AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPERVISION FOR TEACHER LEARNING FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE TEACHERS AND INSTRUCTIONAL SUPERVISORS: THE CASE OF TWO UAE SCHOOLS

by
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Instructional supervisors at schools are considered to hold a major responsibility for improving instruction by providing teachers with professional development activities aimed at teacher learning (Glickman, Gordon & Ross-Gordon, 2010), yet little research extensively studies the actions of instructional supervisors that promote or hinder teacher learning especially from the perspectives of both teachers and supervisors. This explanatory and exploratory qualitative case study sought to compare the perspective of teachers and instructional supervisors on instructional supervisors' practices that promote or hinder teacher learning, the nature of professional learning that is attributed to result from instructional supervisory practices, and the organizational conditions under which this learning occurs. It yielded a list of teacher learning promotive factors, instructional supervisory practices and organizational conditions. Similar interviews took place at the two participating schools and the findings were interpreted separately and comparatively across schools. Participants identified the factors that lead to teacher learning as reflection, reading, daily practice, attending PD workshops, teacher willingness to learn, observing the actions of others, dialogue, peer collaboration, and receiving feedback. As for the promotive instructional supervisory practices, those were found to be being responsive to teacher needs, setting a supportive learning environment and holding teachers accountable, providing constructive feedback, building a trusting relationship with teachers, leading by example, mentoring, and building a culture of constant collaborative learning between teachers and instructional supervisors. The organizational conditions found to be promotive of teacher learning were having scheduled learning time dedicated solely to teacher learning, budget allocations for teacher learning, having a climate of support for learning, having teacher learning as an upheld organizational value, having shared office spaces for teachers, providing workshops on schoolwide curriculum issues, having shared decision making processes that give teachers a voice, having a system of accountability, having a schoolwide open door policy, having intra-school agreements to exchange best practices. The results of the study pointed at a clear mismatch among supervisors and teachers when it comes to their professional beliefs pertaining to teacher learning and the factors that contribute to enhancing it. They showed minimal teacher and instructional supervisor communication and collaboration and suggested little teacher sense of responsibility for their own learning. They also indicated an emphasis placed by instructional supervisors on teacher formal learning and much less emphasis placed on teacher informal learning, with an emphasis on professional development activities rather than professional learning. Finally, the results suggested that some instructional supervisors lacked knowledge of teacher learning theories, and the rest who were found to have such knowledge

were found in need of translating that knowledge into action plans and supportive practices. The study ends with recommendations for both research and practice.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

All administrative work at a school revolves around the improvement of students' learning. Instructional supervisors, within the administrative team, serve to supervise the instructional conduct of teachers, as their positional title implies. According to Suppovitz, Sirindis and May (2010), their role is often identified as the active support of instructional improvement. Ideally, they are expected to observe teachers in action, identify weaknesses and strengths of the teachers, from their experience, and work with the teachers to improve their teaching practices so as to better achieve the learning objectives set for the students. However, very little is known about the role and direct contribution instructional supervisors make to teacher learning within the context of their school organization. From my experience in teaching in the Arab region, and from observing my colleagues at work, the relationship between instructional supervisors and teachers is characterized by tension and problems rather than associated with supporting teachers, let alone promoting their professional learning, and often far from being smooth and productive. Teachers in the region tend to usually fear instructional supervisors. The ideas of an instructional supervisor as an inspector and a harsh judge of teacher's performance and abilities, or an assessor, whose decisions impact the professional and career path of teachers, seem to dominate the views of many of the teachers I met. This tension seems to extend beyond the experiences of Arab teachers. Pawlas and Oliva (2008) discussed extensively the tension that arises between teachers and supervisors. They stated that evaluation is in itself a stressful activity and that the authoritarian-inspectorial approach to supervision is a completely rejected idea nowadays.

These negative vibes and tensions between teachers and instructional supervisors are often attributed to certain factors many of them related to the approach and actions of instructional supervisors. I have sat through group coordination sessions where one teacher's actions were discussed by the coordinator as actions that should never occur again in the school, without providing the teacher with alternative actions she may take in case she finds herself in the same situation again and without consideration of the teacher's emotions. I myself heard several phrases from my coordinators during my first year that made me feel like I was not allowed any mistakes and that I had to float myself through the year without much help. Later that year, I found myself really liking another coordinator. It wasn't until the end of the year that I realized that my admiration for the second coordinator was due to the feeling of confidence that she gave me. She made me feel that mistakes were opportunities for learning. Her approach inspired me. I also discovered that I was not the only one with such a feeling. I was just like many other new comers to the field of education (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Oliva, 1993; Wong & Wong, 1999).

