outcomes of students by bringing an impact on the instructional organization and learning climate of the school. Because the principal's role is revolved around managerial functions which concern the instructions and coordination of curriculum, the researchers choose the term 'Instructional Management' for the construct (Cohen & Miller 1980).

As described in figure 2.1, the instructional management framework became an influential model to this day and continues to give guidance to researchers in this field. There are five main features in the Bossert's framework. Firstly, the model gives importance to the principal's instructional management activities domain. (Edmonds 1979; Erickson, 1979; Lipham 1981; Bridges 1982; Cuban 1988; Robinson et al. 2008). The personal characteristics of principals that shapes the approaches to instructional leadership was placed the second in the framework (Goldring, Cravens, Murphy, Porter, & Elliott, 2012; Leithwood & Beatty 2008; Leithwood et al. 2008; Hallinger 2011a). The professional experience, years of service as principal, gender and the attitude of the principal towards self efficacy, openness, resilience and optimism towards learning were the range of characteristics.

On the other hand, the size of the school and district, socioeconomic status of the school community, and the sociocultural environment of the school the organizational was framed within the principal's organizational context (Hallinger & Heck 2011a, b; Goldring et al. 2012; Belchetz & Leithwood 2007; Wiley 2001; Teddlie, Stringfield, & Reynolds 2000; Hallinger & Murphy 1986; Bridges 1977). Therefore, this framework indicates that the leaders work in a shaped and moderated working context instead of a vacuumed situation.

Socio Cultural Context

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┌──────────────────┐                              ┌──────────────────┐
│    Personal      │                              │     Learning     │
│ Characteristics  │                              │     Climate      │
└──────────────────┘                              └──────────────────┘
                    ╲                           ╱
                     ╲                         ╱
┌──────────────────┐  ╲   ┌──────────────┐   ╱              ┌──────────────────┐
│  Instructional   │ ───▶ │   Principal  │ ──               │     Student       │
│     Context      │      │ instructional│   ╲              │     Outcome       │
└──────────────────┘  ╱   │  Management  │    ╲             └──────────────────┘
                     ╱    └──────────────┘     ╲
┌──────────────────┐ ╱                          ╲ ┌──────────────────┐
│    Community     │                              │   Instructional   │
│ Characteristics  │                              │   Organization    │
└──────────────────┘                              └──────────────────┘
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Socio Cultural Context
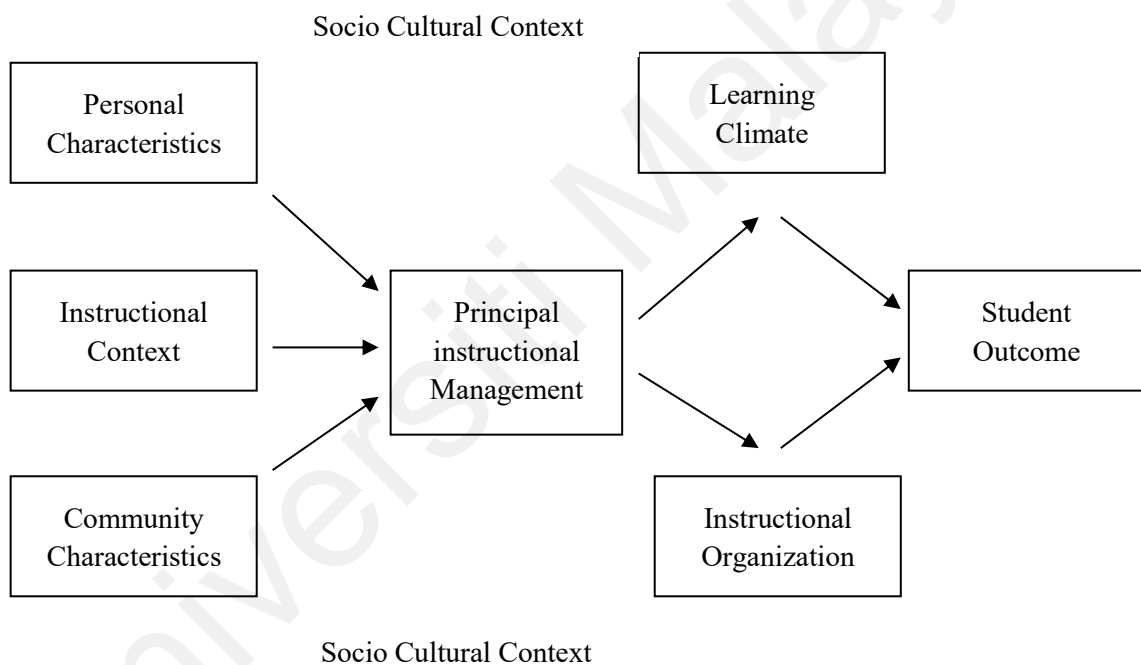
Figure 2.1 The Far West Lab Instructional Management Model (Bossert et al. 1982)

Fourthly, the features of the school is mediated with the principal's effect on student outcome (Hallinger & Heck 1996, 1998, 2010, 2011a, 2011b). This understanding is consistent with the term 'achieving results through people' given by Bridges (1977, 1982). Finally, the ultimate effectiveness of the principals effort are reflected in the

impact achieved on student learning and development (Purkey & Smith 1983; Edmonds 1979; Mulford & Silins 2003, 2009).

Over the time, the term instructional leadership has taken over the term instructional management which was initially employed by Bossert and his team of scholars from USA. The sources of power used by the principals to achieve the results in the school is the main distinction between these two terms. However, the principal who operates using this frame of reference achieves positive impact on their organization more on expertise and influence rather than using of positional authority and power (Blasé 1987; Hallinger 2003; Hallinger & Heck 1996; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005; Leithwood et al. 1990, 2008; Knapp, Copland, Honig, Plecki & Portin, 2009).

2.4.2 Hallinger & Murphy Instructional Leadership Model (1985)

This model which is also known as PIMRS model of instructional leadership (Hallinger & Wang, 2015) is the most fully tested approach to instructional leadership of Hallinger and his colleagues (Hopkins, 1998). As an initial exertion, Hallinger and Murphy examined 10 elementary school principals on their instructional leadership practice and conducted a review of the school effectiveness literature. To collect information on instructional leadership a common questionnaire was used for the principals, school staffs and the central administration supervisors.

Document analysis was supplemented these data later in this study. With the details of findings a three dimension instructional management framework was developed which was delineated into 11 specific instructional leadership functions (Hallinger &

Murphy, 1985). This model is empirically supported particularly in relation to the student outcome (Hopkins, 1998). Using the 11 job functions from the three dimensions of instructional management, Hallinger and Murphy (1985) then created the Principal Instructional Rating Scale (PIMRS), which is used as the appraisal instrument of principal's instructional management behaviour. Later the 11 job functions descriptor was revised and reduced to 10.

Although researchers and scholars tend to differ as to the exact nature of instructional leadership, most researchers still use stem from Hallinger and Murphy's model (1985) as their basis. This model has therefore been chosen to serve as a framework for this study. Enlisted a review of the 10 dimensions of instructional leadership described in the model. This dimensions is employed in the analyzing of research data for this research.

2.4.2.1   Defining the school mission

The dimension of defining the school mission includes framing and communicating school goals (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). Providing a school with direction is a very basic yet extremely important task of principals in their instructional role of school leaders, (Gupton, 2003). They do this through the vision and mission of the school. Hallinger and Heck (1996) in a prominent synthesis of school leadership effect research conducted have identified that vision and goals is the most significant avenue the school leader's impact learning. school. Drucker (1992) very aptly asserted, effective leadership is founded in thinking through, defining and establishing clearly the the organization's mission.

The broader picture of the direction the school seek to move forward is referred to as the vision. Goal in contrast refers to the specific achievable targets that is taken throughout the journey towards the vision (Hallinger & Heck 2002). The mission of the school usually begins with a clear vision. Visions are dreams of how best to accomplish the mission (Gupton, 2009). A vision is an aspiration that details what we are aspiring to, what we would like to be. It is in the main long-term in nature. It is important for educational leaders to know what they want for their schools and where they want to lead their schools.

a)   Framing school goals

Covey (2004) claims that by having a clear understanding of your destination and the sense of purpose that comes with it, you are better able to deal with even the most difficult daily challenges that you may face. As defined by Covey (2006), vision is about seeing with the mind's eye the potential and possibilities in people, projects and in enterprises. He stated that, a vision is formed when the mind connects to the needs of the system with possibility (Covey, 2006).

It is important that the leaders are passionate about their visions and that they believe they are achievable. A vision cannot be developed in a vacuum. To develop their visions, (i) leaders need to know themselves well; (ii) they need to know their schools well; (iii) they need to know the community in which their schools operate well; (iv) a good understanding of the staffs and learners of the school is also needed

(Clarke, 2007; Gupton, 2009). It is also indicated that, good principals set high expectations and standards for success (Glanz, 2006).

The fundamental purpose of the school is encapsulated in a mission statement (Zepeda, 2004; Gupton, 2003). It serve to focus on the values and beliefs of the school community. The mission also helps and guide the principal in focusing, developing and coordinating the school's improvement process. Elmore (2008), an expert in school improvement from Harvard University mentioned that having the right focus and being driven by that focus in administration and instruction is the key to improve the school and student achievement.

McEwan (2002) on the other hand have cautioned the school leaders not to solely claim the ownership of the school mission as it supposed to be owned and belonged to the school community as whole. As such, the school mission must be a collective vision of everyone and should be a consensus statement of where the school community wants to move towards together. Comparatively, a much higher level of sustainable commitment is produced when there is a shared vision than a vision imposed from top down (Moloi, 2005).

b)   Communicating School Goals

Ensuring that staffs are involved in the process of drawing up a purposeful vision for the school is the leader's another important responsibility besides framing school goals. In order that they take ownership of the vision and share the common goal, the leader to be inspiring (Blasé, Blasé & Philips, 2010). However, unless the vision is

meaningful, it will not inspire and elicit commitment from the group. In their study, Blasé et al. (2010) found that, in times of decision making, high performing principals tend to include all relevant stakeholders. Relationships with individuals and teams were based on trust. To encourage and build a sense of ownership, they were also willing to share power and responsibility.

Besides ensuring the vision and mission being shared with all stakeholders, it is the leader's very important function to communicating the mission and vision to them and ensuring these vision is being put into practice (Clarke, 2007). Through handbooks, conversation with staff and students, school assemblies, teacher and parents meeting and staff meetings this can be achieved (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). By also behaving in ways that are consistent with the vision of the school, the principal can serve as a powerful incentive for members of staff to do the same and thus get the support of all other stakeholders (Moloi, 2005). Shared beliefs, values, missions and goals are the foundation upon which a learning organization builds and returns frequently for re-examination, renewal and guidance in dealing with the many issues on the educational landscape (Gupton, 2003).

From the mission and vision, the goals of the school are emerged (Naidu, Joubert, Mestry, Mosoge, & Ngcobo, 2008). These goals should be clearly, concretely and specifically stipulated in order that they may serve as a blueprint to realize the vision and mission of the school (Gupton, 2003; Naidu et al., 2008). According to Glanz (2006) in order to turn the process of realizing the goals and objectives at school, effective leaders were seen to be establishing clearly defined academic goals for the schools and collaborate strategically a consistent and clear school instructional

policies. The student learning outcome can be influenced by principal by setting the school goals and promoting effective instructional practice (Zepeda, 2004).

An effective instructional leader of a school generally has a clearly defined mission and goals in regards to student achievement (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). On the other hand, a new coordinated objective with manageable scope that appears to work best will be included as performance goals are to be expressed in measurable terms. Staff and parent's input during the development of the school's goals is also perceived as important (Clark, 1980; Bossert et al. 1982; Davies et al. 2005; Hallinger & Heck 2002; Robinson et al. 2008; Venezky & Winfield 1979; Edmonds 1979). However, there is no single best approach is found within this model for the principals to take in setting their goals.

In collaboration with the staff members the principal could set the goals. However, it is important the school has a clear academic goal that is supported by the staffs and which are incorporated in their daily practice. This picture of goal oriented, academically focused schools is seen as a contrast to the schools that portrayed as pursuing a variety of vague, ill-defined and sometimes conflicting academic and non-academic goals (Hallinger & Wang, 2015). However, it is anticipated in this study the challenges faced by the leaders in a centralized education system where common vision and goals for school in different social setting and pupil who come from different social economic background.

2.4.2.2   Managing the instructional program

Direct working relationship with the teachers in relation to curriculum and instruction is involved in this dimension (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). Greater focus is given to the coordination, control and instruction of curriculum. There are 3 management functions incorporated in this dimension, namely (i) supervising and evaluating instruction; (ii) coordinating curriculum; and (iii) monitoring student progress.

The principal's role in managing the technical cores of the school is focused in this dimension (Hallinger 2003; Hallinger & Heck 1998; Leithwood et al. 2006; Marks & Printy 2003; Murphy 1988; Robinson et al. 2008; Spillane 2006; Weick 1976, 1982). It was also indicated that in the larger school it is obvious that the principal is not the only person involve in developing and monitoring the school's instructional program. However, this framework assumes that it is the key responsibility of the principal to coordinate and control the academic programs in the school though day to day tasks are delegated extensively to others (Hallinger & Wang, 2015). The 3 functions of the principal indicated in this dimension will be discussed in the next section.

a)   Supervising and evaluating instruction

Providing instructional support to teachers, monitoring classroom instructions through formal and informal classroom visits and aligning classroom practices with school goals comprises in the function of supervising and evaluating instruction (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). However, this particular function remains controversial and over the past decade, there is an increase in attention on the the role of the

principal in performing teacher evaluation (Hallinger et al. 2014; Kimball & Milanowski 2009; Danielson 2007; Kimball, White, Milanowski, & Borman, 2004).

In order to support the teachers in their instructional task, there was a general consensus that principals need to have an adequate teaching experience (Enueme & Egwunyenga, 2008; Glanz, 2006). Glanz (2006) consolidates this view by stating that principals should perceive themselves as "teachers of teachers". It is also seen as important for principals to go through similar experiences in order to support and communicate good teaching practice among teachers. It is through these experiences that they would be able to gain the knowledge and skills to support their teachers. The experience in teaching will also beneficial for the principal to earn credibility in teachers perspective. Besides that, it is also important to enable the principals to understand the challenges faced by the teachers (Glanz, 2006; Enueme & Egwunyenga, 2008).

The supervision and evaluation process on teacher's performance is a very controversial function because it mainly is subjective and to a large extend can be dependent on the person who is doing the evaluation. The fear of prejudices is also there. When supervision is done for supportive purpose rather than evaluative purpose, it becomes more purposeful and less dictatorial. Here, supervision has been interpreted as a function to help rather than what was traditionally viewed as one for judging and rating (Blasé & Blasé, 1999). Further to that, Blasé and Blasé (1999) also concluded from their study of effective instructional leader that successful principals plans to have adequate feedback fr teachers carefully and gives information and assistance for the teachers' professional growth and development.

Although there are indications of existence of different purpose for evaluating teaching personnel, the ultimate purpose would be to promote professional development and growth of the teachers which in turn improves the student achievement (Gupton, 2003; Bush, Joubert, Kiggundu & Van Rooyen, 2009). This function emphasizes the importance of developing the instructional capacity of teachers within the PIMRS framework (Hallinger et al. 2014; Attinello, Lare, & Waters, 2006; Duke1990; Fullan 2001; Reynold, Muijs, & Treharne, 2003; Showers 1985).

Blasé et al. (2010) claim that the ritualistic nature of the formal evaluation process with its attendant fear, stress and anxiety has obstructed teacher's professional development. The instructional leaders are expected to find ways and means to turn the supervision and evaluation process into a positive learning experience and an opportunity for growth. Gupton (2003) firmly believes that the provincial and district evaluation system mandates can be taken by the professional staff in the school and turn it into useful tools for teaching and learning improvement. A school's professional community can literally transform evaluations from traditionally oriented observation, checklists and ratings that are one way (top-down or bottom-up) to cooperative endeavors where teachers and administrators work as team to help each other learn, grow and improve their performances.

Providing instructional leadership by focusing on best practices in supervision and professional development is the prime responsibility of the principal. In order to contribute to a meaningful supervision and professional development, Glanz (2006)

have mentioned that the principals need to (i) engage in word and deed by emphasizing on teaching improvement and promoting learning, (ii) involve teaches in planing, implementation, assessing and professional development process, (iii) employ experts to be consultants in supervision and profession development, (iv) provide alternative solutions to the traditional practices of professional development and supervision, and (v) draw links between supervision and professional development and supervision with student achievement. The last point brings us to the section which considers the principal's role in monitoring learner progress.

b)   Coordinating curriculum.

There are two main features in the school's educational program which is known as curriculum and co curriculum activities. Effective principals were seen to be involving teachers in the planning and development of these curriculum (Glanz, 2006). This process encourages teachers' commitment which in turn enriches the learners educational experience resulting in student achievement. The principals as instructional leader has to create opportunities to encourage best practices in the area of planning, development and curriculum implementation (Glanz, 2006).

Though instructional leaders are not expected to be experts in the area of curriculum development, Glaz (2006), emphasized that, the importance for them to be familiar with the basic concepts in the area of curriculum development is essentially important. Glanz (2006) further listed a few ways an instructional leader may best facilitate curriculum management such as, (i) principals to review all instructional resources and material in various content (e.g reading and mathematics) and model

the best practice in curriculum, (ii) encourage teachers and other stake holders to review curriculum guidelines and recommend revisions to the instructional program; (iii) integrating local, provincial and national standards to curriculum and instruction; (iv) review assessment procedures; and (v) to help facilitate curriculum revision and development, curriculum specialist are invited from within and outside school.

An effective instructional leader also seen to be planning well a well rounded extra curricular programs for the learners. They also keep the students away from undesirable form of entertainments and at the same time would enable them to develop themselves holistically by engaging students in a meaningful extra curricular activities (Van Deventer & Kruger, 2003)

c) Monitoring student progress

By guiding and assisting teachers to engage in a sound assessment practices, an instructional leader becomes an instrument in improving learner's achievement (Stiggins & Duke, 2008). Effective principals are also seen to be familiar with different assessment methods and techniques at the same time have in place a systematic assessment procedure (Glenz, 2006). In order to inform their leadership practice, relevant assessment data is also collected and reviewed. The findings from this data is used for the school's instructional program improvement plans (Blasé et al., 2010; Glanz 2006).

In order to inform on the real condition of the school and to give direction for school improvement plan, collection of relevant data is extremely important (Zapeda, 2004).

Gupton (2003) also agrees that, instructional leaders need to do researches and use variety of data before making any informed decisions and planning strategies for continuous improvement of the school. Stiggins and Duke (2008) asserts that school leaders must ensure that their assessment systems provide a wide variety of decision-makers in different kinds of information, in different formats, at different times to support or verify student's learning depending on the context.

On the other hand, in order to have an in-depth information on instructional practice in the school, the data collection is not to be done at a superficial level. For instance, an analysis should be clearly defined and should be specific to identify the reason why learners from a particular grade aren't performing well in a particular learning area. The specific aspects of learning area they are not performing and the particular learners who are affected should be identified to maximize efforts for improvement on teaching and learning (Gupton, 2003). According to Gupton (2003), data which is skillfully and carefully collected, analyzed and stored can be a powerful tool for change as it gives information that enable to streamline strategies particularly to meet the specific needs of the learners.

According to Halinger and Wang (2015) tests results should be used to evaluate the changes happening in the school's instructional program and to make classroom assessments instead of using it to diagnose student weakness. The principals play an important role in providing timely and in useful manner the test results to the teachers and discussing the results in useful manner with the staffs as whole using interpretive analyses with the details of relevant test data in concisely to promote improvement (Hallinger & Wang, 2015).

2.4.2.3   Creating a positive school climate

Overlapping with dimensions incorporated in transformational leadership, this dimension has a broader scope and intention in the instructional leadership model (Hallinger, 2003; Leithwood, 2006). It conforms that, through the development of high standards and expectations, a successful school creates an academic press and a culture that fosters and rewards continuous learning and development.

Instructional leaders who are effective in school also develops a culture of continuous improvement in which rewards are aligned with purpose (McDill, Rigsby, & Meyers, 1969; Glasman, 1984; Hallinger & Murphy, 1986; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1986; Barth, 1990; Hallinger et al. 1996; Hallinger & Heck 2010, 2011a, 2011b; Heck & Hallinger 2009, 2010; Heck et al. 1990; Purkey & Smith, 1983; Mortimore, 1993; Walker 2012). The principal also expected to model values and give the support for a continuous improvement of teaching and learning (Hallinger & Murphy 1985; Dwyer 1986; Hallinger 2003; Marks & Printy 2003 Leithwood & Jantzi 2005; Leithwood et al. 2008; Leithwood & Sun 2012).

Gupton (2003) stated that, school climate may be one of the most important ingredients of a successful instructional programme. The school climate can be also seen as the school's personality. Without a climate that creates a harmonious and well-functioning school, a high degree of academic achievement is difficult. The word "climate" and "culture" are often used interchangeably. Notably, the climate of the school is closely associated with the school culture. The longer the school is established, the more the culture could be portrayed and described distinctively.

The climate and culture of the school is mediated with the principal's effect on learning (Hallinger & Heck, 1998). Additionally, if school culture can affect learning and ultimately students' achievement (Watson, 2001; Gupton, 2003), then the school principals are responsible for creating a conducive school climate for effective teaching and learning (MacNeil, Prater, & Busch, 2009). Therefore, it is an essential and fundamental part of instructional leadership

There are several functions included in this dimension of promoting a positive school learning climate. They are (i) protecting instructional time (ii) promoting professional development, (iii) maintaining high visibility, (iv) providing Incentives for teachers and (v) providing incentive for learning (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). The necessity to influence and promote a positive learning climate trough indirect and direct activities is embodied in this dimension by the job descriptor.

a)   *Protecting instructional time*

Time is one of the most important resources of effective instruction. One often hears teachers complain of time constraints which impede effective instruction. It is, therefore, important that the principal, as instructional leader, makes sure that instructional time is protected and properly managed (Glanz, 2006). Blasé et al. (2010) found that principals who do not develop effective systems to organize the school, often find themselves spending a lot of time on repair and maintenance tasks which distracts them from spending quality time in supporting teaching and learning chores in the schools.

Learning time can also be protected if interruptions and disruptions, which compromise teaching and learning, are minimized (Glanz, 2006). Interruptions such as excessive announcements over the intercom, learners sent on errands, drop-in visitors and unplanned assembly talks should be avoided (Glanz, 2006). Very often teachers who have difficulty dealing with disciplinary problems in their classes waste teaching time. This can be avoided if the principal collaboratively devises a school wide policy on discipline and inform the teachers on system of rules and procedures to deal effectively with disciplinary problems in their classes (Glanz, 2006).

Glanz (2006) in a research indicated that too much classroom time is spent on non-teaching related activities. This often occurs when teachers have not planned well for their lessons. The principal also must ensure the direct teaching practice of teachers in the classroom are given enough time. In this regard, providing supervisory workshops on strategies to increase direct teaching and monitoring their practices in classroom is essential (Glanz, 2006). Besides that in context where centralized governance of the education system is practiced, the total time for teacher's instruction and student learning, special dates on calender such as holidays exam schedules, and other compulsory school events are fixed by the higher authority more likely either shortens instructional time or diverts the students attention from the instructional program (McLeod, Fisher & Hoover, 2003).

b)   Providing incentives for teachers

According to Blasé et al. (2010) effective principals work on the philosophy "a happy teacher is a better teacher." They, therefore, do their best to boost the morale

of their staff. They successfully create comprehensive and inclusive cultures of appreciation and recognition by encouraging stakeholders to recognize achievements and contribution of individual and groups (Blase et al., 2010). In addition, written and verbal acknowledgement are given to encourage them for their contributions.

c)   Providing incentives for learning

There is nothing greater motivation for a child than when their learning is is valued by the school community and family (Fullan, 2007). It can be seen then, how important it is that the principal as instructional leader works together with parents and the community to recognize the achievement of a learner and to provide incentives for learning. Learners need a place that is physically, emotionally and intellectually warm. A conducive, inviting atmosphere in the school and the classrooms, a clean, safe and well maintained physical structure which is conducive to teaching and learning will go a long way to meeting these needs (Gupton, 2003).

The principals by setting a high expectation for teachers and learners and by rewarding the achievement, builds their confidence in their ability to achieve and help them to reach the level of expectation. Reward systems, interventions to assist learners in need of support, involvement of parents and other stakeholders in recognizing efforts of learners will bring about positive outcomes. It is important to keep stakeholders informed of what is happening in school and this can be done using different forms of communication. Letters, newsletters, a school newspaper, local newspaper columns, annual student achievement award ceremony and regularly scheduled parent-teacher conferences are some of the channels that can be used. It

can also be used to garner support for the school and to promote opportunities for community based interaction and dialogue about the school and the learners (Gupton, 2003).

d)   Promoting professional development

Recent researches support the contention that to sustain efforts to improve schools and to kindle commitment in sustaining positive learning environments, principals need continuous professional development (Nicholson, Harris-John & Schimmel, 2005). Improved professional development serves a dual purpose. On the one hand it gives principals the confidence to take on their leadership roles, and on the other it develops their competence to be successful and motivated through job satisfaction (Nicholson et al., 2005). Effective instructional leaders are lifelong learners and models of learning (Blasé et al., 2010; DuFour, 2002; Fink & Resnick, 2001; Gupton, 2003).

The principals may provide relevant information and opportunities for the staff development as as the teachers pursuit to improve teaching and learning. A closer priority may also be given for staff development programs that are closely related to the school goals (Clark 1980; Rutter et al. 1979; Showers 1985; Brookover et al.1982; Little 1982; Heck & Hallinger 2009; Hallinger & Heck 1996a, 2010, 2011a, 2011b; 2011; Kruger et al. 2007; Sleegers, Geijsel, & Van den Berg, 2002; Joyce & Showers 2002; McLaughlin & Marsh 1978; Robinson et al. 2008; Louis et al. 2010).

Blasé et al. (2010) indicated that, principals who are high performing were fully aware that they need to update their skills and knowledge base continually in order to facilitate an impact on teaching and learning process at the schools. Therefore, they should consistently engage in self-reflection and constantly compare themselves to every changing professional leadership standards. Their honest attempts to assess themselves with these standards, will enable them to stay tuned and sensitive to the areas needed for professional growth as a leader. Gupton (2003) commented that self reflection and assessment helps to increase skills and heighten a sense of enthusiasm and energy level.

High performing principals participated in Blasé et al. (2010) seem to work hard to be an exemplary educational leaders. They also served as role models for teachers. By engaging in professional development activities effective principals demonstrated that learning is a dynamic and a life long process. Thus, in order to improve their leadership skills and practices, they are open to new ideas and constantly look for measures to improve their leadership skills for a better practice. Leaders with such calibre and thoughts serve as an exemplary models for parents, teachers and learners. Taking this into consideration, it would then be correct to assume that as lifelong learners they would encourage and foster the development of their teachers. In order to maintain their focus and support teachers in their work, principals ongoing growth is seen as essential (Blasé et al., 2010).

Promoting learning in the life of learners is the ultimate aim of school. However, what they learn largely depends on the teachers performance in the classroom. In the research done by Blasé et al. (2010), it was confirmed that substantial difference in

student's achievement that happens depends on the teachers. In that sense therefore the quality of teaching has to be given focus in school reforms (Nicholson et al., 2005). Accordingly Blase et al. (2010), indicated that teachers are expected by high performing principals to design classroom instructions that develop learner's ability which improves learner's achievement.

Effective instructional leaders also found to be providing support and assistance to teachers who are having difficulty in the area of teaching and learning by providing them meaningful, collaborative and ongoing professional development opportunities (Glanz, 2006; Fink & Resnick, 2001). Fink and Resnick (2001) very aptly point out that instructional leaders figure out the developmental needs of their teachers and provide opportunities for professional development.

Its is also proper to note that the principal may not be actually delivering the professional development programs where the development specialists in different subject may do it. However, the culture of learning must be created by the principals by providing the right kind of specialized professional development opportunities that reflects the needs of the teachers. Effective principals also build repertoires of flexible alternatives by encouraging reflection, exploration, inquiry, experimentation and problem solving skill rather than just a rigid teaching methods and procedures (Blasé & Blasé, 2000).

Findings from a study done by Enueme and Eqwunyenga (2008), examining the instructional leadership roles played by principals at Asaba Metropolis city in the Delta state of Nigeria found that a good instructional leaders keep in touch with the

skills needed for teaching and learning. Moreover, an important conclusion reached by the researchers was that teachers job performance positively related to the principals' instructional leadership roles (Enueme & Egwunyenga, 2008; Blasé & Blasé, 2000).

Principals from effective schools seem to indicate that they always encourage teachers to engage in professional learning opportunities such as, taking courses focused on school improvement, enrolling in advanced degree programs that develop the skills in instructional and curriculum development and participating in programs that may help address instructional improvement. They also encourage visiting other schools that have exemplary programs that might help in addressing their school weaknesses. such as, courses focused on school improvement (Blasé et al., 2010).

Blasé and Blasé (2000) illustrated that the three primary elements for successful instructional leadership are (i) conducting instructional conferences (pre or post-observation conferences) in which the principal should exhibit traits such as making suggestions, giving feedback, modeling, using inquiry and soliciting opinions from teachers and learners; (ii) providing staff development. The study of teaching and learning, development of mentoring and coaching relationship, supporting collaboration, the use of action research, application of adult learning principles and providing resources and application (iii) developing teacher reflection. The teacher's should be purposefully engage teachers to articulate feelings, share attitudes and trained to think deeply about instructional issues by the principals.

The Wallace Foundation commissioned a study in an attempt to develop knowledge on professional development to determine if exemplary program graduates are more instructional leaders that graduates from other programs. The results also indicated that leading the teachers and improving instruction in the classroom were strongly focused by the principals who graduated from the eight exemplary program (LaPointe & Davis, 2006).

An interesting observation made was that principals on these programs indicated that they were less engaging in activities related to school facility management, security building, attending district meetings and enforcing school rules LaPointe and Davis (2006) in their paper stated that the focus given on professional development of teaching and learning appear to produce strong instructional leaders.

e)   *Maintaining high visibility*

The scope of responsibilities of the principals and the school leadership team in respect to leading in learning is described in this dimension of instructional leadership. On the other hand, in a broader context it is also helps in place these responsibilities of how leadership achieves its effects in schools (Hallinger & Chen, 2015). It also serves as an indicator showing principals priority for the students and teachers. Even though principals may seem busy and their time seem to be not in their control, according to Hallinger & Murphy (2012) principals can set priorities on their time spent in the school. High visibility also known too increase better interaction between teachers and principal and also between students and principals. It was identified that this form of interactions increases positive effects on classroom

instruction and student's behaviour in the school (Barth, 1990; Hallinger & Murphy 2012; Clark 1980; Marks & Printy 2003; Leithwood et al. 2008; Leithwood & Jantzi 2005; Leithwood & Sun 2012; Walker 2012; Wynne 1980).

In a study done by Blasé et al. (2010) the recognition of student accomplishment and parents supportive roles are important symbolic responsibilities of principals beside their visibility at school related events. Effective principals tend to adopt an open-door policy, one in which teachers, parents, students and staff are comfortable with approaching the principals in schools, or in their offices without always having to have an appointment or feeling apologetic about the interruption. Many principals felt that this type of policy was a form of visibility and provided opportunities to attend to teachers' concerns (Blasé et al., 2010; Gupton, 2003).

Blasé et al. (2010) also found that "walk-through" by the principal to provide non-evaluative, constructive feedback to individual teachers were more effective than class visits done for evaluative purposes. It also provides principals with valuable information about teaching and learning that they believed could not be obtained in other ways (Gupton, 2003). However, Blasé et al. (2010) also found that finding time to conduct these 'walk-through' posed a serious challenge even for the most experienced principals.

It is important, however, that the principal actively participate in the social life of the school community. In larger schools where direct contact, though preferred, would be a challenge. Principals could maintain a presence, or a form of visibility via multiple forms of communication (Gupton, 2003). Surveys, telephone calls, personal

visits, letters and e-mail notes are all appropriate and additional ways to communicate, depending on the purpose and the situation. Being sensitive to the context and the purpose is essential to effective communication.

2.4.2.4   Limitation in this model

As much as the influence of the instructional leadership roles of principal is acknowledged in this model, its undeniable to note that these are not just the only role of the principals (Cuban, 1998). School principals plays instructional, managerial, political, symbolic leadership role as well as human resources roles in their schools (Bolman & Deal, 1992; Cuban, 1988). On the other hand, critics also asserts that limiting or focusing only on improving student performance will make the principal dysfunctional and make the leadership role narrow (Barth, 1986; Cuban, 1998).

Therefore, instructional leaders must adjust their roles to the needs, constrains and opportunities found in the school context. For instance, principals from small schools may spend substantial time working in the classroom on instruction and curriculum (Hallinger & Murphy, 1986). However, such direct classroom involvement may not be feasible and unrealistic in larger school context, be it primary or secondary school.

On the other hand, it has been also found that the social economics status (SES) and context of a school also has an effect on the principal's instructional leadership practices (Andrews & Soder, 1987; Scott & Teddlie, 1987). In a comparative study done among school serving student population from high vs. low SES, the researcher

found that the form of leadership was adjusted to the needs of the school though they were instructional leaders. A clear measurable goal focused on the academic achievement of the student were the focus of principals from the low SES schools. This aspiration is well supported throughout the school and the community at large. On the other hand, effective principals from high SES schools is seen to be giving a clear academic mission which is well informed by the teacher and the school community which includes the students and parents. These mission is expressed too broadly which challenges the school to have a measurable goals (Hallinger & Murphy, 1986).

2.4.3 Murphy's Comprehensive Instructional Leadership Framework (1990)

Murphy comprehensive instructional leadership framework (1990) derived from a comprehensive literature review on instructional leadership. He noted that principals from the schools that are highly effective with a strong quality of teaching and learning have directly or indirectly demonstrated elements of instructional leadership. Using this review, a comprehensive and systematic instructional leadership framework was provided by him. However, since this framework is not empirically tested it was not adopted in researches (Hallinger & Heck, 1996). There are four instructional leadership dimensions which was broken into sixteen different behaviors and roles make up the dimensions. Namely. (i) developing school mission and goals, (ii) coordinating, monitoring and evaluating curriculum, instruction and assessment, (iii) promoting a climate for learning, and (iv) creating a supportive working environment (Murphy, 1990). Figure 2.2 describes this model.

Remaining the other dimensions in Hallinger and Murphy Model (1985), this model has an addition of one sub dimension in the promoting school climate which is, establishing positive expectation and standard. On the other hand, under the fourth dimensions, creating a supportive working environment Murphy (1990) has describe six job descriptions of an instructional leader. They are, (i) creating a safe and orderly learning environment; (ii) providing opportunities for meaningful student involvement; (iii) developing staff collaboration; (iv) securing outside resources to achieve school goals; (v) forging link between home and the school; and (vi) developing supportive work environment. All this job descriptions are related to the teaching and learning process.
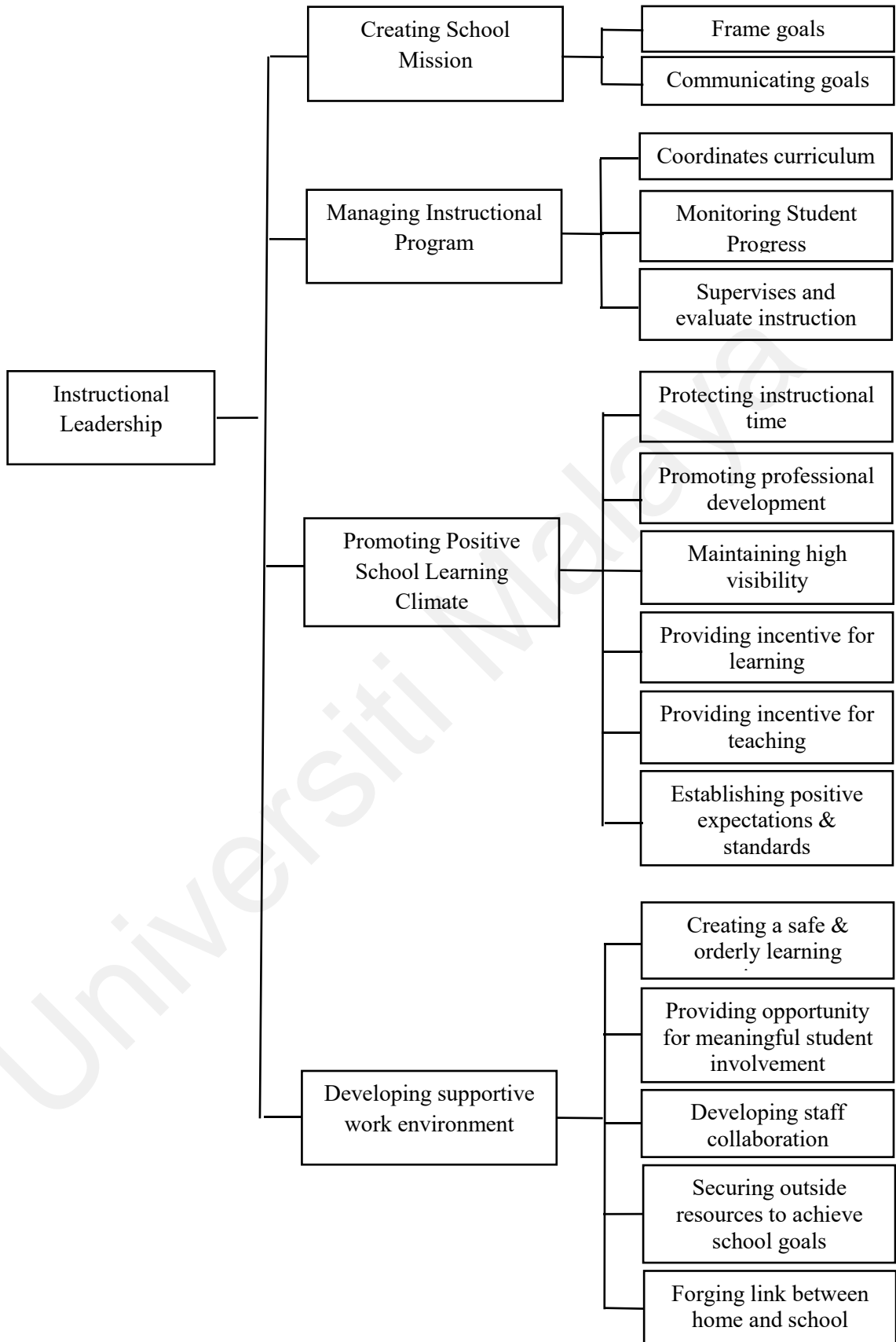
Figure 2.2 Murphy's Comprehensive Instructional Leadership Framework (1990)

Peer collaboration among teachers is identified to build healthy relationship through caring, trust and communication. This in turn helps teachers to structure, facilitate and organize learning experiences effectively. Besides that, it also helps fostering sharing of teaching techniques and materials which in turn improves teachers classroom management (Blasé & Blasé, 2000; Fink & Resnick, 2001; Gupton, 2003). Not surprisingly then, Blasé et al. (2000) found that high performing principals also encouraged teachers to routinely help their colleagues improve teaching and learning.

