CHALLENGES IN THE 21ST CENTURY: INNOVATIVE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PRACTICES AS A SOLUTION

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INTRODUCTION

In the globalization era of education, instructional leadership practices remain relevant and can contribute to the success of a school (Hallinger, 2005; Department of the Prime Minister, 2010). The Malaysia Education Blueprint (PPPM) from 2013 to 2025, has been designed by the Ministry of Education (MOE) to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of the transformation of the education system.One of the main goals of this blueprint is to reduce the administrative burden so that principals can focus on instructional leadership practices (Jamelaa Bibi, 2012). The blueprint delineates that, school leaders will be guided by the District Education Office and the Department of Education through a professional collaboration effort that focuses on school improvement and the development of the school staff's potentials and capabilities. Accordingly, the principal is required to be an excellent instructional leader and act as anagent of change in order to move the organization forward in the academic and co-curricular activities. In theory, a pattern of effective principal leadership will affect the professionalism of teachers and students' academic achievement (Sergiovanni, 2001). School leaders need to fulfill their role as administrators and instructional leaders to make improvements and monitor the progress of a school on an ongoing basis.

An instructional leader is an individual who is responsible for organizing, developing and ensuring positive attitudes toward school change (Kursunoglu and Tanriogen, 2009). In the Malaysian educational scene, instructional leadership has begun to gain a place among the leaders of the school because it is instrumental in creating/developing effective schools (Sazali, Rusmini, Abang Hut and Zamri, 2007). Alimuddin (2010) notes that instructional leaders who act as agents of change are successful in creating a conducive school environment, which would significantly result in students' comprehensive excellence.

According to Mitchell and Joyce (2005), instructional leadership is basically teaching people how to lead people and is also related to the improvement of the teaching of students. Many studies in the west argue that instructional leadership (Hallinger and Murphy, 1985; De Bevoise, 1984; Blase, 2000; Quinn, 2002) has a strong influence on the success of a school. Instructional leadership serves as the key to school effectiveness (De Bevoise, 1984), hence school leaders who practice such leadership style would be able to make the school more effective (Hallinger and Murphy, 1985). Such leadership style has become more important today due to the increasing demands of society on the school as a learning organization (Southworth, 2002). Furthermore, the pressure to continuously improve academic achievement in schools demands that school leaders play their role as instructional leaders (Leithwood, 2003, cited in Hallinger, 2005; Murphy, 2002)

In Malaysia, the Ministry of Education (MOE) under the Aminuddin Baki Institute (IAB) has taken the initiative to strengthen instructional leadership among school leaders. Various programs that focus on the management and instructional leadership have been organized especially for newly appointed principals. Meanwhile the Inspectorate and Quality Assurance Unit (2003), through their circular in effect, has made it compulsory for school leaders to play their role as instructional leaders and teach a specific number of times and lead the supervision of teaching and learning in a structured manner. In tandem, the Aminuddin Baki Institute Report (2006) emphasizes the Competency Standards of Malaysia Principal ship, which requires principals to use effective strategies that will help to improve the school performance in curriculum/academics?, and to set high targets and expectations for school performance. In realizing their role as instructional leaders, they should always be focused in improving the performance of schools rather than merely focusing on making learning as the core activity of their school.

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

Abdul Shukor (2004) in Juhana (2007) explains that leadership is a process of change and reform in the administration of the organization, such as building relationships and visions. The leadership concept refers to the competency of the principal in influencing, motivating and changing the behavior of the staff and students to implement school programs in order to achieve the vision and goals of the school. According to James (2009), the term 'instructional' originates from the English word, 'instruct', which means teaching' or 'the process of teaching something'.

There is a variety of definitions that have been discussed in almost all studies on instructional leadership. According to Lunenburg and Ornstein (2008), it is common that the definition of instructional leadership is discussed in these studies by the different researchers. Yet the majority of the definitions fall under the same framework and can be summarized as leaders who lead the learning community. For example, Abdul Ghani Abdul Rahman and Mohammed Zohir (2010) define instructional leadership as the ability of the leaders to focus on the aspects of leadership, support and encouragement to teachers and students in overcoming problems, improving and enhancing the process of teaching and learning in schools.