Ibrahim (2012) investigated the learning needs of beginning teachers in Emirati government schools and found that the first years in the profession are not treated as a learning period. Teachers are expected to know how to teach right after graduation. He concluded that Emirati teachers lack the required support to carry out the responsibilities of teaching especially throughout the beginning years. He also concluded that a supportive school environment needs to be established if the country aims to produce effective teachers. Yet little, if any, support is provided. He also concluded that this tension leads to many teachers leaving the teaching profession within their first few years rather than learning and growing in the profession.

Research Problem

As Ibrahim (2012) pointed out, the Abu Dhabi Education Council, responsible for the three educational districts in Abu Dhabi, highly criticized the three education programs in the country for the poor level of education graduates. Educational reform has gained center stage in the UAE as an attempt to shift the national population into a skilled one, capable of preserving the UAE identity and capable of competing with the world marketplace in the 21st century (Dada, 2011). Education reform is also part of the Dubai strategic plan. Upgrading teacher qualifications to improve the performance of public schools is one of the strategic thrusts that Dubai has set for itself to reach the aim of improving the achievement of students and ensuring that Nationals in the country all have access to quality education opportunities (Dubai Government, 2007). Hence, the birth of the Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA) in 2006, to develop the knowledge and human resources of Dubai. Since schools, were the main institution to provide knowledge to the upcoming generations, an inspection bureau was developed within the authority under the name Dubai School Inspection Bureau (DSIB), in 2007. It is responsible for inspecting schools on a yearly basis and rating them according to set standards.

The UAE's Ministry of Education is currently aiming at improving teaching practices through subjecting teachers to intensive professional development. Shifting schools towards becoming professional learning communities was the solution to fulfil the Ministry's vision due to the high importance placed on continuous learning in the culture of professional learning communities (Al Taneiji, 2009).

Learning has been attributed great importance yet many of the factors found by research to promote teacher learning have been found missing by local research conducted in the UAE

(Al-Taneiji, 2009; Stephonson, Dada & Harold, 2012). Still teacher learning has been claimed to occur to some degree, though not at all times or in all schools, and manifest in improved student outcomes. The research problem that leads this study is the discrepancy between the claim of attributing great importance to teacher learning, yet having studies showing an absence of many of the factors that research has found to promote teacher learning.

The following sections will provide the rationale of this study, the purpose of the study, the research questions this study attempts to answer, and, the significance of this research study.

Rationale

Teacher learning has been studied from different perspectives. Teachers were found to learn through an interplay of contextual issues, and, professional and personal needs (Cameron, Mulholland & Branson, 2013). Their learning was reported to occur mainly on the job (Maaranen, Kynaslahti & Krkfors, 2008). Studies that focused on understanding teacher learning on the job, have explored factors that promote this learning. Many factors on the job were found to be promoters of this learning (Blasé & Blasé, 1999; Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2010; Kohm & Nance, 2009; Thoonen et al., 2011). These factors were found to be promoted through effective professional development, whose successful implementation leads to change in teacher beliefs and attitudes; hence, learning (Guskey, 2002; Kwakman, 2003). The presence of instructional supervisors was also identified as important for teacher learning to occur; where one of their roles was identified as facilitating learning (Rudland et al., 2010; Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2007). A wide range of professional development practices, as well as organizational conditions and teacher characteristics were identified as conducive to teacher learning.

Professional development that has proved effective at triggering teacher learning has been found to have the characteristics of differentiation (Avalos, 2011; Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2010; Robbins & Alvy, 1995), cultural validity (Hallinger & Leithwood, 1996; O'silluvan, 2002), self-directedness (Gravani, 2007; Mushayikwa & Lubben, 2009), constant communication (Heaney, 2004; Knight, 2002), follows action research (McNiff, 2002; Ponte, Beijaard & Wubbels, 2004), ongoing with follow-up (Heaney, 2004; Retallick, 1999), and includes active learning opportunities for teachers (Garet et al, 2001; Prince, 2004).

