




Implementation of Coaching Leadership Style by Principals to Enhance Learner Success



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ABSTRACT

In this empirical study, the researchers argue that immediate attention is required to ensure that principals successfully implement Coaching Leadership Style (CLS) to enhance the sustainability of learning experience learner success. The problem underpinning this study is that the principals face difficulties in implementing CLS. The study is based on Instructional Coaching Leadership Theory. The major assumption of this theory is that Instructional Coaching Leadership Theory is viewed as a method of providing sustained and personalized support to the principals and emphasizes the fundamental role of active learning, reflection, and feedback in the learning process. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the challenges facing principals in successfully implementing CSL and how principals can mitigate these challenges. This study used qualitative methodology to gather data from three secondary and two primary school principals in Bloemfontein through structured interviews. The findings of the study revealed that principals lamented the lack of training to implement CLS. In the discussion with the participants, the researchers concluded that necessary steps should be taken to empower the principals on CLS. Recommendations for further research and implications for principalship and training programs are provided. This empirical study contributes to the body of knowledge by exploring how can principals practice CLS to achieve the objectives of the study of successfully implementing CLS to enhance learner success and of devising means of mitigating challenges experienced by the principals.

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INTRODUCTION

Changes in the political, social, and economic spheres as well as technological advancement brought about challenges in the educational field, globally including South Africa. To meet these needs, along with learner success, schools must be led by principals who possess prudent leadership styles. Leadership refers to the explanation of how and why specific individuals become leaders and emphasizes the essential characteristics and actions that people might adopt to improve their leadership skills.¹ Amongst the

¹ Simplelearn.com., “10 Major Leadership Theories Every Manager Should Master in 2023,” 2023.

plethora of leadership styles, coaching leadership style (CLS) is one of the styles principals must acquire and successfully implement. Studies reveal that disruptive change across industries and businesses is currently a norm and what might have worked in the past can no longer be effective. Contemporary principals cannot have all the responses in all situations, thus new leadership approaches must be tried. CLS is one of these leadership approaches because CLS is designed to create high performance and is characterized by collaboration and partnership.² When leading the staff or teaching the learners, it is fundamentally important to adopt and hone an effective leadership style as this will assist them in identifying areas of weaknesses and provide necessary advice.³ In the study conducted by Sibindi and Ndlovu it is highlighted that CLS serves as a change catalyst within the South African context reflecting on its effectiveness in quickening racial transformation, how CLS can be implemented in an organization and expressing the view that CLS is widely used in career progression support, leadership development, and performance improvement.⁴ Further studies reveal that CLS is valuable in showing that coaching is beneficial to all managers in organisations as it improves behaviour which results in better working relationships and for other organisations in South Africa which intend to implement coaching programmes, not only for their managers but also for organisations that want to focus on managers as coaches for their subordinates.⁵ This study responded to two questions, namely: What are the challenges that principals experience in successfully implementing CLS to enhance learner success and how can principals mitigate these challenges? In light of this, the objective of the study is to evaluate the challenges faced by principals in successfully implementing CSL and to devise means by which principals can mitigate these challenges.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Definition CLS

Various researchers provide different definitions of CLS. Berg and Karlsen view coaching leadership as a technique that supports and challenges colleagues, to assist them in attaining individual growth and development.⁶ Vesso and Alas suggest that a huge number of organizations view CSL as a way of successfully leading the people.⁷ Coaching leadership is a style that relates to recognizing team members' strengths, weaknesses, and inspiration to help every individual to perform to their best ability. CSL is one of the four major leadership styles that school principals can use to motivate their teachers and achieve learner success.⁸ Therefore, it is essential that school principals who have supervisory authority over teachers and learners to ensure that their leadership attributes enhance learner success.

Western Governors University defines leadership as an explanation of how why certain people become leaders and focuses on the traits and behaviours that people can adopt to increase their leadership capabilities.⁹ Vucicevic explores that CLS leaders must work to create an environment where conversations flow freely, and ideas are exchanged without hesitation, and recognize active listening as an integral part of open communication.¹⁰ CLS is characterized by collaboration, support, and guidance. CLS is essentially the opposite of autocratic leadership which emphasizes a top-down approach.¹¹ The

² National Society of Leadership and Success, "What Is Coaching Leadership Style?," accessed May 13, 2024, <https://nsls.org/blog/what-is-coaching-leadership-style>.