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP CONCEPT FRAMEWORK

The study adopts the instructional leadership model of Hallinger and Murphy (1985; 2003) as its conceptual framework. The model consists of three main dimensions (Foo Say Fooi and Tang Keow Ngang, 2002), which are defining the missions and goals; managing programs and curriculum; and nurturing a conducive environment for teaching and learning. The three dimension can be further explained in ten sub-dimensions that are the dimensions of the designing of goals; clarifying goals; supervising teaching processes; managing the curriculum; monitoring academic progress, being in control during teaching, providing support for teaching activities, providing incentives to teachers, acculturation of the growth of knowledge, setting and enforcing academic policies, and rewarding students achievement. The three main dimensions of the instructional leadership model by Hallinger and Murphy (2003) is discussed lengthily in the subsequent sections.

THE DEFINITION OF MISSION AND GOALS DIMENSION

The dimension of defining the mission and goals is a core element in the process of instructional leadership. The purpose of setting the school mission is to determine the future direction and to undertake strategic initiatives to achieve these goals. Next, the school mission is translated into short-term and long-term goals. These goals should not be in conflict with the policies and philosophy of the national education for all should be complementary to each other. The mission and goals of the school should be realistic, clear and be based on students' potentials, capabilities, teachers' styles and resources that are available and can be measured. Each performance must be measured and evaluated from time to time so that the principal would know of the school's success and failures. Such assessment allows principals to conduct strategic planning for school improvement (Mc Ewan, 1998, Glickman et al. 2001). This first dimension is considered important in order to distinguish between effective and ineffective principals. This can be done by assessing the formulation and realization of the school mission and goals, and the optimum efforts taken to achieve them (Bennett et al, 2003). Furthermore, the school mission and goals will determine and direct the operational management of the school and its classroom practices. Finally, this dimension also entails that the strategies of an instructional leader includes designing the school goals and clarifying these to the school citizens.

DIMENSIONS OF MANAGEMENT OF CURRICULUM PROGRAM

This dimension focuses on the coordination and control of teaching and curricula. Management of teaching programs involve managing,

planning, thinking, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, reflection and instructional improvement implemented either in the classroom or outside the classroom (Blase and Blase, 1999; Dowling, 2007). The curriculum includes aspects related to knowledge, skills, norms, values, cultural elements and beliefs to help develop a student physically, spiritually, mentally and emotionally, and how the teacher imparts knowledge (Fink and Resnick, 2001). Thus, the role of an instructional leader in this dimension is to manage the program's curriculum to meet the needs of the philosophy, vision and educational goals of the school. School activities must be scheduled well by instructional leaders so that they do not interfere with the teaching and learning processes. The management of teaching and curriculum dimension consists of three sub-dimensions, which are supervising teaching processes, coordinating and monitoring students' academic curriculum.

THE DIMENSION OF NURTURING A TEACHING AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

School environment means the norms and attitudes of teachers and students that affect the teaching and learning processes at school, and attitude towards the school, whether the school is an institution of effective teaching and learning, or otherwise (Ishak, 2003; Southworth, 2002). A positive school environment enables teachers and students to utilize the allotted time optimally for teaching and learning processes, while enjoying it simultaneously. The dimension of nurturing the teaching and learning environment would consist of activities that directly and indirectly promote the growth of the school (Quinn, 2001; Webb, 2005). A positive school environment will create a positive culture in school and also influence the teaching practices and students academic development (Mohd Suhaimi, 2004). Fostering such environment of teaching and learning will create school as

learning organization that focuses on continuous learning. The dimension of nurturing the environment of teaching and learning highlights six sub dimensions, which are rewarding the students, giving incentives to teachers, cultivate the culture of knowledge growth in school, determining and enforcing teaching policies, organizing in-service training, and finally monitoring teaching and learning processes.

INNOVATIVE LEADERSHIP

Innovative leadership definitions generally revolve around the person's ability to think innovatively; be creative, fulfill commitments, continue to improve the processes, products and services (Manz and Sims, 1997; Walton, 1985; Dougherty and Hardy, 1996; Plsek, 1997; Bossink, 2004; Aragon-Correa et al., 2007; Kamaruzaman Jusoff et al., 2008). The definition of leadership also revolves around the ability of the leaders to influence (inspire, motivate, collaborate and align) followers to act together to generate the innovation needed (Sillince, 1994; Eisenbach et al., 1999; Tosti and Jackson, 2003; Bono and Judge 2004; Harvey, 2006; Aragon-Correa et al., 2007).