In addition, many factors have been found to promote teacher learning such as reflection (Blasé & Blasé, 1999; Korthagen, 2010; Sackney & Walker, 2006), mentoring (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2010; Lyne, 2013), collaboration (Thoonen et al., 2011), dialogue (Melville & Wallace, 2007; Yeo, 2006), and the use of assessment tools (Knight, 2002; Ross & Bruce, 2007). However; the factors that promote teacher learning all depend on the teachers' characteristics of ,job commitment and willingness to learn (Melville & Wallace, 2007; Nir & Bogler, 2008).

Certain organizational conditions were found to exist in schools whose teachers reported to be undergoing learning, such as a publicized learning message (Knight, 2002), a hovering understanding of the importance of continuous teacher learning (Vescio, Ross & Adams, 2008), heads of departments as role models for continuous professional development (Knight, 2002), clear evaluation of learning (Knight, 2002), and that the school as a whole is characterized as a professional learning community (Avenell, 2007; DuFour, Dufour, Eakey & Many, 2006; Hord, 1997; Stoll et al. 2006). Studies also identified a wide range of factors and organizational conditions that hinder teacher learning (Cameron, Mulholland & Branson, 2013; Ukusowa, 2012). They have found that inadequate resources (Cameron, Mulholland & Branson, 2013;

Lohman, 2000; Ukusowa, 2012), negative emotions (Retallick, 1999) and isolation (Lohman, 2000) have been identified as such factors.

Supervision was also noted as important for learning to occur (Rudland et al., 2010). Supervisors were identified as responsible for teacher development (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2010; Oliva, 1993; Pawlas & Oliva, 2008; Yeo, 2006) through setting up professional development and modifying organizational factors in favor of teacher improvement (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2010; Pajack 1989 as cited in Blasé and Blasé, 1999). Therefore; expectedly, a relationship exists between instructional supervisors and teacher learning. However; extensive research on the actions of instructional supervisors that trigger teacher learning from the point of view of the teachers is scarce. Moreover; studies seldom went further into questioning teachers about the nature of the learning they attribute to their instructional supervisors or the learning that they undergo directly from their instructional supervisors' practices or what they would like for their supervisors to do to help them learn. When focusing on the Arab World context, these studies become almost extinct. Blasé and Blasé (2004), one of the few studies on the topic, inquired extensively about the characteristics of instructional leaders that affect teacher classroom practices using open ended questionnaires distributed to more than 800 teachers from different schools. Their study revealed two major groups of characteristics namely, promoting reflection through dialogue with teachers and promoting professional growth. They suggested that further research be done on this topic and that a case study be conducted on a school and that in depth interviews take place with teachers with contextual data about the schools they work in because their study lacked this contextual data. Another similar study done in the Lebanese context by El-Murr (2015) on 6 instructional supervisors and 25 teachers, inquiring about the instructional supervisory practices that promote teacher learning, found that

teachers requested the direct assistance of their instructional supervisors and preferred to resort to self-directed learning initiatives to have the maximum control over their own learning. She concluded with the recommendation that further research be done on the nature and impact of instructional supervisory practices on a bigger and more diverse population. Webster-Wright (2009) called for the shift of focusing on teacher professional development activities and focusing on the professional learning; the aim of professional development activities. She recommended that further studies take place to understand how instructional supervisors could promote teacher learning.

Since research seldom covered the topic of instructional supervisors' practices that trigger teacher learning extensively, and since the topic was almost non-existent in the Arab World context within the searched databases, and since literature has recommended that further studies be done in the area; this study focuses on the instructional supervisor and their practices that are actually leading to teacher learning in the Arab world, specifically the UAE.

Purpose

This research study is an explanatory and exploratory multiple case study that examines in depth the school's instructional leaders' actions that promote or hinder teacher learning (measured as teacher change in classroom practices) in the school from the perspectives of both instructional supervisors and teachers and the correspondence or contradictions between the perspectives of the two. Furthermore, this study seeks to explore teachers' perceptions of what they believe they learn from instructional supervisors and the perceptions of instructional supervisors of what they believe they provide teachers with.

Research Questions

1- What are the teachers' perceptions of what they learn from instructional supervisory practices?

2- What do the instructional supervisors perceive they provide teachers?

3- What are the supervisory practices and organizational conditions that promote or hinder teacher professional learning from the perspective of the teachers?

4- What are the supervisory practices and organizational conditions that promote or hinder the professional learning of teachers from the perspective of instructional supervisors?