2.4.4   Weber's Instructional Leadership Model (1996)

The Weber's Instructional Leadership Model (1996) incorporates research and findings about shared leadership and the empowerment of informal leaders. In this regard Weber (1996) claims that effective instructional leadership would depend to a large extent on two important factors, that is, the flexibility a principal exhibit in sharing leadership duties and the clarity with which a principal matches leadership duties with individuals who can perform them collaboratively. As mentioned by Hoy and Miskel (1991), it is an important role of a principal to build strong team of teacher leaders in the school. When the teacher leadership opportunities are supported by the principals, leadership among teachers are promoted. This helps the people in the school who are working with common goal and yield positive results. In this regards, instructional leadership becomes a corporate responsibility that empowers others as suggested by Hart and Bredeson (1996).

There were five essential domains of instructional leadership identified by Weber (1996). The five domains were (i) defining the school mission, (ii) managing the curriculum and instruction, (iii) promoting a positive learning climate, (iv) observing and improving instruction, and; (v) assessing the instructional program. The domain on assessing instructional program which was the fifth domain of this model was given emphasis and seen as essential for the improvement of instructional program in schools (Weber, 1996). According to this model, the instructional leader plays an important role in initiating and contributing to the planning, designing, administrating and analyzing the effectiveness of curriculum. Through constant revision and refinement, the teachers with continuous scrutiny of instructional leadership program were able to meet the needs of the students. In general, to create a school that emphasizes student achievement, Weber's model (1996) incorporates shared leadership and empowerment of informal leaders (Weber, 1996).

As much as the model is very captivating, this model just like Murphy's (1990) model has not been empirically tested. Therefore, it is not clear and certain if a principal demonstrates behaviours indicated in Weber's model succeed high level of student achievement. In Malaysian context where centralized educational governing is practiced the syllabuses are developed, assessed and distributed to the local schools. Thus, the school leaders may not have direct relationship in the process of instructional programs. However, some leaders because of their area of speciality may be part of the assessment. In that sense, this model is not directly relevant to access instructional leadership practice in local context. As such, it will not be employed in this study.

2.4.5 Alig-Mielcaric's Simplified Model of Instructional Leadership Model (2003)

Alig-Mielcaric (2003) found three distinct similarities that emerged from a study of the three models discussed (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Murphy, 1990; Weber, 1996). All the three models indicating the importance of instructional leadership and emphasizing on communicating goal and vision, monitoring and supervision on the process of teaching and learning, and promoting the importance of professional development. Having found the similarities in these 3 models, Alig-Mielcaric (2003) then used these three common dimensions to come up with his own framework of instructional leadership which he tested empirically. Figure 2.3 describes the elements in this model.