³ Indeed Editorial Team, "What Is Coaching Leadership Style? (And When to Use This Style)," Career Development, accessed May 13, 2024, <https://indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/coaching-leadership-style/>.

⁴ Hugh Myres, "Factors in South Africa Inhibiting the Progression of Black Executives in Their Careers and the Role of Coaching in Their Development" (University of the Witwatersrand, Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management, 2014).

⁵ F. Jackson and Anna Patrizia, "Exploring the Effects of a Coaching Leadership Style on the Relationships between Managers and Direct Reports in South Africa," accessed September 3, 2024, <https://google.com/search?q=Exploring+the+effects+of+a+Coaching+Leadership+style+on+the+relationships+between+Managers+and+Direct+Reports+in+South+Africa+FAP+Jackson+>.

⁶ Jan Terje Karlsen and Morten Emil Berg, "Coaching Leadership Style: A Learning Process," *International Journal of Knowledge and Learning* 13, no. 4 (2020): 356–68.

⁷ Signe Vesso and Ruth Alas, "Characteristics of a Coaching Culture in Leadership Style: The Leader's Impact on Culture," *Problems and Perspectives in Management* 14, no. 2 (June 13, 2016): 306–18, [https://doi.org/10.21511/ppm.14\(2-2\).2016.06](https://doi.org/10.21511/ppm.14(2-2).2016.06).

⁸ Karlsen and Berg, "Coaching Leadership Style: A Learning Process."

⁹ Western Governors University (WGU), "What Is Authentic Leadership?," April 4, 2020, <https://www.wgu.edu/blog/what-is-authentic-leadership2004.html>.

¹⁰ Milicia Vucicevic, "Coaching Leadership: Definition, Pros & Cons, and Famous Examples," September 1, 2023.

¹¹ Sophia Lee, "25 Leadership Qualities That Make You a Great Leader," Leadership Skills, n.d.

National Society of Leadership and Success (NSLS) demonstrated that CLS ensures that leaders can observe the strengths and weaknesses of the individual team members thus enabling them (leaders) to assist all the individuals to grow and succeed.¹² CLS provides high levels of personalized support that is balanced by the provision of meaningful feedback. CLS is frequently referred to as the “polar opposite” of autocratic leadership which advocates the command-and-control approach to leadership.¹³ The study has pointed out that CLS is about empowering members of the team to be the best versions of themselves. CLS can be likened to a situation in which team members are provided with the keys to the castle that allow them to navigate the kingdom.¹⁴

TYPES OF LEADERSHIP THEORIES

Karlsen; Meyer (in Berg & Karlsen) and Avolio identify the following types of leadership theories:¹⁵

Situational leadership theory

This theory was constructed by Ken Blanchard and Paul Hersey in the 1960s as one of the prominent leadership theories. This theory advocates that to be effective, leaders must adapt their leadership style to the existing situation they find themselves. Leaders cannot implement this style as a ‘one-size-fits-all’ style because employees are unique and work in differently in different situations.¹⁶

Full-range leadership development theory

This leadership style was developed by Burns in 1978. Burns suggested a full range of leadership theory that consisted of three basic constructs, namely, laissez-faire, transactional, and transformational leadership styles.¹⁷

Coaching leadership theory

Coaching leadership theory is regarded as one of the cardinal parts of leadership theories. Meyer (in Berg & Karlsen) argued that coaching leadership theory assists employees in developing personally and with long-term perspectives.¹⁸ This study focused on school principals as leaders and the leadership style that they can utilize to become effective leaders. The study also demonstrated the behaviours and traits that school principals must possess, and how to effectively implement coaching leadership in an educational setting to enhance learner success.

Coaching leadership in a school context

Various studies have been conducted on CLS in schools worldwide and in South Africa.¹⁹ Robertson has noted that adopting a CLS in a school can produce a range of benefits for school principals and their staff members as well as their learners because school life is very hectic and pacy, therefore principals must be agile in their thinking and decision-making.²⁰ Mathias added that CLS is effective for long-term development because it motivates teachers and learners to experiment with new ways to develop their strengths and weaknesses and suggested the need for principals to implement CSL because it increases

¹² National Society of Leadership and Success, “What Is Coaching Leadership Style?”

¹³ Vucicevic, “Coaching Leadership: Definition, Pros & Cons, and Famous Examples.”