Significance of the Study

This study would have implications on improving practice and adding to the available research. It affects practice by identifying effective instructional supervisory practices that enhance teachers' professional learning, from the perspective of teachers and supervisors, as a guide for instructional supervisors towards triggering teacher learning. It affects research by providing an in depth descriptive study of the situation in the UAE regarding how principals lead teacher learning highlighting the contextual differences between how it is perceived in Dubai and in the West, and by providing an empirical study which highlights the promoting and hindering actions of instructional supervisors at achieving teacher professional learning from the teachers' perspective.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section presents some literature relating to the topic of the research study. Literature about the context of the study will be discussed first, followed by the review of teacher learning, its definition and how teachers learn. Next a review of the literature unfolds factors that promote teacher learning including effective professional development and its characteristics that make it effective. Other factors that hinder teacher learning will then be discussed. Following, literature about school organizational conditions that also promote teacher learning will be presented. Finally this literature review will reveal literature revolving around the role of instructional supervision in teacher learning.

Context of the Study: Education in the UAE

Studies in the UAE have covered the topics of the degree to which schools in the UAE fulfill the requirements of professional learning communities (Al Taneiji, 2009), teacher satisfaction with the areas of school leadership, teacher professionalism and collaboration, quality teacher professional development, supportive facilities and resources, curriculum and instruction, student management parental involvement, and the school as a workplace (ADEC, 2012; Badri, Makki, Ferrandino & El Mourad, ND). They also covered the issues that impacted teacher professional learning (Stephonson, Dada & Harold, 2012), and beginning teachers' learning needs (Ibrahim, 2012). It has been found that shared leadership, content and pedagogical knowledge, and critical reflection are among the factors that affect teacher professional learning (Stephonson, Dada & Harold, 2012). Teachers show good satisfaction with principal school organization but less satisfaction with principal's leadership of teaching and learning (ADEC,

2012; Badri, Makki, Ferrandino & El Mourad, ND). In a teacher satisfaction survey, of interest was that licensed teachers expressed the least satisfaction with the situation as is, including satisfaction with professional development, effectiveness of school leadership, teacher collaboration and teacher professionalism (ADEC, 2012). Schools in the UAE have also been found to own characteristics of supportive and shared leadership, and supportive structures; however, shared values and norms, collective learning and application and shared personal practice were not evident (Al-Taneiji, 2009). Seldom was the instructional supervisor discussed as the agent for teacher learning. Factors found effective at triggering teacher learning in the literature, such as the factors of collaboration, dialogue and sharing of practices, and shared values and norms were weak in the schools. How then does teacher learning occur? Who is triggering it and how?

Based on a search in the available databases, research that covered the topic of instructional supervisors' practices that trigger teacher learning do not exist in the Arab World context.

Understanding Teacher Learning

Definition

Professional learning has been defined as "a complex process, which requires cognitive and emotional involvement of teachers individually, and collectively, the capacity and willingness to examine where one stands in terms of convictions and beliefs and the perusal and enactment of appropriate alternatives for improvement or change" (Avalos, 2011, p.10). It has also been defined as the ongoing task of restructuring knowledge and beliefs to incorporate new knowledge and integrate it into practical knowledge (Melville & Wallace, 2007). Moreover, it

has been described as a process of teacher development accompanied by continuums along which this development occurs including continuums of cognition, conceptualization, morality, egoism and consciousness. According to Glickman (2010) teachers can evolve cognitively from operating with concrete material to operating with more complex and post formal material. They would shift from viewing the student as a passive receptor of knowledge to viewing the student as an active constructivist of their own knowledge. Conceptually teachers could evolve from concrete thinking to a moderately abstract thinking level, to a highly abstract thinking level. (Glickman, 2010).

Kwakman (2003) proposed that teacher learning is referred to as professional learning simply because teachers learn in order to progress professionally and improve their teaching practices.

From these definitions and propositions it could be concluded that teachers who have learned would be teachers who have made clear shifts in some of their beliefs about the learning and teaching process and obvious developments in terms of their cognition, their view of students and their conceptualization of ideas. These shifts could be assumed to be ones towards more effective teaching and achievement of teaching objectives. Webster-Wright (2009) added that professional learning should be viewed as a "holistic experience rather than as a combination of interrelated "factors"" (p. 714).