One of the methods for organizations to become more innovative is to utilize their employees' ability to innovate (Hartog and Jong, 2007). In order to continue the existence of innovation, the leaders' ability to innovate should be emphasized (Katz, 1964). Innovative leadership has been considered as difficult because innovative abilities rely solely on behaviors that are determined by a very fragile social system within an organization (Hartog and Jong, 2007). In spite of what has been written on innovative leadership, it is actually the invention or design that focuses on bringing benefits for the future (Selman, 1999). According to Lyon (2010), innovative

leaders are individuals who drive growth by putting new ideas in their action in all aspects of the organization or functions.

Lyon (2010) also associates innovative leadership with predictors of the future. According to him, an innovative leader is able to foresee what might happen in the market and society. The experiences of the innovative leaders are important since they would learn from their past challenges to create opportunities for the future. These indicate that the innovative leader needs to think; thinking about the future, creating opportunities, and developing solutions to ensure the organization is on the right track regardless of the changing environment. At all times, the innovative leader needs to have a vision and be sensitive to understand the oncoming challenges and navigate the course and direction that he or she is expected to lead (Glidden, 2006).

Jusof (2007) defines innovative leadership as someone who has skilled and creative followers in preparing products, processes or new services. Indirectly, an innovative leader must also be creative, possess vision, imagination, and farsighted in producing thinkers among his followers (Carucci, 2007). Meanwhile, Gehler (2005) relates innovative leadership with the education of leadership training in a new strategic environment. It is an education where leaders are given the opportunity to develop their agility to face any challenges and complexity of the environment. Earlier, Jenson (2002) defines innovative leadership as the ability to be ahead in their advantages, such as the advantage of being in receipt of a strategic innovation in an uncertain environment.

Basadur (2004) states that when viewed as a process that can be followed by a leader, creative leadership and innovative leadership share the same goal. Both continue to identify and define

a new problem, then proceeding to resolve and finally implementing its solutions. The clear difference between the two lies in the tools that the two types of leaders use. However, both are related in encouraging their followers to think and seek the way to innovation together (Basadur, 2004).

In contrast to the conventional leadership theory that only focuses on the physical, personality and behavioral style in specific situations, Basadur (2004) emphasizes on how a leader involves others in thinking of innovative ways. In this regard, Basadur (2004) tries to relate creative and instructional leadership that involve the implementation of generated creative ideas. Creative ideas become tools, while innovative leadership is more concerned with the implementation and reception of those ideas (Kabanoff and Rossiter, 1994).

INNOVATIVE CONCEPT OF LEADERSHIP FRAMEWORK

This study describes an innovative leader as a person who leads the creation and implementation of the innovation process. Therefore, the study defines innovative leadership as the process of intellectually stimulating, motivating through inspiration and coordinating followers (subordinates) to achieve a common goal. (Mohd Asyikin, 2011).

STIMULATING THE INTELLECTUAL.

Stimulating the intellectual is closely associated with the efforts to instill knowledge in the mind; an idea or thought that is unique, creative and innovative compared to the old, conservative mindset (Manz and Sims, 1997; Plsek, 1997 and Walton, 1985). Therefore, stimulating the intellectual is concerned with the creation of new ideas, which is related to the employees' behavior process in the generation of new ideas, for example, the integration of incompatible products, and

illustrations and images outside the box (Barbuto, 2005); emphasis on proposals and ideas that are critical, challenging and competing (Pounder, 2001). This trait is the target or behavior orientation to stimulate the intellectual.

Bass and Avolio (1994) defines intellectual stimulation as a leadership style in which leaders stimulate followers to think innovatively and creatively by questioning assumptions, restructuring problems, and approaching the old situation with a new perspective.

Stimulating the intellectual is also related to the consciousness and understanding of the problem and its solution (Bono and Judge, 2004); attention to intelligence, rationality, logic, and rigorous solutions (Dionne et al., 2003). Therefore, the use of intellectual stimulation here refers to the sensitivity of the issues and prioritizing solutions that are appropriate and accurate in its aim.

Taking into account the definitions coined by leading scholars, the study refers 'intellectually stimulating' to the thinking process that is desired, an opportunity to study the problem, looking at things from different angles, and emphasizing sensitivity toward the environment.

MOTIVATION THROUGH INSPIRATION.

Leadership as a process of motivating followers has been cited by scholars such as Yukl and Van Fleet (1982) - the power to boost morale, build confidence, showing examples and moving people forward; Kolev (2008) - provides a compelling picture of the future, emphasizing the spirit of giving, promising a bright future and the challenge of self-confidence; Bass and Avolio (1990) - an emphasis on delivering the right vision, commitment to a full and compelling vision; Hatfield et al. (1994) - the idea of a strong emotion, emotional

experience, personal encouragement and persuasion in realizing the vision.