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```
Instructional
Leadership
    ├── Defines and
    │   Communicates Shared
    │   Goals
    │       └── The leader works in
    │           collaboration with the
    │           staffs to define
    │           communicate and use
    │           shared goals.
    │           Organizational decision,
    │           instructional practice
    │           alignment, curriculum
    │           materials purchasing and
    │           progress targets settings
    │           are based on the goals. It
    │           focus on staffs in general
    │           and sets a common
    │           mission to achieve.
    │
    ├── Monitors and provides
    │   Feedback on the
    │   teaching and learning
    │   process
    │       └── Activities around the
    │           academic curriculum of
    │           the instructional leader is
    │           described in this
    │           dimension. Being visible
    │           around the school, talking
    │           with teachers and
    │           students, giving praises
    │           and feedback to school
    │           community on academic
    │           performance and ensuring
    │           instructional time is not
    │           interrupted are the
    │           activities involved in this
    │           dimension.
    │
    └── Promotes school wide
        professional
        development
            └── Behaviors consistent with
                life long learning is
                encompassed in this
                dimension. Teachers are
                encouraged to learn by the
                instructional leaders. They
                are also provide
                opportunities for
                professional development
                that are aligned to school
                goals being a resource
                person.
```

Figure 2.3 Alig-Mielcaric's Simplified Model of Instructional Leadership (2003)

2.6   Summary of the chapter

The review of literature in general summary shows that, in order to give direction and expertise to the subordinates and bring the school forwards to success, the school principals should be an instructional leaders and an educational visionaries. Much of the available literature on leadership and leadership practice, particularly in developing countries, is often inaccessible simply because of the issue of language (Harris & Jones, 2015). Within Asia, for example, the evidence base about leadership and leadership practices, including instructional leadership, remains patchy and, with the exception of certain countries, remains under-developed (Harris & Jones, 2015; Hallinger & Chen, 2015; Walker et al, 2015; Hallinger, 2011a; Kwan & Walker, 2008). Therefore, the empirical evidence from some contexts and settings are still in short supply while the knowledge base of instructional leadership continue to flourish and grow.

In order to strengthen the research base on instructional leadership in the context of East Asia, further research and studies are urgently needed (Jamelaa & Jainabee, 2011; Hallinger & Bryant, 2013) since poor quality of evidence and knowledge base in local literature also evident. Besides that, most of the models on instructional leadership have also been formulated in the western world. Thereby, successful models keeping in consideration of the leadership of school principals in Asian context is not in existence (Sharma, 2012). In this study therefore, a model of instructional leadership will be formulated by exploring effective principals and their instructional leadership practices in Malaysian context.

In this chapter, the definition of instructional leadership has been outlined and the research done on the topic and its effects on learners' achievement, was reviewed. A few existing instructional leadership models which are common were discussed briefly and the theoretical framework used in the resent study was discussed. In the next chapter, the research methodology which comprises the research procedures, design, the details of sample population, the research instrument used, the data analysis procedures and the process of validity, reliability and triangulation process will be discussed.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1   Introduction

This chapter focuses on the research paradigm, research design which comprises of the data collection method, research procedures, sample population, the research instrument used, the data analysis procedures and the process of validity, reliability and triangulation process will be discussed. The aim of this research was to: 1) explore the principals' conceptual understanding of instructional leadership in Petaling Perdana District; 2) to explore how primary school principals' view their roles as instructional leaders; 3) to explore teachers' general perceptions of principals as instructional leaders.

3.2   Research paradigm

In order to gain a better insight into the respondents' realities and experiences of Instructional Leadership in the context of schools at Petaling Perdana District, this study was done within the interpretive research paradigm. This paradigm is grounded in the belief that the construction of knowledge is not just by phenomena that are observed but also through description of the intentions of people, values and reasons, beliefs and self-understanding (Henning, Rensburg & Smit, 2004). According to Connole (1998). The interpretive perspective places primary emphasis on the process of understanding the context. Therefore, this paradigm was used with a concern of understanding individuals from their subjective experiences. Interpretivist usually avoid rigid structural framework unlike positivist research. They adopt more personal and flexible research structures (Carson et al., 2001) in order to capture meanings in

human interactions by being receptive (Black, 2006), making sense of what is perceived as reality (Carson, Gilmore & Gronhaug, 2001).

Having thought about the ontological positions, the researcher also considered the epistemology of this research. The epistemology is about getting as close as possible to the participants being studied to gather the knowledge and justify the subject being researched (Creswell, 2013). Moreover, the two main distinctions, positivism and interpretivism in the epistemology of research are also carefully done. Positivism gives no room for subjective opinions of the researcher as it deals with measurable relations and verifiable observations and deals with more specific perspectives. Therefore, there will not be and speculation and conjecture (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jaxkson, 2012). On the other hand, the interpretive approach suggest that facts are based on perception rather than objective truth. Thus, it rejects absolute truths and the conclusions are derived from interpretation of the participants instead of the abstract theories of the scientist or researcher (Easterby-Smith, et al., 2012). In order to understand the meanings, values and context of the subject, the researcher developed some specialist knowledge in the area of research.

Since there are no single reality or truth on Instructional leadership practices of primary school leaders, through a qualitative interview and observation a critical inquiry was done to identify the reality of the context. From these understandings, the researcher identified the emerging patterns and meaning from the data as suggested by Connole (1998). This approach tied well with the focus of the research, as its purpose was to gain a deeper understanding regarding the perceptions of a particular group of principals and teachers on principal's instructional leadership

practice. More specifically, this research focused on the understandings of individual principals' perception of their professional roles and practices as instructional leaders from their unique context and background being in their daily working environment. and teachers' general perceptions of the principals as instructional leaders.

A generic qualitative approach was employed in this research. This approach does not have a guiding set of philosophic assumption as described by Caelli et al (2003) to understand, seek and discover a phenomenon, perspectives, process and worldviews of the people. This type of data is suitable for this study to understand people in their own context to define their world (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). This would further serve as the distinguished characteristic of this qualitative research.

In the research, the exact words of participants were used to describe the understanding of their instructional leadership practice and the challenges they faced in the field. This approach would be helpful for the researcher to fulfil the aim of the study as it is concerned with interpreting and understanding the research problem from participant's perspectives. A qualitative approach would facilitate to gain insight on the research problem. Therefore, an in depth study was conducted in this research to obtain useful information with the researcher as the main research instrument. This implies that researchers would be able to collect data themselves and adapt to circumstances to obtain rich information (Creswell, 2009).

3.3   Research Design

Research design is the plan for conducting the study. According to Creswell (2013), there is no one agreed structure on how to design a qualitative study. Some authors believe that by reading a study, pointing out the emerging issues, and discussing the procedures, a qualitative researcher would gather sense on how to conduct the study (Weis & Fine, 2000). However, this may not be true always as understanding broader issues is essential and could be helpful in designing a study (Morse, Barret & Mayan, 2002). Cresswell (2013), shared three components, (i) preliminary considerations prior to beginning a study; (ii) steps engaged during the study and; (iii) the elements that flow through all phases of the process of the study involve in designing a qualitative study. The researcher gave consideration to the above three aspects pointed out by Creswell while planning for the study. This study was confined to Petaling Perdana District being one of the largest district in Selangor. The interviews session was also held with minimal interruption and quiet place at schools while the observation of principals was also held at their respective schools. The sessions were also held at the convenience of the principals and the teachers for focus group session.

According to Creswell (2013), qualitative researches which usually based on interviews and observation usually involves studies of individuals with the ultimate goal to identify the internal behavioral and psychological characteristics. It also directs at renunciation of the mental structure and experiences of individuals being in a specific cultural and social settings (Creswell, 2013). Therefore, to gain a finer

insight into the participant's realities and experiences of instructional leadership, a qualitative approach was employed in this research.

Qualitative research method descriptions are likely to benefit from a clearly stated ontological and epistemological position. Stating the epistemological and ontological position shows where one stands as a researcher and it is essential for some authors while for others is not necessary (Cresswell, 2013). This research began by identifying and dealing with the ontological position which which refers to the fundamental nature of existence (Dilts & DeLozier, 2000; Creswell, 2013). Therefore, as mentioned by Dilts and DeLozier (2000) there is no right or wrong answer as different people view topics differently depending on their role, values set or background. The arguments are built on belief system and guiding principles which decides the events to be noticed and ignored and the evidence to be collected and what need to be set aside.

To crystallize education policies and education practices, majority of educational researchers have accepted the case study method as a prime strategy (Creswell, 2013; Bassey, 1999). Qualitative data could be much more than just words which can be derived from interviews or text from documents. Photographs, videos, sound recordings and so on, can be considered as qualitative data (Creswell, 2013). Qualitative researchers are often interested in identifying particular features of consciousness, culture and behaviour. Thus, in this research, it would be appropriate to use qualitative research method particularly case study method to answer the research questions and achieve the research objectives. These methods would enable

us to generate propositions about how instructional leadership is practiced within a Malaysian context.

In order to understand the complex school social phenomena in Petaling Perdana District where SK, SJKC and SJKT schools are found led by principals from various age group, education background and experience leading a qualitative approach was seem appropriate and employed in this research. It was decided that the best method to determine the principals' understanding of their roles as instructional leaders would be by interviewing them, which requires a qualitative approach. To determine the principals' understandings of their core duties and to find out what challenges they face required an active involvement of the researcher with the principals at the school. Though it was a complex task these aspects of research design is unavoidable for a decent understanding of the subject and good interpretation to gather information on the primary school leaders conceptual understanding and practices in Petaling Perdana District, Selangor.

Stake and Savolainen (1995) pointed out that the objective of a case study is to develop an understanding of a subject pertaining particular person or group in a particular context. The identification of a specific case is the beginning of a case study. It can be a concrete entity such as a person, (individual), a small group, a partnership or an organization (Creswell, 2013). Usually a case study focus on individual perceptions (Yin, 2013). On the other hand, it is undeniable to note that a case study phenomenon is confined to a specific space and time (Hayes, 2006). Thus, in this research to examine the conceptual understanding of principal's instructional leadership practice in the Petaling Perdana District, a case study method seemed to

be appropriate. In the end, the researcher would be concluding with the overall meaning derived from the case.

A case study is used when there is a lack of theory in a particular subject or a particular theory does not explain a phenomenon adequately as explained by Merriam (2002). There is much to discover about the instructional leadership practice in the Malaysian context. Hayes (2006) mentioned that the practical purpose of a case study helps to identify key research questions for future constructions of survey questionnaires. Findings from this research will also allow better questions to be asked by modifying the semi structured questionnaires when similar studies conducted in different contexts or settings. This would be potentially helpful to compare and analyze more case studies in the future

In regards to search context and setting, a case study may be conducted in different environment such as in a classroom, a school, university or any sites suited the study (Creswell, 2013). For this case study, this was done among principals. Multiple approaches such as collective discussion, direct observation, and photographing were employed to observe and evaluate in order to have an understandable and meaningful conclusion.

The researcher also embarked the case study method as it seemed fitting in terms of criteria and application to provide potential contribution of empirical knowledge to the subject. The raw data was translated into evidence with a continuous process of interrogation and interpretation of the data collected with the assistance of recording tools, photos, medias and other forms of electronics and non electronic sources.

To prevent the tendency for the researcher attempting to answer questions that were too broad or topics that diverted from the objectives of the study, Yin (2003) and Stake and Savolainen (1995) suggested in placing boundaries in a case study. Suggestions like; (i) by time and place (Creswell, 2009); (ii) time and activity (Stake & Savolainen, 1995); and (iii) by definition and context (Miles & Huberman, 1994) were provided to bind a case. Binding the case ensured the scope of the study remained intact and focused.

As highlighted by Yin (2003), consideration should be given to the case study design when (i) the study is focused to a "how" and "why" questions; (ii) manipulation to the behaviour of those involved in the study cannot be done; (iii) contextual conditions are to be covered because they are phenomenon to the study; or (iv) when there are no clear boundaries between the phenomenon and context. The setting in this research was also in accordance to the matters highlighted by Yin (2003) thus, the case study method was engaged in this research. On the other hand, since the researcher was not testing relationships, and since it is not experimental, an in-depth qualitative study using case study research approaches was employed to get a deeper understanding of the subject. A case study aims to generalize across a larger set of units and highly relied on the conversational evidence which was not utilized in a non-case study research as mentioned by Gerring (2004).

3.3.1 Data Collection

Observation, interviews, artifacts, documents and other supplementary techniques are be some combination of data collection methods and strategies may be used to study participants perspectives by a qualitative researchers (Creswell, 2013; McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). The research strategies are flexible, and many different combinations of strategies may be used to obtain valid data (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). Mertens (1998) asserts that researchers using the interpretive paradigm most often used data collection methods such as interviews, observations and document reviews. These three main data collection methods were used for the purpose of this study. Semi structured interviews were selected as main method to collect data among the principals and the focus group which comprises of a group of teachers from four school.

To uncover the fundamental perspectives, beliefs, and behaviours' underlying the practice of instructional leadership, the Hallinger & Murphy's (1985) Instructional Leadership Model is sought in this study. In the first stage of this study, a qualitative approach in which semi-structured interviews with 24 primary school principals was conducted to investigate the extent these principals practiced instructional leadership in their respective schools. In the second stage of this study, a focus group session with five to six teachers from four school who have shown significant academic achievement and turnaround were conducted. These groups of teachers were assistant principals and head of subject areas. Focused group sessions were conducted to triangulate the findings of this research.

3.3.1.1 Interview

Interview is a communication event aimed towards finding the participants thinking, knowledge and feelings of a particular subject of the research interest (Henning wt al., 2004). Therefore interviews need to be concise and clearly conducted with specific aim to find out what the participants think, feel and has to say about the research topic in hand. According to Henning et al. (2004), to enhance the researcher to have a better grasp of the interview, the participants can also at all times refute information gathered from other research methods such as observation, document analysis and literature reviews

In qualitative research, there are three common types of interviews. They are structured interviews, semi-structured interviews with a schedule standardized open-ended interviews and unstructured interviews (Creswell, 2013; McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). In a structured interviews, verbally administered questionnaire with pre-determined questions are asked. It comes with minimal or at times without any variations with no scope of followup questions to further elaboration. Such interviews are quickly administered and its easy. It is particularly useful when there is likely a literacy or numeracy problem with the respondents. McMillan and Schumacher (2006) pointed out that, by the very nature of the structured interview, it is of little use if depth is required in the study as it only allows for limited participant responses.

Unstructured interviews conversely do not reflect any preconceived theories or ideas and it is carried out with minimal organization or at times unorganized. For instance,

the interview may just start with questions such as "can you tell me about your experience of being a principal?' and further progress based primarily upon the initial responses. Usually these questions evolve from the natural flow of the conversation. Unstructured interviews usually are time consuming (often lasting for hours) and can be challenging to manage. The absence of predetermined interview questions gives little guidance on the matters to talk about (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). This may lead to confusion and would be sometimes unhelpful for participants. Generally, such interviews are useful when virtually nothing is known about the subject of research or an antithetical perspective of a known subject area is perceived (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006).

Semi structured interviews on the other hand consist of several specific key questions that will assist researcher define the area they are exploring. However, it has also the tendency to diverge the interviewer or interviewee in the process of pursuing for ideas and responses in more detail (Britten, 1999; Dawson, 2013). In a semi structured interview, a schedule with a set of questions relevant to the research is used as a guideline. Though the questions sometimes are not asked in a particular sequence, all relevant topics and areas are covered during the interview (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). Compared to the structured interview, the flexibility in this approach allowed for wider discovery and elaboration of information that is important for both the participants and researcher.

Semi-structured interviewers with a schedule were advantageous in that they allowed the interviewer to be flexible and to explore different avenues that may emerge from the participant's perceptions. They do not constrict the interviewer to a particular set

of questions. In that sense, the interviewer may amend questions to get the underlying meaning of what is being said (Lichtman, 2010).

If the interviewer's presence may give a bias responses, the semi structured interviews can be disadvantageous (Creswell, 2008). If sensitive questions are asked, the participants may respond selectively on what they think the interviewer wants from them. The lack of anonymity will be there then as the participants can see the interviewers motives which can influence the participants responses. In order to avoid this, the researcher examined and carefully scrutinize his own familiarity with the topic and its source for a possible bias as Creswell (2008) pointed. As much as possible, the researcher interpreted data and made conclusions from a researcher's stance. The aim was to benefit from inside knowledge and to minimize biasesness

To give the principals the opportunity to express their view on the role in the school and that of others in enacting instructional leadership, a semi structured questions were used in this research study. Interview method assist to establish and understand the principals individual view of their role at their work and work place, this method has been helpful as also suggested by Rubin (2005), Silverman (2005) and Denzin (2001). In relation to the principals' current position and leadership styles, their personal and prior professional experiences were also explored. Besides that, questions were also asked to generate preliminary propositions concerning their instructional leadership practice enacted in their specific organization and on socio-cultural context. A more in-depth description was attempted by the interviewer as suggested by (Belchetz & Leithwood, 2007; Bajunid, 1996; Hallinger & Murphy, 1986; Dwyer et al., 1983).

3.3.1.2 Focus Group

A focus group is a qualitative research technique commonly used within a targeted research setting for an advance research project (Dawson, 2013). It is a technique used involving a group interview in which purposive participants are selected from a specific population focused on a given topic (Rabiee, 2004). The group dynamics is a distinct features of focus group interview in which richer and deeper data are gathered tough social interaction within the group. It also provide information a range of ideas and feelings on particular issues.

According Dawson (2013), focus group method is used for a various reason in a research such as, (a) when researcher is undertaking an action research project and use focus group at the planning or diagnostic stage to find what people think about being part of the project, during the halfway to understand the group dynamics and influence of social interaction and at the final stage during the process of evaluation; (b) when the researcher gathered some interesting themes emerging from individuals during the semi structured interview session while doing a study on a grounded theory; and (c) in an attempt to gain a deeper understanding of data gathered from close ended questionnaires that has been sent to a sample population of the research study. In this study, since the researcher gathered interesting themes emerging from individual principals during the semi structured interview, the focus group interview session was seem appropriate and employed.

The participants for the focus group was selected on the criteria that that (a) they will have something to contribute to the research topic, (b) have similar social-

characteristics and (c) respondents who would be comfortable talking to the interviewer during the session as suggested by Richardson & Rabiee (2001). This approach of selection in which the subject are selected considering the knowledge of the study area is also related to the concept of 'Applicability' (Burrows & Kendall, 1997).

Answering to the question about the number of focus group needed for a simple research question, several authors suggested there may only be three or four focus group is necessary (Krueger, 1994; Burrows & Kendall, 1997). Krueger (1994) suggest that subsequent focus groups may only produce repetitious information which is also known as theoretical saturation. On the other hand, as smaller group shows greater potential, Krueger & Casey (2000) suggest that the optimum number of participants in a focus group is between six to eight people. Since this is a manageable number and large enough to gain variety of perspective and small enough not to become fragmented and disorderly, to support the findings and for the purpose of triangulation which deemed important, in this research four focus group with 5-6 participants in each group was employed to gather data.

At all schools, the assistant principals who were also part of the management team and teachers who were responsible for the curriculum having best knowledge of the principal were the respondents of the focus group. The principals were aware of the focus group session however, the assistant principals selected the teachers as he/she may have a better knowledge of the teachers in the school to comment on the leadership practice of the principal. This is also to avoid any prejudices in answering the interview questions.

3.3.1.3   Observation

Observations are yet another form of qualitative data gathering that could provide unexpected and useful information witnessed at the research sites. For that purpose, field notes were jotted down to capture as many aspects of a scenario, such as non-verbal gestures and expressions that could add value to the qualitative evidence.

Since this study was conducted in school premises, permission was obtained from the State Education Department, District Education Department and the school principals for the researcher to attend and bear witness to multiple observational settings. It enabled the researcher to get a holistic knowledge of what was happening in the school under the leadership of the principal. It also gave the observer a first-hand experience, knowledge and expertise in interpreting what was observed (Merriam, 1998).

The strength of a qualitative research is using loaded descriptions and explanations of the processes in naturalistic environments (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Observation reporting creates the opportunity to build social interactions with research subjects and gather rich, detailed data within authentic natural settings. Moreover, information obtained through casual conversations at the research sites, also provided important contextual data, which gave a different perceptive from that of a formal interview.

The researcher ensured the principals were observed in a non-obstructive manner as they interacted with teachers, staffs, parents and students (Lofland, 2006; Dwyer et al., 1983). The principals were observed for a day in order to develop a picture of their instructional leadership practice. This amounted to an average of three to five hours of observation in each shadowing day. Descriptive field notes were kept of their activities.

Clarification on the principals' action when the intent was not clear, a reflection of their decisions and activities was ensured in order to place them in the overall scheme or plan (Lofland, 2006; Denzin, 2001; Dwyer et al., 1983). Besides the interviews and observation, the researcher also spent enough time in each school to observe classes, recesses and surroundings especially in relation to the principals' instructional leadership practices.

3.4   Research Ethics

Researchers are solely responsible for the integrity of the research processes (Mouton, 2001; O' Leary, 2004). The issue of ethics which is the foundation for all researchers was not be compromised in this research. According to Janse van Rensburg (2001), research ethics are the moral dimensions of a research and highly needed to be observed when decisions are made on what is right and wrong while engaging in a research. To this effect, this research was carried out carefully within an ethical frame in respect for person, knowledge, democratic values and respect for the quality of educational research. The crucial need to get the well informed consent from the research participants by ensuring their understanding of what the research entails is

all that the research ethics detail (Creswell, 2013; McMillan & Schumacher, 2006; O'Leary, 2004; Mouton, 2001).

It is the ethical responsibility of the researcher pertaining to the case study to be cautious not to put the research participants or the organization or communities under any jeopardy, humiliation or any form of public scrutiny at any stage of the research. Most importantly, the researcher ascertained there were no betrayals of trust and ensured that opportunities to do research in the same organization in future by other researchers including the researcher himself will not be obstructed. Prior consent was obtained from the participants before commencing the interview on the taking of photography, using of audio and video recordings. Consent was given by all participants for photography around the school and audio recordings.

Another ethical priority is ensuring the confidentiality of the participants (Creswell, 2013; McMillan & Schumacher, 2006; O'Leary, 2004; Mouton, 2001). In line with research ethics, there were no deceptions on the researchers' part. Furthermore, confidentiality was also promised to all participants. All names were represented by identifier numbers (e.g Respondent #1, Respondent #2) and schools were labelled with pseudonyms (SB, HC, BK, BD) for identification purposes and as an effort to protect the anonymity of the respondents.

Considering the series of procedures and protocol involved in accessing Malaysian public schools to conduct research, official approval was acquired from Educational Planning and Research Division (EPRD) and further clearance from relevant State Education Department (JPN) and District Education Department office before the

research was carried out (Letters attached in Appendix C). There were a sequence of tasks and procedures that were adhered to prior to commencing field work and data collection. Prior to the data collection, firstly, the list of school to be visited for research purposes was endorsed by EPRD. For the purpose of this study, a research proposal, the list of schools under study and the purpose of the school visit was submitted to EPRD through an online application. Upon receiving the EPRD letter of approval, separate applications were made to respective State Education Departments (JPN) and District Education office to notify them of the schools to be visited and to obtain their official endorsement before commencing the school visits.

In order to protect participants identity, O'Leary (2004) caution the researchers to outline the conditions such as the security of the storage of data, restriction of the raw data access, permission requirements for the subsequent use of the data, eventual destruction of the raw data and publication of research findings in a manner that does not allow a ready identification of subjects. During the interview, a consent form with confidentiality clause with the details of the above was signed by the participants (refer to Appendix D). The ultimate purpose of the consent form is to provide participants information describing the aims of the research and the nature of their involvement as participants in a plain language. Respondent rights were also clearly informed to the participants. Ensuring and observing the welfare of the participants and to respect the personal privacy and dignity of the individual was a priority of the researcher.

School visits on the other hand were carried out on mutually agreed dates with the principals. The purpose and scope of this research was read out and the reasons for

selecting the sample schools were also explained to the research participants. Moreover, from an ethical standpoint, Dawson (2013) also confirmed that research subjects should be free from any coercive influence during the period of data collection. As such, research objective of this study was reminded to the participants and since their participation is voluntary, assurance was given that they may withdraw anytime from the study. No personal information was revealed at any point to anyone in order to ensure confidentiality. All information obtained was kept safe during the duration of the study and was accessible to the participants upon request.

The researcher was a participant observer throughout the data collection process (especially when observation is concerned) in the schools. As highlighted by Konecki (2008), there are usually some difficulties when researcher is a participant observer because normally they will be regarded as stranger in the context. Thus, Dawson (2002) asserted the importance of establishing rapport in the context, while Hayes (2006) pointed out the importance to know precisely the boundaries between the researcher and the respondents. Therefore, a rapport was built with the respondents by having informal interactions. The respondents were informed on how their opinions would be published however with the anonymity and the confidentiality of personal information.

3.5   Sample Population

A sample population is referred to the group of individual participating in the research. Participants were selected from a larger population in a particular environment. In this research, an opportunistic sample of 24 principals from a wider population of principals in one district was selected. It is an important feature of qualitative research to have a flexible sampling design particularly when the research conducted is exploratory in nature (Creswell, 2013). It is undeniable however, that it can be difficult to make prior decision on participants when little is known about the phenomenon or setting. In such circumstances, research designs which is flexible enough to foster reflection, optimistic sampling and preliminary analysis should be created as suggested by Creswell (2013).

The It is when sapling decisions are made during the process of data collection, opportunistic sampling happens. Commonly it occurs when research field takes new lead taking advantage of the unexpected (Creswell, 2013). This technique is also used when an open period of recruitment of participants continues until an appropriate manner of events, subjects or institutions are enrolled. The ultimate goal is to gather an equal number of respondents with specified variations to explore and describe the conditions and meanings occurring within the study (Johnson & Christensen, 2004).   Johnson and Christensen (2004) also mentioned that the researcher capitalizes on opportunities to select cases during the data collection stage. These cases in opportunistic sampling could represent typical, negative, critical or extreme sample as advantages are taken of developing events when the study begins.

It is also highlighted by various researchers that principal leadership practices are framed within an organizational context (e.g., Hallinger & Heck, 2011b; Hallinger & Murphy 1986; Belchetz & Leithwood 2007; Goldring et al., 2012; Teddlie et al. 2000; Wiley 2001). Thus, it is essential to note in this research that principal leadership are influenced by organizational features like the located district and complexity, social-economic status of the community and social-cultural features of the education environment. It is therefore an obvious truth that leaders do not operate in a vacuum and their functions are shaped by the context in which they work (Hallinger, 2011a & 2011b).

Therefore, in this research, the researcher identified the importance of comparing principals' that were within the same jurisdiction of a particular district. Selection of the 24 principals was guided by issues of access and issues of availability. Specific considerations such as school type and race of the principal was considered in order that there will be a congruent selection in a diversified culture and varied type of schools are there in Malaysia i.e National School (Sekolah Kebangsaan - SK); National Type Chinese School (Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan Cina - SJKC) and National Type Tamil School (Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan Tamil - SJKT) although the opportunistic sampling method was used. Primary school principals were selected because in the instructional leadership literatures, the effects of principal instructional leadership are more substantial at this level of schooling (e.g., Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Louis et al.,2010; Leithwood et al., 2006; Robinson et al., 2008).

These 24 principals were selected according to several criteria. Firstly, since Malaysia is a multi-racial country where each race has its own identity within the

society, a cross-section of national school, national type Chinese and national type Tamil school head teachers were selected to take part in the data collection process. Secondly, the schools selected aimed to represent a variety of settings (rural and urban) and was of various sizes - small (60-100 students) to large (1200-3000 students). Thirdly, the principals selected were considered to be effective leaders by their Districts and have various lengths of tenure and experience. The principal's demographics are added in Table 3.1 below:

Table 3.1
The Principal's Demographics (n=24)

Demographics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	9	37
Female	15	63
Ethnicity		
Malay	6	25
Chinese	10	42
Indian	8	33
Age		
40 - 45 years	1	4
46 - 50 years	5	21
51 – 55 years	6	25
Over 55 years	12	50
Highest Education		
STPM & Diploma	4	16
Undergraduate	15	63
Master degree	5	21
Tenure as principal		
Less than 5 years	5	21
6 – 10 years	9	37
More than11 years	10	42

Involvement in principal training preparation		
Yes	3	13
No	21	87
Type of School		
National School	8	33
National-Chinese School	9	37
National-Tamil School	7	30

Only principals who expressed interest and were willing to participate were considered (Henning et al., 2004). Additional data about the principals' schools were also reviewed in order to ensure that principals selected have a track record of success. These data was used to identified principals leading the educational organizations effectively. According to Marshall (1996), many qualitative researchers used purposive sampling because they recognize that some participants may be loaded with information than others which gives greater insight and understanding to the researcher. In other words, knowledgeable and informative people on the phenomena of the area of research were chosen as participants as suggested by McMillan and Schumacher (2006).

To support the findings and for the purpose of triangulation which deemed important as suggested by Denzin (1973), five to six teachers from four schools were

interviewed through a focus group session. At all schools, the assistant principals who is part of the management team and head of subjects' teachers who were responsible for the school curriculum were the respondents of the focus group.

A small number of cases that may give valuable information on a particular phenomenon were picked through the purposive sampling process. While probability sampling that is planned to select large number for greater dimension, purposive sampling gathers greater depth of information (Teddlie & Yu, 2007). While purposive sampling brings about greater depth of information, Teddlie and Yu (2007) also highlighted that expert judgment of the researcher would be essential in purposive sampling. The researcher were well aware of the characteristics of the participants involved in this study as much as possible when purposive sampling decisions were made. Following table 3.2 describes the sampling frame of this research.

Table 3.2
Sampling Frame

Sample population	Sampling strategies	Criteria for selection
24 principal from a district	Opportunistic Sampling	• A cross-section of Malay, Chinese and Tamil school principals • Represented a variety of settings (rural and urban) and were of various sizes • The principals selected were considered to be effective leaders by their Districts and had various lengths of tenure and experience. • Willing to take part in the interview.
4 principals from the 24 interviews - Observation	Purposeful sampling	• Principals who demonstrate the characteristic of instructional leadership based on to the interview transcription. • Had brought an improvement in the particular school in terms of academic achievement and school turnaround.
5-6 teachers within the school - Internal respondents - Focus Group	Purposeful sampling	• The deputy principal who is also part of the management team. • Head of subject teachers who were responsible for the school curriculum.

It is a commonly asked question concerning the sufficiency of the numbers of respondents and interviews when a research project is designed. Baker and Edwards (2012) clearly answered this vital question. They mentioned that it largely depends on the epistemological (relating to the theory of knowledge), methodological and practical issues when conducting a research. It also depends on the resources.

However, in response to the question, Baker and Edwards (2012) also mentioned that, in a qualitative study, one respondent who is the person of interest is all that is needed. In their article, As advised by Baker and Edwards (2012) an adequate sample population for a qualitative research can vary from one to one hundred or more. However, the best sample size in qualitative research is ranged between a dozen to 60 with a mean of 30 considering the length of time this form of research takes, the issue of gaining entry to the research setting and challenge of transcribing interviews which can take hours (Baker & Edwards, 2012). Looking at the resources and time limitation, in this study a range of 24 interviews of primary school principals and focus group with five to six teachers from the school focus group to triangulate the findings in this research was feasible.

3.6   Research Instrument

In this research, an open ended semi-structured interview protocols were used for the interviews. Considering all aspects of the various types of interviews, for this research, semi-structured interviews with a short interview protocol was used (Appendix A & B). These interview protocol questions was done as part of the larger research with principals with a proven credibility in student achievement and raising student outcomes. Here for this research, some parts of the schedule were phrased in a user-friendly manner to allowing respondents being in their common environment and respond in ordinary language eloquent for them which is also understandable to the interviewer. To facilitate this predicament, the interview schedule was also translated into the local language (Bahasa Malaysia) and was verified by a group of native language speakers as being an accurate translation from the English version.

The interview protocol consist of open-ended and semi-structured questions used for interviews in this research gave the principals opportunity to express their view of their roles and that of the others in enacting instructional leadership. At all time, the interviewees were assured of the anonymity and confidentiality of the interviews as suggested (Denzin, 1978; Glazer & Strauss, 1965; Rubin, 2005; Silverman, 2005; Smith, 1979). The main objective and aim of this research as stated in chapter one served as the prime guide of the structure of the interviews. Reassurances were given to the participants that the aim of the research was to determine their perceptions in respect of instructional leadership and not to judge or evaluate their management skills or so forth as suggested by Bajunid (1996) and Belchetz & Leithwood (2007).

The personal limitations associated with investigation and analysis skills were improved as the researcher played the role as the living instrument in this research. The researcher was the primary instrument who can effectively respond, adapt and be the ideal mean for data collection and data analysis (Merriam, 2002). The advantages of human instrument includes the ability to expand understanding through verbal as well as non-verbal communication, an immediate processing of information and data, summarizing materials and checking with the respondents for accuracy of interpretation on unusual and unanticipated responses (Merriam, 2002). Adding to that, at every point of a research, the researcher was also careful to reduce personal bias or error (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Thus, the researcher was constantly on par with the qualitative approach research skills and was aware of possible bias. In this research, corroboration and triangulation techniques were also used to minimize personal error and misinterpretations.

3.7   Pilot Test

According to Teijlingen and Hundley (2001), the prime reasons for undertaking a pilot study are to (a) to identify an appropriate methodology for the study, (b) to develop a research plan, (c) to collect preliminary data, (d) to test and develop the adequacy of research instrument, (e) to assess the feasibility of a full-scale survey, (f) to determine the resources needed for a planned study (i.e.finance, staff etc), (g) to identify the logistic problems using the proposed method, (h) to convince funding bodies that the study I worth funding and feasible.

Mason and Zuercher (1995) made a compelling argument about the importance of a pilot being conducted although it may be time-consuming, frustrating, and fraught with unanticipated problems, rather than investing a great deal of time, money, and effort in the full study.

In terms of research instrument, the researcher adapted this interview protocol (Appendix A & B) and modified the questions following a pilot test with three principals with a proven credibility in student achievement and raising student outcomes was done as this research as part of a larger study. This was for the purpose of checking the accuracy, to familiarize, further refine the type of semi-structured questions to be asked during the interview. The interview schedule was also translated into Bahasa Malaysia and was verified by a group of native language speakers as being an accurate translation from the English version.

3.8   Data Analysis

The Data analysis process is a process done to inspect, transform, clean and model data with the goal to discover useful information, suggest conclusions and support decision making (Creswell, 2013). According to Henning et al., (2004), the test of a competent researcher who is involved in a qualitative research comes in the data analysis process which requires high level of analytical skills and strong ability to capture and craft understanding of the data in writing. The researcher was aware of the fact that before data analysis was carried out, a comprehensive understanding of the various models and on the subject of the instructional leadership is essential to perform a viable analysis of data.

The responses of every respondent were likened to a piece of "puzzle" and further connected it to the researcher's overall understanding of the organizational behavior as suggested by George et al. (1985). As the various strands of data was braided together, the convergence added strength to the findings and promoted a greater understanding of the case. The researcher was consciously aware and careful to not be too assimilated with the research subject by taking sides with any respondents opinion or writing a skewed report that data does not support. The researcher also gathered as much evidence as possible without hesitation from multiple point of view from the respondents and research setting in order to avoid any prejudices and assumptions in writing as as advised by Hayes (2006). ATLAS.ti 8.0 for qualitative data analysis software was used to analyze the data.

3.8.1 Analysis of the data from interviews and focus group

The researcher also took notes while digitally recording the interviews. The interviews were then transcribed verbatim as soon as possible after the interview had taken place to support the interpretation and findings (Sandelowski, 1993). Those interviews conducted in Malay were carefully translated into English. Each interview was fully transcribed and uploaded into ATLAS.ti 8 and the coding was done accordingly. Close examinations were done to data searching for themes and patterns that gave a clearer picture of the subject and the aim of the study. Initially, a deductive analysis was done to explore the principals' conceptual understanding of instructional leadership in Petaling Perdana District, Selangor which was the primary objective of this study. The Hallinger and Murphy Instructional Leadership Model (1985) was used to draw out and uncover the differences and similarities focusing on the aim of the study (Creswell, 2009; Mertens, 1998). To generate key themes and propositions for further investigation and testing, a constant comparative analysis was undertaken as suggested by Glazer and Strauss (1965). Following this initial phase, the researcher further interrogated the data inductively to generate provisional codes. The recurring themes were categorized accordingly to explore how primary school principals' view their roles as instructional leaders in Petaling Perdana District, Selangor.

This enabled the researcher to further probe the data for specific examples of instructional leadership practice as well as interrogating the data using the inductively formed codes. All transcripts were analyzed using the combined coding procedure through ATLAS.ti 8 and further synthesized and refined to generate

emergent themes. The findings represented in this research were first organized under the features of instructional leadership (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985) and later through the inductive probing on the data collected. Recurring themes and trends were noticed in the data from the detailed inductive analysis of the data.

For safety and convenience, ATLAS.ti 8 was also used as a data bank to save pictures, scan documents, interview transcripts and other forms of evidences that are directly or indirectly related to this research and research objective. To facilitate a greater understanding of the phenomena being studied, the researcher also collected and integrated the interview data together with voice recorded interview. During the analysis process, these multiple data were converged rather than handling it individually. As acknowledged by George and McKeown (1995) every perception contributed as a piece of puzzle for the researcher's understanding of instructional leadership when the data was converged. The various strands of data braided together added strength to the findings. This led to a greater understanding to the instructional leadership practices of primary school principals in the context.

As mentioned earlier, every participant was identified with pseudonyms in the report upon transcribing and coding the digitally recorded interviews. For a smooth knowledge organization and presentation, ATLAS.ti 8 research software was used for the process of analysis. As suggested by Miles & Huberman (1994) the data consisted chronology, narrative records which includes transcribed interviews, observation field notes, and documents in each research settings. With this, the researcher was able to exploit the quality of the qualitative data and better judge its objectivity.

3.9 Data Validity, Reliability and Triangulation for interviews and focus group

Validity questions are answered to ascertain whether the researcher is investigating are investigating what the researcher says he will be investigating using certain methods. (Henning et al., 2004; McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). The claim of validity is highly residual on the data collection and analysis techniques in the research (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). To ensure the researcher accurately recorded the phenomena under investigation and for the issue of credibility, the researcher used triangulation, member check and peer debriefing to promote confidence.