¹⁴ Ganesh Kailash, “What Is Coaching Leadership Style: Benefits, Examples, and Steps to Implement It in the Workplace,” accessed May 13, 2024, <https://culturemonkey.io/employee-engagement/coaching-leadership-style/>.

¹⁵ Karlsen and Berg, “Coaching Leadership Style: A Learning Process”; Kailash, “What Is Coaching Leadership Style: Benefits, Examples, and Steps to Implement It in the Workplace”; J. Bruce Avolio and M. Bernard. Bass, *Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire. Manual and Sampler Set* (Redwood City: Mind Garden, 2004).

¹⁶ Morten Emil Berg and Jan Terje Karlsen, “A Study of Coaching Leadership Style Practice in Projects,” *Management Research Review* 39, no. 9 (2016): 1122–42.

¹⁷ Avolio and Bass, *Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire. Manual and Sampler Set*.

¹⁸ Karlsen and Berg, “Coaching Leadership Style: A Learning Process.”

¹⁹ Frances Robertson, “The Power of Coaching Leadership Styles ,” Home (/) Best Practice, October 18, 2022, <https://www.headteacher-update.com/content/best-practice/the-power-of-coaching-leadership-styles/>; Sarah Mathias, “5 Effective Leadership Styles in Education-How to Make Them Work for You,” accessed May 13, 2024, <https://thoughtexchange.com/blog/edu-leadership-styles.>; Agnė Daučianskaitė and Vilma Žydzūnaitė, “Differences and Similarities between Coaching, Instructional and Educational Leadership Styles,” *Acta Educationis Generalis* 10, no. 3 (2020): 87–100.

²⁰ Robertson, “The Power of Coaching Leadership Styles .”

self-awareness and assists them in paying more attention to their strengths.²¹ CSL leaders engage school principals in purposeful growth conversations that will positively impact collaborative decision-making, teacher leadership, and classroom practice.²² Principals must be engaged in continuous coaching professional development (CPD) that would enable them to navigate difficult conversations positively. A further study conducted in Boston, USA revealed that leadership is important in education to create and sustain a positive learning atmosphere and ensure learner success. CLS has parameters such as goal, implementation of the educational process, teaching methodologies, and principals' activity, among others.²³ CSL principals are skilled in active listening, understanding their staff's needs, and providing constructive feedback.²⁴ CSL principals must consider one-on-one sessions as employees may feel more comfortable speaking and learning from a leader when they have private sessions as this will offer them the opportunity to gauge the level of their interest.²⁵ In the South African educational context CSL should foster active thinking, intellectual engagement, democratic participation and a supportive school environment in which disequilibrium and experimentation can occur by increasing interaction between diverse peers.²⁶

The significance of CLS for the principals

The significance of CLS is that it does not only provide critical career development but also boosts principals, teachers and learners' confidence which enhances productivity.²⁷ According to Leadership Success, CLS aims to empower principals to make a genuine variation resulting in a more fulfilled workforce and better team ethic and ultimately enhanced learner success.²⁸ CSL principals are great at giving constructive feedback to improve an individual's talents, specifically when it comes to achieving goals and having the confidence to tackle new projects or problems.²⁹

Challenges faced by the principals

There have been numerous challenges faced by principals which can be categorized in terms of different geographical and cultural contexts. A Nestle professional from demonstrated that principals face challenges such as keeping up-to-date with the latest trends in educational technology, information overload and misinformation, collaboration and professional development for leadership growth.³⁰ A study by Tintoré, et al. investigated principals' problems and challenges that commenced from 2003 until 2019 which reflected an increase in challenges which motivated the need for changes in educational practices and implementation of leadership training programmes.³¹ The main challenge in CSL is the process of overcoming resistance from individuals who may be resistant to coaching processes. This resistance can arise due to various reasons, such as lack of trust in the leader, and scepticism about the benefits of coaching, among others.³²

To solve these challenges, Debara has proposed that principals who implement CLS must pay attention to developing their teachers in the same way that coaches develop their players, through the programmes such as professional development programmes, mentorship and continuous provision of

²¹ Mathias, "5 Effective Leadership Styles in Education- How to Make Them Work for You."

²² Daučianskaitė and Žydžiūnaitė, "Differences and Similarities between Coaching, Instructional and Educational Leadership Styles."

²³ Debara Deanna, "Coaching Leadership Skills: Examples and Skill to Get Started," accessed April 17, 2024, <http://www.betterup.com/blog/coaching-leadership-styles-examples>.