Webster-Wright (2009) highlighted that in order to achieve teacher learning, there exists a need to focus on understanding learning. Kwakman (2003) claimed that participation in professional learning activities is a prerequisite for learning; however, only participating does not necessarily lead to learning.

Understanding teacher learning is key for analyzing its presence or absence. Researchers have attempted to come up with frameworks for its understanding. Of these researchers, Cameron, Mulholland and Branson (2013) suggested a new framework for understanding teacher professional learning and emphasized the need to focus on contextual issues as well as the professional needs, such as pedagogy and curriculum, and personal needs, such as self-development and professional growth, of teachers, not just professional factors.

As its definition implies, teacher learning can be visible through a change in teacher pedagogy. To further understand teacher learning, Ross and Bruce (2007) linked change to teacher beliefs and stated that if a gap exists between what teachers believe is the best practice and the practices found efficient through research, then the only manner to achieve change is if this gap is acknowledged by the teachers themselves. Therefore; only through awareness of the need for learning new practices can this gap be filled. This implies that teachers need to be aware that they need to change for teacher learning to occur. Therefore, before attempting to teach teachers, an attempt at spreading awareness for the need for this change is needed.

Kolb, Osland, and Rubin (1995) explained the learning process as one of both learning the required material and learning one's capabilities for learning. They explained an adult learning process where they identified that experiences are followed by reflections and observations which lead to the formation of abstract ideas, which then require further testing and application in new settings, which in turn leads to new experiences. They described the learning process as a continuous one where the four stages keep recurring, implying a cyclic nature of teacher learning.

Kwakman (2003)'s work, views learning as social in nature. She contrasted two different perspectives of teacher learning. The first was the professional development perspective which views professional development as the means for teacher learning and asserts that teachers learn best by practice. The second is the cognitive psychological perspective which emphasizes the role of others in the learning process of teachers and identifies staff developers as important factors for promoting teacher learning. Kwakman's results of her study of how 542 teachers learn confirmed that learning or cognition is situated. She found that the workplace did not play a major role in teachers' participation in professional learning activities as much as the personal characteristics of the teachers themselves such as their professional attitudes and their sense of professional accomplishment. Kwakman (2003) concluded that teacher learning at work is either a result of professional development activities such as workshops, or the result of interaction with others such as through collaborative reflection. Korthagen (2010) came to a similar finding with a study of 32 experienced teachers going through a reform with no professional development. The teachers were studied for 14 months with the aim of finding the relationship between teacher behavior and mental processes, and teacher professional learning at school. She concluded by supporting the notion of situated learning with his results.

Gregory (2010) studied 34 teachers in the US for teacher learning in teams aimed at student problems' solving and found that 60 % of the teachers reported that they had learnt new intervention skills from their teams. She concluded that teacher optimism or pessimism regarding the team played a major role in whether the teacher gained any new skills or not.

In sum, teacher learning was found to be an interplay between contextual issues, professional, and personal needs. It has been characterized as situated, cyclic, dependent on teacher personal characteristics such as their attitudes, optimism and sense of accomplishment,

and greatly dependent on teacher awareness of the need for learning. It was also found to either result from professional development activities or from teacher interactions.

Noteworthy is that values have been described as personal preferences, from a psychological perspective. They have been theorised to be the basic precursors to individuals' behaviors. (Sagnak, 2005)

Therefore; and for the sake of this paper, teacher professional learning will be defined as the process of improving teacher decision making skills regarding the components of their profession, namely the students, the learning content, and the teaching process; and its manifestation in a shift in teacher knowledge, practice and attitudes. This learning will be assumed to be due to a change in teacher cognition, conceptualization, *values* and beliefs regarding teaching.

Types of Knowledge

Knight (2002) distinguished between two different types of teacher knowledge based in how the knowledge is gained. He identified them as teacher implicit knowledge and teacher explicit knowledge, where implicit knowledge is knowledge that is gained from informal, often unidentified, sources such as classroom behaviors; while, explicit knowledge is knowledge gained from external identified sources such as lectures or books and from reflection or metacognition.