In this study, interviews and focus group used to support themes that emerged from the study. To ensure the accuracy of the data, constant check was done with the participants. Participants were also given the interview transcript for verification to avoid misinterpretation of their statements (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006; Long & Johnson, 2000; Shenton, 2004). Besides that, in order for the reports to be refined and strengthened, peer and colleagues were also given the opportunity to comment on the research work as suggested by Sandelowski (1993). All these were done for the overall findings to be conscientious and ensure trustworthiness of the findings and to further establish the validity and reliability of the research findings.

3.9.1 Validity

The threats of validity in this research were considered carefully by the researcher. Proactive steps were taken to counter the challenges and careful consideration was given so that important features were not overlooked. One of the threats of research validation is the threat of internal validity (Creswell, 2013). Internal validity is the extend to which one is able to say that besides the variables studying in this research no other has caused the results. One of the measures that was taken to ensure internal validity is by not demanding from the principals any answer during interviews. Interviews were also not done in an inconvenient or rushing situation as misinterpretation of facts and personal experience may occur.

External validity which is largely related to generalization is said to be another threat in case study (Creswell, 2013). As highlighted by Richie, Lewis, Nicholls & Ormston (2013) since qualitative research methods reflected a mix of research objectives, participants, findings, philosophy and findings, there is no one right or accepted way of doing it. As such, the context of the researched organization, culture and norms may not be casually comparable to respondents in other context of schools even though they may look similar. The researcher was aware of the threat and ensured the validity of the research was maintained at all times.

Besides that, member check was also done with a senior lecturer in the field of Educational Leadership and a Master's student in the field of Educational Leadership to ensure the interpretive validity. It was done on two principals' interview transcript and the focus group transcripts after the coding process. The schedule is attached in

Appendix F. A higher level of agreement between the researcher and the experts indicates the interpretation of the data content is valid and objective. This process also enabled the researcher to ensure sufficient depth and relevance of the data collection and analysis has been done. This process also demonstrated a clear decision trail and ensured the interpretation of the data were consistent. On the other hand, it also assist to demonstrate clarity in thought process and to increase the credibility and validity of the coding during data analysis and subsequent interpretation.

3.9.2   Reliability

Reliability in qualitative research refers to the exact replication and consistency of results (Creswell, 2005). It is a challenging process, as qualitative research comes in diverse paradigms. These evaluation is essential in order that the research findings are reliable in practice, unlike quantitative researches who apply statistical methods to establish validity and reliability of research findings. The sample size in this research is sufficient to get enough data to describe the phenomena addressed in the research question. There were 24 principals and 4 focus group was interviewed and the data from the interview transcription was analysed for that purpose.

In this research, in order to avoid personal biasness which may influence findings (Creswell, 2005; Morse, et al., 2002) a members check was. A member check is a technique used to help improve accuracy, validity, credibility and transferability of the study. It is also known as informant feedback or respondent validation (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). According to Creswell and Creswell (2017) the narrative

accuracy checks and interpretive validity involved in member check is essential in a qualitative research. In this research, the narrative accuracy check was done with the research participants upon transcribing the interview protocol. The transcriptions were sent to them for review via email. A representative was chosen for the focus group transcripts. It was done in order to assure the authenticity of the work. This process also helped in improving accuracy and transparency of the transcripts as also suggested by Noble and Smith (2015).

3.9.3   Triangulation

According to Patton (1999), triangulation refers to a process that uses multiple methods or data sources used in qualitative research to develop a comprehensive understanding of a phenomena. Dependability and confirmability of the findings was done through the process of triangulation. There are four type of triangulation methods (Konecki, 2008; Denzin, 2006). They are (i) data triangulation which involves time, space and people; (ii) investigator triangulation which involves more than one researcher (or even respondents); (iii) theory triangulation that involve using of one or more theoretical frames in the effort to interpret the phenomenon, and (iv) methodological triangulation that involves more than one method for data collection.

Data triangulation seem to be best fitted for this research to check the constituency of qualitative data and to produce a more comprehensive set of findings. The essence of data triangulation is to validates data by cross verifying the information researcher gathered from an open-ended questionnaire as a method for data collection as done in

this research (Kuper, Reeves & Levinson, 2008). In this research, triangulation was done between the responses received from the 24 principal from the Petaling Perdana District, the four focus group teachers' interview responses and the researches observation process in the four schools. Triangulation is important in this case study as this research was integrated with various respondents and came from different data sets such as interviews with principals and focus group sessions with teachers. The issue of validity and reliability in this research was also ensured through triangulation. The results obtain from the triangulation process is discussed in chapter 5 to enhance the discussion of the finding.

Triangulation is not a technological solution for data collection or analytic problems (Denzin, 1973; Sandelowski, 1993; Long & Johnson, 2000). However, it allows researchers to validate, confirm, and corroborate findings within a single study (Teddlie & Yu 2007). Various data sources and methods leads to a singular proposition on the phenomena being studied in triangulation (Mathison, 1988). This technique provides concrete evidences from data and is essential in research as the researcher can construct meaningful propositions about the area being studied. In this study, interviews with principals, focus group interviews and observations was used as a way of approaching triangulation.

3.10 Summary of the chapter

This chapter detailed the research design and methodology used to gather and analyze the data. The use of a qualitative and interpretative paradigm as a research paradigm was justified and the process of data collection through interviews and

documents were outlined. A discussion of the type of sampling used was given. The techniques of data analysis that were used was also clearly explained. Approach to data analysis was outlined and ethical considerations and the trustworthiness of the data collection methods was also dealt with. The demographic of the respondents was also given. The profile of the participants is added in the next chapter.

The researcher was aware of the danger of collecting overwhelming amount of data which requires a solid process of data management and procedure analysis. The researcher was also careful that he may get 'lost' in the data as warned by Patton (1990) and Yin (2003) which often happens in qualitative research. The researcher also diligently handled the data collection and the process of data analysis. All information obtained was used effectively and excessive jargon in the English language was avoided in order to have data clarity. The researcher was also careful of simplicity in writings without losing the true meaning that allows others to understand the writing easily as suggested by Hayes (2006). In the next chapter, the analysis of the data was be outlined and the themes that emerged is presented.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Introduction

In this chapter an analysis and interpretation of the data collected using the semi structured interviews from twenty four primary school principals and four focus group sessions in the Petaling Perdana District in Selangor is presented. Besides that, an in-depth case study was conducted at four schools using focus group session with an average of 5-6 teachers in each school and through observations. Emerging themes of Instructional Leadership practices of the principals in the Petaling Perdana District are explored. Findings from the interviews and focus group will be discussed in this session is discussed in this chapter.

4.2   Demographic profile of the research participants

The following information and observations were gathered during the interview session and during data collection field visit. Summary of the school and research participants are provided in Table 4.1. Thereafter, a demographic profile of each principal and focus group is given. Schools with 200 and below number of students are classified as "small" schools. Schools with 201 to 999 students are classified as "medium" sized school and " large" for schools with 1000 and above students studying in the particular school. The predominant parents' economic status of the parents of students was defined by the principals during the interview session.

Table 4.1
Profile of the School and Principals

Res. No.	Gender	Race	School Type	Average School Size	School Social Setting	Predominant Parents Economic Status	Principal Years of Service
#1	Female	Malay	SK	3200 (Large)	Semi Urban	Middle & Lower	1
#2	Female	Chinese	SJKC	2800 (Large)	Urban	High & Middle	7
#3	Female	Indian	SK	500 (Medium)	Semi Urban	Middle & Lower	5
#4	Female	Indian	SJKT	910 (Medium)	Urban	Middle & Lower	10
#5	Male	Indian	SJKT	225 (Medium)	Semi Urban	Middle & Lower	5
#6	Female	Malay	SK	1700 (Large)	Semi Urban	High & Middle	15
#7	Female	Indian	SJKT	100 (Small)	Semi Rural	Middle & Lower	5
#8	Male	Chinese	SJKC	3877 (Large)	Semi Urban	Middle & Lower	18
#9	Male	Chinese	SJKC	1300 (Large)	Urban	High & Middle	16
#10	Female	Malay	SK	1972 (Large)	Semi Urban	Middle & Lower	22
#11	Male	Chinese	SJKC	987 (Medium)	Semi Urban	High & Middle	22
#12	Female	Indian	SJKT	516 (Medium)	Urban	Middle & Lower	10
#13	Male	Indian	SJKT	1100 (Large)	Semi Urban	Middle & Lower	17
#14	Female	Malay	SK	2000 (Large)	Semi Urban	High & Middle	7
#15	Female	Chinese	SJKC	900 (Medium)	Urban	High & Middle	1
#16	Female	Indian	SJKT	100 (Small)	Semi Rural	Middle & Lower	7
#17	Male	Chinese	SJKC	3200 (Large)	Semi Rural	Middle & Lower	19

#18	Female	Chinese	SJKC	920 (Medium)	Urban	Middle & Lower	8
#19	Female	Chinese	SJKC	4000 (Large)	Urban	High & Middle	9
#20	Female	Chinese	SK	1200 (Large)	Urban	Middle & Lower	8
#21	Male	Indian	SJKT	200 (Small)	Rural	Middle & Lower	10
#22	Male	Chinese	SJKC	2200 (Large)	Semi Rural	Middle & Lower	21
#23	Female	Malay	SK	900 (Medium)	Urban	Middle & Lower	3
#24	Female	Malay	SK	671 (Medium)	Semi Urban	Middle & Lower	2

4.2.1   Demographic profile of the Principals

Principal #1

Principal #1 was a Senior Assistant in-charge for curriculum before become a principal for the past 1 year. Though this is the first posting as principal, she had a great deal of experience in education and have been given best educator award twice over her 28 years of teaching experience in the primary school. After working in 6 different parts of Malaysia in diverse settings she is here being principal. She has been through NPQH principal preparation and training program by IAB for six months. Prior to that the principal obtain Diploma in Education. The school is located in a semi-urban area where many socioeconomically deprived people living with mostly middle and lower income parents who are fairly disinterested in the student learning. This is large school and categorized as Band 3.

Principal #2

Principal #2 had an experience of leading two schools simultaneous when she was promoted first as a principal since the number of students in both the school was small. The main school had 45 pupil and the branch school had 35 pupil. Being principal for the past 7 year, currently she serve in the fourth school for the past 3 years. She has not attended any formal training prior to the appointment as principal. However, she has attended an intense one week course on leadership when appointed as principal. Her experience as a Senior Assistant has been an additive for the current position. This is a large school is situated in an urban setting and the parents are from high and middle income group. However, this is not a high performing school.

Principal #3

Being principal for the past 5 years, Principal #3 has an experience of leading the 4th school. She have been teacher for 25 years. There were no formal training on leadership was attended however, when promoted, she went for short courses conducted by IAB on finance and management. Previously she was in a school where a turnaround from Band 3 to Band 2 happened during her leadership. This medium sized school has most of the students coming from low cost flats and broken homes. Parents living there are mostly from lower and middle income group who often do not get involve in the education matters in the school. She is one of the four principals exhibited Instructional Leadership quality and brought about significant change in the school. Thus, she was shortlisted for further interrogation and in depth case study.

Principal #4

Principal #4 has a total of 10 years' experience as a principal. She has been principal in the current school for the past 6 years. There were no formal training for leadership was attended by the principal. However, her previous Senior Assistant post for about five years and experience as teacher for ten years before becoming principal has been advantageous. In total, she has an experience of 25 years in teaching field. It is a medium sized school situated in an urban area. However, the parents are from middle and lower income group. This is a vernacular school with Bahasa as second language, therefore, due to their underachievement in the previous year academic results, the school has downgraded from Band 2 to Band 3.

Principal #5

Principal #5 being principal for the past five years. He started his carrier as a teacher then promoted to Senior Assistant before being principal. Beside the teaching experience, he did the Masters in Principalship from University Malaya. It is a medium sized school with most students coming from lower income family. His learning experience has been a great assistance in executing the role as a principal. His leadership in the school is remarkable as it has not only bring a change in the academic achievement but also restored a very positive relationship with the parents, PTA as well as Board of Governors. His vibrant leadership was remarkable thus, he was shortlisted among the four principals who exhibited Instructional Leadership quality and brought about significant change in the school for further interrogation and in depth case study.

Principal #6

With a ten years' experience being a Senior Assistant, Principal #6 was appointed into the leadership office. She has been principal for 15 years but have not got any formal training on leadership. The carrier was developed through experiences and sharing among colleagues. The school is situated at a semi urban context where most parents comes from high and middle income group. It is also a large school classified under Band 2.

Principal #7

Principal #7 is a non NPQEL trained leader managing a relatively small vernacular school with a population of 100 students. She is not NPQEL trained however, has 25 years of teaching experience and 12 years of experience being a Senior Assistant. She also attends short courses conducted by IAB. This is a semi-rural school with mostly middle and lower income group. This school has experienced a turnaround in academic performance under her leadership. From Band 4 it is now developed to Band 2 over a 4 years period.

Principal #8

With 18 years' experience from various school dilemma, Principal#8 has set foot in this vernacular school for the past 7 years. This energetic and vibrant principal has received *Anugerah Perkhidmatan Cemerlang* (Excellent Service Award) thrice during his tenure as principal. He has not been through any formal training before appointed as principal. However, he follow through short courses done by IAB especially on the area of administration. Currently he is leading a large vernacular

school with 3877 students situated in a semi urban new village setting. The students in this school comes mainly from middle and lower income family.

Principal #9

Without prior formal training on principal leadership Principal #9 have been int he office for the past 16 years. He has been in this school for the past 6 years. During his leadership this school experienced a turnaround in academic achievement and it is now classified as Band 1 and known to be high performing being the top 10 in the district. This large school comes with a population of 1300 students situated in an urban setting. Most of the student comes from middle and high income family background.

Principal #10

Principal #10 22 years of experience being principal for the past 22 years and been in this current school for 10 years. This highly motivated principal has never been through formal principal training however, attended short courses conducted by IAB on administration. The school is situated in a semi urban area populated with mostly middle and lower income group. It is a Band 1 school with a large school population of 1972 students. The school experienced turn around especially in the area of academic achievement during her term of office as principal in the school.

Principal #11

Started the teaching carrier with certificate an serving as teacher for seven years, Principal#11 was appointed to principal leadership without and formal training some 22 years ago. During these years he has also served in the education department as

supervisor for two years before continuing his vocation as principal in the school. He has been through short courses on administration conducted by IAB. This is medium sized school with mostly students coming from middle and high income group. The school is situated in a semi urban setting.

Principal #12

Principal#12 has been a principal for the past 10 years. She has not attended any formal training before she took the office. However, she have been through some courses conducted by IAB on administration matters. Currently she gives leadership in a medium sized vernacular school in an urban setting. Most students comes to this school are from middle and high income group. This is Sekolah Wawasan (Vision School) where the Bahasa, Chinese and Tamil medium shares the same compound but has different management.

Principal #13

Being principal for 17 years, Principal#13 has been giving leadership in this vernacular school for the past 7 years. Though he has not gone through formal training before becoming a principal, this graduate teacher from UKM has been following short courses conducted by IAB regularly especially in the area of administration and management. He is currently leading a large school which has experienced turn around in the area of academic achievement during his term in office. Some of his initiatives has brought about his change. The students from this school comes from middle and lower income family. For the remarkable change in the area of academic improvement and his Instructional leadership quality, the school

was selected for further research. However, the principal was transferred to another school.

Principal #14

Principal#14 is a highly active and passionate person being in the office for the past 7 years. She has been though the NPQEL training before becoming the principal. With her calibre she has brought about many changes in the school climate besides the area of academic. During her tenure the school has also experienced a turnaround in the area of academic achievement too. Currently the school is in Band 2. It is a large school located in a semi urban area. The students come from mostly the middle and lower income group. She is one of the four principals exhibited Instructional Leadership quality and brought about significant change in the school. Thus, she was shortlisted for further interrogation and in depth case study.

Principal #15

This highly motivated young principal has been in the office for the past 4 years. Before Principal#15 became the principal, she has been a Senior Assistant for two years. She has been newly appointed to this newly established vernacular school. Before being appointed as principal, she has been through the NPQEL training. This medium sized school is located in an urban setting. The student comes mostly from middle and high income family.

Principal #16

Giving her leadership in a small vernacular school, Principal#16 has been a teacher for the past 30 years and have an experience being principal for 7 years. She have not

been through any formal training prior to the appointment as principal. However, she has been attending profession training provided by IAB on administration and management. The school is situated in a semi urban village. Most of the students comes from lower and middle income family.

Principal #17

Coming from the northern state of Malaysia, Principal#17 has been in primary school education for more than 30 years and been a principal for 19 years especially in vernacular school. He has not been through any formal principal training however, had few years of experience serving as vice principal position such as VP Admin, VP student affair and VP Co Curriculum. Currently, he is giving leadership in a school with 60 years of history situated in a new village (semi urban). It is a large school with majority children coming from middle and lower income group.

Principal #18

Principal#18 has been in the office for the past 8 years giving leadership in a vernacular school within a vision school. She has 14 years of experience being the vice principal before being promoted. She has not been through any formal training before appointed as principal. She is currently in a medium sized school where most of the student comes from middle and lower income family background. According to the principal, the Vision School concept is not well accepted by the PTA as well as the community. Therefore there are no much support from the public especially in terms of financial aids and sponsors. The principal also struggle to face the challenges and conflicts faced by the school as they share compound with the other

two schools. A good working relationship with the teachers and the many years of experience as school leader is seen as an asset in leading the school.

Principal #19

Coming from a High Performing School (HPS) in the district, Principal#19 has been in the leadership position for 9 years. She has not been through any formal principal training, however, her 13 years being Senior Assistant under 3 principals has been an added advantage to lead the schools. On appointment as principal, like the others, she was also sent for short courses mainly on administration. The Principal is venturing into 21st century learning and made it the priority for the year. The school is a middle sized school situated in an urban setting. Most students coming from the professional and upper middle class family. The importance of working together with teachers, Parents Teacher Association and the Board of Governors is seen as very important in order to run the school towards greater heights. The principal also seem to be very strict about fulfilling the requirements and programs initiated by the Ministry of Education.

Principal #20

Principal #20 is observed to be a systematic an orderly person being in the role for 8 years. Being in the urban school with most students coming from lower and middle income family, the principal expressed the many challenges they face particularly the lack of parental involvement in the children's education. It is relatively a large school. The principal also insist on the usage of IT among the teachers, trains them to develop their skills in the area particularly the whole of last year. She feels teachers must be competent in the usage of IT as the Ministry of Education insist on it and

expects the teachers and administration to be efficient. She is a well popular person who also goes around teaching the neighbouring school district officers as well as some secondary schools to teach the basic use of ICT to help improve their work. 21st century learning is also a priority in this school. Though there were no much improvement in the school academic achievement, this creative and innovative principal brought many transformation in the landscape of the school as well the infrastructure without much cost.

Principal #21

Principal#21 is a vibrant principal who brought a change in the vernacular school which is small in number and situated in a rural area. Most students come from a lower and middle income family. One of the achievement under his leadership was, the lower rate of students under LINUS program. Currently 80-90% is able to read, write, count and able to speak well in the school. He has been a principal for about 10 years has no formal principal training before his appointment. Short courses conducted by IAB on the area of administration are being attended. He believes that students are not only to be developed academically but also holistically especially in the area of personal development and sports. Primary school education must also prepare them for their best in secondary school and tertiary education. The parental support both personally as well as through the PTA in the school is remarkable. According to the principal, these supports are important to bring the school to a higher ground. However, he also felt that most parents never bothers about students' education and hardly communicate with the children as well as teachers about it. This is a setback in academic improvement. The principal also insist on developing the classroom into 21st century classroom and the use of ICT in teaching and learning.

They were rewarded for their remarkable usage of ICT in the school last year. For the remarkable change in the area of academic improvement and his Instructional leadership quality, the school was selected for further research. However, the principal was transferred to another school.

Principal #22

With great importance given to relationship between teachers, parents and the community, Principal #22 works harmoniously and brought a drastic change in all the schools he has given leadership. Particularly in this current school which is situated at a semi urban setting were most people comes with the Chinese new village. It is a large vernacular school with majority of the students coming from middle and lower income group. According to him, the strength of keeping the relationship with all level of staff like a family is an added advantage to achieve greater things. Even the leaders and members of PTA and Board of Governors of the school seem to have a very good working relationship with him. He constantly mentioned that the work like a family. He has not been through any formal training before appointed as principal. His mentors particularly the former retired principals who had impacted his life has been giving him sound advises and counsels. Under his leadership the school has improved drastically in the area of academic achievement as well as co curriculum activities. He emphasizes on teaching and learning and found to take many initiative to assist the teachers by bringing trainer locally and from abroad. He is also seen to have a very good rapport with the surrounding community. He is one of the four principals exhibited Instructional Leadership quality and brought about significant change in the school. Therefore, he was shortlisted for further interrogation and in depth case study.

Principal #23

Principal #23 is currently giving leadership in a medium sized school situated in an urban setting. She didn't underwent any formal training before being promoted. However, she has have been through short courses conducted by IAB on administration. This sympathetic leader gives heart the teachers and students personal struggles. She does not seem to push the students and teachers for high academic achievement but encourages them to do the best. One of the method she insist in the school is the streaming. By this she feels the good students can excel and the weaker ones can be monitored at the same time motivated to do well. However, there were no much significant academic achievement is seen. Nevertheless, the students' involvement in the co curriculum activities are remarkable according to her. Most students comes to this school are from middle and lower income family. Here, the parental involvement in the student academic life is also at stake. Since many students are foreigner and coming from East Malaysia, absenteeism and truancy is a major challenge faced in the school. Being new to the school, the principal is working hard towards improving the infrastructure and develop the resources in the school. Being friendly to the staffs and parents is seen as an advantage for the principal to be connected with them and motivate them to do better in their job as well as fulfilling their responsibilities. She also tries new methods to engage parents' involvement in the school.

Principal #24

Having been attended formal training provided by IAB particularly NPQEL, Principal #24 took the office 2 years ago and been posted this school. 21ˢᵗ Century learning is seen as important as being regulated by the District Education office but due to financial constrain, the principal did not give much priority. Though academic achievement is emphasized in the school, the teachers and students are seen to be vigorously in the area of co curriculum. However, there has been initiatives taken to improve the academic standard f the school. Personal interest is taken by the principal on the area of academic especially among the students from the last class. She is seen as a passionate teacher. In term of leadership, according to her, the courses conducted by IAB especially on administration has been a great help in running the school. This school is in a semi urban setting with students coming mainly from a middle and lower income family. The school also has a special need students classes and have about 70 students. The parents and community involvement in this medium sized school is very minimal which is a significant concern pointed by the principal.

4.2.2 Demographic profile of the focus group participants and the school background

Focus group session was held in the selected schools for an in depth understanding of the principal Instructional Leadership practice. Six schools were shortlisted looking at the principal's Instructional leadership characteristics and the schools' significant turnover under the leadership of the principal. However, due to several reasons such as the transfer of the principal and the unwillingness of the principal for further interrogation, two out of the eight schools were dropped.

The teachers who participated in the focus group session were volunteers. The Senior Assistant was expected to be part of the focus group. The other teachers were selected on their availability by the principal and the Senior Assistant *(Penolong Kanan)*. An introduction of the study was clearly defined to the focus group participants in the beginning of the session. The confidentiality and anonymity of the data and participants were guaranteed. The participants were also given the freedom of choice not to answer any questions if they were uncomfortable. They were also assured that no individual or institution will be named in any final report or any resulting publications that we will publish from this without your explicit permission. Permission was also sought to record the session simply as an accurate and verbatim account to transcribe. Following are some introduction about the Focus Group and the some observation from the schools participated in this study. The summary of the focus group session participants is found in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2
Summary of the focus group participants.

School	School Type	Respondent No.	Gender	Current Responsibility at School
SB	SJKC	A1	Male	Head of Bahasa Malaysia Panel
		A2	Male	Discipline Teacher
		A3	Male	Head of Chinese Language Panel
		A4	Female	Head of Maths Panel
		A5	Female	Counselor
BK	SK	B1	Male	Penolong Kanan Pentadbiran (PK1) - Curriculum & Administration
		B2	Male	Innovation
		B3	Female	Head of Maths Panel and Culture
		B4	Female	Head of English Panel & PLC showcase coordinator
		B5	Female	Year One Coordinator & LINUS teacher
		B6	Female	21st Century Learning Coordinator
HC	SJKT	C1	Female	Penolong Kanan Pentadbiran (PK1) - Curriculum
		C2	Female	Head of Science Panel & Curriculum Secretary
		C3	Female	Head of Bahasa Panel
		C4	Female	Head of Tamil Panel
		C5	Female	Head of Maths Panel & Data Teacher
BD	SK	D1	Female	Head of Bahasa Panel
		D2	Female	Head of English Panel
		D3	Female	Head of Maths Panel
		D4	Female	Discipline Teacher

D5	Male	Penolong Kanan (PK1) - Curriculum
D6	Female	Year 5 Coordinator

School SB

Five teachers from this school participated in the focus group session. It was a well-balanced group in terms of participation. They were very comfortable during the interaction session. The Senior Assistants (PK), the principal's choice wasn't able to be part of the session as she had an urgent meeting to attend. However, she arranged the group of teachers to participate in this session. The researcher observed a very positive working climate in the school where teachers being very happy working under the principal. Their excitement at work under the leadership is also shown in their unwillingness to get a transfer of being promoted as it will require a transfer.

The school infrastructure is also seemed to be very conducive for teaching and learning. Besides that it is also advantageous for community engagement. The large hall with 8 badminton court which can accommodate 1000-1500 people for the community as well as personal events is spectacular. Every classroom is equipped with microphones and LCD projectors. This is essential tool for classroom control and the teaching and learning process in the 21st century classroom. The use of microphones is an added advantage especially when there are large classrooms like this school. Teachers found to fully utilize the tools for teaching.

It is also noticed that there were a number of reading corners around the school area especially along the corridor junctions and the staircase area. These reading corners

were well maintained. Students seem to be actively using the places for reading and playing chess and Chinese chess. There was also a LED board at the front of the school where announcements are published. Besides, the teachers mentioned that, names of achievers and winners as a mean of appreciation and as a source of encouragement is published in the LED board. Mini language quizzes also keep running on the board.

It was identical to note a mini museum in the school initiated by the principal. The museum depict the village and the little town with artifacts and detailed information was interesting. There were also cultural things displayed in the mini museum. It is well maintained. This is another way the school is engaging with the community. It is open to the outsiders and is applauded by the community as well as political leaders. The Malaysian concept clean canteen with choices of Chinese, Malay and Indian food is another way the principal encourages multi-racial and multi-cultural significance in the school is admirable. According to the principal, this is another way the students (mostly communicates in their own dialect) may communicate and improve their Bahasa and English. In this way the students and teachers are also able to get familiar with different culture and food as this is a vernacular school.

The recycle corner is also impressive. Students were seen to be actively involving in the communal recycle project. Students were seen to collect recycle items from around school area during the recess time. They were spontaneous and engaging in the project. The sports arena especially basketball court is commendable. Basketball is the niche area of the school in the area of sports. The teachers and students in the school were very polite and friendly. Besides them, canteen operators and staffs

around the school including the security guard was very friendly and interactive. They were very positive about the very friendly principal.

School BK

At School B, 6 people participated in the focus group session. The Senior Assistant was chosen by the principal. The other teachers were selected on the availability by the principal and the Senior Assistant. Relatively all the teachers participated in the session has been in the school for substantial number of years. The participants were very friendly, welcoming and spontaneous. This group were also free to share openly. They were equally excited like the principal on the positive developments taking place in the school. Repeatedly, the team kept mentioning that they are moving forward under the present leadership. From the response of the teachers, it was also noted that there is a very positive work climate under the leadership of the principal. The teachers seem to be satisfied being in the school. They also have a very orderly office fling system.

It is distinctive in this school to note that innovative and creative teachers make own effort to develop interesting classroom atmosphere conducive for learning. The teachers expressed that the Principal gives freedom for the teachers to venture new things without much restriction. LINUS classroom and Tamil Language/ Moral classroom with 21st century concept is truly identical and worthy to be . These classrooms look modern, informative, practical and cost effective. These had been teacher's personal effort. The freedom given by principal helps the teachers to stretch their talents and skills without restriction. Students are excited to go to these classrooms for learning. Positive learning outcome has also been prominent.

The school' infrastructure is not very conducive but principal and teachers are working hard to upkeep the standard of the school. However, it is well maintained. Slowly repairs are being done with the help of the community and the Parents Teacher Association (PTA). It was mentioned that last year, the school library was formed and the prayer room cum religious class room was renovated. Despite their limitation, the school has never failed to show improvement in the academic achievement as well as various co curriculum activities. They have participated in the state, national and international events. The international music fest held in Sarawak and winner runner up is a spectacular achievement. A balance importance to academic and non-academic activities especially for the students not very inclined to academic matters is given in this school.

School HC

In this medium sized school, the Senior Assistant together with 4 teachers participated in the focus group session. The Senior Assistant was selected by the principal and the other teachers were chosen by the Senior Assistant according to their availability. Since it is a medium class school with less classroom there are also less teachers in the school. Thus, not many were able to be released for the focus group session. However, they gave the full support towards the research. Every teacher participated in the session was a panel head. They seem to have very hectic schedule as they are also required to attend meetings and courses often due to the teacher ratio.

He school has an improvised infrastructure. This new building structure is large and spacious. The relationship among the teachers, PTA and Board of Governors was in strain with the previous principal and the teachers confessed it has been restored under the current leadership. It is a big relieve for the teachers. According to them, this has also improved the process of teaching and learning in the school at the same time has created a positive work environment. The teachers are also excited on the new development of the open hall *(dewan terbuka)*. The opening ceremony and the schools' anniversary celebration were graced by the Deputy Education Minister in November 2016. Having a futsal court in the school is an added advantage for the school to engage with the community.

This school has a well-furnished resource room, exceptional computer facilities in the IT room and the library which was newly developed. This is done with sponsors. It has brought significant excitement in the students according to the principal and teachers. The principal as well as teachers were open to the involvement of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) or individuals on ideas to further develop the school especially in teaching and learning. The administration in this school also gives priority for both academic and non-academic matters. However, due to the lack of teachers, they were not able to excel like other schools especially in the co curriculum. With their limitation and the support of parents they have participated in external competitions. One of which they had taken part in the National level *"Manavar Mulakam"* debate competition and received a National award for the year 2016.

School BD

All the teachers participated in this focus group session were chosen by the Senior Assistant considering the availability of the teachers. The teachers participated in the session were very cooperative and impulsive in sharing. All teachers participated as also been head of panels. They expressed their pleasure working under the current leadership who gives them the autonomy to execute their responsibilities and trying new things in school. They also mentioned the principal work hand in hand with the teachers.

Though this is a National type (SK) school with Bahasa language is main medium, at school, the principal encourages speaking English language in the school. English language programs and competitions are also often given priority in this school. It is a school of choice by many parents living around the community. The schools infrastructure has been improved with the initiative of the PTA. This school has also developed over the time to be high performing school especially in the area of academic.

Since the teachers are given opportunity, they come up with creative ideas and at the same time extend their abilities to do new things and participate in various events and competitions. This is very promising for the further development of the school. This school also has large classroom (40-45 students in a class). The limited number of classrooms in a large school causes large and hamper classroom size (40-45 students). This also challenges the desire to invent 21st century classroom and reading corners as desired.

4.3 Process of Reporting Research

Before analyzing the data, all data and pictures collected were entered into ATLAS.ti version 8.0. The findings were analyzed by first doing the coding based on the transcript and themes besides recognizing the patterns according to the research question.

These research questions were arranged to be answered in three continuous phases constructively. The first phase was carried out to answer the research question in this case study through a deductive reasoning method which works from a more general to a more specific inquiry to test the PIMRS Instructional Leadership Model. The second phase of the research was done by doing an inductive coding to draw out the recurring codes and themes emerging from the data applicable to Malaysian context. There were about 10 themes drawn from the inductive coding. These themes are described in this chapter and will be discussed further in the chapter 5. At the final stage, the researcher formulates a contextual model of Instructional leadership derived from this study. In the next section the results derived from the analysis will be presented.

4.4 Research Question One: What are principals' conceptual understanding of instructional leadership in Petaling Perdana District, Selangor?

The first level of finding derived from deductive reasoning from the PIMRS Instructional Leadership Model (1985) from the principals interview.

4.4.1 Defining the school mission

The principals functions and role in framing school goals and communicating the school goals is ascertain under this dimension of the PIMRS Instructional Leadership Model (1985). They are to ensure that the school goal is clear and measurable and are specially focused on the academic progress of the student. It is the responsibility of the principal to ensure these goals are widely known and supported by the school community according to Hallinger and Murphy Instructional Leadership Model (1985).

4.4.1.1 Framing school goals

As a whole, it was found that only 5 principals from the total respondents of 24 principals mentioned about them involved in framing the school goals. Since Malaysia practices a centralized governing system, every school despite their geographical location and school size follows the same vision and goal set by the Ministry of Education, State Education Department and District Education Department Director. However, some principals emphasized their personal goals for their school. Usually it has a tie with the expectation and goal of the Ministry of Education and District Education Department Director which relates to the student achievement. The following excerpts are on creating school goals by the principals:

> *"It is my aim as a leader to ensure that all children achieve and it is my mission and go to ensure that we meet our targets and improve our target. My main target is to raise the UPSR all schools from 64% to 85%. My vision is to see the Improvement of academic results and to move into the top band one day in two years time. I would want to be remembered as someone who improved the school and took it from band 3 to 1" (Line 1:16 of Respondent #1)*

> *"I want to help students to achieve UPSR. I want to help all students in my school can read and write in 3 languages , which is in Bahasa Tamil, Bahasa Malaysia and English"* (Line 12:2 of Respondent #12).

> *"I have a big responsibility, my aim is for all the students to score well (in public examination)"* (Line 14.53 of Respondent #14).

From the responses of the principals, it is noted that, UPSR results was their utmost priority. Since academic results also determines the ranking of the school, it has been the priority. As, mentioned, these goals were tied to the goals of Ministry of Education. It gives great satisfaction for principals when they achieve their targeted results. On the other hand, one principal mentioned that it is their aim to ensure every students acquire basic numeracy and literacy skills (LINUS) during their early three years of primary education:

> *"We expect close to 100% reading and writing. So students must able to read and write and able to do mathematics 100%. That means no one should left behind. Now they calling LINUS where every student is expected to read and write and also do mathematics and also they are able to speak well. And we already achieve about 80% - 90%"* (Line 31:6 of Respondent #21)

Another principal indicated that her aim is to ensure no child is left behind and there must be fairly assisted in their education journey.

> *"Following the Government's principle that every child has to go to school....That is the first thing, Education for All....Second thing is that, helping everyone…. helping students to learn"* (Line 9:13 of Respondent #9).

From the responses it is identified that the principals were basically concern about the academic achievement and exam result of the students. These expectations are

closely related to the expectation and goals set by the Malaysian Ministry of Educations and District Education Department.

4.4.1.2 Communicating clearly school goals

Communicating school goals was mentioned by 3 principals. The following were shared by the respondents when discussing about communicating their school goals:

> *"When teachers report to school, I will talk to them regarding our mission and vision and what is their role" (Line 13:17 of Respondent #13).*

> *"We must share our vision with parents and teachers. They must know where we are heading and I need to enlist them" (Line 18:4 of Respondent #18).*

The principals response indicates parents and stakeholders need to know about the schools' vision and goals in order to know where the school is heading. However, this is not indicated by other principals.

4.4.2 Managing the instructional program

The second dimension of this model focuses on the leadership function of the principals in coordinating and controlling of instruction and curriculum in the school. There are three main functions of the principals, (i) supervising and evaluating instruction, (ii) coordinating curriculum, and (iii) monitoring student progress are included in this dimension of the model. It requires the principal's deeper engagement in the school's instructional development. It also assumes that the development of academic cores are key leadership responsibility.

4.4.2.1 Supervising and evaluating instruction

It was identified that 15 principals mentioned they supervise and evaluate instruction. However, it was indicated that monitoring is also done to improve teaching and learning process. The principals feel highly responsible to carry out their duty in supervising and evaluating instructions. At some schools the principal carries out the task of supervision and evaluation together with the Senior Assistant. The following were mentioned:

> *"When I observe them in the classrooms I ask them to come along- look at your friend's teaching" (Line 1:35 of Respondent #1)*

> *...I'm also responsible for analyzing teachers' performance. That is my job, so I hope that helps teachers to be better at what they do" (Line 1:46 of Respondent #1).*

> *"I find out more about teaching and learning through a learning walk. Teachers are busy. So I walk in and stand at the back. I do a learning walk every day but do not enter." (Line 2:13 of Respondent #2)*

> *We also have learning walks in each classroom and across the school and this helps me keep in touch with what is going on in lessons. I observe some classes everyday. In terms of student learning – again I visit classrooms and I analyze the strengths and weaknesses of teachers –then I give them feedback so they can improve" (Line 2:15 of Respondent #2)*

> *"I do inspections in every class. Every month every teacher is inspected and I sit and talk to the teachers about what they need to do to improve" (Line 4:34 of Respondent #4).*

> *"In the classroom of course we monitor, not just by walking. Every now and then we have to go into their classes and evaluate their teaching" (Line 14:23 of Respondent #14).*

> *"I am not observing to find their fault but want them to be excellent teachers" (Line 23:12 of Respondent #23).*

The principals seem to be very focused on monitoring as not to find fault but to help the teachers improve themselves in the area of teaching and learning. They also mentioned that feedback is given to the teachers upon observation done. On the other hand, it was also agreed by some principals that, supervision and evaluation process comes as an important task instructed from Ministry of Education and District Education Department.

> *"Every month I do a 30-minute observation of all of my teachers with my leadership team of course and give the teachers a grade. I have to submit these grades to the PPD at the district so that they can measure the performance of teachers every month" (Line 4:13 of Respondent #4).*

> *I do inspections in every class. Every month every teacher is inspected and I sit and talk to the teachers about what they need to do to improve" (Line 4:34 of Respondent #4).*

> *"We have to go around to the class, every morning, we have to go around the school to make sure the teachers go according to their time table, go into their class on time" (Line 19:28 of Respondent #19).*

Interestingly, a principal mentioned that supervision and evaluation is a team effort in their school. The individual panel heads together with the principal and the senior assistants does the monitoring process.

> *"We have a panel....in the panel we discuss about the pro and cons and whether the (academic) program is suitable or not. We call them Penitia, if the program is not suitable we scrap it" (Line 31:33 of Respondent #21).*

Supervision and evaluation of instruction is generally done by the principals for the improvement of teaching and learning. As indicated, these task also comes as a

directive form the Ministry of Education as well as state and District Education Department. However, principals were found being diligently engaged in this task.

4.4.2.2   *Coordinating curriculum*

Coordinating curriculum is not seen as a major task of the principals as the Senior Assistants in charge of curriculum are given the responsibility to coordinate curriculum. However, it was noted 10 principals mentioned that they coordinate curriculum especially by create creating extra learning hour in school to improve learning among the student and to prepare them towards the public examination:

> *"My strategy has been to put on extra classes. These classes take place after school 1 hour" (Line 1:18 of Respondent #1).*

> *"I set up the program from std 4, std 5 and std 6. Then we can see the achievement in std 6. When we start in std 6, you cannot see the achievement. So you must start from std 4. That is why I'm doing this program from Std 4. Then only I can achieve the target" (Line 13:14 of Respondent #13).*