Motivation through inspiration can also be defined as a dimension of a leadership style, where leaders provide motivation, inspiration to his followers to perform a task or work towards achieving the vision and goals of the organization (Rosenbach and Taylor, 1993). Therefore, treatment motivation through inspiration in this study refers to the behavior of leaders in influencing the followers to carry out their duties.

HUMAN COORDINATION.

Coordination is an attempt to coordinate the components of the organization; the arrangement of working together and heading toward the effects of one goal (Bossink, 2004). Gardner (1990) - emphasis on the role of the field, building a sense of community and shared values; Tosti and Jakcson (2003) - to create harmony and consistency, determination, long term, provide vision guidance and visualization performance; Kotter (1996) and Mary-Jo (1997) - to strengthen a two-way communication, the goal of delivering effective and comprehensive information transmission; Tamkin et al. (2010); Tosti and Jackson (2003) - the emphasis of the movement of groups and individuals, and the implementation of the strategy, as well as specific interactions within the organization.

Coordinate treatment of followers in this study refers to the treatment of the leader in aligning followers to carry out his duties to be in line with the mission and vision of the organization. Coordination is closely related to human dimensions, such as mentioned by Kotter (1988, 1990) that the whole process is the alignment of human leadership.

SCENARIO OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP IN MALAYSIA

The Malaysia Education Blueprint (PPPM) 2013-2015 aims to produce management and principal of efficient and quality. To realize this goal, PPPM 2013-2025 pays attention to the duties and responsibilities of school leaders in planning, coordinating and evaluating instructional activities in order to improve performance and achieve its innovative and highly skilled human capital development. Thus, the principal is suggested to make changes and improvements in his instructional leadership and learning practices. This is consistent with the statement made by Shahril (2001), that the mere role of the principal as a school administrator is no longer appropriate to achieve the educational goals of Vision 2020 and to meet the demands of changes in the education sector. However, the reality is that school leaders are still unable to serve as instructional leaders in total because many teachers are still using traditional teaching methods and have failed in diversifying their teaching methods.

The findings of Andi's study (2007) shows that the control and protection functions of principals' teaching period were at a moderate level. This means that instructional leadership that needs to be practiced by the principal is not fully practiced. In fact, some principals did not serve as instructional leaders in full. This can be proven by a study conducted by Southampton (2007) who found principals failed to monitor students' academic progress on a regular basis.

As a leader in educational organizations, principals represent a very important driving force. This is because the leadership practices significantly influence the success and effectiveness of an organization such as a school. Even the success and excellence

of a school is dependent on the success of the leadership in managing the organization well and effectively. A study on educational leadership by Hallinger (2008) found that effective principal's instructional leadership is required to determine the success of a school by improving students' academic achievement.

According to a study in low-performing schools conducted by Mohd. Suhaimi (2007), he found that principals failed to prepare appropriate and effective teaching and learning programs due to teachers' lack of understanding in providing information on headcount. This failure is related to the weakness of principals' instructional leadership role in ensuring that teachers are given sufficient knowledge to implement an improvement program in order to achieve the set objectives. In fact, Ashley (2010) explains that although school leaders need to practice instructional leadership, his behavior on the monitoring of student progress is weak because school leaders are more inclined and comfortable with the transformational and transactional leadership behavior.

In reality, the situation in school today requires the leader to spend his time mostly on office administration, discipline problems, paperwork, communication via phone or internet, which are not directly related to teaching (Azlin Norhaini, 2006). A majority of the school leaders also have failed to fulfill their primary role that is to help the teacher in the classroom due to their time spent on general school administration and management matters (Maimunah, 2005). In addition, many school leaders had to attend to many pressing matters, such as attending meetings, meeting parents and examining damages in the school. These matters have limited their time to focus

on instructional leadership practices (Mohd Suhaimi and ZaidatolAkmaliah, 2007). School leaders also had to spend a lot of time in outside school tasks (Bity Salwana, Ahmad Basri, Ramlee and Mohammed Sani, 2008).

In this context, Azlin Norhaini (2006) also reported that in some situations, school leaders seemed to be less proactive, less creative, less innovative, often lose their focus, and lose their attention on the actual management goals due to the frequently similar problems that they faced. She also reported that principals lacked openness to change and were passive, especially in dealing with routine management problems. School leaders were also said to face problems in matters relating to planning activities to the extent that they were not able to follow the scheduled time plan. These issues and problems on the instructional leadership practices have sparked the idea to conduct this study.