²⁴ Indeed Editorial Team, "What Is Coaching Leadership Style? (And When to Use This Style)."

²⁵ Dennison Kara, "Why Leaders Should Consider Shifting to Coaching Leadership Style Now More than Ever," *Forbes Leadership Strategy*, accessed May 13, 2024, <http://www.forbes.com/sites/karradennison/2021/09/20/why-leaders-should-consider-shifting-to-coaching-leadership-style-now-more-than-ever/?sh=7672e012f81>.

²⁶ Jeanette Maritz, "Taming the Wild West of Business Coaching Training: An Emerging Conceptual Framework," *Acta Commercii* 13, no. 1 (2013): 1–11.

²⁷ Indeed Editorial Team, "What Is Coaching Leadership Style? (And When to Use This Style)."

²⁸ Leadership Success, "What Is Coaching Leadership Style?," accessed May 13, 2024, <https://leadershipsuccess.co/blog/what-is-coaching-leadership-style>.

²⁹ Engage, "What Is Coaching Leadership Style?," accessed May 17, 2024, <http://www.engagecoach.com/What-is-coaching-leadership-style/>.

³⁰ Nestle Professional, "The Coaching Management Style: Definition & Examples," accessed May 13, 2024, <https://nestleprofessional.co.uk/news/insights/coaching-management-style>.

³¹ Mireia Tintoré et al., "A Scoping Review of Problems and Challenges Faced by School Leaders (2003–2019)," *Educational Management Administration & Leadership* 50, no. 4 (July 12, 2022): 536–73, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143220942527>.

³² Tintoré et al., "A Scoping Review of Problems and Challenges Faced by School Leaders (2003–2019)."

feedback.³³ Developing coaching leaders requires providing training and development programmes that enhance coaching skills and competencies across the board. School principals should invest in workshops, coaching training for managers, leadership coaching for managers and mentoring opportunities to equip leaders with the necessary tools and techniques to effectively coach their team members.³⁴ In conclusion the study was arranged as follows, theoretical framework, then methodology, findings, and conclusion.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is based the Instructional Coaching Leadership Theory. Several theorists played a role in the development of this theory in the 20th century, namely, Jim Knight, who was a research associate at the University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning as well as Elena Aguilar, an instructional coach and author of several books on Instructional Coaching leadership Theory. This theory emerged because teachers and researchers recognized the limitations of traditional professional development models that focused on one-time workshops or lectures instead of continuous, job-embedded learning opportunities that could yield everlasting transformation in leadership development and teaching practice. The main assumption of this theory is that Instructional Coaching Theory is viewed as a method of providing sustained and personalized support to teachers and emphasizes the fundamental role of active learning, reflection, and feedback in the learning process.³⁵ The relevance of this theory in this study is influenced by the notion that this theory serves as a conceptual framework from which CSL programmes can strategize the development of effective school leadership and successful implementation of CSL. Researchers conclude that the Instructional Coaching Theory provides a convincing theoretical framework that addresses the challenges school principals face in implementing CLS to enhance learner success.

METHODOLOGY

The study is located in the interpretivism paradigm, focusing on grasping the knowledge of the meanings that people attach to the phenomena. The qualitative research methodology was used in this study because it is in good relation to of interpretive research paradigm. Purposive sampling was used to select two principals drawn from primary schools and three from secondary schools in Bloemfontein. Two female principals were from the primary schools and three male principals were from the secondary schools. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews and data was collected 30 minutes daily for a week. The study was ethically cleared by CUT's Humanities Research Ethics and Innovation Committee, HREIC 13/04/2021. The thematic data analysis was used.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Both the findings and discussion were explored simultaneously in this section of the study. Findings revealed challenges faced by the principals which included a lack of training for principals to successfully implement CLS and a need for regular engagement and discussions about CLS. Moreover, the importance of CLS for development, confidence boost, feedback and communication skills were discussed.

Challenges faced by principals in the implementation of CLS.

a) Lack of training for principals to successfully implement CLS

The research revealed that there is a lack of training which prevented the principals from implementing CLS successfully. The literature review corroborated this view revealing the numerous challenges faced by principals which have become more challenging than before and categorized in terms of different geographical and cultural contexts.³⁶ This is in tandem with the view expressed that current principals face challenges such as keeping up-to-date with the latest trends in educational technology and academic achievement.³⁷ During the empirical investigation, it was clear that lack of training served as a challenge for principals in successfully implementing CSL as depicted in the literature reviewed.