> *"As a Head, you have to think a year ahead and plan well what you want to do for your students. If the past years activities don't suit, you drop the plan and I choose the plan which suits my students' level, then I will try to plan well so the following year it doesn't have any bad impact on my students" (Line 14:67 of Respondent #14).*

> *"Especially this year I myself said we need to start the tuition classes in the afternoon for standard 4, 5, 6 students" (Line 15:8 of Respondent #15).*

Though the Senior Assistants generally coordinates curriculum, the principals indicated that they oversee them and create opportunities for learning by having extra classes. The principals don't see coordinating curriculum as their core responsibility. Special programs to encourage learning for students in standard 4 in

order to develop them gradually to achieve the schools target in UPSR examination is also initiated by a principal.

4.4.2.3 Monitoring student progress

Only 4 principals mentioned that student progress is monitored by them. At most instances it was remarked that the teachers were expected to monitor student progress and manage them accordingly:

> *"Once a while I go around to the classes and check students' work. We have one program called "Operasi Menggilap Mutiara" (polish the pearl). We see students as pearls and so we polish them (Line 11:12 of Respondent #11).*

> *"I managed to stream them because from my observation, the performance of the students are not so encouraging, that is the reason why (I do streaming)" (Line 19:6 of Respondent #19).*

Streaming is done to further develop the students. For a more competent and independent process of evaluation, in one school in particular, the monitoring student process is given to a professional group. This company monitors the students' progress regularly and conducts motivation talks until the students sits for the public examination.

> *"So far when it comes to motivation talk, we have this talk every 3 months once. We are not just doing once or twice. So I want for example especially for my Year 6, the exam classes. Every 2 months they will come and service. It is outsourced. We pay this company, so they will come to motivate my students and they really monitor my students until their exam day" (Line 14:37 of Respondent #14).*

The student progress was generally monitored by the teachers in the classroom. However, as indicated, some principals take initiative to monitor student progress and plan programs for the academic achievement of the students.

4.4.3 Creating Positive School Climate

This dimension which is broader in scope and intent, includes five specific functions of the principals namely, (I) protecting instructional time, (ii) promoting professional development, (iii) maintaining high visibility, (iv) providing incentive for teachers, and (v) providing incentive for learning. The culture of continuous improvement is emphasized in this dimension. Instructional leaders are expected to align the school practices and standards with its mission and create a climate that support teaching and learning.

4.4.3.1   Protecting instructional time

Only 3 principals mentioned the sub dimension of protecting instructional time. Since instructional time is standardized by the Ministry of Education, the school leaders follows this direction. However, those principals who mentioned about this particularly said that extra classes are given to Standard 6 students who sit for the Primary School Assessment Test *(UPSR-Ujian Penilaian Sekolah Rendah)*. These are individual efforts taken with the assistance of other stakeholders in the school like Parent Teachers Association and the Board of Directors:

> *"In addition (to the one hour class after school) there's a Saturday*
> *class that takes place twice a month. The interim results from this*

approach has been an increase an achievement for year 6 pupils in the National exam" (Line 1:20 of Respondent #1)

"Early morning we'll start with the reading program, 7.10-7.40 a.m. For year 6 we have extra classes, we'll start lesson for them earlier, official time is 7.40 a.m." (Line 7:2 of Respondent #7).

"We are more concerned about year 6 because it's academic and they are about to sit for their UPSR, so we have many extra classes, morning, afternoon, Saturdays. We have motivation camp and invite speakers to come to teach answering techniques" (Line 20:25 of Respondent #20).

The principals feels that the extra classes organized are important for the achievement of the school goals which is the academic achievement especially the UPSR exam results. Besides the extra classes, there were no mention of how instructional time is protected in the school. Basically, the principals feel the teachers were carrying out their main responsibility of classroom teaching despite their heavy administration responsibilities.

4.4.3.2   *Promoting professional development*

In some schools initiatives are taken by the principals to have in-house training to develop a better teaching and learning. 13 principals mentioned about promoting professional development among the teachers. According to them, usually professionals are invited to conduct the training.

"We are now focusing more on academic work. I always call from outside people for courses for the teachers.... I find they need more training about teaching and learning. They improve themselves by attending training with the ministry but I encourage them to do further training. Some teachers are doing masters for example. Some

of my teachers also mark papers. It benefits my teachers and my students" (Line 4:41 of Respondent #4).

"For teachers we have in-house training from teachers who represented the school in outside training, they come back to teach the rest of the school." (Line 11:15 of Respondent #11).

"To improve the quality of teaching and learning, we have a group from China came to our school to conduct a program called Micro Teaching"(Line 22:39 of Respondent#22)

"We encourage them (teachers) to attend a short courses….For the Chinese school there are also courses conducted by other associations from China and Taiwan" (Line 22:51 of Respondent#22)

"We still keep up the LDP (Latihan Dalam Perkhidmatan – In Service Training) I told my teacher… if they need some courses to upgrade their teaching skills I will find some funds to have these training. This is very important. I also send them to Taiwan and China" (Line 22:70 of Respondent #22)

For some principals, peer learning is encouraged to develop their professional development. The Professional Learning Community concept is another initiative encouraged in the District.

"If you feel sciences or languages subjects are quite weak, I see number of teachers are, they really can't bring out, how to teach and all that, we can bring someone from within them. Maybe 1 or 2 senior teachers, we can talk to each other, like PLC (Professional Learning Community), they can teach and learn from each other, when they are from same age same group, they feel much easier they can sit and talk together" (Line 16:20 of Respondent #16).

Some principals also mentioned that they will do the training themselves using their expertise. They also attend professional development programs to enhance their skills and upon returning, they take initiative to teach the teachers.

"I train the teachers myself. I train my teachers myself. I don't call other consultants. I did it myself. I train all my English teachers. I'm the trainer" (Line 14:61 of Respondent #14).

"I like to go for conferences, I pay my own money to go for conferences, every year I go, when I come back from conference, I share with my teachers, especially about classroom teaching" (Line 7:29 of Respondent #7).

As the school leader, the principals seem to create opportunities for the professional development of the teachers. At some schools, initiatives are taken by the principals to have in-house training to develop a better teaching and learning. The principals seem to be concern of the professional development of the teachers as it influences student achievement. Attending training programs conducted for them as well as the teachers organized by the Ministry of Education, the State and District Education Department and District Department of Education are also seen as important by the principals.

4.4.3.3   *Maintaining high visibility*

On the sub dimension of maintain high visibility, it was noted in the deductive analysis that 14 principals perform this consistently since learning walk is a required task to be done by the school leaders as instructed by the District Education Director. Some principals mentioned that they come early in order to interact with non-teaching staffs. However, learning walk seems to be a challenging task since high volume of other administrative task are at hand.

"I do ensure that I walk around the school every day so teachers can see me. I go into classrooms and I talk to the teachers" (Line 1:41 of Respondent#1)

"On an average day I am bogged down with routine administration, seeing parents etc- but I always try at least for some part of the day to get out and see what is happening in classes" (Line 1:43 of Respondent #1).

"I go around another class and I see them teaching. They are doing their work. I always do that. I just want to find out. They know I am not around, are they sitting and teaching, are they talking to their friends..are attending the phone. I can see them they are really teaching" (Line 12:14 of Respondent #12).

"When I enter the school I won't go to the office. I just go around the school. First I talk to the security about any problem. After that, I go to the canteen to look at the arrangement there and then I go around the classrooms. After that I go to the special rooms like library and computer labs and have a glance. It will take about 40 minutes to an hour after that I will go to my office. The purpose is to show my presence. Every morning and before leaving the school i just go one round see any problem or not" (Line 31:32 of Respondent #21).

Principals also mentioned that they come early to school to greet and welcome the students. This practice seems a very meaningful one for the principals, to be early to welcome the student as they are able to show themselves to the parents as well which in turn builds a rapport with them.

"I am in by 7.05 I will be standing by the small gate where pupils come in - this is a 'loving program' initiated by the district education department. - with all my teachers in charge and one of my deputies. I welcome the pupils to the school- we greet them and the pupils, the kindergarten pupils" (Line 1:49 of Respondent #1).

"I'll be at the school gate to welcome the students. That is why I come early in the morning. When I got time I will linger around. I mingle with all the parents and I will chat with them" (Line 14:44 of Respondent #14).

"Everyday I will stand in front of the gate since the day one until today. So, slowly I felt that the parent started to know I am the principal" (Line 15:6 of Respondent #15).

"I will go straight to the front gate to meet up with parents, students, and welcome them. In this way, I can more or less know my parents and then whenever they have anything, they will come straightaway to me" (Line 19:12 of Respondent #19).

Looking at the responses of the principal, the function on maintaining high visibility is done by the principals to build relationship with the parents, staffs as well as students. Although it is enforced by the District Education Department Director, the importance of this function is well known by the respondents.

4.4.3.4   *Providing incentive for teaching*

On the matter of providing incentive for teaching, 12 principals indicated their conscious effort. Besides the awards given by the Ministry of Education and the District Education Department for teacher's achievement, some principals recognizes and rewards their teachers for their outstanding performances in the school. According to some principals, Teachers Day is seen as a time to appreciate the teachers. Thus, grand celebrations are done on the day. On the other hand, teachers efforts are also recognized with regular celebrations.

"Teachers Day means I want to do something for my teachers. Sometimes I buy for them biscuits, small small things also I buy. They'll think they are appreciated by HM.... Then we have potluck system, monthly once everybody will prepare one item and monthly well celebrate teacher's birthday, we'll buy something for them" (Line 7:41 of Respondent #7).

"I consider myself being close to my team. The Teacher's Day celebrated by the Ministry in May is not our main stay: we have our

own "teacher's day". We have our own "Board of Governor" who finance us. These are the society's captains of industry to come and reward and celebrate Teacher's Day with the community etc." (Line 17:16 of Respondent #17).

Teachers are also appreciated for their efforts in meetings and publicly in the schools. The principals indicated that the teachers are appreciated with kind words and gestures like giving them appreciation certificates and gifts.

"When we are having meetings, I just appreciate any of the teachers who had done well.... I appreciate them and I thanked the teachers who came back to teach during the holidays in front of other teacher" (Line 12:24 of Respondent #12).

"If they have good results, I appreciate them not just verbally, I would also give them a certificate that they did well for that particular year right. So I give them certificate from the school and I did one session with them to appreciate all my year 6 teachers. So they felt proud" (Line 14:15 of Respondent #14).

"For teachers we don't give money. We give trophy or any needed memento useful for the teachers" (Line 31:29 of Respondent #21).

Some principals also mentioned that the efforts and achievements of the teachers are recognized and celebrated by bringing them out for outings and overseas trips. This is also often done with the assistance of the stakeholders like Board of Governors and Parents and Teachers Association. The principal play an important role in forging the financial requisite to organize the trips.

"Once a while I would take my teachers out. Recognition is very important they feel that the principal, and they feel that we are working hard she know that she feel that...I will praise them, recognition from the principal, they feel much happier. When the class performed well I will reward the class teachers" (Line 16:25 of Respondent #16).

> *"We take teachers out to China on partially sponsored trips....these are things I do in going the extra miles....I always think about how to take care of my teachers. I organize gathering, trips etc" (Line 17:22 of Respondent #17).*

By having welfare funds for the teachers, one principal feel that the teachers are encouraged. This fund is used for various purpose specially to meet the needs of the teachers such as in times of special needs, to celebrate successes and special days this fund is used.

> *"Sometimes we don't just use words to encourage. We also have a Teacher Welfare Fund. Like this year I found around RM5000 sponsor for them" (Line 22:67 of Respondent #22).*

The function of the principals in appreciating the efforts of the teachers are given importance by the principals to motivate teachers to achieve better results. Teachers also seem to value the gesture of the principals and do better in their assignments when they are appreciated. Positive relationship with principal also motivates teachers to do more.

4.4.3.5   Providing incentives for learning

In terms of providing incentive for learning, only 3 principals mention these in their interviews.   Some of these principals celebrate the success of the students.   This aspect of providing incentive may seem less because students who are academically excelling are recognized and awarded at the school award giving day which held once a year.

> *"I invite VIPs to my school to showcase the success of the children" (Line 1:7 of Respondent #1).*

"We have weekly reward program during the Assembly. Last year one student went to state level competition to assemble a computer CPU. So we gave him a special financial award. We gave cash reward of RM500 to the student" (Line 31:28 of Respondent #21).

Principals gesture to reward the students by utilizing outside resources to appreciate student success is found to be very encouraging. Often the teachers were seen as the important figures to highlight the success of students to the principals. Genuine efforts are taken but there were very little mentioned about this function in the responses.

4.5 Research Question Two: How principals view their role as instructional leaders in Petaling Perdana District, Selangor?

An inductive analysis was done at the next phase of this research in addition to the PIMRS model. Based on this review, 10 themes were drawn though the inductive analysis which will be pointed out in this section and further discussed in the next chapter. The following themes which were drawn seem to and explains the successful change happened in the school especially in relation to the instructional effectiveness and school improvement.

4.5.1 Establishing Positive Expectation and Standard

This sub dimension is ascertained to be highly quoted the principals. 21 principals mentioned that they establish positive expectations and standards in the school they lead. The following are some of the quotes from the principals. These expectations seem to motivate the teachers to strive for betterment especially in terms of school

improvement and student achievements. Principals generally mentioned that specific

targets on academic achievement are set for the school to achieve because it implies

the standard of the school.

> *"It is my aim as a leader to ensure that all children achieve and it is my mission and go to ensure that we meet our targets" (Line 1:15 of Respondent #1).*

> *"I came in our school was in band 4 then2 years we went band 3 but last year my target is actually band 2, so last year then we worked for band 2 and we got it" (Line 7:10 of Respondent#7)*

> *"They (teachers) are more in their comfort zone, they felt like ok they got 48 straight As, that's it, they are already satisfied. But when I came there, I told them we can do much better than that. So the only thing I injected that time was I put the confidence level to all my teachers. The following year they got about 65 straight A's" (Line 14:11 of Respondent #14).*

> *"We expect close to 100% reading and writing. So students must able to read and write and able to do mathematics 100%. That means no one should left behind. Now they calling LINUS where every student is expected to read and write and also do mathematics and also they are able to speak well. And we already achieve about 80% - 90%" (Line 31:37 of Respondent #21).*

Principals also heard to say that the teachers are expected to complete the task

assigned to them without any excuses. Basic knowledge on using modern

technology is essentially important in schools. Often these expectations and

standards are realistic thus it need to be followed by the teachers and staffs.

> *"If you ask anybody this is a stress-free environment. This is very relaxed, but the work has to be done. I don't care when they do it or how they do it as long as the work is done. When the deadline comes then the work must be done. And this is how I want things done. When and how you do it doesn't matter to me but it has to be done on the teachers know this" (Line 3:3 of Respondent #3).*

"Every morning before 7.30am they (teachers) have to read their relief what class, they have to write their relief slip themselves, no more spoon feed finding the teacher… if I send the telegram means official send means you have to receive" (Line 20:8 of Respondent#20)

"I want my teachers to move towards the 21st century, they are teaching the students for the future, so the teachers must be well versed how to use technology, when I teach them, they teach the students, the students will enter the 21st century with some knowledge, every work, even the security guard need to learn how to use the computer" (Line 20:13 of Respondent #20).

As a leader, the principals of expect the teachers to demonstrate a positive self-image and be a role model for the students and others. According to the principal, the teachers were also expected to believe the potential of every child and teach the students until they are successful as it is their prime duty and responsibility.

"First of all as principal I should know, I should believe, all students can learn. I should express this believe to my teachers. I also shared to my teachers, different child learn differently, they use multiple intelligence through their learning process. We should identify what multiple intelligence in particular child use to learn" (Line 5:18 of Respondent #5).

"I make all teachers understand what they want to target. When you do not accomplish the target, what you should do if you fail, you have to find the way on how to improve. If you are not successful you have to change your way of teaching. Do not say that the students are not clever" (Line 23:10 of Respondent #23).

The principals were seen to be certain when they set their expectations and standards. These expectations and standards set by the principals certainly brings the teacher and the school out of their comfort zone and lead the schools towards greater progress and student outcome.

4.5.2   Creating a safe and orderly learning environment

Instructional leaders involve in critical processes such as planning, implementing, supporting, advocating and monitoring every aspect of the curriculum, instruction and improvement plans (Glanz (2006). They also create supportive work environment which includes professional development opportunities, time and space for staff collaboration. With that in thought, the following codes for the sub dimensions were drawn from the data.

The principals participated in this research has also indicated that maintaining the structure of the school building and creating a better classroom environment is their priority in order to promote better teaching and learning process. 14 principals mentioned that creating a safe and orderly environment is an essential function of being a leaders. The environment seems to play a very important part in teaching and learning. Various creative means were initiated by the principals for that purpose:

> *"I have tried to change the environment by the introduction of a mini zoo and a mini garden. I invite parents into these programs and encourage them to work with their children. We have many we have many Community programs that the children engage in these improvements and change" (Line 1:2 of Respondent #1).*

> *"Learning climate is very important because learning climate in the sense that we make the classroom attractive for the students that means we don't just have a whiteboard and maker pen. We also decorate the class with some interesting pictures and flowers, flower pots and we use color paintings. Our classrooms are not painted with white only. Conducive color that's attractive is used. It's very important. So we spend money on that (Line 31:27 of Respondent #21).*

The school infrastructure as well as classroom facilities were also improvised to match the needs of the current needs, particularly the 21st century concepts

classroom to further enhance the teaching and learning process. Besides the classroom, principals also ensure the other special activity rooms are well equipped.

> *"I have also asked my LPS to sponsor smart board. We don't want to be outdated, even though our school is small, but still our children, I don't want them to be deprived, what others are getting, I also want them to get"* (Line 7:23 of Respondent #7).

> *"About the school facilities, now we are planning with the board of governors a plan to build another block which consist of 4 stories which include the special classrooms, special classrooms means music room, science room, and activity halls. Currently we have a big hall but for a smaller one, a small auditorium can take about 300-400 students.... I hope that this project can be completed in the end of the year so that we can have more space more room for the students, then we can achieve better results than the previous years"* (Line 8:11 of Respondent #8).

> *"Recently we do the 21st century classroom. Smart classroom. Most of the classroom, 99% we change the classroom to 21st century with the help of the parents"* (Line 13:11 of Respondent #13).

> *"My goal for this year so that the class rooms are equip with LCD, because we do not have all these things, because we are looking for this 21st century learning, so we need to equip all the classroom with all the facilities"* (Line 19:17 of Respondent #19).

> *"All our classes have ICT facilities. Though this is a school situated at a village, we have good facilities. Actually with the help of the Lembaga and PTA my school has a very good atmosphere and learning environment. Very cool and positive"* (Line 22:63 of Respondent #22).

Besides just the classroom environment, this particular principal also feels the importance of the school canteen to enhance the learning of the student. His philosophy is that, since this is a vernacular school, by having a school canteen with variety of stalls by different races, the students will learn to interact in common language such as Bahasa Malaysia and English rather than only interacting in their

native language (refer to Appendix E for the pictures). This concept also promotes

unity in diversity as Malaysia is a country with multi races, culture and religion.

> *"The school canteen is run with 1 Malaysia concept with Malay stalls and Indian stalls besides Chinese stalls. The canteen is graded A by the local municipal's health department" (Line 22:19 of Respondent #22).*

The principals generally feel that students need a place that is physically,

emotionally and intellectually inviting. It is also evident that principals do take extra

efforts to create a safe and orderly environment with the help of other stakeholders

like Parents and Teacher Association (PTA), Board of Governors (BOG), as well as

the school alumni.

4.5.3 Providing opportunity for meaningful student involvement

The other theme that was seemed highly quoted was providing opportunity for

meaningful student involvement. 18 principals said that opportunities must be

created for student involvement. Besides academics, principals also seem to create

opportunities for co curriculum and other non-academic activities. Principals were

seen to giving consideration for reading programs to enhance the learning abilities of

the students. This initiative is also found to be initiated by the Director of the District

Education Department. Thus all the school in the district seem to echo on the

program.

> *"They (students) do not have a culture of reading which i wish they had. I am trying to cultivate this - Every morning children come before 7 and before they enter the class there is a reading program. They gather at the assembly hall and they all have to read. If they do*

have a book they are provided by the library" (Line 1:51 of Respondent #1).

"We always invent new programs, for example the reading program. Before assembly we get together. We always invent new programs so that the students can practice and achieve more (Line 3:15 of Respondent #3).

Every morning, we have morning reading when the student come to school at about 7o'clock before the school bell ring about 7.15am. on Tuesday we will be reading English books and following day will be Bahasa Malaysia books" (Line 8:21 of Respondent #8).

"Actually, my school students are from New Village they don't have the chance to speak Malay and English…I must create the environment for them to learn. So we did some activity like morning reading. Actually the concept is from our District Education Director" (Line 22:41 of Respondent #22).

On the other hand, principals also mentioned that they identify the talents and potential of the students and create opportunity for the students' involvement in non-academic activities which motivates the students.

"My school student's are good at playing ping pong and badminton performance are very good. Recently one of my year 4 student, a girl student she was the champion of MSSM Ping Pong under 12, year 4 student" (Line 8:8 of Respondent #8).

"Actually my school students are balanced with academic studies, moral education and outside activities" (Line 22:41 of of Respondent#22)

"Extra curriculum activities are very good. Like Basketball, School music band and others. We have school band for the past 40 years. This year we are going to Taiwan for the second time end of the year." (Line 22:77 of Respondent #22).

"We are organizing a big event this year that is going be organized by the famous Hong Kong TV station (Phoenix Broadcast). Our school is invited to perform at their dinner, and the whole world will be watching" (Line 11:6 of Respondent #11).

> *"I care for their academic success and not only in academic and also in co-curriculum in whatever they participate"* (Line 24:25 of Respondent #24)

Besides the curriculum and co-curriculum programs, principals also indicated that they are concern about the holistic development of the student. As such, special initiatives to promote student involvement and to improve their personal abilities, discipline and character building, interesting programs as mentioned below are carried out in their school.

> *"We had started 3 years ago. The name of the program is VAKS. We focus on the Visual, Audio, Kinetics, and Spiritual. We have a simple exercise, we tune to a soothing song in the morning....I notice the student can focus more and the discipline is much better. They can improve"* (Line 14:18 of Respondent #14).

> *"I give more emphasis on character building.... Some students are hard to teach because of the family background but we never give up on them. We organize camps to boost the morale and character of students. In my school we place emphasis on good behaviours and character."* (Line 17:13 of Respondent #17).

> *"We will make sure that no one should be left even the students slow learner and also those who are having discipline problem, we try to deal with them in a different way using different approach. We take different approach to make them a better student"* (Line 31:7 of Respondent #21).

From the responses of the principals, it's evident that they have been intensely creating opportunities for holistic student learning by various means. Besides academic, principals also seem to create opportunities on co-curriculum and other non-academic activities. Their efforts are well accepted and appreciated by the teachers, parents as well as students at large.

4.5.4 Developing staff collaboration

Developing staff collaboration is a theme that was mentioned by all 24 principals. This is something widely promoted among the schools by principals for an effective teaching and learning. The success of leadership is also attributed towards this collaborative effort. Other words like "team work" are also used by the principals to emphasize this collaborative effort. Following are some quotes mentioned by the principals on the team work:

"My Success as a leader is the fact that everyone comes together on works as a team. I have tried to instill in my staff the need to work together for the benefit of the children. all my teachers should know that we are there for the good of the children and that we need to work together as a team. It is my belief as a leader that we can only make progress by working as a team" (Line 1:24 of Respondent #1)

"It is about collaboration and valuing each other so we can achieve more together" (Line 1:32 of Respondent # 1).

"I do come up with lots of new projects and there's lots of new work. And then we all work together with all the new programs to improve things for the students. But we know what we want for all students" (Line 3:11 of Respondent #3).

"I will go for the best after discussion with all my colleagues then the chance of having a wrong decision is lesser" (Line 8:17 of Respondent #8).

"When you do something, you must have full support from the members. That is why I build a team. They do work together. So when you build the teamwork, then you can see the success. That is the most important formula for my leadership"(Line 13:2 of Respondent #13).

"So far I have a very good team with my other 4 vice principal. I have very good rapport with them and I know every problem that is happening to them and they can work and we collaborate well" (Line 14:50 of Respondent #14).

"All are responsible for our student's academic performance, that's why we form small groups and all teachers share the work load, so you take care of a few, i take care of a few, the whole school, the teachers in the school, they share out the workload" (Line 19:21 of Respondent #19)

"If we have great ideas, we share and they would try. I know the truth as a Head master if anyone shares knowledge with me, I will appreciate" (Line 23:9 of Respondent #23)

Besides that, principals also feel that a distributed leadership is essential to run the school towards success. Collaborative approach is seen as productive. Often these principals seem to give autonomy to the fellow colleagues in order that task and goals are achieved. The principals were noted saying the following in the conversation. They seem to trust and entrust the responsibilities especially that which relates to administration matters to teachers and senior assistance for better productivity.

"I believe in shared leadership and a collaborative approach. But there are rules to follow you know so we must also follow what the ministry says. I cannot know everything so I find it is okay to ask others their point of view. I seek help where I can but I know my responsibilities as a principal" (Line 2:2 of Respondent #2).

"My staffs work collaboratively. Yes, that's the strength of my staff. Very good collaboration from every aspect. Also my support staff, they are close to each other" (Line 10:1 of Respondent #10)

"I do a lot of empowerment. I distribute work to all my Senior Assistants and I have given them some of the authority to pass down some of their work to teachers. They also cannot do all the work so its empowerment all the way down to the teachers" (Line 10:7 of Respondent #10).

"Like any other government school I have 4 Vice Principals assisting me in my daily job. The VP for admin, VP for Student Affairs, VP for Co-curriculum and VP for afternoon sessions. Work is distributed among all of us" (Line 17:5 of Respondent #17).

"A leader must delegate his powers. That means not everything I must do. I make sure if today I am not here the senior assistant must play the role. I delicate to her and give her liberty to make some decision. Unless it's a policy decision or serious one, she have to call me" (Line 31:25 of Respondent #21).

"In our school, there are a number of senior assistants and deputy senior assistants, about 10 of them. I trust them fully and entrust them to make decisions unless when its important decision making to consult me.... I distribute quiet a lot of the work to my assistants" (Line 22:16 of Respondent #22).

Tough the principals fully trust and entrust their responsibilities, there is also mention of monitoring by them in order to keep the smooth running of the overall school. The principals also know their boundaries of what can be distributed and work under careful restriction. On the other hand, some principals also take initiative to collaborate with the teachers to enhance teaching and learning. The following was mentioned:

"I always practice collaboration with the teacher. I always try to help the teacher, in teaching and learning activities". (Line 5:4 of Respondent #5).

"When I took over, I gave the chance and collaborate with them (teachers). I make a schedule and they can come and see me whenever they free.... I work together. I make groups of teachers to work together. We can work together because when I had my first meeting with them, I've told them that I am very open and you can voice out whatever you wish even what you think that I am not doing the right." (Line 24:1 of Respondent #24).

This dimension on developing staff collaboration was commonly mentioned and widely promoted in the school by all the principals for effective teaching and learning. The success of leadership is also attributed towards this collaborative effort. Principals also feel these efforts are essential for greater success in the school.

4.5.5 Securing outside resources to achieve school goals

21 principals from among the research participants has indicated they actively involved in securing outside resources to achieve school goals. They mentioned that at most instances the Parents and Teachers Association and the Board of Directors play an important role in assisting the principals to secure funds and other means to improve teaching and learning in the school. Parents also seen to be contributing towards the needs of the improvement of the school. However, it is identical to note that principals play a very important role in securing outside resources.

> *"One of the strengths of the school is that there is now a strong PTA who buy resources for the school and also pay for additional training for the teachers such as getting experts to come in to give talks" (Line 4:1 of Respondent #4).*

> *"Beside PIBG [Parent and Teacher Association], Tamil school has board member called LPS, and my LPS member are doing excellent job for the benefit of the student. Most of the LPS members are business people and they are very dynamic" (Line 5:14 of Respondent #5).*

> *"LPS also, they're very supportive after seeing improvement of the school, like building anything we need they will help us, education we need fund for students, PIBG will help" (Line 7:16 of Respondent #7).*

> *"The Parent-Teacher Association are very close and help us a lot" (Line 10:6 of Respondent #10).*

> *"I have discussed with the PIBG chairman, since this girl has so excellent achievement in the Ping Pong, this year we try to get coach from outside for the school. When external coach comes in we have to pay more. I talked to the PIBG committee and they all agreed to bring in external coach" (Line 8:9 of Respondent #8).*

> *"For some teachers, they were sponsored by the PIBG to do the 7 habits of effective people and come back to teach the rest of the school" (Line 11:16 of Respondent #11).*

"We have a special allocation of RM10000 from the Parent & Teachers Association and the Board on Governors allocated for teacher motivation" (Line 22:36 of Respondent #22)

"Actually with the help of the Lembaga and PTA my school has a very good atmosphere and learning environment" (Line 22:63 of Respondent #22).

The principal's good rapport with the Parents and Teachers Association and Board of Governors is seen as an essential tool for better partnership of them in the school. On the other hand, proactive principals also seem to have good rapport with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO), friends and society at large to vigorously get resources that aid the needs of the school and to appreciate the efforts of the teachers and students. The parents and NGO's also comes in to fill in the gaps especially to develop the student learning, extra curricular activities and to improve school facilities.

"I have NGOs that come and work with the weakest students in particular standard two on a Saturday" (Line 4:12 of Respondent #4).

"My rapport with NGOs also very good. They buy prizes for the students, gifts and food. Sometimes I look for my own sponsors for the children. My teachers also, every year for teachers' day I am buying for them, expensive things, like last year I bought for them batik material, year before that, I bought watch for everybody…" (Line 7:38 of Respondent #7).

"I get my funding from mostly Chinese philanthropists – many who have made it in life and who lament their lack of education but who are generous to donate towards Chinese education" (Line 17:19 of Respondent #17)

"I socialize among donors to get them to support our cause. We get a lot of help from China. We send teachers over to China for training and visits. For example, a trip to Guangzhou would normally cost a

person at least RM3,000 but I could get the Chinese to offer us a lower rate so my teachers could visit Guangzhou with just RM1,000" (Line 17:21 of Respondent #17).

"When I do "gotong royong", I engage IM4U mutual cooperation, I involve former students, volunteers, youth. They paint the kindergarten. They provide the paint" (Line 23:28 of Respondent #23)

"It was normal to ask how you got money. It is up to you because you have the talent. For example, Taekwondo Association, I ask what their contributions to school are. They promised to upgrade the parking space" (Line 23:29 of Respondent #23).

The The principals sees parents assistance and their involvement in school is seen as something important. The principal seems to secure resources particularly from parents to achieve the school needs.

"One more we have is the football club. We engage the outside professional coach. Last 2 years I already implement the program. So most of our parents the court is sponsored by one person" (Line 13:13 of Respondent #13).

"Recently, we had cross-country activity and I already have 26 volunteers means the parents who volunteer to come and be the road guide for the students" (Line 15:18 of Respondent#15).

"For me my school is very small and the field condition is not good. So, we circulate out a notice to invite parents to help. We do two times to prepare school field for sports days. They were very supportive, some parents said next time if you need any help you can inform us" (Line 15:20 of Respondent #15).

"To make this program not a burden for the teachers, I set up e-sarana, e-sarana ibu bapa, this is under PPPM, whereby we gather all those interested parents to come in, to contribute to the school. Because school is really an open concept whereby we invite the private sector to come in to help the school to grow, this is kind of the concept that we try to have to cooperate with the PIBG" (Line 19:24 of Respondent #19).

"We have a group of mothers come everyday to assist in the school. They come and help the afternoon session students in various activities like to play chess, in reading, singing and besides that whenever the school has other activities they will be there to help. There are in total 12 foster mothers" (Line 22:33 of Respondent #22).

"For standard 1 and standard 2, we have parents coming in for story telling. And then for another 2 days, we have Di Zhi Gui (Recitation of confusion proverbs). Our parents also come in for standard 3 and 4, and then we have this exercise, aerobics, and two days dizhigui for standard 3 and standard 4. We have different activities in the morning" (Line 19:40 of Respondent #19).

Principals participated in this study played an important role in securing outside resources to achieve school goals. They are actively involved in securing funds and other means to improve teaching and learning in the school. This responsibility is seen to be vital as the resources given by the government are limited to achieve desired goals and plans. A good personal relationship with the stakeholders and outsiders is an important skill attained by many of these principals.

4.5.6 Forging link between home and school

In order to have a greater learning outcome for students, 19 principals agrees on the importance of forging link between home and the school as part of their leadership. Though this is also seen as a challenging task, they see it as a very important responsibility. The relationship build with the parents and home of the students also seen to reduce parental complains and enhances parent's involvement in the student's academic matters. Besides that parents involvement in the school also enable the school to have enhancing activities. For instance in one school, Foster Mother *"Ibu Penyayang"* programs is carried out to encourage and assist students who are slow in academic studies. According to the responses, such programs and other support from

the parents to achieve school goals are only feasible with a positive link between school and home.

> *"I have spent a great deal of time with the Parents Teachers Association and the community organizations to generate a better working relationship"* (Line 1:1 of Respondent #1).

> *"I try to involve parents, as i said before we try and get them into the school in various ways…. this is important for our students' success"* (Line 1:27 of Respondent #1).

> *"I believe that Parents do play an important role in their children's education. If they don't take the initiative to ensure their progress in school, then we also will have a hard time"* (Line 9:14 of Respondent #9).

Open door policy is practiced by some principals to forge the link between the school and home. By creating a positive relationship with the parents, it is assumed that most of the parental complains and student discipline problems can be restrained. Avenues are given for the parents to voice their opinions and struggles to the principal.

> *"I tell the parents to come and see me if a teacher are not doing their job. So for example if a teacher isn't teaching properly, or a student doesn't understand, then I tell the parents to come and complain to me. I can then go to the teacher and tell them what the parents are saying"* (Line 4:32 of Respondent #4).

> *"In job description of principal, one of the important is good relationship with parent and the public. This also help me a lot to run a school smoothly. I always practice visible and accessible policy in the school, I always trying to be in the school, unless there is important meeting. Parents and the public come to the school because I always invite them to visit me in the school, to discuss things"* (Line 5:2 of Respondent #5).

"When you working together with the parents, we can see the problem giving by the parents very less. When parents start giving problem to the school, we cannot do anything.... 2 months once we meet the parents, so they give full support" (Line 13:22 of Respondent #13).

"We will call parents for any activity, if we have some community activity like (gotong-royong) and cultural activity that involves the parents. We are all together. They have good relationship with the teachers.... We must bring in the community inside, bring the teachers inside so make them work together. Management will be very easy." (Line 16:9 of Respondent #16).

"When our relationship with parents becomes closer and their involvement become stronger, teaching and learning process becomes better and student achievement also increases. Besides that student's discipline problems and parents complains also decreases" (Line 22:28 of Respondent #22).

Links between school and home is also essential to keep the parents updated on the latest happenings and systems employed in the school. Social medias are also used as a mean to build the link and keep the parents informed.

"I will call them (parents) to give them briefing with new formats, always update with them so my parents all really updated with new and current issues" (Line 7:14 of Respondent #7).

"I allow the class teacher and the parents to communicate using whatsapp. Only to talk about the academic of the child. So they will know where their children are" (Line 14:25 of Respondent #14)

"Our school we have a lot of activities from January until the school close and they can see all the activities in the school Facebook. So we interact with the parents and they can see all the pictures" (Line 14:35 of Respondent #14).

According to the principals, this is also an instruction from the Ministry of Education and the District Education Department to build link between the school and home for a smooth and effective running of the school.

"To make this program not a burden for the teachers, I set up e-sarana, e-sarana ibu bapa, this is under PPPM, whereby we gather all those interested parents to come in, to contribute to the school" (Line 19:24 of Respondent #19).

"Since last year, we are doing our campaign to encourage more parents to come to the school activities – through the Parents Support Group - KESIB (Kesatuan Sokongan Ibu Bapa – Parents Support Club)" (Line 10:8 of Respondent # 10).

It is a constant effort taken by the principals in the school to build the bridge between the school and home. From the responses, it is undeniable that there is a need for good link between the school and home. However, there is an invariant challenge in this area.

4.5.7   Sense of Responsibility

Beside the above findings, the researcher also identified the following themes reoccurring from the data through the inductive analysis. The data indicates that 20 principals mentioned on the importance of having a sense of responsibility in bringing the school to betterment and to impact the lives of the students not only academically but also to build them as a person. As they are appointed to a particular school and entrusted with the responsibilities by the Ministry of Education, State and District Education Department, the principals feel that, without having the sense of responsibility, they will not be able to bring a positive change in the school especially in the area of teaching and learning and student achievement. Besides that, they also feel accountable to the State and District Education Department.

"My main aim as leader is to improve outcomes and in particular to improve the learning achievements of my children and to raise test scores. This is what the ministry expects of me and this is what I should achieve during my time at the school" (Line 1:14 of Respondent #1).

"As I was given the opportunity to lead the school, it is my responsibility to take it forward. I feel happy and pleased that I can take the school forward. This is a joy to me to move the school forward" (Line 2:4 of Respondent #2).

"There are tasks only I can do because I am responsible to the District and the Ministry for these things. Like the school achievement, I must ensure we still perform at the highest level. That is my job" (Line 2:19 of Respondent #2).

"The principal plays a very important role on the performance of the children. It's a very important role because all of the success comes from the leadership....When the result go down, they (District Education Department) will ask the HM why? What happen? So you must all the time focus on the learning process. If the learning not good, you have to do something" (Line 13:27 of Respondent #13).

"As a school leader, commitment to the school, commitment to the work is very important, and then of course accountability, anything that happens in the school we have to be accountable for that." (Line 19:43 of Respondent #19).

The school leaders and teachers play a very crucial role in believing the student as a potential person and take responsibility in moulding them. Understanding their backgrounds and taking personal interest is also considered as important. Disciplining students is also seen an important responsibility of the school leaders and teachers as defined in the responses of the principals. Principals who mentioned on this dimension seem to have experienced positive student achievements and school improvement.

"We do have quality students yes, we have students who get A's, yes. But I want quantity, all of the students should pass at least the basics. If the students can't do this then it is our responsibility. When they get to the secondary school this is when the problems start" (Line 3:13 of Respondent #3).

"I am responsible for the student achievement which is what the ministry wants. So my job is about improving result...Everybody must work hard to achieve the results. Not only me, but it is my job to make sure that everybody focuses on academic" (Line 4:45 of Respondent #4).

"I want to help students to achieve UPSR. It is my responsibility. I want to help all students in my school can read and write in 3 languages, which is in Bahasa Tamil, Bahasa Malaysia and English" (Line 12:2 of Respondent #12).

"I have a big responsibility. My aim is for all the students to score well. Those who can excel of course I will brush them up until they get good results. For those who did not excel yet for primary level, at least they are able to speak, able to write and able to understand simple Maths for me I'm proud of them" (Line 14:53 of Respondent #14).

"I told them (teachers) to see the student as your own child. If your own children are able to excel, the students are able to do that" (Line 14:58 of Respondent #14).

"We have to take care of students learning and academic result. I mean this is a very big portion also of my responsibilities" (Line 15:29 of Respondent #15).

"Principal is fully responsible for student learning in school. Because you lead the teachers and you are the role model for the students." (Line 22:55 of Respondent #22).

The importance of having a sense of responsibility in bringing the school to betterment and to impact the lives of the students not only academically but also to build them as a person were seen as essential by the principals. The school leaders and teachers play a very crucial role in believing the student as a potential person and take responsibility in moulding them.

4.5.8 Ministry Expectations

This sub dimension indicates the principals role in fulfilling the call of the Ministry of Education as well as the State and District Education Department in particular according to the data collected and the inductive analysis done. These responsibilities are related to the school teaching and learning process as well as the academic achievement. As in Malaysia a centralized governance of education system is practice, complying to the inclination of the Ministry is a requirement. 16 principals mentioned on their managerial responsibilities they are coping with while leading their schools. For instance, these principals mentioned that fulfilling the requirements set by the Ministry of Education, State and District Education Department especially in attaining targeted results has been their major concern.

> *"The Ministry of Education oversees the school and sets targets for us. The district also set targets and goals and they try to support us. We just follow what they say. All schools have to do this as expected. The Ministry expect me to deliver better results" (Line 1:26 of Respondent #1).*

> *"The school's results are very important to the Ministry - I am judged on that. As I mentioned earlier, results are everything so we have to do our best" (Respondent #2).*

> *"The ministry's measure of success is by the quality, that is the number of A's that we get and not just the quantity....Now there is writing for English too in the exam so that is an extra burden for us" (Line 3:17 of Respondent #3).*