In realizing the objectives of the PPPM, it has been suggested that schools need to be competitive in order to make Malaysia a world-class education system. In this case, knowledge is the most important resource for creating change. Thus, organizations led by good leaders in using and managing knowledge, would achieve a better performance. School leaders are expected to have relevant knowledge, skills and expertise to manage schools towards excellence (PPPM, 2013-2025). In reality, knowledge plays an important role in realizing the transformation of educational excellence. Nonaka (1994) describes that not only the knowledge possessed by individuals, but also the group's knowledge in an organization can become a new knowledge to produce innovation in the organization.

According to Martins and Martins (2011), the school leaders are the carriers of knowledge like other professionals in terms of their experience and knowledge. Moreover, Khalil's study (2010), which involved a number of countries, found that the culture of a country is responsible in the different abilities to transfer knowledge, which eventually affects the creation of new knowledge. Some studies reported that knowledge management in schools have not been practiced widely in Malaysia and that the management of knowledge in organizations in Malaysia are still not strong (Toh et al., 2003; Rahman, 2004).

This concurs with Murray's (2013) findings that school leaders and teachers lack the knowledge and skills to use existing data to improve teaching, learning and school management. This weakness has led to the excess of available data that has not been used effectively for the achievement of students in the curriculum, teacher development, the provision of financial and human resources. Based on the preliminary PPPM report, there is a relationship between the practices of high-performing school management and vice versa. Low performing school leaders claimed that they had a lot of programs that should be implemented and were burdened with this situation. On the other hand, high-performing schools, school leaders understood the important things that need to be done and acted by focusing only on the key practices that need to be implemented immediately. This situation illustrates that the knowledge of instructional leadership practices among school leaders are still at a moderate level and should be upgraded.

The changes in management and teaching in schools nowadays have actually put more pressure on school leaders. This has resulted in their increased workload. Furthermore, school

leaders are not able to handle the changes and new challenges well due to the lack of relevant knowledge, skills and experiences. Therefore it is important that school leaders master the necessary knowledge and skills before undertaking their position.

Organizations such as school can never achieve excellence in education without being led by a leader with skills to respond creatively and innovatively in any changing situations. According to Alimuddin, (2010) a stable leader is a leader who practises instructional leadership and become agents of change in schools since both elements can help to achieve school excellence. A study by Hazura Wan Hussain (2009) shows that there is a relationship between the leadership of principal as an instructional leader has a great impact on student academic achievement. This finding is consistent with the opinion of Hallinger and Heck (2003) in which the principal requires the commitment and cooperation of teachers to ensure improvement in student achievement. Fullan (2001), Bovalino (2007) and Havlik (2007) also agree that the success of change and innovation is made possible when the school leaders were given full cooperation and commitment by all teachers.

It is the responsibility of the principal to implement any changes that occur, and according to Hussein, (2008) the success or failure of any change made depends on the principal. This finding is supported by Azhari (2002), who describes the principals as agents of change at the school level who are responsible to support, help, guide and encourage teachers to adopt and implement change and educational innovation in schools effectively so that the school goals can achieved, which particularly would benefit the students.

School is a social institution that provides educational services to clients ranging from students, parents and the community. It is undeniable that parents expect the very best for their children (Abdul Razak, 2001). In the era of globalization, the technological development is moving rapidly. Al Ramaiah (1999) points out that the role of technology in schools is very important. The failure of the school to grow in line with the advancement of technology will hinder educational excellence. The use of modern tools in schools such as computers, machinery and equipment as well as new techniques in administration, teaching and learning will help to improve school performance. Recent development in the world of education that emphasizes on the use of multimedia, such as in the smart school has insisted that necessary changes in technology are implemented in school. To implement this change of course requires school leaders who have the knowledge, skills and great expertise.

According to Beer and Nohria (2000), a 70 percent change in organizations failed because of weaknesses in the strategy and goals, shortcomings in communication and trust, the weakness in the efficient management, change management skills, and weaknesses and obstacles in making changes. In fact, according to Hazura Wan Hussain (2009), the ability of principal behavior to manage internal and external challenges can ensure the success of a change in school. Thus, the principal as an agent of change should have a positive opinion about the changes, and excellent school leaders always know what is best, are sensitive to change and the issues that plagued the education system (Nor Asikin, 2009).

CONCLUSION.