Ways Teachers Learn

Scholars found that identifying the kind of learner the teacher is helps in deciding on appropriate means to achieve certain learning objectives and differentiating between teachers. Kolb, Osland, and Rubin's (1995) Learning Style Inventory indicated that there are four types of

adult learners. The first type, which they called the diverger, is an adult that solves problems by looking at it from different perspectives and by brainstorming. The second type, named the converger, is adults who look for specific answers to solve problems. They tend to a hypothetical- deductive reasoning style. Assimilators are the third type of adult learners. They are adults who tend to inductive reasoning. The last type of adult learners is adults who tend to plan and experiment.

Several theories have emerged relating to how teachers learn. They help instructional supervisors and those responsible for teacher learning to understand how teachers learn which would help guide instructional supervisors mold their teacher development activities effectively. Two theories repetitively emerging were the theories of self-directed learning and transformational learning. Self-directed learning is learning that occurs naturally without the help of a facilitator and on a daily basis (Tough, 1971). It assumes that teachers can learn by themselves. Self-directed learning requires a certain degree of readiness on behalf of the teachers which not all teachers are capable of reaching simultaneously (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2010).

The second theory of learning is the theory of transformational learning. Mezirow (2000) defines transformational learning as the process of transforming the knowledge into more inclusive frames of references, from which opinions are formed and actions are guided. In other words, one shifts around the knowledge one already has to make connections amongst it so that the gained knowledge is the new links one made (Korthagen, 2010). Therefore, transformational learning is a process of making links between pieces of knowledge previously acquired rather than acquiring new pieces of knowledge. It requires viewing knowledge already available from a

different perspective and grouping them differently. This new grouping of knowledge pieces is the result of experiences. It forms opinions and guides actions.

In an attempt to uncover how teachers learn, Maaranen, Kynaslahti and Krokfors (2008) studied 113 teachers in Finland who had no previous teacher education. These teachers entered into teacher education after they had been teachers for several years. They investigated the links between workplace learning and teacher learning. The teachers were asked to explain their learning experiences. They explained four different ways in which they learnt. The first three methods were described as informal and self-initiated methods, while the last was characterized as organized and formal learning. The first was through experience. The second was from the school's teacher learning environment, where the focus is on learning and teaching. The third way of learning described is problem solving. It is when teachers face problems at work and must solve them and hence learn. The last learning method described is learning from studies that the administrative team or their colleagues suggested to them or from the studies covered in their teacher education.

Through his review of literature, Knight (2002) establishes that teachers either learn from informal, unintended occurrences, or from intended actions such as attending a lecture or reflecting. Knight stated that teachers learn informally through their subject departments. He recommended that professional development policies be reconsidered to take this informal learning into consideration.

On the other hand, some researchers found that teacher learning is greatly dependent on the way in which teachers are viewed. They call for viewing teachers as professionals capable of generating their own knowledge through self-learning rather than their need for information and

knowledge to be bestowed upon them. McNiff (2002) in her paper on action research as an approach to learning discusses teacher learning as resulting from the teachers' engagement in a continuous process of action research where teachers examine and reflect on their own practice and take action that is based on the results of this examination, emphasizing the importance of self-learning as a method for teacher learning.

Other researchers claim that the alignment of professional development activities with teachers' orientation to learning, or the method they prefer to learn through, greatly affects the degree to which they learn and change their teaching. In their study on the effect of teacher orientation to learning on professional development and change, researchers Opfer, Pedder and Lavicza (2011a) investigated the degree of relationship between the school's method of providing teachers with learning opportunities, and teacher learning change on 1126 teachers in England. They found that teachers learn individually through reflection, modification and experimentation. They also learn from professional development from external sources. However; they have very low belief and practice in research as a method of professional development. Their study showed that the teachers' belief and practice of different orientations to learning greatly affected the degree of the teachers' learning, or change in teacher beliefs, practice and student outcomes, as the researchers defined it. In sum, they found that teachers' learning ranges from internal learning, i.e. through practicing reflection, modification and experimentation, to external learning- i.e. learning from professional development activities- to collaborative learning- i.e. learning from each other, but does not extend to research – i.e. researching areas for improvement. In other words, teachers learn by themselves, from professional development activities, and from their colleagues.

The ways teachers learn have been found to be numerous including intentionally, unintentionally, internally, externally, from their subject departments, through experience, from the teacher learning environment, through problem solving, through self-learning, from professional development activities, and from their colleagues. As for learning from research studies, some studies have identified it as a learning method teachers resort to, while other studies have found that teachers do not extend their learning to learning from research.