> *"In terms of the ministry my role is clear the results must be very very good...They are not concerned about the students level because you are responsible as a principal for that." (Line 4:20 of Respondent #4).*

"The core business of the school in Malaysia is academic performance. So for primary school is the UPSR results. Because it also links with the NKRA (National Key Result Areas) of the school, where the placing of the school in Malaysia, they will look 70% at the UPSR results, only 30% to the SKPM (Standard Quality Education Malaysia" (Line 10:13 of Respondent #10)

"District Education Director targeted 12% of pupils getting 5A. That was his target" (Line 23:5 of Respondent #23).

Principals also mentioned that reporting to the District Education Department on the teachers performance is also an important aspect in their job description. These reports are sent every month as mentioned by Respondent #4.

"I have to submit these grades to the PPD at the district so that they can measure the performance of teachers every month" (Line 4:20 of Respondent #4)

The Ministry of Education as well as District Education Department also have various programs and systems that which is expected to be followed by the schools. The principals are required to follow the system and expected to deliver what is required form them.

"We have to know the latest what the Ministry is implementing you have to abide what they have already given to you and you have to impart all the knowledge to the teachers" (Line 14:6 of Respondent #14).

"They give us the guideline on certain things we have to achieve like for example LINUS it must be 95% and above" (Line 14:42 of Respondent #14).

"All the program to the Ministry and then empowered through the State Education Department and District Education Department we have to follow – we have to deliver" (Line 10:20 of Respondent #10).

Most times, principals are also expected to attend meetings and courses organized by the District, State as well as Ministry of Education. In actual it was also seen through observation and from the responses of the principals that they are heavily loaded with paper works. This tasks always takes much of their time in the school. However, it is an unavoidable bureaucracy in a centralized education system employed in Malaysia.

"Typically my day is full of tasks that I have to do for the District - lots of paperwork" (Line 1:40 of Respondent #1).

"The demands from ministry of education, sometimes it takes a lot of work to complete, lots of form and paperwork to be completed." (Line 5:15 of Respondent #5).

The principals also mentioned that every initiative and implementations from the government is an imperative to be followed. Thus, when many new things are implemented, the teachers and the principals struggle to follow as they juggle their time with their primary task which is teachings and learning.

"Apart of teaching we have to follow and do whatever the government implement, we must follow that" (Line 12:3 of Respondent #12).

"PPD already mentioned every month we have to choose 10% of the teachers to monitor the teaching. We will go in to sit in for the teaching and learning process and then we need to report to PPD (Line 15:25 of Respondent #15).

"There are many new programs that we just cannot cope with. These are coming from the district and from the ministry and there's so many we cannot cope with them we just cannot cope. Plus they (District and Ministry of Education) always want results" (Line 3:12 of Respondent #3).

"In the present I want my teachers to all be skilled in ICT, because the government wants everything to be 'e', everything need to be recorded" (Line 20:4 of Respondent#20)

"We have this SPSK (Sistem Pengurusan Sekolah Kualiti – Quality School Managing System), because Selangor is the pioneer for this one it's system" (Line 20:15 of Respondent #20).

The need for principals to fulfil the requirements of the Ministry of Education as well as the State and District Education department is seen as their major task and their daily cores. Although it takes much of their time in the school, the respondents indicate that these requirements are essential to be fulfilled.

4.5.9 Role modelling

From the inductive analysis done, it was found that 15 principals have have indicated that role modelling is essential in fulfilling their roles as a leader. They lead by example and demonstrate what is expected from the teachers being a role model.

"I think what I do is that I show and demonstrate a positive attitude to learning that I hope teachers and students see every day. I have to show them that I am positive about learning so they will be too." (Line 1:48 of Respondent #1).

"I model how I want teachers to be. I am punctual to their lessons, I give proper feedback, I listen to what they have to say" (Line 2:16 of Respondent #2).

"I leave my house very early, 5.30 I'll be in school, but I got to show a good example for my teachers. My teachers, even the school starts at 7,40, I'll ask them, 90 percent will be in school before 7.00 a.m" (Line 7:1 of Respondent #7)

"I don't like to force them but I lead them and normally they would look at me as a role model. It is not easy to become a principal

because you must show good example. So I'm a person who is very punctual and make sure I reach school before 7a.m. and I would always go back late" (Line 14:9 of Respondent #14).

Being a role model and setting an example certainly help the followers (teachers and student) to instill values in them and to succeed in life. It also stirs the creativeness and innovation among the people you lead. As such being an example and walking the talking is essential for a leader as pointed by the principals.

"We must be good example for them, and the teachers must be good examples for the students"(Line 7:35 of Respondent #7).

"The School Administrator from the Head Teacher and all the Senior Assistants have to walk the talk." (Line 10:34 of Respondent #10).

"I feel as the head, you have to show good example. Actually I'm a role model. Role model to the school" (Line 14:47 of Respondent #14).

"I always make sure that I'm involved inside every activity, every activity done in the schools and for everything we must be role model." (Line 16:13 of Respondent #16).

"A leader must set an example to the staffs. If the leader themselves not shows the example then the organization will be in difficult situation so the leader need to set an example by doing things in right way. I always lead by example." (Line 31:2 of Respondent #21)

There were also instances where principals proudly mentioned that they had role models who have influenced their life to be who they are today. The role of the role models was seen as a significant factor for their success.

"I learned how to become a principal from my previous Headmasters. Some of them were good and of course I don't follow the things that weren't so good. I learned a lot from them.... I also

learned from other Headmasters too and other schools. One school in Johor has helped me. That HM has given me a few booklets. I take my teachers there too. I have also visited another few schools and learned from the HM's there" (Line 4:3 of Respondent #4).

"I have been under a few headmasters and i learned a lot from them" (Line 19:2 of Respondent #19).

"I learn to be a leader from my seniors. There are 5 of them who have retired taught me about leadership, management and working together with the Board of Governors. I always consult my senior headmaster and headmistress. If facing any school problem I consult them or discuss with other headmaster and headmistress. So we learn from each other" (Line 22:9 of Respondent #22).

There was an instance where it was indicated that the principal takes initiative to create opportunity for the teachers to go and gain experience and knowledge from successful school who have portrayed significant conception in their schools. Such schools can be role modelled.

"I gave the staff other examples of how other schools do it and I tell them that if they can do it so can we and I give them examples and opportunities to go and see it for themselves" (Line 3:24 of Respondent #3).

Leading by example and demonstrating in their actions what is expected from the teachers is considered important. By living an exemplary life the principals believe they can be a positive influence that brings about improvement as subordinates always looks up to the leaders who directly lead them.

4.5.10   Managerial assertiveness

Managerial assertiveness is also a factor that was seen among the respondents. 14 principals mentioned in the responses that they are assertive when it comes to

fulfilling task assigned to the teachers. The teachers and staffs are also expected to be

punctual and disciplined. These principals feel that being firm is essential.

Orderliness and following the laws and orders are of utmost important. Teachers and

staff who do not confine to the order and gives problem will be removed from the

team. Sometimes they are mentioned as autocratic leaders to fulfill the task given and

achieve set goals.

> *"The work has to be done. I don't care when they do it or how they do it as long as the work is done. When the deadline comes then the work must be done. And this is how I want things done. When and how you do it doesn't matter to me but it has to be done on the teachers know this"* (Line 3:33 of Respondent #3).

> *"If I'm supposed to do something then I'll make sure I do it. If my teachers are supposed to do something then they must do it too. I will support them but they are responsible"* (Line 4:44 of Respondent #4).

> *"I always tell them that I have two styles of leadership, one is Laissez-faire and the other is Dictatorial. I'll allow them the flexibility to get it done, and if they can't get it down, then I'll have to force it down their throat"* (Line 9:16 of Respondent #9).

> *"At certain point you have to be autocratic. Depends on the condition of the situation and condition at that particular time you need."* (Line 14:7 of Respondent #14).

> *"Sometimes I myself felt that we need to do a very firm decision especially in the meeting, there are many things positive/negative so we have to do the decision."* (Line 15:21 of Respondent #15).

> *"Towards the end of the year, I told my PKs (Senior Assistants), this is the dateline and I want the management book. By hook or by crook they did deliver on time"* (Line 24:19 of Respondent #24).

> *"To me, everything must be done in systematic order, everything needs to be recorded, and put in the file. And let's say there is work to be done, if can settle today I will settle, I will not hold until tomorrow. I always give them (teachers) dead line so they must follow the deadline"* (Line 20:2 of Respondent #20)

"Teachers must follow my instructions. If a teacher fails to follow my instructions I will not penalize them. I will do the job. For example classroom management. If they fail to do I will enter the class and I will ask the teacher to excuse himself/herself and ask them to go and sit at the back of the classroom and watch what I'm doing...That's why when I give any work, now days they will complete it... I will always say there is no excuse" (Line 31:18 of Respondent #21).

When the teachers or senior assistance are found uncooperative or not abiding to the law and order, the principals uses their positional authority to remove them from the school. These principals were very assertive as the productivity of their school and achieving the targets are their utmost priority.

"When you give every chance to them, they still don't change, I'll talk to the PPD (District Education Department), transfer to other school. That is my last choice. So they have to do it, if they don't do it, they will spoil others. That is my last choice. If there is many chances already, I have to take the action. If I don't take action, it will spoil others." (Line 13:40 of Respondent #13).

"(I am) Very strict. Law by law maybe, whatever instructions coming down from the MOE, we have to do, we have to abide. I have told them we are civil servants and then we are a ground worker, that's why we have to follow instructions" (Line 19:25 of Respondent #19).

"When I first entered the school, they are 5 senior teachers that are uncooperative, they form cliques, they cannot change with the times, because they have been in this school for too long. I kick them out one by one, some of them voluntarily transfer out" (Line 20:22 of Respondent #20).

Being assertive in their approach and sometimes being autocratic is seen as important by the principals. This also increases productivity and enhances better performance among the staffs to produce better results. On the other hand, it also inflict fear in the teachers and staff to accomplish their duties and responsibilities tactfully.

4.6   Research Question Three: What are teachers' general perception of principals as instructional leaders in Petaling Perdana District, Selangor?

Research question three is answered from data derived from four focus group interviews done among 5-6 teachers from four schools where the principals shown distinct level of instructions leadership as well as significant changes in terms of academic achievements. Besides that an observation was also done at the particular schools shortlisted. In the first part a findings resulted from a deductive analysis is presented. Subsequently reoccurring themes from the transcript through a inductive analysis are presented.

4.6.1   Teacher's view of Principals' conceptual understanding of instructional leadership in Petaling Perdana District, Selangor.

The first level of finding from the focus group interview data analysis derived from deductive reasoning from the PIMRS Instructional Leadership Model (1985) to gather the conceptual understanding of Instructional Leadership in Petaling Perdana District.

4.6.1.1   Framing school goals & Communicating clearly school goals

None of the focus group respondents mentioned about the principals framing school goals and communicating school goals.

4.6.1.2   Supervising & evaluating instructions

6 teachers mentioned about their principals supervising and evaluating instructions from 3 focus group. It was generally mentioned that, normally supervision is done during learning walk.

"He will observe during learning walk. He closely observe" (Line 25:42 of respondent R2 of SB).

"I'll say 90% of the time he will just allow us to go ahead and gives the autonomy. At the same time he will be observing as well" (Line 25:43 of respondent R1 of SB).

"Most of the time this principal come for learning walk and walk into our classroom." (Line 27:33 of respondent R3 of HC).

According to the teachers, they do not feel pressured or stressed when the principal does evaluation and supervision as they are comfortable with the principal (Respondent R4 of BD, Line 28:33). Their responses corroborate with what the principals have said. Principals seem to fulfil this essential duty as stipulated in their job description.

4.6.1.3   Coordinating Curriculum

There were 9 teacher participant indicated from 3 focus group that their principals involve in coordinating curriculum. Teachers also have mentioned that they coordinate curriculum together with other peers in the form of Professional Learning Community (PLC) method which is being widely promoted by the district.

"Our headmaster initiates many programs. Some of the programs that we see its effective are like study room morning reading program. The morning reading program involves all three languages namely, Bahasa, English & Chinese" (Line 25:8 of respondent R2 of SB).

"In terms of academic achievements, especially in terms of choosing of workbooks for students, he makes early preparation and gives us

*time to choose the right workbooks for them. He prepares us early
for the task every year" (Line 25:25 of respondent R2 of SB).*

*"Another initiative the headmaster has taken is bringing in the DLP
program (Dual Language Program) to our school. DLP is about
having science and maths in English for year 1 and year 4 next
year." (Line 26:44 of respondent R3 of BK).*

Though the Senior Assistant in-charge of curriculum is directly involved in the
matters pertaining coordinating curriculum, the school principals were seen to be
coordinating programs which may enhance learning in the school. Autonomy also
given to the teachers especially subject panel heads to coordinate curriculum while
principal contributes new ideas and create opportunities to enhance learning process
in the schools and to uplift the standard of the school.

4.6.1.4   *Monitoring student progress*

From the data, only twice teachers from 2 focus group mentioned about monitoring
student progress. This dimension is also seen as a major role of the teachers rather
than the principal themselves. Through various programs the students are supported
as well.

*"We have a 'student foster' program where the weaker students are
coached. For example, a teacher will take two capable students who
can pass and personally coach them. Every week they meet at least
for an hour." (Line 25:9 of respondent R2 of SB).*

*"As teachers we must have the nature to ensure a student improve
ad become clever. If a student doesn't improve even after our
initiatives, we must have substitute plans. Teachers always working
hard in improving student achievement." (Line 26:18 of respondent
R1 of BK).*

Teachers shared they carry out the function of monitoring student progress in the school through student foster programs and mentoring. The initiatives of teachers in bringing a change in the life of the students were highly prioritized according to the interview data.

4.6.1.5 Protecting instructional time

There was 1 teacher who mentioned of this dimension in the focus group session. However, the morning reading program which begins before the school hours and extra classes for students who are taking public examination which as mentioned by the principals were acknowledged by the teachers.

> *"Challenges are most of the time from the parent's side. Parent's side, in case if we want to punish the student sometimes they think we harm them but it's not like that. Most of the time our principal will help us. He will handle this kind of matter" (Line 27:6 of respondent R2 of HC).*

4.6.1.6 Promoting professional development

This dimension on promoting professional development was mentioned 20 times by teachers in all 4 focus groups. Principals were applauded for their initiatives taken to encourage the teachers for professional development. The teachers mentioned that their principal encourages them to become exam paper markers. By doing this the school gets first hand tools on the techniques on answering exam questions which benefits the teaching and learning in the school

> *"The headmaster always encourages teachers to go and improve their skills. For example, he pushes me to become an examiner for*

UPSR examination. So he encouraged me recent to attend the course conducted to mark exam paper I'm grateful for having him as my boss. He takes responsibility on teachers performance and to make them competent." (Line 25:26 of respondent R2 of SB).

"This school is very special as we have a lot of exam markers as compared to the other schools. In our school for one subject probably we have 3 markers. So you can see that the competence level in these teachers is different. When you have equip yourself with adequate of techniques, like how to tackle this academics questions. So it helps the students (Line 25:59 of respondent R1 of SB).

Besides being the public exam paper markers, some principals also encourage the teachers to get themselves involve in post graduate studies and lifelong learning. The teachers who are involved in post graduate studies were also given special permissions and lesser workload to encourages them to develop themselves.

"Our headmaster always encourage the teachers towards life long learning. He always introduce books and articles to read especially in the area of education. He also encourage us to go for distance learning. Many teachers in our school are doing post graduate studies." (Line 25:35 of respondent R4 of SB).

"The principal encourage teachers also to participant certain courses to enhance teaching skill and improve our knowledge in teaching." (Line 28:2 of respondent R1 of BD).

Development programs and workshops, particularly in regard to the latest trends and inclinations were initiated by the principals in order to uplift and empower the teachers professional standards.

"After this Headmaster came we also plan some staff development for the teachers on 21 century classroom and education. He also does some workshops" (Line 27:31 of respondent R3 of HC).

"We are doing well now. We get what we need. We needed more exposure on technique in teaching and staff development." (Line 27:37 of respondent R4 of HC).

Besides just sending the teachers to other training programs and courses, at times, the principals also trained the teachers on their niche area.

"She shared a lot of information on teaching and as more she is an English teacher. So she really trained us certain technique of answering question in English, method of teaching, strategies and so many things she had shared with us" (Line 28:14 of respondent R1 of BD).

The principals were seen concern about the professional development of the teachers as it affects the overall performance of the school. As such, as an instructional leader they create opportunities and allow the teachers be grow holistically.

4.6.1.7   *Maintaining high visibility*

4 times from 2 focus groups teachers mentioned on the maintaining high visibility sub dimension. However, all focus group agrees that their principals does learning walk. This is shows the principals are visible.

"Most of the time this principal walk around the school and he also walk into our classroom." (Line 27:33 of respondent R3 of HC).

"She is always around. You can approach her anytime. If u got any problem u can even call her or walk in." (Line 28:12 of respondent R4 of BD).

"Even parent walks into her room and she entertain them and make them go back satisfied. Open door policies." (Line 28:51 of respondent R5 of BD)

From the responses of the teachers, it is noteworthy that principals are visible in their school though they are held up with many duties and responsibilities, the availability of the principal when the teachers and parents need to meet them was applauded.

4.6.1.8   *Providing incentive for teachers*

On the dimension of principal providing incentive for teachers, there were 4 times teachers mentioned this in 3 focus groups. The principals were seen as someone who cares for the teachers and takes care of their welfare. They are also being appreciated for the motivation they give the teachers.

> *"There is a program created by the headmaster on 'co-teaching'. He also started a fund to sponsor the teachers to attend the program held in Taiwan and encourage them to go" (Line 25:39 of respondent R3 of SB).*

> *"This headmaster always motivates us. Whenever we do any program or complete any work, he appreciates us and do something appropriate to motivate us for the work done" (Line 27:14 of respondent R4 of HC).*

> *"So as a leader, he really take care of the welfare of the teachers" (Line 27:18 of respondent R5 of HC).*

> *"She is very concern about the staff, that's one thing. The welfare of the staffs. Actually when I came here I found her that she is very different. She is very understanding. She is very supportive and concern to the staff" (Line 28:17 of respondent R5 of BD).*

From the focus group sessions, it was also observed that all the teachers participated were joyful working under the leadership of their principals. The gesture of principal giving verbal and written appreciation and recognition and the principals' care and concern of the teachers welfare was also acclaimed.

4.6.1.9   *Providing incentive for learning*

This dimension was only mentioned 5 ties by 4 teachers in 2 focus groups. Usually incentive for learning are given at all schools for the best performances during the annual award giving day. At the SB school, the researcher observed a LED board with names of students who have won a language quiz conducted by the school for the week (refer to Appendix E). According to the principal this is a way to encourage the students. Besides that, particularly this focus group mentioned the following.

> *"When the UPSR results are given, a private company comes and gives gift for the top scorers. Usually they will open a bank account and bank in the money into their account"* (Line 27:29 of respondent R1 of HC).

> *"Each of us normally in classroom if they do well, most of the teachers will give some sweet or something like pencil even though if it's small thing but we give as a reward"* (Line 27:34 of respondent R2 of HC).

> *"When a student do well or achieved something, we will inform the Headmaster. What he will do is during the assembly he will called out the person and appreciate them in front of other students."* (Line 27:35 of respondent R1 of HC).

> *"We also doing a birthday months for them every months we celebrate. When the children went for competition we will call them in the assembly and appreciate them. The parents are also called for the assembly and appreciate them"* (Line 27:36 of respondent R4 of HC).

Through the responses, it's noted that teachers play an important role in appreciating the students. They are required to channel the students to the principal and indicate the purpose the student need to be appreciated. Providing incentive were done in a small and meaningful way.

4.6.2 Teacher's view on Principals role as instructional leaders in Petaling Perdana District, Selangor.

An inductive analysis was done at the next phase of this research in addition to the PIMRS model. Consecutive principal responses, 10 codes and themes were pointed out in this section and further discussed in the next chapter. From the inductive analysis on the data collected, the following themes were seen reoccurring in the focus group interview data.

4.6.2.1   Establishing positive expectation and standards

It was noted from the data 3 times teachers from 3 focus groups have mentioned that their principals establishes positive expectations and standards. According to the teachers, these expectations encourages them to be better and at the same time brings the school to a greater height.

> *"Our headmaster brought to realization that student academic achievement is low here because most student comes from the new village background. To which he makes plans accordingly" (Line 25:75 of respondent R4 of SB).*

> *"The headmaster's common phrase used is 'niche' - be the best in your area of interest. This phrase may sound technical but it is not. It enable the teachers to carry out the work without stress. Our headmaster knows the potential of the teachers and use them to lift the name of the school" (Line 26:28 of respondent R6 of BK).*

> *"She stresses more in English. Even in district level, she leads the English school, so that's why we are improving" (Line 28:5 of respondent R5 of BD).*

According to the teachers, the principals' initiatives and emphasis matters for the overall school achievement as well as the student achievement within the school as

well as outside the school. The teachers also feel motivated when positive expectations and standards are established by the principals.

4.6.2.2 Creating safe and orderly learning environment

There were 14 teachers from all 4 focus groups shared about their principal creating a safe and orderly learning environment in their respective schools. As the researcher walked around the school while doing observation, it was noted the teachers were using microphone to teach at SB and BK. Another impressive thing that the researcher saw was the LED board which is used for publishing announcements as well as too publish the name of students who have attain certain achievement.

At BK, the principal has also come up with "Road Traffic" themed corridor, where various road signboards and lines were drawn in a way to educate the students of their safety. The school areas of all the four schools were clean and conducive for learning. The remedial classroom and the Tamil Language/ Moral classroom which was transformed into 21st century classroom, initiated by the principal of BK school and done by the respective teachers were outstanding. Refer to the Appendix E for some of the pictures.

Generally, the teachers felt that their school have a conducive classroom facility which is helpful for an effective teaching and learning process. With these facilities they are able to carry out many initiatives without restriction.

"We have many programs....with the good facilities available at the school like smart boards and other facilities we are able to carry out these programs effectively" (Line 25:8 of respondent R2 of SB).

"This school has very, very good facilities contributed by our Board of Directors, They really invested a lot of money and time.... So now all our classes are equip with I can say it's very advanced teaching aids, where we have this build in smart board system in each of the class, and it really assisted our teaching a lot" (Line 25:12 of respondent R1 of SB).

"Every class is completed with smart board at the right time by this headmaster. With this facilities, we are able to teach the first level of KSSR concisely and comfortably" (Line 25:33 of respondent R4 of SB) .

Besides the classroom facilities, it was also heard from the focus group interviews with the teachers that the resources room and the school library is also upgraded. It is well equipped and comfortable for learning.

"Now our Library is air conditioned and is very beautiful and comfortable with many new books" (Line 25:31 of respondent R4 of SB).

"We have transformed two classed now and next year we intend to focus on transforming the Resource Room/ Library where books and other facilities will be upgraded. When facilities are upgraded, student achievement also increases" (Line 26:42 of respondent R1 of BK).

On the other hand, the teachers also felt encouraged by the principals for allowing the teachers to transform, their classrooms into 21st century type classroom. It was noted from the interview that student who attend this classes are very motivated. There is an expectation that the student who attend the remedial class will progress faster being in such learning environment (Refer to Appendix E for the pictures)

> *"In the area of my specialization (Tamil & Moral) the headmaster asked me to create my class into the 21st Century classroom concept. She gave the assistance & encouragement…This year many student like to come to my class. Because something new….its student friendly" (Line 26:47 of respondent R6 of BK).*

> *"Since now the 21st century classroom is emphasized, every classroom need to have a smart board. With the hep of PTA and BOG all classes are fitted with smart boards. This greatly help the teachers for an effective teaching and learning process" (Line 27:30 of respondent R1 of HC).*

According to the teachers, the principals' role in creating a safe and orderly environment and giving autonomy for the teachers' creativity in transforming classroom into a conducive learning environment indeed encourages the teachers to be better and at the same time brings the school to a greater heights. The principal is seen as the motivating factor for the transformation in the area of school infrastructure and facilities which is essential for an effective teaching and learning process.

4.6.2.3   *Providing opportunity for meaningful student involvement*

Teachers from all 4 focus group have repeatedly mentioned on the principal's initiatives in providing opportunities for meaning student involvement. All the four schools had great achievements on curriculum and co curriculum activities under the leadership of the principal.

> *"When I started the basketball team, he let me try, and until today, we are performing in that area also, and also in other areas, he always encourages the students to take part in a lot of outside competition and tournaments" (Line 25:28 of respondent R1 of SB).*

> *"Our HM encourage our students to communicate and take part especially in English program and English competition"* (Line 28:3 of respondent R6 of BD).

> *"Sport activities and nature club. It's already in national level…She will encourages to excel in our talent, whatever talent we have she will encourage us to excel it"* (Line 28:8 of respondent R3 of BD).

Opportunities were also created for the student to participate in national and international competitions. Indeed, this gesture promotes self-motivation and confidence in the life of the students. Besides that, this exposures also gives wider experience for the students.

> *"Like my basketball team, previously we have this team coming from Indonesia, to have friendship match with us. So there is a lot of interaction. We really encourage that in terms of students, so that they will be able to have a broader view than just being limited into this village…Our band is going to Taiwan, again end of this year…We also have the robotics team went to Korea for world championship"* (Line 25:50 of respondent R1 of SB).

> *"HM always encourages the students to take part in a lot of outside competition and tournaments. So every week you can see that there will be students getting prizes, like arts and crafts and sports and mathematics."* (Line 25:2842 of respondent R1 of SB)

> *"Normally she likes students to take part in competition like district and state level. She encourages a lot on that"* (Line 28:1 of respondent R4 of BD).

The personal interest and exposure of principals according to the responses of teacher also stirs them to create opportunities and encourage students involvement in the school and to venture in variety of activities which eventually empowers the students.

> *"Our headmaster has unique and vast experience in Scouts. She always talks about Scouts… She wanted to make Scouts as one of the niche area of our school"* (Line 26:1 of respondent R1 of BK).

"Our headmaster also has great passion for music. Then I have a passion for dancing. This is why when we formed a dance group in our school she fully supported. This has enabled us to aim high. We joined Mesakot (Dance & Culture competition) organized by University Malaya and was the champion in the competition....This year we also joined the national level Malaysia Borneo Hornbill festival. She supported everything including the registration fees..... She wants to make music and dancing another niche area in the school especially for the students who are not very academically inclined." (Line 26:13 of respondent R3 of BK).

The children feels more empowered. The know there are not very good in academic so they try other skill they can do. So when we give them the chance they flourish. There is a nice balance between academic and extra curriculum" (Line 26:8 of respondent R4 of BK).

Besides the curriculum and co-curriculum activities, the principals also show high interest in the reading programs and the academic well-being of the school community. To cater for the need of the people, book exhibitions and education fair are held regularly. This exhibition does not only cater for the need of the primary school but also the secondary school and the general public living around the school area.

"He (the headmaster) also encourage us to have book exhibition in the school and encourage the students to buy books and read. This has created a reading habit among the students" (Line 25:32 of respondent R4 of SB).

"Every year our school, initiated by the board of directors also will hold an education fair, oversea education fair. Specialized for Taiwan university and colleges for vocational studies. So for those graduated students from our school, now they are in secondary school, so this secondary school students will come back to attend this overseas education fair. So it's actually another opportunity for the students. Those who can't really perform in academic so that they have another way out by attending this vocational fair" (Line 25:54 of respondent R3 of SB).

Because of the support by the principal, it was mentioned by the teachers that they get involve in extra curriculum activities and competition despite their heavy workloads. The encouragement of the principals also seems to motivates the teachers to give their best in all that they do.

> *"Though we are busy with our cores we still get ourselves involved in various state and national activities. For instance recently our a student from our school became the national winner of a debate event 'Manavar Mulakam' It's a debate program. We also involve in other programs organized by non governmental organizations"* *(Line 27:21 of respondent R1 of HC).*

> *"Even we have our own heavy work loads and teaching still our teachers are willing to participant in all this competition co-academic because of the support by the head"* *(Line 27:33 of respondent R2 of HC).*

Teachers responses also indicates that principals play a very vital role in providing opportunities for student involvement. These opportunities also encourage the teachers to further develop their talents, when the talents are tapped, the teachers feel motivated which eventually lead to better performance in curriculum and co curriculum activities.

4.6.2.4   Developing staff collaboration

27 times teachers from all the four focus group have intensely mentioned on developing staff collaboration and cohesion. Generally, this aspect is seen as very important and highly appreciated. From the observation it is distinct to note that the teachers from all the four school seem very comfortable with one another and express themselves freely. There was harmony visible in the school noted through observation as teachers and staffs were smiling and seem to work in a stress free

zone. The teachers also mentioned that they work in teams to be more productive and to achieve school goals.

> *"The strength of the school are the collaborative efforts among the teachers functioning as a team"* (Line 25:6 of respondent R2 of SB).

> *"The strength of the school are the teachers under the leadership of this HM. Teachers help one another. If one teacher cannot handle the other teacher will help"* (Line 26:24 of respondent R3 of BK).

> *"When one of the colleague fall, the other colleagues will help out, whenever there is a teacher who is sick, sometimes there are teachers who have serious illness, and then the other teachers, will not say anything and just without any further thinking will help to carry the burden for that teacher. So it's, I will say it's quite a good team work"* (Line 26:10 of respondent R1 of SB).

> *"This HM gives importance for team spirit among the teachers, I see a very positive environment"* (Line 27:12 of respondent R4 of HC).

> *"Though we have heavy workload, since we have a caliber leader who is concern about out well being, all our loads becomes lighter. We work as a team. Team work"* (Line 27:9 of respondent R1 of HC)

Professional learning community is also a trend observed being practiced in the schools. The teachers who have common interest and teaching the same subject seem work in small groups. This kind of cohesion are promoted by the principals. The following were mentioned by the teachers:

> *"For the English department we are a small group of five teachers for all the student. We don't have centralized kind of program but we work with each other. We share materials and resources"* (Line 26:32 of respondent R3 of BK).

> *"Sometimes we used to have certain activities. We collaborate with all the subject teachers. We have a meeting so everybody could work to together and we give the best of any activities that carried out"* (Line 28:27 of respondent R1 of BD).

"Sometimes we just sit and observe her teaching and share what is her strategies and we sit together come up to improvise. We just see what is our strength and weakness" (Line 28:29 of respondent R1 of BD).

"I'm the head of English Panel. I'm very lucky because they are very supportive. Just name it, we can do the program ad-hock. Like planning today tomorrow is on" (Line 28:31 of respondent R6 of BD).

"We like to share things. For example, R1 is one of the examiner. She really shared a lot of things especially when it comes to answering technique" (Line 28:38 of respondent R6 of BD).

The concern shown by the principals towards the teachers and the responsibility they take over difficult situations such as handling difficult parents motivates the teachers. This principal is mentioned to handle such situations amicably. The teachers feel problems are not always pushed to them but principal stands with them handling it. This create a spirit of oneness.

"Challenges are most of the time from the parent's side. Parent's side, in case if we want to punish the student sometimes they think we harm them but it's not like that. So they come down meet with HM maybe in harsh style so we have to explain to them. Most of the time our principal will help us. He will handle this kind of matter" (Line 27:6 of respondent R2 of HC).

Cohesion and collaborative efforts are also done with teachers from other schools. Principals also takes the initiative to introduce the teachers to schools who have made significant progress and encourages the teachers to learn from them.

"Sometimes we get idea from other school teachers who teach the same subjects as well. We have friends from other school so we get ideas from them then bring them back share it with friends" (Line 28:29 of respondent R4 of BD).

The teachers agree that when staff collaboration and cohesion is promoted by the principal, the school can achieve greater things. It is repeatedly mentioned that shared responsibility and team work is essential, and it is practiced in their schools. The credit was given to the principals who seem to be highly effective in leading the school.

4.6.2.5   *Securing outside resources in achieving school goals*

It was noted teachers mentioned 26 times in all the four focus group that the principal have secured outside resources to achieve school goals. The outside resources that comes from various people and organization has been a great help in upgrading the school facilities as well as for the teachers and students to participate in outside activities which needed funds. The teachers also echoed what was mentioned by the principals that the Board of Governors and Parents and Teachers Association play a very important role in contributing towards the school progress.

> *"The Board of Directors sponsored the electronic LED board that is fixed outside the canteen. Board of directors in Chinese schools, usually are the backbone of the school. In terms of building construction and also improving the facilities of the school. And we are very lucky that we have a very strong board of directors who always help us out. Every year they will have initiatives usually suggested by our headmaster. Like last year, we have this smart board, quite a lot of money being invested in that. And upgraded the parking lots." (Line 25:53 of respondent R1 of SB)*

> *"Since 21st century classroom concept is emphasized now, all classroom are to be fitted with smart board. PIBG and BOG was willing to help when we asked them. They even said if possible they will fix in all classrooms. This is helpful for teachers to carryout the teaching and learning process effectively" (Line 27:30 of respondent R1 of HC).*

Besides the Parents and Teachers Association and Board of Governors, the other group of people such as retired teachers from the school and the school alumni also seem to contribute their resources for the betterment of the school. The school leader's rapport with them enhance further their contributions.

> *"Retired teachers from the school avail themselves to help. They often come to support our activities and ready to help" (Line 25:72 of respondent R4 of SB).*

> *"Our Alumni who are now successful in life come and donate to the school" (Line 25:55 of respondent R4 of SB)*

The principals seem to have good rapport with the parents which in turn encourages the parents to contribute their resources for the progress of the school was also mentioned by the teachers. The resources shared by the parents certainly of a great hep for the school. This scenario only happens when the school leaders has built a good relationship with the parents.

> *"There are also some parents comes and help. There are two or three parents from higher income group. The support us by cash or by getting us the things we need" (Line 26:43 of respondent R6 of BK).*

> *"She (Headmaster) collaborates with the parents very well. And also outside communities, and the Giant supermarket, she collaborates with NGO very well. With TUDM as well. She does a lot of collaboration effort. She tries to get sponsors to profit the school and to paint the school" (Line 28:25 of respondent R4 of BD).*

The teachers also indicated the principals' efforts to gather resources for the betterment of the school from various professionals, cooperate companies and non-

governmental organizations. Their efforts, personal relationship with the outsiders and their influence were commended by the teachers.

> *"The Headmaster also has a insight to get outside resources very smartly. Because she knows funds in our schools are limited in order to make the school successful she get outside resources. We also got funds from the parents of Tamil class students…. Besides that, we also received contribution from the CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) Giant in our vicinity. They had a program called Giant & My School. They had a good link with the Headmaster and helped the teachers to continue with our mission successfully" (Line 26:6 of respondent R1 of BK).*

> *"HM also hired a choreographer for us when we went to the national level competition. She looked for a choreographer for contemporary dance as I am only specialized in cultural dance" (Line 26:11 of respondent R3 of BK).*

> *"We have Program by EWRF, NGO, and IMPAK. EWRF is under Tamil Foundation. This IMPAK program is for parents. The meaning of IMPAK is parents also can improve the children's education. This is conducted by NGO, Tamil Foundation" (Line 27:24 of respondent R2 of HC).*

> *"We get funds from state government and some political parties as well. Besides that some private companies like Sime Darby, Panasonic Shah Alam and BRB Hicom also contributes towards achieving our school activities and plans" (Line 27:28 of respondent R1 of HC)*

The teachers indicated that principals play an important role in securing outside resources. These principal's positive good relationship with the Parents and Teachers Association, the Board of Governors as well as Non-Governmental Organizations and other available resources is seemed essential to achieve school goals. Their ability in securing resources for the betterment of the school indeed bring positive development in academic achievement and improvement in school facilities and environment.

4.6.2.6   *Forging link between home and the school*

Though the parental involvement in students' academic life is mentioned to be one of the greatest challenge, this function was mentioned 15 times by the teachers in all four focus groups. This is being done with the dedication and wisdom of the principal and the schools has seen greater level of participation and link between the home and the school.

> *"Foster mother program (ibu penyayang). They willingly come and help the students. The assist in reading programs buy reading books to the students before the school assembly or during the recess time. They also come and help in any school activities in terms of manpower as well as finance" (Line 25:44 of respondent R4 of SB).*

> *"She collaborates with the parents very well" (Line 28:25 of respondent R4 of BD).*

When there is a positive link between school and home, the school benefits especially when they have any event or programs, there will be greater participation and support. For instance the following was said by a teacher:

> *"Lately, we had a carnival to celebrate our schools' 65th anniversary. The parents involve and gives overwhelming support in selling and buying dinner tickets because we have good rapport with them" (Line 25:45 of respondent R4 of SB).*

Besides that, this links has also brought positive changes in the school in terms of teaching and learning. It is also identical to note that with this link, parental complains were minimized in the schools which does not affect the instructional time and the school were also able to achieve a greater results in their planned programs and activities.

"The support from parents is quiet good especially when they know their children has certain ability, they support in t hat area will be good. They will support to improve them and cooperate very well for training" (Line 26:10 of respondent R3 of BK).

"Headmaster practices open door policies. I can compare schools for example here every parent walks in she entertain them and make them go back satisfied." (Line 28:43 of respondent R5 of BD).

The teachers mentioned as indicated below that the principals were expected to be leaders with good inter personal relationship. Their efforts to build the link between school and home is important. Although sometimes parents can be hard and harsh, when the principals tactfully handle them, greater relationship is build.

"As my teachers said our Headmaster, he has the leadership quality. He knows how to handle the teachers, students, parents and community also. It is very important to improve the school" (Line 27:15 of respondent R5 of HC).

"She has very good reputation among the parents. Parents like her the way she approaches. She will entertain them well and makes time for them" (Line 28:18 of respondent R3 of BD).

The principal's dedication to promote link between school and home is seen to bring positive change in the teaching and learning at the school. When parents complained are heard and diligently responded by the principal, a positive outcome is seen. On the other hand, effective principals also seen to be creating opportunities for parents' involvement in the school. It's also interesting to note that with this link, parental complains were minimized in the schools and the school were also able to achieve a greater results in their planned programs and activities as mentioned by the principals.

4.6.2.7   *Sense of responsibility*

Through the inductive analysis, another reoccurring themes from the data shows that the principals were seen as responsible people by the teachers. In the midst of all their cores, the principal does take initiatives and steps to bring the school to the next level. From the responses of 7 times was indicated by the teachers that the leaders sense of responsibility has an impact on school achievement.

> *"Our headmaster is very responsible over the school's academic as well as co-curriculum achievements" (Line 25:24 of respondent R2 of SB).*

> *"When we go for any competition, HM always supports us and ask us to bring the name of the school to the light. No matter we win or not glamour must be there and we must be made known to others." (Line 26:25 of respondent R6 of BK).*

At one school, the teachers also mentioned that the principal take the challenge and responsibility to enhance the school's enrollment by adapting the Dual language program which is a government initiative. The teachers feel that through this program, there was a better development in terms of teaching and learning as well as expectations was established to perform.

> *"The DL program (Dual Language Program) was an initiative of our Headmaster...Only two schools around this area has adopted this program. Not many schools in the district also have having this program. HM have taken this challenge and with this program we believe our enrollment rate will also increase next year. This is one of the initiative our GB has taken" (Line 26:44 of respondent R3 of BK)*

Generally, the teachers see their principal being very responsible in fulfilling their duties and responsibilities. They also take responsibility to support the teachers to

achieve the planned initiatives. This gesture motivates the teachers as well to fulfil their core task and be committed to their job.

4.6.2.8   Ministry Expectations

In a centralized education system employed in Malaysia, the ministry expectations and bureaucracies are unavoidable. There were 8 times teachers from all 4 focus group shared their concerns on this theme. Through observation it is also noted that teachers are often out of school to attend meetings and courses organized by the Ministry. In smaller schools it was even intense especially when there is a smaller team of teachers in the school. In such schools teachers hold more than one responsibility and are constantly has to leave station. This effects the classroom learning and often other teachers also has to relieve. It was a challenge to hold focus group sessions for this research due to the reason. Besides that, these expectations are also seen as the managerial responsibilities of the principals.

> *"Since now the system has changed to KSSR, the teaching methods and resources also is new. We need more time to prepare teaching and learning materials. However, in the midst of this, a greater amount of time is also taken for other administration work, documentation, online filling which are time consuming. So we feel like we are not able to do what actually we suppose to do in the area of teaching and learning" (Line 25:22 of respondent R4 of SB).*

> *"When HM or Senior Assistant go for meeting with District Education Department, we are pressured with all the 'why' questions. Why last year you can this year cannot? Sometimes we also don't know how to answer" (Line 26:19 of respondent R1 of BK).*

> *"The big challenge is our syllabus. It took us a long time to get ourselves adapted to it. Even children also find it very difficult to get themselves to the new syllabus format because they have more hots*

questions like higher order thinking skills. It's very big changes for students so they find it difficult" (Line 28:40 of respondent R4 of BD).

"Actually our education program is like few years later it change. Just like PPSMI, PBS and recently now we have dual program coming in so we actually learning and struggling. There is no such thing 100 percent. Every year we are keep on learning. If they change the program then we know and we need to adjust ourselves to cater to the new program" (Line 28:41 of respondent R2 of BD).