³³ Deanna, "Coaching Leadership Skills: Examples and Skill to Get Started."

³⁴ Indeed Editorial Team, "What Is Coaching Leadership Style? (And When to Use This Style)."

³⁵ Samantha James, "Instructional Leadership: Instructional Coaching Explained," n.d.

³⁶ Tintoré et al., "A Scoping Review of Problems and Challenges Faced by School Leaders (2003–2019)."

³⁷ Nestle Professional, "The Coaching Management Style: Definition & Examples."

For instance, Mr. Motaung asserted that:

“Coaching CLS is the style that can be used to train your teachers how to do their job, like how to teach, how to help learners pass their tests and exams. Unfortunately, we are not trained on how to implement it.”

In support of Mr Motaung’s assertion, Mrs Khalipha lamented:

“How can we train teachers about something we don’t know? It is a good idea, but we must be able to do it. We must be trained to be able to train our teachers. Imagine leading a blind while you are also blind.”

Mrs Moloto also added:

“It is where you call your teachers and coach or train or teach them about the trade of teaching. Some teachers are new, and you have to teach them, such as inducting them about the job ahead.”

Both the participants and the scholarly research confirm that for CLS to be successfully implemented, there must be training that focuses on personal and skills development of teachers and principals. One scholar consulted suggested that CLS is the leadership approach that focuses on individual growth, skills development, and empowerment while another one pointed out that CLS aims to empower employees to make a genuine variation resulting in a more fulfilled workforce and ultimately better outcomes.³⁸ The Instructional Coaching Leadership Theory became relevant in this study because of the proposed programmes that can be strategized for the personal and skills development of school principals. The researchers contend that there is a serious need to provide training and introduce empowerment programmes for principals. The national and provincial departments of education must also provide training to principals as this will assist them in successfully implementing CLS and thus enhance learner success. Failure to do so, the education system is destined for failure which affects the overall learner success in any democratic country.

b) A need for regular engagement and discussions about CLS

The research further revealed that principals face challenges that inhibit the successful implementation of CLS. Some of these challenges are related to their inability to have regular engagements and discussions about CLS. In support, the literature study revealed that **coach leaders must work on creating an environment where conversations flow freely, and ideas are exchanged without hesitation.**³⁹ CLS principals must consider one-on-one sessions with teachers because they will feel comfortable speaking and learning from their leader.⁴⁰ The empirical investigation revealed that principals must regularly meet as principals and hold discussions and engagements about implementing CLS. They must meet daily and during staff meetings as their teachers are still new and need to be trained to deal with their young learners. Ray agreed with the participants that CLS leaders must engage school principals in purposeful growth conversations that will positively impact collaborative decision-making, teacher leadership behaviour, and classroom practice.⁴¹ To this extent, Mrs Moloto alluded that:

“We need to have regular meetings, engagements, and discussions about how we can effectively implement CLS. I think this will help us and our teachers. And again, our learners will benefit from this because they will do well in their studies. Classroom activities will be so productive that our learners will do well in their assessments.”

Mr. Zembe narrated that:

“Every year when we start, we must have a meeting and engage the entire staff about what we can do to improve the leadership role of the school and instructional activities in classrooms. In fact, we must train them how to do their work, and this is simply being engaged with them and coaching

³⁸ Vucicevic, “Coaching Leadership: Definition, Pros & Cons, and Famous Examples.”

³⁹ Leadership Success, “What Is Coaching Leadership Style?”

⁴⁰ Vucicevic, “Coaching Leadership: Definition, Pros & Cons, and Famous Examples.”

⁴¹ Leadership Success, “What Is Coaching Leadership Style?”

them as well, and we need to do this daily or regularly. We sometimes receive new teachers who have to be trained more often because they are still wet in their ears.”

In the end, Mrs Khalipha supported the two participants above and highlighted that:

“I coach them (teachers) regularly about their work. I always have individual and group discussions with them about their work, relationships with their HODs, and Deputy principals and learners. Remember, our learners are still young, so these teachers need to be trained on how to teach young learners, unlike the older ones in the high schools, but I guess and doubt if I am doing it correctly.”