School leaders need to be wise in handling any uncertainties and in using available resources to make the right decision. When making a decision, the risks are not only borne by the principal, but the whole school community will also not be spared of the consequences (Hamedah and Normah, 2010). To manage these challenges, the principal should be innovative, creative and responsive to the various conflicts that arise during the running of the schools. This is evidenced based on a study by Mehrabani and Shajari (2012), where their study has found that the capability of the leaders in using their knowledge can produce innovation capability in an organization.

A leader needs to practice certain methods to remain competitive. Hitt et al. (2003) state that innovation is a strategic choice that allows a competitive advantage globally. Therefore, to remain competitive and to keep up with the changes, school leaders need to be creative and innovative. Leadership in schools should strive to continuously produce a skilled workforce, professional, creative and innovative (Hussein, 1993). Innovative leadership is a viable alternative to contemporary leadership in resolving problems effectively. Innovative leadership practices include radical changes through new ideas, methods, processes and techniques to solve any current and future problems (Asim Sen and Erol Eren, 2012).

According to Hersey et al. (1997), the success of innovative leadership practices to solve a problem really depends on the expertise and breadth of leadership knowledge, a wide range of creative skills, common shared values and extraordinary talent. Leadership qualities help innovative leaders to understand the causes of current and future problems, and to resolve them successfully. According to Asim Sen and Erol Eren, (2012) the effectiveness of

innovative leadership practices also depends on the characteristics of the followers and the internal and external environment. Together, they help innovative leaders to create a radical change.

Since instructional leadership and innovative leadership practices are very significant to the excellence of the school, they are considered as viable alternatives for school leaders to implement them effectively, especially in schools in Johor. Other studies on Instructional Leadership include Latip Muhamad (2006), Mohd Suhaimi (2007), Robinson (2008), Ho Yip Leon (2008), Stebick (2009), Fulton (2009), Lim Siew Phay (2009) and Jamelaa Bibi (2012). The findings were more focused on the relationship between instructional leadership and academic achievement of students, the teacher's perspective on instructional leadership, the use of quantitative methods to examine the relationship and were conducted only in urban schools (Mohd Suhaimi, 2007). There were also some studies that only focused on innovative leadership such as Linda-Marie Stempihar (2013), Aminuddin Sham (2012), Mohd Asyikin Daud (2011), and Asim Sen (2012).

Asim Sen study demonstrates that the innovative leadership is the most ideal leadership to be implemented in the 21st century. The literature also found that so far, there has been no study linking the instructional leadership practices with innovative leadership. Therefore, a comprehensive study regarding instructional leadership and innovative leadership is needed. In the innovative context, cooperation in generating innovative ideas and support are greatly needed. There are some individuals who pose a threat to innovation. Uncertainty and lack of knowledge has led them to oppose to any innovation. This is because they view that any changes will replace what they already knew. These individuals believe that innovation will

not bring any benefits to the organization but may cause a decline in quality and is a waste of money, time and energy.

A study on innovative instructional leadership practices needs to be carried out because not many previous studies have been conducted primarily involving the principal. For schools to remain competitive in the world arena of education, school leaders need to have the knowledge, skills and experience. These aspects will assist school leaders to meet any changes. This statement is supported by the findings of a study done by Popadiuk and Choo (2006) who found that innovation and knowledge creation has a strong and complex though limited studies in this area have been conducted.

In fact, Mohd Salleh (2000) states that the principal is considered as the person who leads instructional leadership tasks although their tasks are not much focused on the aspects of teaching. However, they are responsible in determining the level and progress of student achievement. Thus, a form of leadership that is able to fulfill this quality needs to be used and expanded mainly to the school leaders and headmasters as the front line leaders, and teachers as classroom leaders. The discussed instructional leadership will encourage teachers and the community to contribute ideas in the process of formulating the school vision, i.e. innovative instructional leadership.

A good innovative instructional leaders can foster shared leadership and implement effective change processes through improved teaching and learning, and promote effective relationships between the school and the community. Therefore a proper research on innovative instructional leadership practices need to be done. This statement is supported by Tamgorien and Kursunologlu (2009) who

found that many school leaders took an indifferent attitude towards changes although this would hinder schools from continuing to excel.

The Ministry of Education (MOE) in Malaysia (2010) has stated that the programs on developing school performance have to be created to help improve poor performing schools. Hence, a study to look at innovative instructional leadership practices is essential in order to generate new ideas and creativity for making change. So this study tries to review leadership practices amongst school leaders in order to realize successful change and innovation in schools.