Though the initiatives from the Ministry of Education and the state as well as District Education Department are done to improve schools, the teachers as well as Senior Assistants feel that the reality in the school is not often considered when plans demands are posed. As such, the leaders and teachers are bogged down in fulfilling the Ministry's expectations and at times neglect the school's core business which is teaching and learning. The adaptation of the constantly changed syllabus is also a challenge. The principals are also seen as managers who carried out instructions from the Ministry.

4.6.2.9   Role modelling

The principals were also seen as a role model by the teachers. There were 4 times teachers mentioned in all 4 focus groups on this theme.

"HM has a caring and loving nature. This nature has slowly sipped in the life of the teachers. Now our teachers also have this nature" (Line 25:69 of respondent R5 of SB).

"In terms of leadership, she is someone who goes down to the grassroots and work together with us. She don't just give instructions This is leadership by example" (Line 26:20 of respondent R5 of BK).

"When this HM came into the school, he became a great role model for us to follow. Usually, when he wants to appoint some task or send a message to the teachers, he will first discuss with us the senior assistance. Only then we make decision" (Line 27:7 of respondent R1 of HC).

"She is a good model and demonstrated good ideas. She shared a lot of information on teaching and as more she is an English teacher. So she really trained us certain technique of answering question in English, method of teaching, strategies and so many things she had shared with us" (Line 28:14 of respondent R1 of BD).

All the teachers testified that their principals had been a role model for them as much as the principals indicated their aspiration on this theme. The principals behavior certainly motivates the teachers to give their best in the job responsibilities.

4.6.2.10   *Managerial assertiveness*

Even though the principals are friendly and accommodative, from the response from 3 focus group, 4 times it was noted teachers mentioned on their principals assertiveness. It is apparent that their principals also practice assertiveness in dealing with the staffs and management.

"Law is law, school laws are there and we are expected to follow it. Not just the teachers but also the students. Our principal expects us to follow the school regulations" (Line 25:17 of respondent R3 from SB)

"When we are carrying out any duties, HM gives us freedom to do it our way. However, he always watches and when need to confront, he will do it private." (Line 27:10 of respondent R3 from HC)

"Sometimes, she draws a line. There is a border for a head." (Line 28:24 of respondent R5 from BD)

> *"Normally we will discuss with HM or can discuss with PK1, in charge of academic. Whatever it is he will be the decision maker."*
> *(Line 28:32 of respondent R6 from BD)*

The assertiveness of principal when carrying out their duties and responsibilities is well accepted by the teachers. They also feel such expectations are important in the school. When there is a harmonious relationship between the principal and the teachers, the principals assertiveness is not seen as something negative among the teachers. The principals' opinions and stands are well accepted for the school's benefit and improvement.

4.7 Summary of the research findings

Following the analysis of the data through deductive analysis and cutting across the findings, the researcher compared across the themes and drawn the following charts. Figure 4.1 indicates the density of codes from principal's response for the first research question on what are principals' conceptual understanding of instructional leadership in Malaysia.
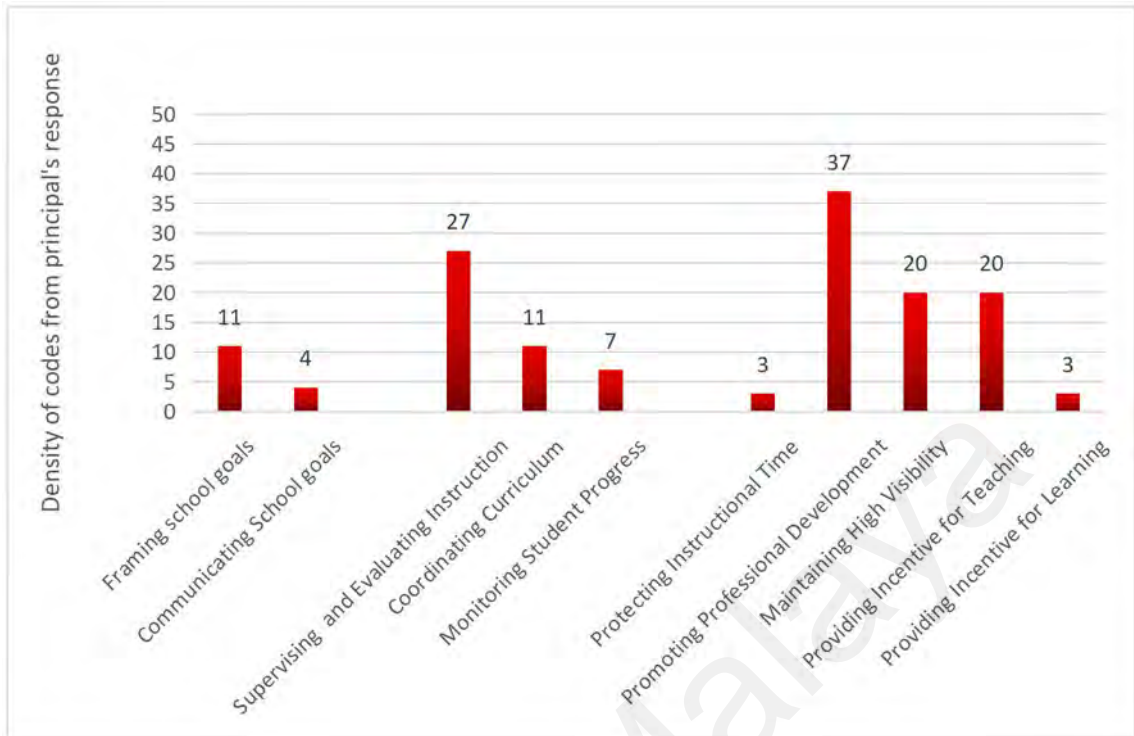
Figure 4.1 Instructional Leadership Practiced by Principals according to Hallinger & Murphy's Instructional Leadership model (1985)

On the other hand, according to the density of codes from principal's response through an inductive analysis, the following summary as shown in Figure 4.2 is drawn on the how the they view their role as Instructional Leadership practices in local context was identified. t is interesting to note that, the domains from the Comprehensive Instructional Leadership Framework by Murphy seem to be highly reflected among the principals involved in the research (refer to the model drawn in Figure 2.2). which derived from a comprehensive and systematic review of instructional leadership, schools effectiveness, school improvement, organizational change and staff development literatures. The inductive analysis from the data according to research question two: How principals view their role as instructional leaders?
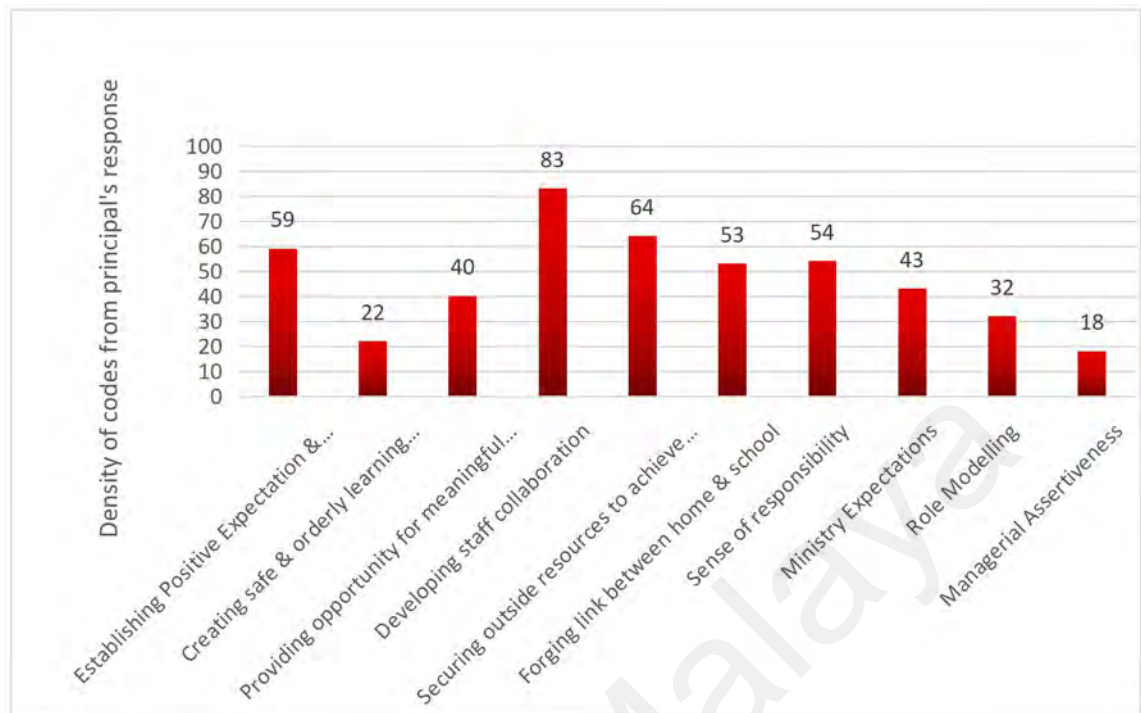
Figure 4.2 Instructional Leadership in the Malaysian Context identified from Inductive Analysis.

The following figure 4.3 shows the density of codes from focus group about the instructional leadership practices of the principals as perceived by the teachers during the focus group session through deductive analysis using Hallinger & Murphy's Instructional Leadership Model (1985).
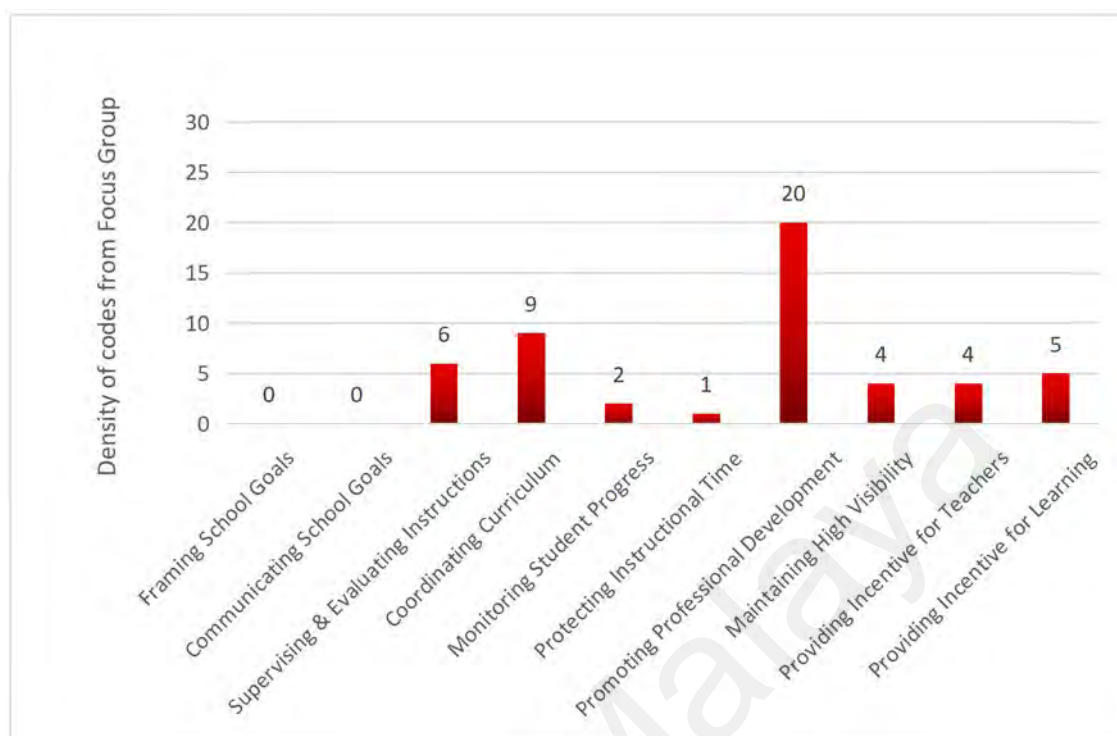
Figure 4.3 Instructional Leadership Practiced by Principals according to Hallinger & Murphy's Instructional Leadership Model as Perceived by Teachers (1985).

Figure 4.4 depicts the code density indicated by the focus group on the instructional leadership practices of the principals as perceived by the teachers during the focus group session through inductive analysis on the reoccurring themes from the data which seem to correlate with the principal's responses. These themes also explains the successful change happened in the school especially in relation to the instructional effectiveness and school improvement. The research question three which is to look at the the general perception of instructional leadership as perceived by the teachers was answered through these findings.
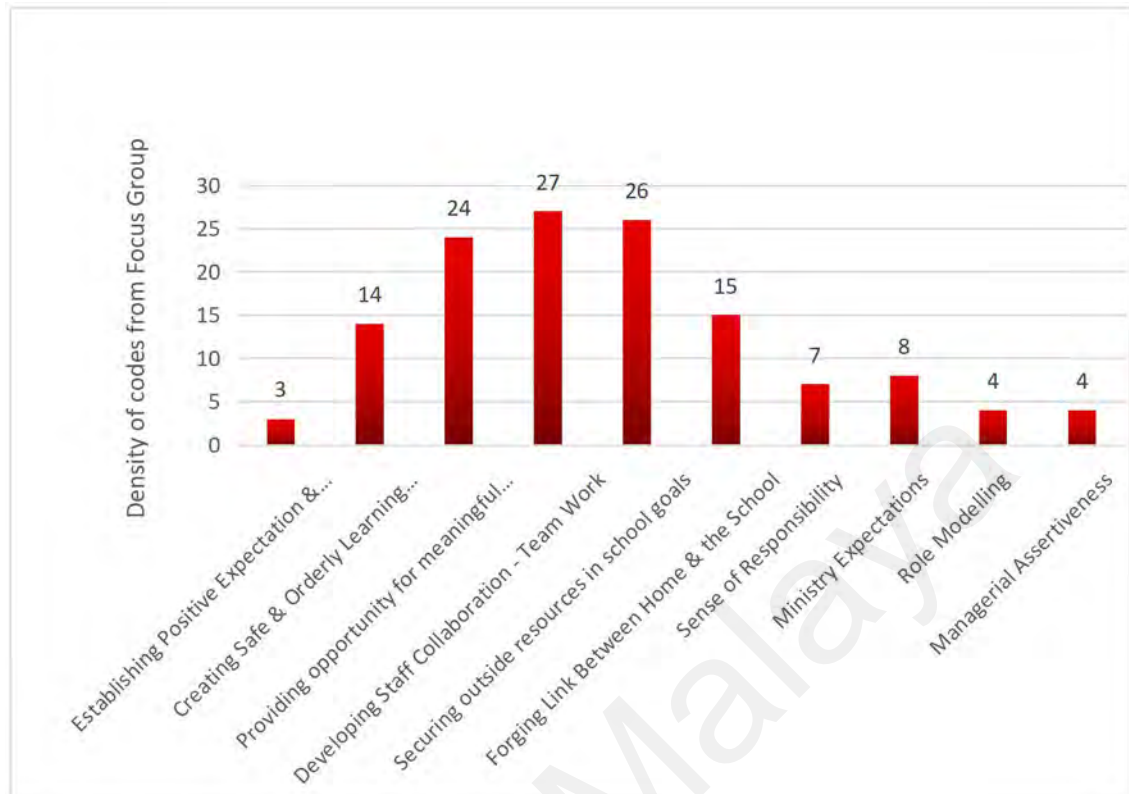
Figure 4.4 Instructional Leadership practice in Malaysian context identified from the inductive analysis as perceived by teachers.

4.8   Summary of the chapter

In this chapter the themes and sub-themes that emerged from inductive and deductive data analysis was presented. Data was presented in accordance to the research questions for clarity and accuracy. This will enhance discussion and argument which will be deliberated in the next chapter. Chapter 5 will focus on discussion on the research findings with the support of the literatures.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

5.1   Introduction

This chapter begins with the conceptualization of the instructional leadership framework used in this study. The instructional leadership proposed by Hallinger and Murphy (1985) was conceptualized and used in this research to inquire the understanding and practices of instructional leadership of primary school leader's in Petaling Perdana District in the state of Selangor. Further to that, recurring themes were also noted through an inductive analysis to identify principals role as instructional leaders in Petaling Perdana District, Selangor.

The similarities among the models combined with the other reoccurring themes from the data was integrated and presented in this part of the research. A discussion will be done following the three research questions (i) What are principals' conceptual understanding of instructional leadership in Malaysia?; (ii) How principals view their role as instructional leaders?, and (iii) What are teachers' general perception of principals as instructional leaders?

5.2   Research Question One: What are principals' conceptual understanding of instructional leadership in Petaling Perdana District, Selangor?

5.2.1 Defining the school mission

As mentioned in chapter 4, the first phase of finding derived from deductive reasoning from the Hallinger & Murphy Instructional Leadership Model (1985) for this part of the analysis. The principals functions and role in (I) framing school goals

and (b) communicating the school goals is ascertain under the defining school mission dimension of the model. They are to ensure that the school goals are clearly, measurably stipulated and specially focused on academic progress of the students. It is undeniable that principals carry the responsibility to ensure the knowledge of these goals are widely known and and supported by the school community.

5.2.1.1   Framing school goals

According to Lock and Latham (1984 & 1990) defining goals and communicating them to the school community is the motivational force that increase performance towards goals. It was also stressed by them that giving feedback also maximizes the motivational forces of the goals. In addition to that, in order to accomplish the goals strategically, individuals needs sufficient resources and opportunities for professional development to achieve specific tasks.

Hallinger (2010) asserts that it is an instructional leader's responsibility to work together with staffs to formulate and communicate goals that are measurable and that which focuses on student's academic progress. It is also the responsibility of the instructional leader to widely share this goals to the school community and ensure they are well supported.

However, both the two specifications described under this dimension are very lowly indicated by the principals. This may be because in Malaysia we have a centralized education system where a general vision and mission for all national school and government aided schools derive from the Ministry of Education Malaysia. The

researcher also observed that every school that was visited has displayed the school mission and vision set by the Ministry of Education (refer to Appendix E). These are general vision and mission set for all schools across the nation.

Besides the vision and mission from MOE, often from the response it was visible that the principals seem to follow the directive from the Ministry of Education and enforce accordingly their stipulated requirements particularly referring to the student exam results. The quality of the school is measured by its student achievement. As such, school leaders takes this is as the primary goal as mentioned by one of the principals. This is reflected in the response of principals #1. The school leaders ensure to meet the targets and improve targets to raise the UPSR results (Line 1:16 of Respondent #1)

Other principals also had the similar sentiments as reflected in Chapter 4. They see that achieving academic achievement seem to be their prime goal as they say "I have a big responsibility, my aim is for all the students to score well (in public examination)" (Line 14:53 of Respondent #14).

As such, although the instructional leader's responsibility is to work with the staffs to ensure that the school has a clear and measurable goals that are focused on the academic progress of its student (Halliger, 2010) it is barely formulated by the leaders. However, the leaders managers well the school vision and mission transmitted by the Ministry of Education and work towards a progress with the teachers by setting targets for better public exam results.

The Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013-2025 also highlight the goal purpose and goals of the Malaysian Education system. They are to holistically equip students to enable them succeed in the 21st century and with all opportunities face the challenges the new era presents. The Ministry of Education in Malaysia has heartily committed to deliver on these goals (MOE, 2013).

However, it is hardly reflected in the schools reality. It also contradicts as the academic results were the determining factor of a schools standard and school leaders are compelled towards attaining better exam results. It is the goal of MOE to seek to develop knowledgeable young Malaysians with critical and creative thinking skills, leadership skills who are able to communicate with the rest of the world was also not reflected. On the other hand, the aim aim to imbued student with values, ethics and a sense of nationhood in order that they may make right choices in life enduring and overcoming life's inevitable challenges as mentioned in Malaysian Education Blueprint was also lurking in the schools. This may be because the principals are exhausted with other administration task.

5.2.1.2   Communicating clearly the school goals

Education system has a centralized governance in Malaysian context. As such, as noted in the previous section, principals working in national schools in Malaysia do not play any role in forming school vision and goal. Even though the vision is not formulated by the school, two principals in this research felt it is important the vision and goals stipulated by the Ministry of Education are communicated among the

teachers and parents. For the parents it is usually shared during he school orientation day.

The principals are expected to communicate a clear vision on instructional excellence and continuous professional development with the goal of improvement of teaching and learning as mentioned by Hoy & Hoy (2003). In this particular context, although the goal of academic achievement is emphasized, it is hardly heard in the interviews the leaders conveying other vision and goals of the MOE to the teachers and parents Besides that, since academic achievement was the primary and pressing concern, the school leaders was seem emphasizing on it to the teachers and parents.

5.2.2   Managing the instructional program

Managing the instructional program has three main functions of the principals; a) supervising and evaluating instruction, (b) coordinating curriculum, and c) monitoring student progress. These are practical functions of the school leaders in the school. The active involvement of the school leaders are fundamental.

5.2.2.1   Supervising and evaluating instruction

Providing instructional support to teachers, informal visit to classroom to monitor instructions and aligning teaching and learning towards school goals are the functions involved in the dimension of supervising and evaluating instruction (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). From the research findings which is elaborated in chapter 4, it is evident that this aspect of the function is mentioned scarcely by the

principals. In some schools this function is done by the principals with their senior assistants.

It was also evident that supervising and evaluating instruction is also a directive from the MOE to raise the teaching standards. In that regard, a single competency based teacher evaluation instrument the Specialist Coaches SISC+ for Bahasa Malaysia, English and Mathematics was introduced to assist principals to evaluate teachers on an objective basis to identify strength and developmental needs (MOE, 2013). The principals involved in this research indicated that they do practice supervision and evaluation of teaching which is an essential duty as stipulated in their job description. They agree that analyzing teacher's performance is part of their responsibility as one of the principal mentioned, that the task of analyzing is also essential in the school as the principals are required to give report to the District and State education department as quoted by the other principal. The teachers in their focus group interview responses also agree to the fact that supervision is done as a requirement of the District and State Education department to review their performance.

Some principal also indicated that the observation and walking around the school are done with leadership team and other teachers. The principals also specified that it is also practiced as a team in order that learning happens and responsibilities are shouldered.

According to the TALIS report (OECD, 2014), school principals in Malaysia are relatively weak compared with most of other TALIS countries in regards to

supervision of instruction. According to the report, only 3% of teachers have received a feedback or appraisal from their principals which is 2nd lowest of the 23 countries. From the number of teacher who received appraisal/feedback, 82% of teacher reported that it resulted in a development plan to improve their teaching (the highest of the 23 countries).

The primary focus of instructional leaders in performing evaluation is on promoting growth and development in respect of teachers which in turn improve learners achievement although there are different purpose for evaluating teaching personnel may exist (Gupton, 2003; Bush, Joubert, Kiggundu & Van Rooyen, 2009).

It is essential as Glanz (2006) mentioned, a principal can contribute to meaningful supervision and professional development by engaging (i) in word and deed to improve teaching and promote earning, (ii) involving teachers in planning, implementing and assessing supervision and promoting learning, (iii) utilizing experts to supervise and professional development, (iv) providing options to traditional practices of supervision and professional development, and (v) drawing link between supervision, professional development and student achievement.

5.2.2.2   *Coordinating curriculum*

Research findings indicates principals rarely coordinates the curriculum. This is an expected outcome in Malaysia as the MOE coordinates the general curriculum of the schools. A generic syllabus and system are given to the schools according to the types of school, such as KSSR for the National Schools (SK) and Primary School

Integrated Curriculum (KBSR - *Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Rendah*) for the National Type Schools (SJKT & SJKC). It is also stipulate under Section 18 of the Education Act 1996 that the national curriculum will be used by all schools under the national education system. It s also mentioned in the Act that the Minister shall prescribe a national curriculum specifying the knowledge, skills and values expected to be acquired by the pupil at the end of the period of schooling and include the core subjects and other subjects (Education Act 1996).

 However, principals did mention that extra efforts were made to create extra hour of learning in the schools to enhance student learning and to achieve better student achievements. For instance some principals mentioned that, their strategies to attain better results in public examination is by having extra classes. As such, it is apparent that the principals responsibility to coordinate curriculum as stipulated in the instructional leadership model is less applicable in the local context though the principals organizes extra classes.

5.2.2.3   *Monitoring student progress*

Research findings indicate principals prioritize less of their time in monitoring student progress. This is hardly a surprise in Malaysia as teachers are expected to monitor student progress and manage them accordingly.

> *"Once a while I go around to the classes and check students' work.*
> *We have one Operation called "Operasi Menggilap Mutiara" (polish*
> *the pearl). (Line 11:12 of Respondent #11).*

Line 19:6 of Respondent #19 in another instance, mentioned that streaming is done in the school as he observe that the performance of the students were not encouraging when all level of students are mixed in the class.

One of the principal also mentioned that they hire professionals to monitor and motivate students who are taking the public examination (UPSR) and to give an independent analysis of teaching and learning in the school. This form of initiatives gives broader perspective of reality and develops the classroom for betterment.

On the other hand, in Malaysian context exams are used to diagnose students weakness, evaluate the results of the school's instructional program. The principal plays a key role in this area as discussed by Hallinger and Wang (2015), providing the teachers with the test results and discussing them with the staffs in a timely and useful manner. However, this analysis are often done for reporting purpose to the MOE and not for student progress in the particular schools in the context. As much much as this is an important element to the interpretive analysis is missing in the context. Moreover, in Malaysian context where education system is centralized, principals don't seem to play a vital role in this area except for reporting purpose.

5.2.3   Creating a positive school climate

As an instructional leader, developing cultures of continuous improvement aligning rewards with purpose and practice is also seen as a main function of an effective instructional leader (Hallinger & Heck 2010, 2011a; Heck & Hallinger 2010, 2011; Walker 2012). The principals are also expected to model values and support

continuous improvement of teaching and learning (Leithwood & Jantzi 2005; Leithwood et al. 2008; Leithwood & Sun, 2012).

Gupton (2003) stated that, school climate may be one of the most important ingredients of a successful instructional program. Since school culture can affect learning and ultimately students' achievement (Watson, 2001; Gupton, 2003), the school principals are responsible for creating a conducive school climate for effective teaching and learning (MacNeil, Prater, & Busch, 2009). All the five sub dimensions elaborated in this dimension on develops a positive school learning climate is seen as an essential and fundamental concept of instructional leadership.

5.2.3.1 Protecting instructional time

Instructional time is one of the most important resources of effective instruction. Therefore, it is important that the principal, as instructional leader, ensures that instructional time is protected and properly managed (Glanz, 2006). Since instructional time is standardized by the MOE, the principals in Malaysia play a minimal role in this aspect. For instance, the total time for teacher's instruction and student learning, special dates on calender such as holidays exam schedules, and other compulsory school events are fixed by the Ministry of Education. These fixations at times more likely either shortens instructional time or diverts the students attention from the instructional program (McLeod et al., 2003) and does not have the principals choice.

On the other hand, interruptions such as excessive announcements over the intercom, learners sent on errands, drop-in visitors and unplanned assembly talks should be avoided (Glanz, 2006). During the observation it was also noted at School SB, there were intercom speakers fixed in every classes and announcements were made via the intercom regularly on that day. This can be very distractive during the teaching and learning process.

5.2.3.2   *Promoting professional development*

Improved professional development serves a dual purpose. Firstly, it gives principals and teachers the confidence to take on their leadership roles, and on the other it develops their competence to be successful and motivated through job satisfaction (Nicholson et al., 2005). In this context it was seen that the principals takes initiative to promote professional development among teachers at large. However, in regards to the principals, the MOE insinuate professional development programs especially in the area of administration is a compulsory to participate for the principals.

Blasé et al. (2010) found that high-performing principals systematically uses a number of methods to enhance professional learning in their schools. Principals were fully aware that they needed to continually update their knowledge and skills so that they could facilitate teaching and learning at their schools. This is because it is evident that effective instructional leaders are also seen as lifelong learners and models of learning (Blasé et al., 2010; DuFour, 2002; Fink & Resnick, 2001; Gupton, 2003). To do this it is essential for the principals to consistently engage in the

process of self-reflection and in the act of comparing themselves to the ever changing professional standards for leaders. In this research it was evident that this happens among some principals. One of them mentioned that,

> *"I like to go for conferences, I pay my own money to go for conferences, every year I go"* (Line 7:29 of Respondent #7).

Principals in this research also has indicated that that they organize professional development training for their teachers. They see the importance for their teachers to be equipped to serve. Besides that a compulsory 7 hours of in-service training sessions are also a requirement by the MOE. For which all the schools strive to complete them. However, the principals seem to take professional development of the teachers seriously as specified by the principals,

> *"For teachers we have in-house training from teachers who represented the school in outside training"* (Line 11:15 of Respondent #11).

Principal also realize the importance of the professional development among the teachers and willingly invest in them by The principals were also willingly acquire funds for that purpose as reflected in their interview session

> *"We encourage them (teachers) to attend a short courses....For the Chinese school there are also courses conducted by other associations from China and Taiwan"* (Line of 22:51 of Respondent #22)

In Malaysian context, the Teacher Professional Development Sector (TPDS) was established by Ministry of Education Malaysia in 2008. The ministry of education

recognized the importance of this and placed the Teacher Education Division (TED), Institute Aminuddin Baki (IAB, the School Inspectorate and Quality Assurance Division and the Malaysian Institute of Teacher Education under its purview. Since these sectors plans and managers teachers professional development activities in the country for a quality teaching and learning the principals in the respective schools doesn't emphasize much on it but seek to complete the 7 hours of in-service training sessions. As such, in the local context the Ministry of Education and the District Education Department seem to take more initiative to promote professional development. The principals however encourage their teachers to attend these professional development courses.

5.2.3.3   *Maintaining high visibility*

The scope of responsibilities of principal with respect to leading the learning is described in this dimension of maintaining high visibility. Maintaining high visibility is an indicator to teacher and students of the principal's priority (Hallinger & Chen, 2015). Although in a normal day the principal's time is out of their control with attending to errands, drop in visitors and unplanned meetings, it is essential for the principals to set priorities on how he remaining time is to be productively spent.

It is a common practice among the principals to come early in order to interact with staffs and students. They have indicated that walking around school is something regular as voiced by these principals, They also take this time as an interactive time with their fellow teachers.

Many of the principal also indicated that they come early and wait at the school gate to welcome student. It is also seen as a interaction time with the parents and getting connected with them. However, the principals also mentioned that this task seem to be a challenging task with the high volume of other administrative task at hand.

Nevertheless, principals presence at the school entrance seem to be very beneficial as described by the respondents. They have a closer relationship with the students as well as the parents. According to the principals, it was indicated that this initiative is also a directive from the District Education Director as he believes the effectiveness of welcoming students and parents as such it is widely been practiced in the schools.

5.2.3.4   *Providing incentives for teachers*

It is also identical to note that the principal's job functions consist of mostly indirect activities to help create a positive learning environment most. The researcher consider rewarding or providing incentives for teaching and learning as an indirect activity. Principals can influence teachers and students attitudes by creating a reward structure that reinforce academic achievement a productivity (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). Rewarding efforts is important because when subordinates know they are are appreciated for their efforts, their self esteem and job satisfaction increases. This in return increase their productivity and quality at work besides improving their attitude towards their job and colleagues.

Teachers from every school in Malaysia are given "Excellence Award" annually by the Ministry of Education and the District Education Department upon

recommendation of the school principals. Besides this award, some principals in this study goes the extra mile to recognize and reward their teachers for their outstanding performances. These appreciations in various forms. For instance, during meetings, as indicated by this principal, teachers are appreciated for their work done and for sacrificially coming to school during the holidays to work (Line 12:24 of Respondent #12).

Some principals also appreciate their teachers by giving them certificates of appreciation, When teachers are recognized in the public they are motivated to do better. Besides that it was also noted that it drives the other teachers to give their best. There were also principals takes the teachers out for recreation and treat as verbalize by the following principals,

The gesture of these principals certainly encourages the teachers. Through observation, it was prevalent that the overseas trips and other trips executed by some of the principals as a mean to reward the teachers has certainly motivated the teachers. The teachers seems very excited talking about them. This will be discussed in research question 3. When they are esteemed, as mentioned by Murphy (1990), its undeniable that the commitment of the teacher and attitude towards teaching and learning increases.

5.2.3.5 *Providing incentives for learning*

Very few principals participated in this research celebrate the success of the students. This aspect of providing incentive by principal may seem less because students who

are academically excelling are recognized and awarded at the school award giving day which is held once a year. However, there are two principals who do provide incentive for learning by giving the students recognition in cash and in kind: According to one of them, VIPs are invited to school to showcase the success of the children *(Line 1:7 of Respondent #1)*. The other principal mentioned that, they also reward the student during the weekly school assembly. For those deserving student cash and ind rewards are also seem to be given though there were hardly mentioned by the research participants.

At the 'SB' school, the researcher observed a LED board with names of students who have won a language quiz conducted by the school for the week (refer to Appendix B). Certainly principals can influence student and teacher attitudes by creating a reward structure as mentioned by Hallinger and Murphy (1985) that reinforces academic achievement and productive effort. However, providing incentives for learning does not seem to be very popular in Malaysian context. It is noteworthy that the annual prize giving day for academic achievements are held in every schools yearly.

5.3 Research Question Two: How principals view their role as instructional leaders at Petaling Perdana District, Selangor?

This research question was elaborated through an inductive analysis done to the research data. In the process of interrogation, the researcher identified that the recurring themes derived from the data seem co-relate with the Murphy's Comprehensive Instruction Leadership framework (Murphy, 1990) which was discussed in the literature review. Further to the dimensions found in Murphy's

Comprehensive Instruction Leadership framework, there were also other recurring themes from the data which will be discussed in this section.

5.3.1 Murphy's Comprehensive Instructional Leadership Framework (1990)

From the schools effectiveness and school improvement, organizational change and staff development literatures, Murphy (1990) in his research findings came up with a comprehensive and systematic review of instructional leadership. Using this review, a comprehensive instructional leadership framework was built. The Murphy (1990) framework is an extension of the 1985 Hallinger & Murphy's Instructional Leadership Model. Refer to literature review chapter two of this research for the detail of this framework which consists of four dimensions of instructional leadership, i) Creating School Mission, (ii) Managing instructional programs, (iii) Promoting positive school learning climate, (iv) Developing supportive work environment.

5.3.1.1 Creating a positive school climate

5.3.1.1.1 *Establishing positive expectations and standards*

Principals expectations in this study seem to motivate the teachers to strive for betterment. By promoting an academic learning climate, the principal influence the norms, attitude and beliefs of the teachers and school community which includes the parents and students (Murphy, 1990). Principals are also believed to be the key role players in the development and maintaining of academic standards in schools (Glanz, 2006; Murphy, 1990; Nicholson, Harris-John & Schimmel, 2005; Sergiovanni, 1984). With this behavior the principal foster to develop a school learning climate conducive for teaching and learning by establishing positive expectations and

standards. The teaching and learning process in the classroom is the primary concern which is directly dealt with in this dimension. From the findings it is identical to note that the principals brought significant change in the school's performance and success seem to be distinctly portrayed. The principals responded saying that it is their aim as a leader to ensure all children achieve and meeting their target is their mission (Line 1:15 of Respondent #1). There were also a common voice seeking their students are nt left behind in academic growth. For instance, the following assertion by a principal:

> *"We expect close to 100% reading and writing. So students must able to read and write and able to do mathematics 100%. That means no one should left behind"* (Line 31:37 of Respondent #21).

It is obvious from this research that, by establishing positive expectation and standard, the school were able to achieve greater things and upgrade themselves. By setting high expectations for both learners and teachers, the principal builds their confidence in their ability to achieve. This, in turn, help the teachers and learners to reach the level of expectation and brings greater achievement in what they do.

5.3.1.2   Developing supportive work environment

Developing a supportive work environment being the second dimension of Murphy's (1990) framework denotes ways an instructional leader establishes the organizational structures and processes that support teaching and learning in school. The principals who exemplifies this dimension noted to be creating a safe and orderly learning environment, providing opportunities for meaningful student involvement,

developing staff collaboration and cohesion, securing outside resources to achieve school goals and forge links between the home and school (Murphy, 1990). However, since this framework was developed through a synthesis of literature review, it has not been empirically tested and accepted generally in researches as theoretical framework (Murphy, 1990; Hallinger ey al., 2005). In that sense, it is also not apparent that a leader who exhibits behaviours from all these dimensions has an impact on the high student achievement which is the fundamental goal of school.

5.3.1.2.1 *Creating a safe and orderly learning environment*

Learners need a place that is physically, emotionally and intellectually inviting. A warm, inviting atmosphere in the school and the classrooms, a clean, safe and well maintained physical structure which is conducive to teaching and learning will go a long way to meeting these needs (Gupton, 2003). From this research it is evident that some principals take extra effort to create a safe and orderly environment. It was generally heard throughout the interview that importance are given to improvise and upgrade the physical environment of the school and classrooms. For instance in a school a mini garden was introduced to give a welcoming environment *(Line 1:2 of Respondent #1)*. According to the principal through this initiative he was also able to connect with the parents.

On the other hand, generally in many school the initiative to transform the classroom into a 21st century outlook was also given importance. Through observation and from the interview, the principals indicated the orderly environment certainly boost better

academic outcome as such they make it a goal to facilitate the classrooms with the needed equipment.

Literatures shows that in Malaysia, it is evident that school leaders do play a significant role in improving their school outcomes and promoting learning environment in their schools (Perera et al., 2015; Ghani et al., 2011; Jainabee & Jamelaa, 2011). As also highlighted in the National Education Blueprint: 'Today, all principals in Malaysia possess the autonomy to shape the learning environment of their respective schools' (MOE, 2012, pg 150).

5.3.1.2.2 *Providing opportunities for meaningful student involvement*

By providing an extended learning opportunities for students who are in need, McEwan (1998) delineates that instructional leaders build a climate that presses for an academic focus. In this research, principals have been intensely creating opportunities for student learning by various means. Besides academic, principals also seem to create opportunities on co-curriculum and other non academic activities and have seen positive results.

Besides that, reading programs are other common voice heard among the principals. Conducive places and suitable time for reading sessions are also created for the students in order that their normal curriculum time is not affected. A few principals indicated that these reading programs are held in the morning before the school hour begin and during their break time (Line 1:51 of Respondent #1). Besides the reading programs, Principals also mentioned that they create avenues that develop the pupil

holistically. For that reason, emphasizes are given for extra curriculum activities like Basketball, School Music Band and others.

On the other hand, there was also principals mentioned that they emphasizes on character building programs such as camps that boost the morale and character of students (Line 17:30 of Respondent #17).

Through this research it is ascertain that the students grow holistically when instructional leaders provide opportunities for student learning. Its also build the self esteem of the students and encourageous them to perform better. This in turn brings about positive outcome in the schools as denoted by Murphy (1990).

It is also the aspiration of the Ministry of Education as stipulated in the Blueprint (2013) that student learning must be holistic and engaging to the broader community. Schools are encouraged to reach out to broader communities to collaborate and improve student learning. These collaboration includes (i) student centred activities such as mentoring programs, student trips and job shadowing, (ii) school centred such as sponsoring of school escapements and materials, classroom assistance and others, and (iii) community centred such as community services. These initiatives will be particularly important to schools in under privileged areas (MOE, 2013).

5.3.1.2.3   *Developing staff collaboration*

Developing staff collaboration is a common theme that was mentioned by all the principals participated in this research. This is seen as something widely promoted among the schools by principals for an effective teaching and learning. The success

of leadership is also attributed towards this collaborative effort. Other words like "team work" were also used by the principals to emphasize this collaborative effort. Often these principals seem to give autonomy to the fellow colleagues in order that task and goals are achieved. The success of their leadership is also conferred to the collaborative effort of the staffs as this principal mentioned,

> *"My Success as a leader is the fact that everyone comes together on works as a team. I have tried to instill in my staff the need to work together for the benefit of the children" (Line of 1:24 of Respondent #1)*

This research ascertains that peer collaborations builds healthy relationship through communication, trust and care among teachers. Blasé and Blasé (2000), Fink and Resnick (2001) and Gupton (2003) mentioned that, collaborative efforts improves classroom management for teachers by effectively planning and organizing instruction, sharing of materials and techniques among the teachers. Not surprisingly then, Blasé et al. (2000) found that high performing principals also encouraged teachers to routinely help their colleagues improve teaching and learning through collaborative efforts.

However, the aspiration of principals collaboration with teachers, students and community at larger as described by Murphy (1990) is contrary to Park and Ham (2014) claims that examined teacher's collaboration across three Asia Pacific countries (Australia, Malaysia and South Korea). Their findings shows that teachers are likely to establish collegial relationship between other teachers where there is less principal-teacher disagreement regarding principal leadership performance.

5.3.1.2.4 Securing outside resources in achieving school goals

Principals in this study also plays an important role in securing outside resources to achieve school goals. They are actively involve in securing funds and other means to improve teaching and learning in the school. The Parents and Teachers Association plays an important role in assisting the principals in attaining these resources both in cash and kind. Referring to the responses from the principals it is evident that active PTA are certainly a source of strength in achieving school goals. Besides the PTA, the principals who engage with the potential people who may assist the school with resources seem benefiting widely. These philanthropists and NGO seem to be a great capital for schools as mentioned by the principals:

> "One more we have is the football club. We engage the outside professional coach. Last 2 years I already implement the program. (Line 13:13 of Respondent #13).

> "I get my funding from mostly Chinese philanthropists – many who have made it in life…are generous to donate towards Chinese education" (Line 17:19 of Respondent #17).

This dimension is also discussed at the shift 9 of the 2013-2025 Malaysian Education Blueprint. A partnership with parents, community at large and corporate sectors is seen as important to make learning happens well beyond the school walls as well as to contribute expertise to the school development (Fullan, 2007). The learning ecosystem that reinforces knowledge, skills and values taught to students at school will be enhanced when all these stakeholders involve (MOE, 2013). In order to compellingly securing outside resources to achieve school goals the principals needs a good people relationship, a good exposure to the outside world, a keen knowledge

of the availability of resources, and competence to bring forth the needs of the school clearly and constructively. Another effort that may enhance would be, as Gupton (2003) suggested for the school leader to attend social events outside the school but based in the community. This opens the lines of communication and offers an opportunity for getting acquainted with staff and community outside of the school environment.

5.3.1.2.5   *Forging link between the home and the school*

It was identical to note the results of the study done by Blasé et al. (2010) where the parents supportive role and their visibility in the school related events were important and it is a responsibilities of a principal as leaders to ensure it happen. As indicated in the Malaysian Education Blueprint (2013-2025), every parents are expected to be equipped to support their children's learning through parental engagement toolkit and online access to monitor their child's in-school progress. This will enable the parents to work more closely with the teachers to improve their child's performance in future.

Furthermore, according to the Blueprint, in order for parents to ensure their children are always on time to school. They also need to ensure to build literacy and numeracy skills in the child. A home-school agreement which comes with specific and simple action plans will be also signed by the parent to help the child. Since there is a provision of online access to progress report on a child's school based and national based assessment via the School Examination Analysis System (SAPS), the government will also take initiatives to promote adult literacy, ICT and parenting skills to support and assist the parents. The Ministry of Education will drive these

initiatives with the help of the Parents and Teachers Association (PTA) by establishing a parents support group.

Principals in this study also sees the importance of forging link between home and the school as part of their leadership. Though this is also seen as a challenging task, they see it as a very important responsibility. As indicated by Respondent #1 (Line 1:1) a great deal of time is spent with the PTA and the community to generate a better working relationship.

The relationship build with the parents and home of the students also seen to reduce parental complains and enhances parent's involvement in the student's academic matters. Besides that parents involvement in the school also enable the school to have enhancing activities as indicated by the respondents.

> *"We will call parents for any activity, if we have some community activity like (gotong-royong) and cultural activity that involves the parents…Management will be very easy." (Line 16:9 of Respondent #16).*

Principals shared the links between parents and school appears to minimize tensions between the parents and school and create a safe and orderly learning environment with less problems. This helps enhance the teaching and learning process in the school as indicated by Respondent #22 who mentioned that with parents support and their involvement, teaching and learning process becomes better and student achievement also increases. This also helps to curb the student's discipline problems and parents complains" (Line 22:28 of Respondent #22).

There are no specific literature is found on this sub dimension of forging link between home and school. However, the effects of family characteristics like socioeconomic status, cultural background and ethnicity on family involvement in education have been explored by researchers though the synthesis presented are still unclear (Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Ming Chiu, Ho Sui-Chu, 2006).

In another research, Gutman and Midgley (2000) found that, in order to support academic achievement among Africans in the school both family factors and school factors are important. In another study it was identified that school students wants their parents to be involved especially when their homework (Catsambis & Garland, 1997). It will be interesting to have further research to know how or if the above characteristics affects family involvement in the Malaysian context.

5.3.2   Other emerging themes

Through an inductive analysis the researcher also identified other reoccurring themes from the data. The following themes which were drawn seem to and explains the successful change happened in the school especially in relation to the instructional effectiveness and school improvement.

5.3.2.1   *Sense of responsibility*

Principals mentioned on the importance of having a sense of responsibility in bringing the school to betterment and to impact the lives of the students not only academically but also to build them as a person. The school leaders and teachers play a very crucial role in believing the student as a potential person and take

responsibility in molding them. These morale obligation is often emphasized on academic achievements as mentioned by the principals in the interview.

These principals also accepts the fact that they are fully responsible for the schools academic results and its their responsibility to prepare the teachers for that purpose (Line 7:27 of Respondent #7). Besides that, the principals also indicated repeatedly that they are solely responsible for all the things happened around school. Thus they are required to be stay committed and accountable at every moment as mentioned by this principal:

> *"We are accountable for all the things that happen in the school. All the result either academic performance or co-curriculum activities as well" (Line 19:27 of Respondent #19)*

From the responses, it is also obvious that the principals feel accountable for the progress and the regress that takes place in the school. Thus the many principals are seen to be taking on the responsibility of managing their school in the aspect of academic achievement. According to the school improvement and accountability policy, Forte (2010) pointed out that, it is the responsibility of an effective leader to ensure school is being an effective learning community though the government, central office, district office, parents teachers and students share a responsibility to maximize student outcome. Discussing about the ethics of charismatic leadership, Howell and Avolio (1992) said that 'a failure to be responsible and take responsibility is a failure to lead.'

5.3.2.2. *Ministry expectations*

Through this research, the principals, were also seen to be coping with somewhat high amount of managerial responsibilities. For instance, principals mentioned that fulfilling the requirements of the Ministry has been their major task and their daily cores. This always takes much of their time in the school for the principals generally mentioned that typically their day is full of tasks that I have to do for the District which is often the paperwork (Line 1:40 of Respondent #1).

However, these requirements are essential to be fulfilled. Most times, principals are also expected to attend meetings organized by the District, State as well as Ministry of Education. Blasé et al. (2010); Bush (2007); Gupton (2003) pointed out that it is very important that principals have a clear idea of their roles and that they balance both their managerial and leadership duties as neglect of either could seriously disadvantage the culture of teaching and learning at their schools.

Looking at the general responses from the principal as described above, in essence, it is evident that a school principal has general managerial duties as well as instructional leadership duties to fulfill. A narrow definition of instructional leadership would see these two facets as operating separately. A broader view of instructional leadership would expand this definition to include the principal giving attention to both instructional and non-instructional tasks (MacNeill et al., 2003). Bush (2007) is of the firm belief that leadership and management should be regarded as equally important if schools are to operate effectively and achieve their objectives. He maintains that management should be linked closely to the achievement of certain

educational goals. If not, it could lead to a stress on procedures at the expense of educational purpose and values.

5.3.2.3.   *Role modelling*

In this research finding, principals also have indicated that role modelling is essential in fulfilling their roles as a leader. They lead by example and demonstrate in their walk what is expected from the teachers. Living an exemplary life is considered important. The concern to walk the talk was also emphasized by the principals in their responses. Their positive attitude is asserted to be demonstrated daily to motivate teachers and students to do better (Line 1:48 of Respondent #1).

Some also indicated they have role models whom have mentored them to be who they are today. The principals also widely indicated (as described in chapter 4) on this dimension. They seem to be aggressively involved in every activities in the school (Line 16:13 of Respondent #16) and by doing things right at school for this reason (Line 31:2 of Respondent #21).

It is identical to note that high performing principals, participated in Blase et al. (2010) study indicated that they worked hard to become exemplar educational leaders and be a role models for the teachers by doing this. On the other hand idealized influence is characterized by Bass and Avolio (1994) as leaders behaviour to serve as role models for teachers and all members of the organization. Yasin, Pihie, Fooi, Basri, and Baki, (2016), indicated that instructional leaders are expected to be a role model for the teachers and the school community as whole. Indeed this is

inspires the teachers and staffs which in turn increase the school performance. Peer-led culture of professional excellence is aspired to be created among the teachers according to Blueprint (2013) where school leaders mentor and train one another while developing and disseminating best practices to hold the peers accountable to meet professional standards.

5.3.2.4   *Managerial assertiveness*

Principals involved in this research also mentioned that they are assertive when it comes to fulfilling task assigned to the teachers. The teachers and staffs are also expected to be punctual and disciplined. These principals feels that being firm is essential. Orderliness and following the laws and orders are of utmost important. Principals who are assertive in their role also indicated that teachers and staff who do not confine to the order and gives problem will be removed from the team. For instance Respondent #13 mentioned that when chances are given for the teachers to improve themselves and they do not change their ways, she will talk to the District Education Department to transfer them to other schools (Line 13:40).

Some of them also noted mentioning that sometimes they need to be autocratic leaders to fulfill the task given and achieve set goals (Line 14:7 of Respondent #14). Though tough decisions are needed to be made looking at the positive and negative impacts, Respondent #15 (Line 15:21) mentioned that very firm decisions often need to be made by the principal in meetings and they need to take responsibility for that decision.