The participants and the scholarly research agreed that for CLS to be implemented, principals must be involved in ongoing and continuous engagement and dialogue with their personnel about CLS. The Instructional Coaching Leadership Theory became relevant in this study because CLS success depends on good leadership attributes which include leaders' continuous engagement and discussions with their employees. The researchers contend that the lack of engagement and discussions among the principals and their personnel contributes to principals' failure to successfully implement CLS. It is, therefore, suggested that principals continually engage and hold meetings with their personnel where they deliberate on the matters that deal with the implementation of CLS, teaching and learning and learner success. Inability to do so, the education system is destined for failure which affects the entire learner success in most schools in the country.

c) The importance of CLS for development, confidence boost, feedback and communication skills

The research established that CLS is fundamentally important for development, confidence boosting, providing feedback and improving communication skills as this will enhance CLS leadership. This viewpoint is corroborated by the scholarly literature. The literature reviewed noted that adopting a CLS in a school can produce a range of benefits for school principals, staff members and learners because school life is very hectic and pacy principals must be agile in their thinking and decision-making.⁴² CSL leaders are skilled in active listening, understanding their team's needs and providing constructive feedback by regularly communicating.⁴³ The NSLS explained that CSL leaders are great at giving constructive feedback to improve an individual's talents when it comes to achieving goals and confidence-boosting to tackle new projects.⁴⁴ In support, Mrs. Moloto articulated that:

“Yes, by the look of things this skill is very important. We are implementing it though we are not direct or specific that we are coaching. But talking with your teachers, advising them about their work, developing them, empowering them, we coach them. I agree that this skill is important. We must formalize it.”

Mr Motaung phrased the importance of CLS with this statement:

“When we coach our teachers, we empower them so that they can become good in their teaching, and in their work. I also believe that when we have engagements with them, we boost their morale and self-confidence. The more we have talks with our teacher, we can make them brave and confident in performing their teaching tasks.”

Mrs Khalipha added that:

“As I said before, because we have young teachers, there is a dire need for empowerment. We have teachers who still lack confidence when in front of the learners, even in our meetings they are afraid of expressing themselves. So, this skill will help them to gain confidence in their job.”

⁴² Beth Ray, “Educational Leadership Coaching as Professional,” School Leadership Review., accessed May 13, 2024, <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/pdf>.

⁴³ Robertson, “The Power of Coaching Leadership Styles .”

⁴⁴ Deanna, “Coaching Leadership Skills: Examples and Skill to Get Started.”

Mrs Moloto exclaimed that:

“With more and more engagements and meetings, we are able to make sure that our teachers will develop and be good at what they do as teachers. When we empower our teachers, we help them build their careers and become positive in their profession. We are able to communicate in these meetings about their challenges in the classrooms.”

The views expressed by the participants accentuate the notion that CLS plays a critical role in enhancing leadership, career and personal development of teachers, motivation and morale boost and the refining of communication skills. The sentiments of the participants and the scholarly research validate the notion that for CLS to be successful, there must be training that focuses on teacher personal and skills development, organized for principals as school leaders. The Instructional Coaching Leadership Theory became relevant in this study because CLS acknowledges the profound role played by CLS in the promotion of personal and development, motivation, confidence boost, communication and feedback. The study revealed that the significance of CLS lies in the notion that CLS does not only provide critical career development but also boosts employees' confidence and feedback, and builds strong communication skills thus enhancing performance and productivity.⁴⁵ Ganesh has pointed out that CLS is about empowering members of the team to be the best versions of themselves. It is not about barking orders or micromanaging every move but it is also about asking questions, and effectively listening.⁴⁶

Both the literature study and empirical evidence are consistent with the Instructional Coaching Leadership Theory which emphasizes the provision of sustained and personalized support to the teachers and the fundamental role of active learning, reflection, and feedback in the learning process. The researchers contend that the implementation of CLS is of paramount importance because CLS induces career development, increase in confidence, feedback, and improvement in communication skills. The study proposes that principals must implement CLS because of the merits that are expressed in both the literary study and the empirical investigation. Failure to do that will result in an education system that is headed for defeat which affects the entire learner success in most schools in the country.

d) Development of guidelines for effective implementation of CLS

The study posits that the successful implementation of CLS by principals is hindered because there are no guidelines in place that would guide them in implementing CLS effectively. Principals can be invited to attend empowerment programmes, workshops, and training sessions that will help them in becoming effective CLS implementers. This point of view is supported by the literature review and the proposed guidelines that principals must follow to implement CLS successfully. Principals must pay attention to developing their teachers in the same way that coaches develop their players, through programmes such as professional development programmes, mentorship and continuous provision of feedback.⁴⁷ CSL leaders must engage together with their teachers in purposeful growth conversations that will positively impact collaborative decision-making, teacher leadership behaviour, and classroom practice. Therefore, principals must be engaged in continuous coaching and professional development that will enable them to navigate difficult conversations positively by removing emotions and personal bias.⁴⁸ The empirical investigation conducted revealed that most participants agree that to effectively implement CLS they need support, to be specifically trained on how to implement CLS and be provided with the resources so that they can further train their teachers. In line with this narrative, Mr. Zembe reflected:

“I believe training will make us good leaders, especially during this modern time. With technology at our doorsteps who can say we don't need to be trained? In our times at the colleges, there were no such things as what is at the schools right now.”

Mrs Khalipha supported the idea above and stated that:

“Without training, no knowledge can be acquired. If our department does not get involved in training us, then we are doomed forever. The support we can get from our department can be

⁴⁵ National Society of Leadership and Success, “What Is Coaching Leadership Style?”

⁴⁶ Deanna, “Coaching Leadership Skills: Examples and Skill to Get Started.”

⁴⁷ Ray, “Educational Leadership Coaching as Professional.”

⁴⁸ Deanna, “Coaching Leadership Skills: Examples and Skill to Get Started.”

beneficial as we will be able to run our schools effectively and make our learners pass and with distinctions.”

Mrs Moloto suggested that:

“Look, for example at the soccer coaches here in South Africa and overseas they have all the resources they need to make their players do well. What about principals who must coach teachers without resources so that we can train and coach our teachers? The department must provide resources. In addition, principals must be well paid.”

The participants suggested that for CLS to be successfully implemented, ongoing and continuous professional development must be conducted for principals. Principals must participate in personal development programmes that will enhance their CLS capability. The sentiments of the participants and the scholarly research agree that for CLS to be successfully implemented, there must be training that focuses on the principals’ personal empowerment, leadership, and development of principals’ skills. Principals who implement CLS must pay attention to developing their teachers in the same way that coaches develop their players, through the programmes such as professional development programmes, mentorship and continuous provision of feedback.⁴⁹ As argued by Engage, developing coaching principals requires providing training and development programs that enhance coaching skills and competencies across the board. Principals should invest in workshops, coaching training for principals, leadership coaching for principals, and mentoring opportunities to equip principals with the necessary tools and techniques to effectively coach their team members.⁵⁰

Instructional Coaching Leadership Theory assumes that the success of the implementation of CLS lies in the development and training of the leaders, hence there is a need for the organization of workshops to improve CLS competencies of principals.⁵⁴ Participants and the scholarly research agree that the development of personnel, the increase in confidence, and communication skills must play a relevant role in implementing CLS. The researchers contend that continuous development of the successful implementation of CLS is vitally important because CLS will assist principals in producing teachers who are motivated, inspired, and competent and who will ensure that classroom activities are executed in a manner that improves learner success. The study proposes that the National Department of Education, Provincial Departments of Education, Department of Higher Education and business sector must develop guidelines that will assist principals to be effective implementers of CLS. These guidelines must propose ongoing development programmes that will empower principals and their teachers because if they do not do that the education system is destined for failure, affecting the whole learner success in most schools in the whole country.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The researchers recommend that successful implementation of CLS requires principals to show necessary empathy, commitment, dedication, and believe that they can act in the role of a coach, and possess the skills to carry out this role. The researchers also recommend that the training of the school principals who can effectively implement CSL is fundamentally important. The national department of education, the provincial departments of education, and businesses must provide support to the principals by developing programmes such as workshops, seminars, and structured CPD programmes.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, a systematic and coordinated implementation of CLS plays an important role in ensuring that principals enhance learner success. CLS is characterized by the support, motivation, inspiration, training and assistance given to the teachers by the principals. For the principals to effectively provide CLS, the study recommends that all the education stakeholders and businesses provide support and training for principals by conducting ongoing empowerment programmes and workshops as this will enhance their CSL competence and thus improve learner success.

⁴⁹ Robertson, “The Power of Coaching Leadership Styles .”

⁵⁰ Robertson, “The Power of Coaching Leadership Styles .”

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