It is also evident from the TALIS report (OECD, 2014) that teachers believe that a teacher will be dismissed for sustained poor performance in their school. This shows the managerial assertiveness of the principal in the school. The predominant thinking tends to be that leaders are only effective if they're assertive and when it is not handled skillfully, it may lead to stress at work (Michie, 2002). Nevertheless, in organizations, the role of assertiveness is essential in order that everyone in the team ultimately work towards achieving a goal (Rabin & Zelner, 1992). Since we are result oriented, in order to get great results, a leader need to be authoritative without steamrolling people One must be skilled in assertiveness in order to be a great manager.

5.4   Research Question Three: What are teachers' general perception of principals as instructional leaders in Petaling Perdana District, Selangor?

The discussion on research question three will describe the general perception of principals' instructional leadership as perceived by the teachers. These findings serves as a corroboration for the previous research findings in research question one and research question two. The findings derived from the Halinger and Murphy (1985) Instructional Leadership Model and an inductive analysis of the data. The following discussions. To fill in the gap in the area of this research and to give an empirical evidence for a conceptual understanding of Instructional Leadership practice in Malaysia the following discussion from the findings are done accordingly.

5.4.1 Hallinger & Murphy's Instructional Leadership Model (1985)

5.4.1.1 Framing clear school goals & Communicating the school goals

There were no trace of teachers mentioning about the school mission and goals. Since the goals are set by the central governing body, these goals are accepted by the school in general. However, teachers generally felt that academic achievement is one of the prime focus given in the school beside the holistic development of the students. It was observed that the goal of MOE was printed and placed at one of the school's classroom (refer to Appendix B).

5.4.1.2 Supervising and evaluating instruction

Teachers mentioned supervising and evaluating instruction are constantly being carried out by the principals. Usually, supervision are done during learning walk (Line 25:42 of respondent R2 of SB; (Line 27:33 of respondent R3 of HC). The teachers seems comfortable in their principals supervision of them as mentioned by one of them.

> *"For us its fine, no stress. Just walk in and she will stand there, we are very comfortable with her." (Line 28:33 of respondent R4 of BD).*

According to the 2014 TALIS report (OECD,2014), as compared to most other TALIS countries, 95.2% of teachers report that the feedback they received has improved their teaching practice. Besides that in Malaysia 99.1% of teachers working in schools where principals use of some kind of formal appraisal than in most TALIS countries. Its also noteworthy that all principals in Malaysia practices a

formal appraisal reporting and all teachers are observed in the classroom directly than most other TALIS countries (MOE, TALIS Report, 2014).

The responses from teachers also corroborates with what the principals said. Responses from the principals in this research indicates they do practice supervision and evaluation of teaching which is an essential duty as stipulated in their job description. It shows that principals take this responsibility as an integral part of their duty as stipulated in their job description. It is also noteworthy that these principals are effective instructional leaders who gives teachers adequate feedback, information and assistance for their professional growth and development as mentioned by Blasé and Blasé (1999). The responses from the principals in this research indicates they do practice supervision and evaluation of teaching which is an essential duty as stipulated in their job description.

5.4.1.3 Coordinating curriculum

According to the teachers, the principals gives autonomy for the subject heads to coordinate curriculum. However, the principals themselves contributes new ideas and create opportunities to enhance learning process in the schools and to uplift the standard of the school as this teacher mentioned,

> *"In terms of academic achievements, especially in terms of choosing of workbooks for students, he makes early preparation and gives us time to choose the right workbooks for them. He prepares us early for the task every year"* (Line 25:25 of respondent R2 of SB).

Though the general curriculum is given to the schools by the MOE, the responsibility of deciding on workbooks are on the shoulder of the principals. In the schools where the focus group was held, teachers mentioned that the principal gives them the autonomy to choose the workbooks and usually it is done. In support to what the principals mentioned, to enhance student learning and for better student achievement, the teachers agree that efforts are taken by their principals by creating extra learning hours. It is essential to note that, having the right focus that drives all administrative and instructions is the the key to improving student achievement and the school (Elmore, 2008).

5.4.1.4 Monitoring student progress

Teachers shared that they carry out the function of monitoring student progress in the school through student foster programs and mentoring. This is in line with the findings from research question 1 which, indicates that the teachers also play an important role in monitoring student progress together with the principals. The streaming system is generally used in all schools to helps in the process of monitoring. Besides that according to teachers, the principals also takes various initiatives like 'Student Foster" programs to coach the weaker students ((Line 25:9 of respondent R2 of SB). These sort of programs were effective in developing students academic standard.

> *"We have a 'student foster' program where the weaker students are coached. For example, a teacher will take two capable students who can pass and personally coach them." (Line 25:9 of respondent R2 of SB).*

Teachers also play a very important role in nurturing students by monitoring student progress as they are in the first line meeting the students. The teachers shoulders this as an important task and work hard in improving student achievement as indicated by this teacher,

Since principals are held with many responsibilities, Stiggins and Duke (2008) suggest that the principals, as an instructional leaders, can assist teachers to engage in sound assessment practices. By doing this the principal becomes an instrument to improve learner achievement.

5.4.1.5 Protecting instructional time

There were no evident teachers mentioning directly on this dimension in the focus group session. This corroborates with what was received from the principals where there very little mentioned on this function as schools in Malaysia are under a centralized governance of education system.

However, from the findings, teachers generally feel often parent's complains and whining disrupts teaching and learning process. For that reason they generally feel that principals take the parent's complain and confrontations and deals with them amicably. This certainly ensure an uninterrupted instructional time.

It is essential for teaching and learning process to have an environment where students are able to concentrate on studies and teachers are free from discipline and managerial distraction (Edmonds, 1979; Pukey & Smith, 1983; Brookover & Lezotte,

1979). This parts of the instructional leadership practice should be given importance in the Malaysian context for an effective teaching and learning. Extra curriculum activities must also be given a balance in the education system as teachers have indicated in the findings.

5.4.1.6 Promoting professional development

Teachers in this research generally have mentioned their principals promotes professional development in the school and there are great satisfaction among them as reflected mentioned by the teachers. The encouragement given by the principals to improve the teachers skills, to become examiner for UPSR examination and to go for life long learning certainly motivates the teachers to progress objectively.

Besides the training and courses organized by the Ministry of Education that requires the teachers to attend, the responses from the teachers corroborate with that of the principals indicating various opportunities are created by the principals for professional development. Indeed, highly effective principals, as mentioned by Blasé and Blasé (2000) creates a culture of learning and provide the right kind of specialized professional development opportunities reflecting to the needs of the teachers.

5.4.1.7 Maintaining high visibility

The teachers' response on this function corroborates and in agreement with the principal's response. It is evident that their principals show their presence around the school as most of the time this principals walk around the school and also walk into

the classroom (Line 27:33 of respondent R3 of HC). Their presence are usually appreciated. Indeed it is noteworthy that visibility in classrooms increases the interaction between the principal and students as well as with teachers as indicated by Hallinger and Chen (2015). In a study done by Blasé et al. (2010) many principals indicated that visibility at school-related events and recognition of students accomplishments and parents' supportive roles were important symbolic of responsibilities. In line with that, the teachers also mentioned the open door policy of the principal to meet the unhappy parents also seem to be very effective.

Effective principals tend to adopt an open-door policy, one in which teachers, parents, students and staff are comfortable with approaching the principals in schools, or in their offices without always having to have an appointment or feeling apologetic about the interruption. As this teacher mentioned, an approachable principal certainly boost the morale of the teachers.

5.4.1.8 Providing incentive for teachers

"A happy teacher is a better teacher" is the philosophy of a effective principal as they do their best to boost the morale of their staffs (Blasé et al., 2010). From the focus group sessions it was observed that all the teachers participated were joyful working under the leadership of the principal. As Blasé et al. (2010) indicated, there were a culture of appreciation and recognition for the staff members. Above the gesture of giving verbal and written appreciation and recognition, the teachers also indicated that their principals care and are concern of their welfare. This certainly improve their

attitude toward the job and encourage them to aim for quality and increases productivity.

High performing principals also reported that they began faculty meetings by praising or acknowledging teachers and staff members, and with requests for thoughts and support for those going through difficult or special times (Blasé et al., 2010). Providing incentives for teaching was broadly visible in the schools and teachers were glad about it. For instance this teacher mentioned,

> *"She is very concern about the staff, that's one thing. The welfare of the staffs…She is very understanding. She is very supportive and concern to the staff." (Line 28:17 of respondent R5 of BD).*

Teachers response on this dimension corroborate with what principal indicated that they go extra mile to recognize and reward their teachers for their outstanding performances as well as takes care of their welfare.

5.4.1.9 Providing incentive for learning

Teachers shared that their principals rewards the student achievement, although this is practiced very minimally in schools. Halinger and Murphy (1985) indicates that usually there are mostly indirect activities in the principal's job functions helps create a positive learning environment. According to them, principal's initiative in creating reward structure that reinforces academic achievement and productive effort influences the teachers and student's attitude towards teaching and learning.

The teachers responses corroborates with the principal's indication where they mentioned that public recognition and appreciations are given to the students in words, by cash and in kind in the schools Such gestures and public appreciations certainly motivates the children especially when they feel valued (Fullan, 2007).

5.4.2 Murphy's Comprehensive Instructional Leadership Framework (1990)

The following section will discuss teachers' responses on their principal's instructional leadership practices derived from the inductive analysis of the data which co-related with Murphy's comprehensive instructional leadership framework (1990) as discussed in the previous section of this chapter.

5.4.2.1 Establishing positive expectations and standards

According to the teachers, the principals role in establishing positive expectation and standard indeed encourages them to be better and at the same time brings the school to a greater heights knowing the capacity of the teachers accordingly.

These is in align with the thoughts of Murphy (1990) which says that conducive school learning climate is developed for to teaching and learning when positive expectations and standards are established. The teachers responses also reasserts as indicated by principals that they set high expectations for both learners and teachers. This expectations builds their confidence and enable them to achieve greater level and perform better. As Glanz (2006), Murphy (1990), Nicholson, Harris-John and Schimmel (2005), and Sergiovanni (1984) indicates a school climate for a conducive teaching and learning is established when positive expectations and standards are

established. In the context the standards are often measures in terms of exam results. As such, principals seem to set standards for the teachers to achieve student achievement.

5.4.2.2 *Creating a safe and orderly learning environment*

The teachers were seen to be very encouraged with the safe and orderly learning environment at school. Beyond the facilities, in the four schools which was observed, the teachers were noticed to be working with joy. The facilities in the schools were also relatively good and schools were seem to be moving toward establishing 21st century classrooms. At least in two school out of the four visited had LCD projectors fixed in most classes and smart board was used.

Besides that, interesting initiatives like "Road Traffic" themed corridor, where various road signboards and lines were drawn in a way to educate the students of their safety at school. The school areas of all the four schools were clean and conducive for learning. The remedial classroom and the Tamil Language/ Moral classroom initiated by the principals of BK and transformed by the respective teachers were outstanding.

Teachers also feel safe being under the leadership of the respective principals as they stand for them in times of difficulty especially when it comes to handling parents. They appreciated and gave credit to the principals for their initiatives especially in creating a safe and orderly environment. This certainly motivates the teachers and students to do better in their task without major restrictions. Besides that, as Gupton

(2003) suggested ensuring a warm, inviting atmosphere in the school and the classrooms; a clean, safe and well maintained physical structure conducive to teaching and learning is being the one of the emphasis of the principals. The teachers responses corroborates with the principal's responses where they indicated that with the autonomy given by the Ministry some principals take extra effort to create a safe and orderly environment.

5.4.2.3 *Providing opportunities for meaningful student involvement*

All four focus group highly mentioned of the principals initiatives in providing opportunities for meaning student involvement which empowers the students as well as teachers. This also conforms to the principals responses of having mentioned that opportunities are created for the students to involve in curriculum, co-curriculum and other non academic activities to stretch the talents and ability of the students. All the four schools had great achievements on curriculum and co-curriculum activities under the leadership of the principals. The teachers gives credit tot he principals who always encourages them and gives them opportunity to achieve new things. According a teacher, the principal also go beyond encouraging them to join national and international competitions for instance the Hornbill Festival and others. Certainly this also empowers the teachers as well as the students to flourish.

Other initiatives taken by the principals are like English language programs and competitions (Line 28:3 of respondent R6 of BD), and sports activities (Line 28:8 of respondent R3 of BD). From the responses of the teachers, it significant denotes that the self esteem of the children are build and brings a positive outcome in the

school when opportunities for meaningful student involvement are provided (Murphy, 1990).

5.4.2.4 Developing staff collaboration

All focus group agreed that their principals has been actively involve in staff collaboration. They intensely shared their point on this matter and felt it is important and highly appreciated. Through observation as well it is viable that all teachers participated were very comfortable with one another and express themselves freely. This shows there is harmony and a positive climate in the school. It correlates with the statements from the principals in their interview where they mention that working together and team work is the strength of the school. The teachers also see that the collaborative efforts is a strength of the principals and certainly encourages them to do better in their job. Staff collaboration also inspires a positive environment as mentioned by many teachers. The teachers also noticed that, when principal gives importance for team spirit among teachers, positive environment develops (Line 27:12 of respondent R4 of HC).

By collaborating with others and working, people with different skills and specialization can be pooled to make the learning climate in the school more successful. Besides that it also creates a happier workforce and naturally cultivates a sense of community within the organization with staffs feeling almost like being part of a family. This will certainly compel them to go beyond the expectation of their role and absorb as much knowledge possible to drive the school forward. This scenario is witnessed in the schools visited.

Principal's professional autonomy balanced with collaborative inter dependency is needed at the school. This is because, every principal are an organizational member builds and sustains formal and informal professional learning communities besides being the experts of curriculum and instructions (Mulford, 2003). The response of the teachers on developing staff collaboration and cohesion validates the responses of the principals where the success of their leadership is conferred to the collaborative effort of the staffs. Besides that teachers more likely have a collegial relationships with one another.

5.4.2.5 Securing outside resources in achieving school goals

All the teachers also agreed to the fact that their principals secure outside resources to achieve school goals. This function of the school leader is highly appreciated by the teaches as it helps them to upgrading the school facilities as well being a support to participate in outside activities which need funds. It was also mentioned that, for the parents, Board on Directors and Parent Teacher Association to be giving undivided support, the importance of school leader's having good relationship with these groups is essential. One of the respondent mentioned that,

> *"She (Headmaster) collaborates with the parents and PTA very well. And also outside communities, and the Giant supermarket, she collaborates with NGO very well. With TUDM as well. She does a lot of collaboration effort." (Line 28:25 of respondent R4 of BD).*

In that sense it is visible that the principals from all the four schools had a good working relationship with the people to support the teachers initiatives. For instance,

in School BK, the teacher mentioned that the principal hired a contemporary dace choreographer when they intended to participate in a national level competition (Line 26:11 of respondent R3 of BK). Besides that the principals also seem to have a good knowledge of the places resources are available to secure them. The high level of indication in this part of the finding is also in line with the response from the principals initiative to secure sponsorship.

In the school based management, securing outside resources to achieve learning goals and building up relevant network with outside bodies and securing community resources to enhance teaching effectiveness is seen as the role of the principal (MOE, 2012, pg.219). According to Bossert, et al. (1982) the principal's instructional management behaviour affects the school climate which in turn shapes the teacher's behavior.

5.4.2.6 *Forging link between the home and the school*

With the dedication and wisdom of the principals the schools have seen greater level of participation and link between the home and the school. This links has also seen to bring about positive changes in the school in terms of teaching and learning. It is also identical to note that with this link, parental complains were minimized in the schools and the school were also able to achieve a greater results in their planned programs and activities as mentioned by the principals.

From the responses it was also observed that its is a great challenge to gain support from parents especially those from the middle and lower income group. This observation and the responses of the teaches corroborates with the statements by the

principals which indicated that the links between parents and school appears to minimize tensions between the parents and school and create a safe and orderly learning environment with less problems. This also helps enhance the teaching and learning process in the school. This findings matches with the exploration of Henderson and Mapp, (2002), and Ming Chiu and Ho Sui-Chu (2006) who mentioned that family characteristics like socioeconomic status, cultural background and ethnicity has relationship with the family's involvement in their child's education in schools.

5.4.3   Other emerging themes

Through an inductive analysis, the researcher drew other reoccurring themes from the teachers' responses on their principal's instructional leadership practices which seem to correlate with what the principals have said in second part of research question that explains the successful changes happened in the school especially in relation to the instructional effectiveness and school improvement.

5.4.3.1 Sense of responsibility

The principals were also seen as very responsible people by the teachers. In the midst of all their cores, the principal does take initiatives and steps to bring the school to the next level. From the responses of the teachers it shows that the leaders sense of responsibility has an impact on school achievement.

The claim of Forte (2010) and the responses of the teachers agree that the principals are effective leaders who takes responsibilities. Their sense of responsibility is also

promotes the school towards greater achievement and popularity. Though the government, teachers and parents share the responsibilities to maximize student outcome and school improvement, without the sense of responsibility of the principal the school will not move forward. The responses from the teachers corroborates with the principals responses where the principals feel accountable for the progress and the regress that takes place in the school. Thus the many principals are seen to be taking on the responsibility of managing their school in the aspect of academic achievement.

5.4.3.2 Ministry expectation

This aspect of the theme is inescapable in a system which is centrally governed. Teachers indicated their principals are often out of school to attend meetings and courses organized by the Ministry. Fulfilling these managerial responsibilities are unavoidable and bureaucratic in a centralized education system employed in Malaysia as reflected in the responses of the teachers and principals.

This corroborate with what principal generally responded that they have general managerial duties as well as instructional leadership duties to fulfill. Bush's (2007) belief that leadership and management should be regarded as equally important and management should be linked closely with certain educational goals. Here the Ministry seem to set the educational goals for the principals to achieve.

5.4.3.3 Role modelling

All the teachers are testified that their principals had been a role model for them as much as the principals indicated their aspiration on this theme. The principals were seem to be at grassroots to work together with the teachers, lead by example and inspire them. By doing this the teachers are also motivated and there are job satisfaction as some of the teachers mentioned as follows,

> *"In terms of leadership, she is someone who goes down to the grassroots and work together with us. She don't just give instructions This is leadership by example" (Line 26:20 of respondent R5 of BK).*

One of the charismatic behaviors that build leader influence consist of being a role model (House, 1977, Yukl, 1998, Hoy & Miskel, 2000). This charisma indeed brings the best out of the teachers to stretch their abilities as well. A leader in its simplistic form is someone who sets an example that others choose to follow. Role modelling is the key to differentiate between a leader and a manager. It is unlikely for others to follow if a leader rarely or occasionally display leadership behaviours. More likely people who fails to be a role model are a manager rather than a leader (Northouse, 2015). In this sense, from the research it is apparent that the principals who shows high level of instructional leadership traits were being leaders than managers as indicated by the teachers. High performing leaders also work hard to be exemplary instructional leadership leaders for the teachers and school community as reflected in the studies carried out by Blase et al. (2010).

5.4.3.4 *Managerial assertiveness*

Even though the principals are friendly and accommodative, from the response of the principals as well as teachers, it is apparent that they also practice assertiveness in dealing with the staffs and management. According to the following responses of the teachers, the principals were seen as being confrontational and assertive in order that the assigned responsibilities are done accordingly. The principals also seen to abide by the law and regulations set by MOE and State or District education department.

As Michie (2002) mentioned, assertiveness need to be handled skillfully or it may lead to stress. From the responses, it is evident that effective school leaders are assertive and often they skillfully handle their staffs. On the other hand, it is also evident that, principals does give freedom to the teachers but having hold the final say in decision making. Principals being assertive in their role and the consequences of their assertiveness by removing low-performing and problematic staffs as indicated in the TALIS report (OECD, 2014) is evident.

5.5 Summary of the research discussion

The volume of density of instructional leadership framework in this study may be summarized in the picture of a pyramid as shown in Figure 5.1. The pyramid indicates the density volume of the dimensions from the response of the principals from the highly weighed at the bottom to the lowly weighed at the top. Dimension I on Developing Supportive Work Environment followed by Dimension II Creating Positive School Climate; precede by Dimension III, Managing Instructional Programmes; and finally Dimension IV Creating School Mission.
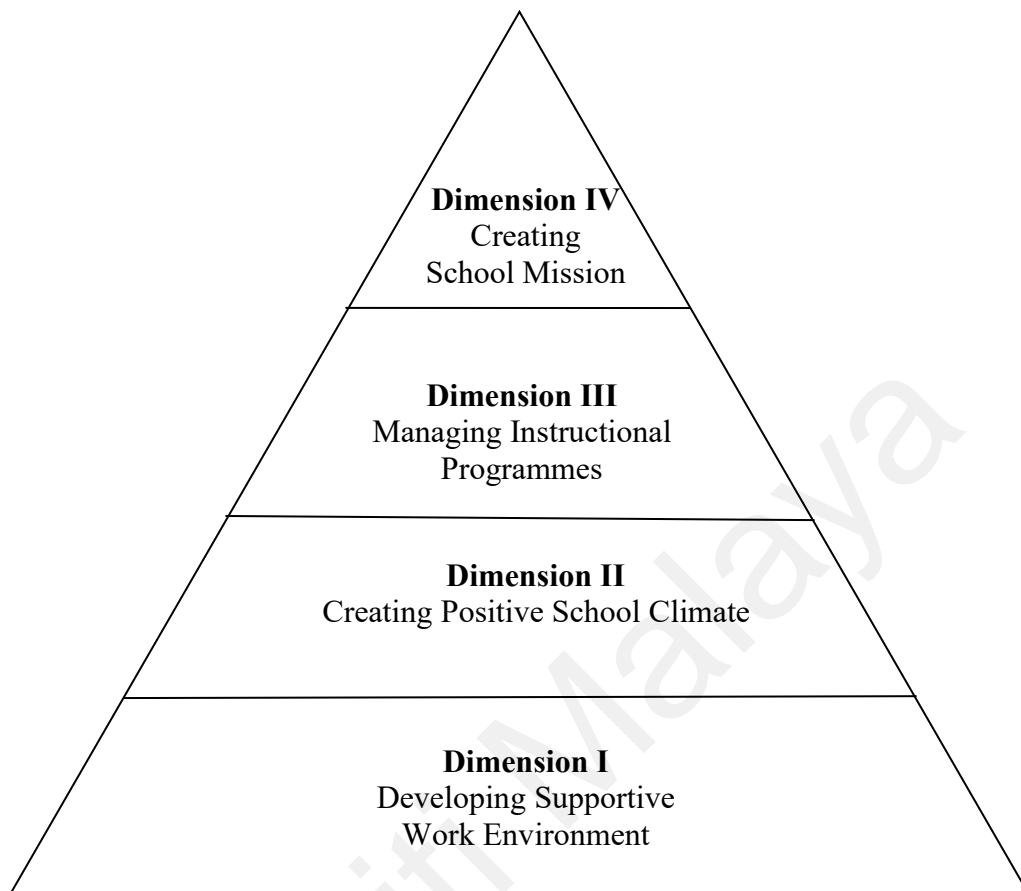
Figure 5.1 Instructional Leadership Pyramid from the Research Finding

The top 3 dimensions, namely (a) Defining school mission, (b) Managing Instructional program, and (c) Creating positive school climate indicated in the Instructional Leadership Model from Hallinger and Murphy (1985) seem to be not very relevant in the local context as in Malaysia a centralized governing system for education is practice.

Figure 5.2 indicates the density of the response from the principals data explaining on the dimension of defining the school mission which has two sub dimensions i) framing school goals, and (ii) communicating clearly school goals. This bar chart indicates the number of times defining the school mission has been mentioned in the

principal' responses in which it is found that both the sub-dimensions had very low density. The framing school goals sub-dimension was mentioned 11 times and the communicating clearly school goals sub-dimension was mentioned 4 times. There were no mention of this dimension detected from the focus group session data. This may be because the mission and goals are set by the Ministry of Education Malaysia and disseminated to the schools under its dominion. It is also reported that the extent to which instructional leadership is practiced especially in the functions under the dimensions of creating school goals, is relatively weak in Malaysia compared with most of the other TALIS countries as reported in TALIS report (OECD, 2014).
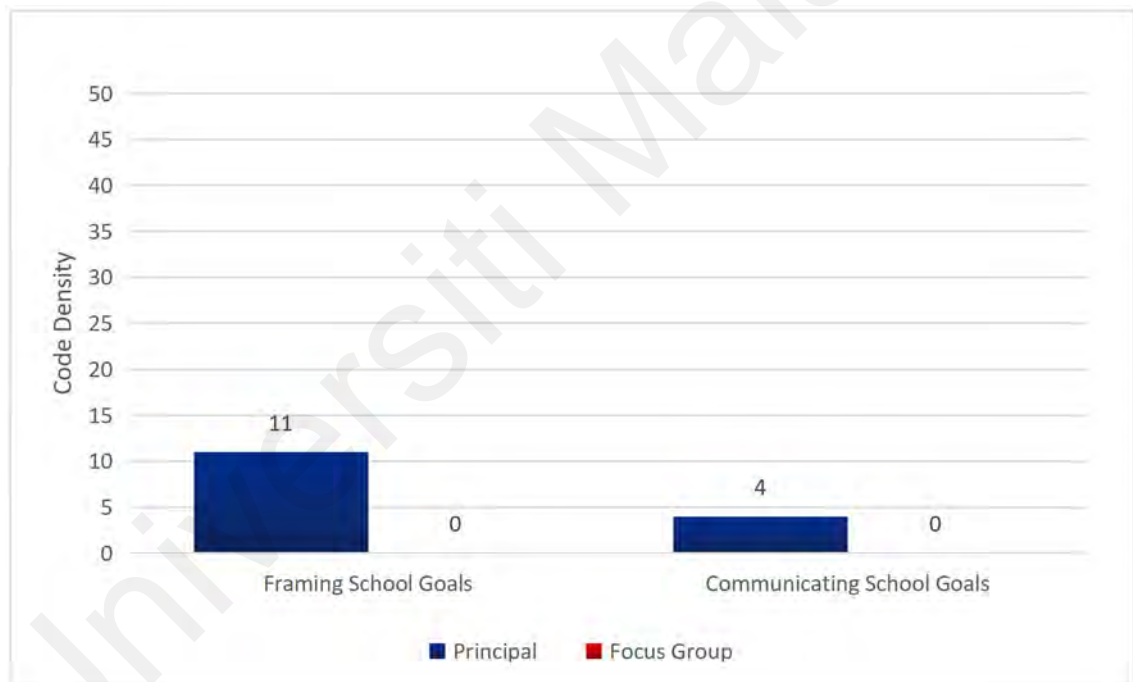

Figure 5.2 Defining the School Mission

Figure 5.3 indicates the density of codes for the second set of dimension which describes the function of the principals in managing instructional program. From the principal's data, it is evident that three sub dimensions under the dimension of managing instructional program were also low. The sub dimension on supervising

and evaluating instruction was mentioned 27 times, coordinating curriculum was mentioned 11 times and monitoring student progress was mentioned 7 times by the principals. The teachers responses also agrees with the principals. However, coordinating curriculum was the highest mentioned 9 times, supervising and evaluating instruction 6 times and monitoring student progress was mentioned twice in the focus group. It's clearly illustrated that managing instructional program is moderately spoken by the principals. Here its also noteworthy that most of the functions described under this dimension are carried out by the principals conforming to the requirement and for reporting purpose to the Malaysian Ministry of Education as well as the District Education Department.
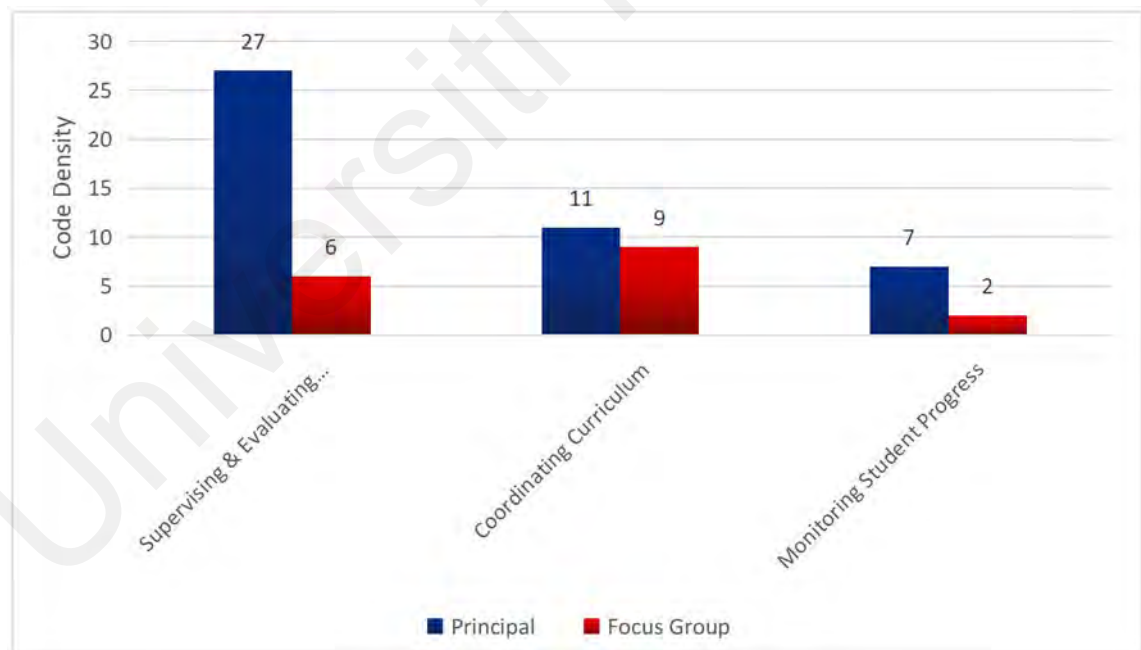

Figure 5.3 Managing Instructional Programs

Creating positive school climate is reflected higher compared to the other two dimension found in the model as shown in Figure 5.4. The density of codes from the

principal's data, particularly, on the sub dimensions of promoting professional development (mentioned 37 times) is higher compared to the other sub dimensions. Besides that, maintaining high visibility and providing incentive for teacher was mentioned 20 times each in the principal's responses. The lowest mentioned sub dimension were providing incentive for learning and protecting instructional time which was only mentioned 3 times each. The teachers response collaborates with the principal's responses. As indicated, promoting professional development was the highest mentioned 20 times, providing incentive for teaching and providing incentive for learning was mentioned 4 times each, principal maintaining high visibility was mentioned 4 times and the lowest mentioned was protecting instructional time which was mentioned once. This indicates that principal's are concern about the school climate and work towards establishing and maintaining the school climate well for a better outcome of teaching and learning. On the other hand, providing incentive for learning (mentioned 5 times) and protecting instructional time (mentioned once) was rarely seen in the focus group responses.
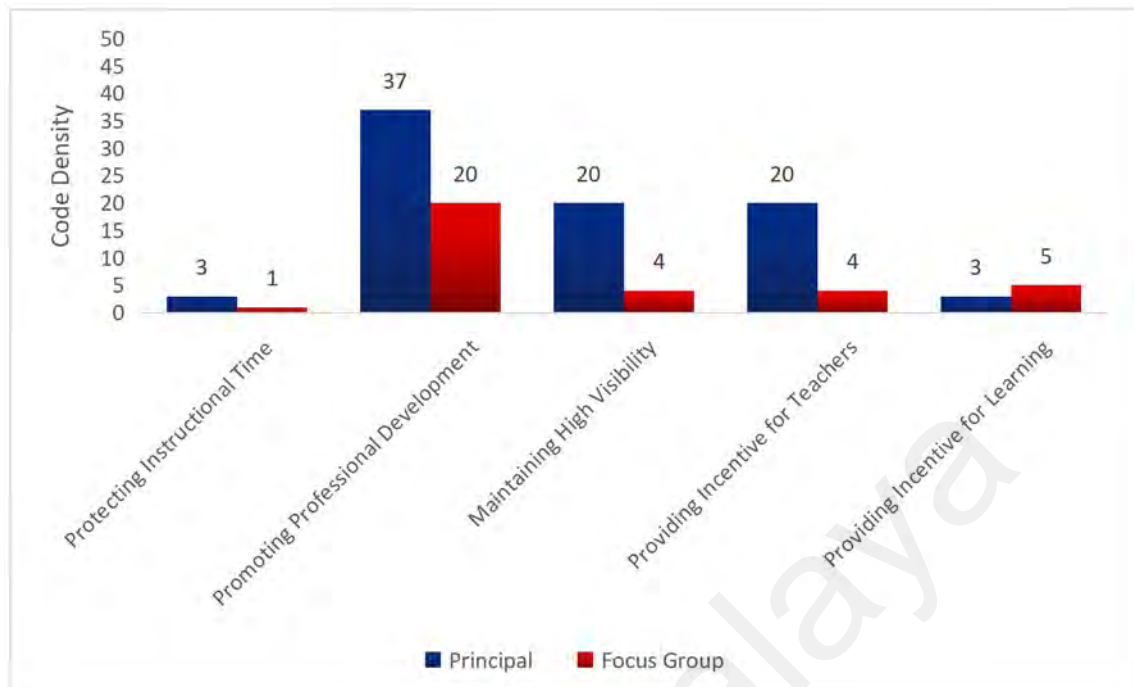
Figure 5.4 Creating Positive School Climate

The density of codes from the principal's data on dimensions which was added by Murphy (1990) as reflected in Murphy's Comprehensive Instructional Leadership Framework (1990) seem to be reflected highly when the inductive coding was done (refer to Figure 5.5). Four sub dimensions namely, developing staff collaboration was mentioned 83 times, securing outside resources in achieving school goals was mentioned 64 times, establishing positive expectation and standard was mentioned 59 times and forging link between home and school was mentioned 53 times by the principals. The sub dimension on providing opportunity for a meaningful student involvement was mentioned 40 times and creating a safe and orderly school environment was indicated 22 times. Looking at the responses from the teachers, it also indicates that developing staff collaboration is the highest mentioned 27 times in the data. There are no much difference in the sequence of other sub dimensions, as providing opportunity for meaningful learning was mentioned 24 times, securing

outside resources to achieve school goals was mentioned 26 times, fogging link between home and school was mentioned 15 times and creating a safe and orderly environment was mentioned 14 times. However, there was a distinct difference between principal response and teachers response on the sub dimension establishing positive expectation and standard which was mentioned only 3 times in the focus group. In Malaysian context, principal's are seemingly involve highly in keeping a positive work environment. However, further empirical studies are needed to support this discovery. Murphy's 1990 framework which was developed through a synthesis of instructional leadership literature has not been empirically tested. Therefore, it isn't certain that a leader exhibiting behaviours from all these dimensions has an impact on the high student achievement which is one of the fundamental goal of schools.
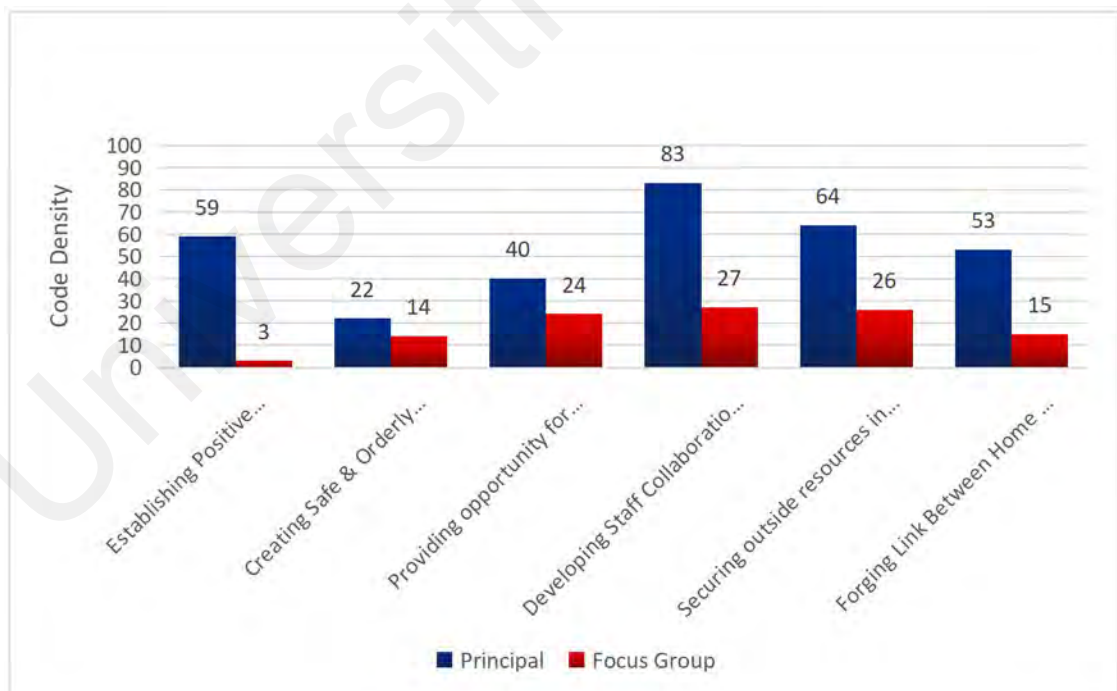

Figure 5.5 Murphy's Comprehensive Framework of IL (1990) additions to the previous Hallinger and Murphy's Instructional Leadership Model (1985)

The observation from the emerging themes from the inductive research as indicated in Figure 5.6 explains that the following four dimensions were reflected highly from the data. Firstly, having a sense of responsibility was mentioned 54 times, secondly, fulfilling *Ministry* expectations was mentioned 43 times. The Ministry expectations sub dimension dimension includes the principals role in fulfilling the call of the higher authority such as the Ministry of Education as well as the State and District Education Department. Thirdly, being a role model was mentioned 32 times and fourthly, exercising managerial assertiveness as a principal was mentioned mentioned 18 times were reflected high. These responses collaborates with teachers response where it the Ministry expectations and the sense of responsibility of principal was the highest (8 times and 7 times mentioned respectively). They also agree that the principal is assertiveness and at the same time being a role model. These two sub dimensions were mentioned 4 times each.
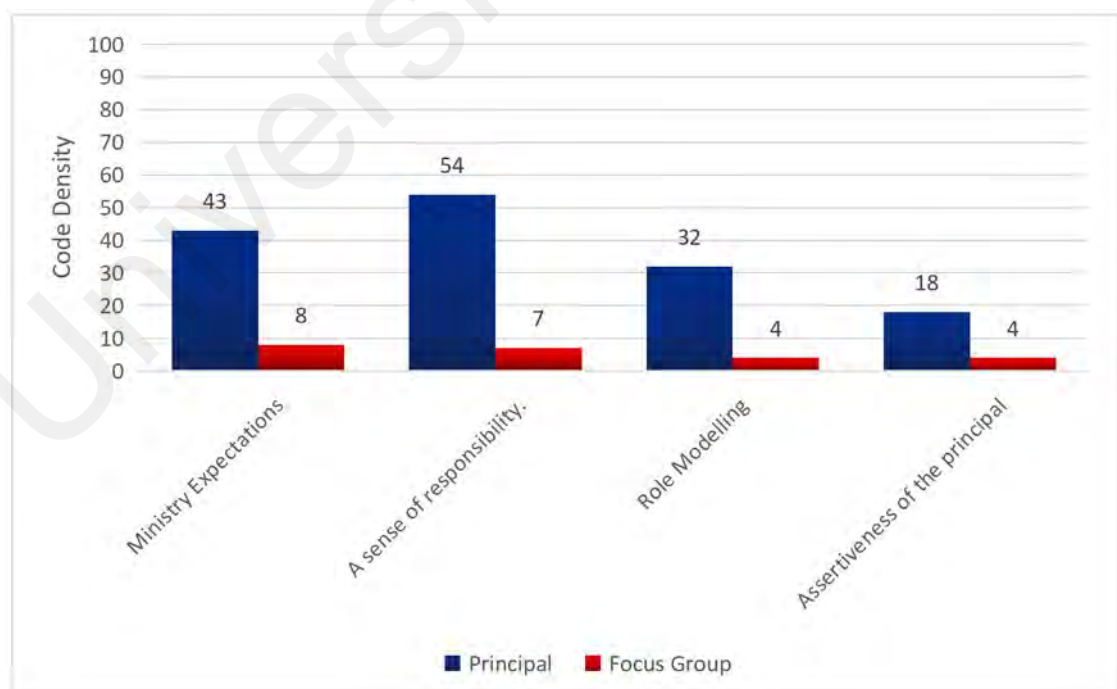

Figure 5.6 Other Themes Derived from the Inductive Coding

Findings reveals that the principals are seem to be bogged down with the managerial and administrative responsibilities (refer to Figure 5.6). This figure derived from the principal's responses points the four functions repeatedly mentioned by the principals to bring success in the school especially in relation to the instructional effectiveness and school improvement from the inductive analysis.

It was identified that, today, it is important for principals in Malaysia to split their time fairly across administrative and instructional activities as indicated in Blueprint (2013). To encourage them, the Ministry of Education also aspired to provide the school leaders a better working conditions and performance based rewards. Besides that adequate facilities and a reduced administrative burden is also assured in order that the principal may channel their energy and time on instructional leadership (MOE, 2013).

The current research furthers instructional leadership practice in the local context by proposing a new concise model of instructional leadership.Synthesizing two predominant models of instructional leadership with an addition of fulfilling of managerial and management responsibilities which was highly reflected in the findings, the new model was developed. This findings is canonical with the TALIS 2014 report (OECD, 2014) which mentions that school principals in Malaysia tend towards a more administrative style of school leadership rather than an instructional style of leadership.

The current study has revealed that principals can't avoid giving attention to administrative duties as it comes as directive from higher authorities and thus focus

to instructional leadership functions may be challenged. As Cuban (1988) described, the maintenance and managerial mode of principals are embedded in the DNA of principalship. Therefore it is essential to carefully look at the structure and normative condition of principalship as there is a general conflict in the effort of principals to be an instructional leaders at school.

However, the principals need to take efforts to balance their administrative and instructional leadership roles. This study certainly gives a picture if the principals are being leaders or managers the most in their practice. The summary of the Instructional Leadership model in Malaysian context derived from this study is shown in Figure 5.7 with the density of codes for each sub dimension from the principal's responses. Dimension and sub dimensions highlighted in blue were some reoccurring theme such as role modelling, sense of responsibility, ministry expectation and managerial assertiveness that was found in this study in addition to the Hallinger & Murphy (1985) Instructional Leadership Model and Murphy's Comprehensive Instructional Leadership Framework (1985).

As shown in researches, instead of administrative activities like completing paperwork, instructional activities such as lesson observations and curriculum planning which raises the quality of teaching and learning in the school has more impact on student achievement (Blueprint, 2013, pg.150).
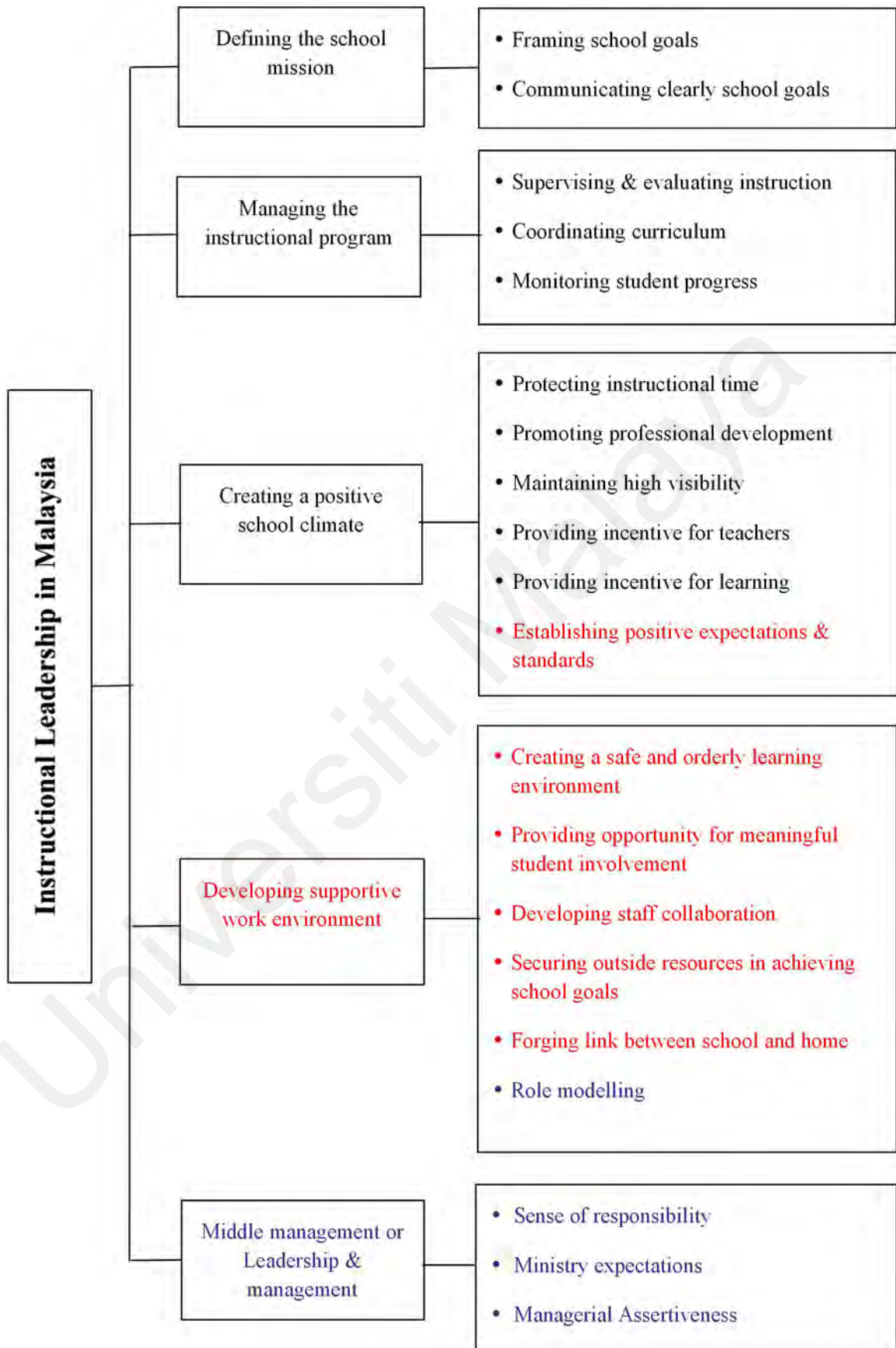
Figure 5.7 Instructional Leadership Model in a Malaysian Context

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5.6   Summary of the chapter

In this chapter the findings from the research analysis was discussed. From the discussion a summary of the research was also presented. The conceptualization of this understanding is essential in a country where instructional leadership practice is highly encouraged and expected to be practices. This study raised many questions for the future research. These questions and recommendation for further studies will be deliberated in the following concluding chapter.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

6.1   Introduction

Considering the context closely, in this research, it is the intention of the researcher to explore further the understanding and efforts taken in local context in terms of instructional leadership practice coinciding with the internationally prominent Instructional Leadership Model (Hallinger & Murphy 1985). In the previous chapter the results gathered was discussed accordingly and a summary of the finding was done. The summary conveyed some of the important findings emerging from the data. This research has also shown that instructional leadership if the very essence to transforming school into an environment where teachers and students may reach their full potential.

From a research participants of 24 primary school principals and 4 focus group, 3 research questions were answered. Firstly, what are principals' conceptual understanding of instructional leadership in Malaysia? Secondly, how principals view their role as instructional leaders? And thirdly, what are teachers' general perception of of principal as an instructional leader? The results showed that Hallinger and Murphy's Instructional Leadership Model (1985) is moderately reflected in the principals' practice because in Malaysian context, the centralized education system is practiced. Besides that, there are also other leadership levels or the middle leaders within the school such as heads of subject and heads of department who involve closely to the instructional core and could be enacting instructional leadership in more ways than the principal of the school (Harris, Jones, Cheah, Devadason & Adams, 2017).

In this chapter the conclusion of the study will also be outlined and presented with a summary of the study, implication of the study, recommendation and suggestion for future research.

6.2   Limitations of the study

According to Bryman (2012) limitations are potential weakness in the study and issues that are not in the researcher's control. There shortcomings and circumstances which the researcher cannot control but might cause dispute in the research methodology and research findings. The limitations also may open possible avenues forr further researches in the subject matter.

The contemporary reality of the principal's instructional leadership practice in Malaysian primary school was discussed in this research. However, research findings only portrays a partial view and may require further empirical study as this research is limited to only Malaysian principals from one District in the state of Selangor, Malaysia. Therefore the findings may require further expansion to other states in Malaysia.

School visit and organizing focus group interview session was particularly a challenge as the teachers and principals were often away for meetings, courses and tight schedule on their daily cores. Nevertheless, despite the limitation, the existing respondents were very cooperative to pave a way for the researcher to get the needed data.

Besides that, the other limitation was faced while transcribing audio recorded interviews and focus group discussions into text especially when trying to translate some part of the Malay responses to English while ensuring to retain the exact meanings of the responses. Though any data can be be subject to different interpretation, in this research the data was analyzed according to the researcher's interpretative framework and specific lines of empirical investigation.

6.3   Implications of the study and Recommendation for further research

The outcome of this research has found that there is variation in the instructional leadership framework in Malaysia. The implications of this study is threefold: a) policy makers, b) knowledge base and c) future research.

6.3.1 Policy Makers

In order to improve the student learning outcome in Malaysia as reflected in the Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013-2025, school leaders need to be developed towards instructional leadership. It gives confidence when the Ministry of Education intend to increase its investment as mentioned in the area of professional development support for principals. The main educational management institute in Malaysia, Institute Amminuddin Baki (IAB) will play an important role training and developing school principals. They are also expected to focus on building effective instructional leadership skills in principals.

High quality principals and supporting leadership team is also assured by the Ministry of Education for every school regardless of location and school performance level to provide instructional leadership and to drive overall school performances (MOE, 2013). Prior to the appointment and through out the service of the principals, adequate training and professional development instructions will be given to all potential candidates especially on the key dimensions of instructional leadership (MOE, 2013).

The Ministry of Education (MOE) as well as District Education department may create professional development programs especially in the area of instructional leadership that are more appropriate to cater the need of the school leaders as described in the Malaysian Educational Blueprint 2013-2015. In that way, instructional leaders in Malaysia may also try new strategies and gain ideas that they may have not learn before in their teaching environment and expand their leadership horizon. Therefore, understanding the local context before making policies and designing training programs will be highly profitable. The policy makers will have a better understanding on the subject of instructional leadership in the local context and the reality in the grassroots as reflected in this research.

6.3.2 Knowledge Base

Through an in depth, empirical and comparative investigation in Malaysian context, this study is also aimed to contribute towards the knowledge base about school leadership in this region. As mentioned, the literature on instructional leadership, particularly in the Malaysian context is limited. It has been disclosed by Hallinger

and Bryant (2013a; 2013b) that the empirical evidence are still in short supply particularly among East Asian societies while international knowledge base about instructional leadership continues to flourish and grow. Emphasis on further studies are urgently needed to strengthen the knowledge base on instructional leadership in Malaysia.

There are also many indigenous literatures written in local national language (Bahasa Malaysia) over the decades but most of these research remain 'hidden' form the view of international scholars (Harris, et al, 2017). In their recent analysis of the leadership literature in Asia, Hallinger and Bryant (2013b) only identified 8 articles from Malaysia that met their criteria for inclusion. There are a significant number of doctoral thesis and masters' dissertations available in Malaysia focused on instructional leadership, however, there are concerns on the issue of quality.

Hallinger (2010) in a review of three decades of doctoral studies using PIMRS model concluded that the methodologies and conceptual frameworks used by the doctoral students on the whole were inadequate for the task of contributing towards the practical or theoretical knowledge base in this field. In this review only six doctoral studies were included from Malaysia. In summary, Hallinger (2010) concluded that the research quality represented, through the doctoral work analyzed, equated with 'weak knowledge accumulation' and an inadequate contribution to the knowledge base on instructional leadership. Since the blind spots from the previous researches that was pointed out were carefully considered in this research, the contribution from this study will certainly build a robust knowledge base in school leadership. This

research will also assist the local as well as international researchers to have a comprehensive understanding of instructional leadership in local context of Malaysia.

6.3.3 Future Research

As indicated by Hallinger & Chen 2015, PIMRS conceptual framework was the first research informed framework adopted widely by the practitioners and researchers. In this case, it may not be sufficient to quantify and generalize the level of instructional leadership practice of principals in local context. This rating scale is far too cumbered as Instructional leaders in local context don't seem to portray the function the dimensions indicated in the list as our context defers. In Malaysia other aspects of Instructional Leadership found in Murphy's Comprehensive Instructional Leadership (1990) seem more to be more prevalent.

Though it is not the scope of this study to develop a substitute research instrument, future researchers may use the model to design an updated or a relevant substitute of the PIMRS for the purpose of future studies. It is very important to create a valid and reliable instrument to measure the instructional leadership construct in Malaysian context. Considering the other recurring dimensions seem prevalent in the context, a new and more concise instrument need to be developed for a more comprehensive research findings working from Hallinger and Murphy's (1985) theoretical dimensions.

Other questions that could potentially be explored in the future are: (a) To what extend the instructional leadership functions of future principals can be positively

affected by the training program?; (b) Do the instructional leadership functions differs depending to the level of schools that is, secondary school, primary school and kindergartner as in local context?; (c) What is the model of used at the principal training institutes and the other official trainers who provide professional development programs for the principals especially in the area of instructional leadership?

6.4   Conclusion of the chapter

School improvement is the top priority of Malaysian school system as deliberated in Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013-2025. Malaysia's poor performance on a comparative global assessment scale was a wake-up call to its Government to address the declining standards in education especially after being significantly outperformed by its neighbours, Vietnam, ranked 17th, Thailand, ranked 50th and most notably Singapore, ranked 2nd place in the PISA ranking in 2012. In the recent PISA ranking in 2015, Singapore ranked 1st and Vietnam ranked 8th.

Instructional leadership also has a very significant effect on the quality of school organization and student learning as mentioned in the seven strong claims of successful school leadership by Leithwood et al. (2010). Since the 1980's, researchers found that instructional leaders who focus on curriculum and instruction maintain highly effective schools. Hallinger and Murphy (1987) also encouraged principals to be strong instructional leaders. It is expressed that principals are responsible for the school's achievement and that they are expected to progress to become an instructional leader from just being a school administrator.

Thus, this form of leadership has become relatively important across the world and particularly in Malaysia. Since Instructional Leadership skills are important to improve student outcomes (Bauer, 2013), this leadership practice is widely promoted in the Malaysian school system as defined in the Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013-2025. To achieve this, school leaders are being prepared towards IL through various professional development programs.

With increasing recognition of the positive impact of effective instructional leadership and the increasing demands of the role, it is essential to identify the extent to which a school leader exercises the role as an instructional leader in their system. From a wide range of research undertaken on the subject of instructional leadership, it is undeniable that this practice has a relatively positive impact on school performance (Ghavifekr et al., 2015, Hallinger, 2012; Hallinger & Chen, 2015). However, the relevance of the instructional leadership models in the local context is still uncertain as the original context when the models are researched and created varies considerably from the context in Malaysia.

On the other hand, Murphy's Comprehensive Instructional Leadership framework (Murphy, 1990) which derived from a comprehensive literature review on instructional leadership of principals in highly effective schools where the quality of teaching and learning were strong is empirically tested and proven in Malaysian context to be highly practiced. The results in this research showed it was highly reflected. This could be because the school context may be similar to Malaysia, where a centralized education system is practiced. It's important to consider the

context and culture of an educational system. While there are some core leadership practices that transcend cultural boundaries (Leithwood, Harris & Hopkins, 2008) leadership actions and behaviours are also contextually influenced and bound. The findings from this study reinforce that the enactment of any type of leadership, including instructional leadership, is socially constructed and culturally defined (Harris & Jones, 2015a; Harris & Jones, 2015b). Therefore to fully understand the leadership practice of principals in Malaysia, it is important to look at the wider social, political and cultural influences that impact upon their behaviour, attitudes and action.

Besides that, evidence from the inductive analysis indicates Malaysian principals practice few functions of Instructional managers such as fulfilling Ministry expectations, role modelling, having a sense of responsibility and employs managerial assertiveness towards an effective schools and improving teaching and learning. A common voice was heard that the school leaders are often busy with the demands stipulated and reporting enacted by the Ministry. However, evidence shows that Malaysian school leaders do play a significant role in improving their school outcomes and promoting learning environment in their schools (Perera et al., 2015; Ghani et al., 2011; Jainabee & Jamelaa, 2011).

At the same time Malaysian principals are also burdened with heavy management duties such as administrative work and meetings affecting their primary focus in improving the quality of teaching and learning in classrooms (Tie, 2012; Jones, et al. 2015). The Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013-2025 aspires to give a better working condition and performance based rewards for the school leaders. Adequate

facilities and a reduced administrative burdens are also assured by the Ministry of Education The principals, assistant principals and the subject and department heads (MOE, 2013).

This research also gave a contemporary knowledge base about instructional leadership in Malaysia. There are not many local evidence of IL available as many are written in Bahasa Malaysia (Harris, et al, 2017). Thus, it is not widely exposed to the international scholars' prospect. In general, it was also found that, there is very limited qualitative studies that have been done systematically on IL in Malaysia and published works are seen to have less reliability (Harris, et al, 2017). This qualitative research gives a distinct understanding of instructional leadership models. It will be helpful to establish a framework that fits the local context and standardize the gap on the definition variation of IL.

With a qualitative research methodology, the findings from this research will certainly be a local response to a generally accepted Instructional Leadership Model (Hallinger & Murphy 1985) which will give a deeper contextual understanding to the subject. No matter how established a model may be, if it does not reflect the reality in the local context, then the results derived may not be encompassing and relevant. Often the theories are neat but in reality it is not distinct.

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