Factors Promoting Teacher Learning

The following section provides an overview of what the literature found to be effective at promoting teacher learning. One of the promotors of teacher leaning was found to be professional development (PD), so long as it complies with the identified characteristics found to lead to effective PD. Otherwise, teachers' commitment and willingness to learn, reflection, mentoring, collaboration, dialogue, and the use of assessment tools were all found by the literature to be effective at promoting teacher learning. The school was also found to be conducive to teacher learning if learning were at the center of its culture. Professional learning communities were found to be great school arrangements that would foster teacher learning due to their characteristics of shared values and norms, supportive leadership, apparent collaboration, co-learning and reflection.

Teacher Learning and Professional Development

Researchers repeatedly found that professional learning activities impact teachers' learning and teaching (Opfer, Pedder & Lavicza, 2011b; Thoonen et al., 2011; Youngs & King, 2002). Of these researchers, Thoonen et al. (2011) found that increased engagement in professional learning activities led to an improved quality of instruction hence an increase in

teacher capacity. Similar results were found by Youngs and King (2002) who studied principal's behaviors for professional development to increase the school's capacity in terms of teachers' knowledge, skills and dispositions, professional community, and program coherence. Their research results showed that effective professional development, be it from an external source, or from internal personal efforts on behalf of teachers and staff, results in increased teacher capacity, under strong leadership.

As Guskey (2002) clarifies through is model of professional development and teacher change, teacher change was not found to occur directly from the professional development. It is the successful implementation, by teachers, of the concepts introduced through professional development that leads to a change in teacher beliefs and attitudes. As previously identified, a change in teacher beliefs is teacher learning.

Professional development is usually administered to teachers in order to improve their capacities. Therefore, effective professional development activities are not ones that only have the characteristics of an effective activity but rather ones that also cater to teacher learning needs. In other words, teachers are the center of learning activities, rather than the activity itself (Gravani, 2007; Webster-Wright, 2009). Focusing on executing the specific details of professional learning activities rather than on fostering teacher learning defeats the purpose of professional development activities, "Many professional learning programs work from the point of view of the person who is conducting them. The emphasis is often on teaching or training, not so much on learning" (McNiff, 2002, p. 22). Workshops about the best researched teaching methods continue to take place where the conductor unfolds information to the teacher and the teacher acts as a sponge, taking note of what is being said and how to apply it.

To discard this habit, professional development activities should be studied for both their characteristics and their ability to trigger teacher learning. Research has found that effective professional development activities are ones that are differentiated according to teacher needs, culturally valid, self-directed by teachers to achieve teacher learning, depend greatly on dialogue and communication between all members of a school and especially between teachers, follow the steps of action research especially reflection, ongoing, and include active learning methods rather than passive ones.

Differentiation.

Several researchers have found differentiation of professional development activities according to teacher needs to be extremely important and have emphasized this in their studies (Avalos, 2011; Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2010; Robbins & Alvy, 1995). An argument for the need for differentiation comes from Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2010, who noted that adults learn differently in terms of their abilities to grasp new ideas. For this reason it seems to be very necessary for instructional supervisors to be aware of the learning activities that individual teachers benefit from in order to achieve the learning activities' full potential at altering teacher instructional activities towards increased effectiveness at providing students with better learning opportunities. Avalos (2011) stated that "instruments used to trigger development also depend on the objectives and needs of teachers". (p.10)

Cultural transferability.

In order to differentiate professional learning activities, they need to be catered around teachers' needs not imported from the West and applied as is. Hallinger and Leithwood (1996) identified that Western contexts are not being taken into consideration when theories and ideas

are being transferred from the West to other regions of the world. They specifically say that the western knowledge base is being transferred "without sufficient critique concerning its cultural salience and validity" (p.101). They continue to discuss training programs which they find have been borrowed from the West in both content and method "even when there is neither conceptual nor empirical validation of the knowledge base in the receiving culture" (p.107). Similarly, O'Sullivan (2002) called for ensuring the cultural validity of models adapted from different countries when his trial at transferring a set of reflection levels from the West to Namibian teachers partially failed due to the cultural differences between the two contexts.

Self-directed.

Mushayikwa and Lubben (2009) found a feature of effective professional development to be that it be self-directed by the teachers with guidance from supervisors after interviewing 55 Zimbabwean teachers. They identified self-directed professional development as a process that is initiated from within teachers and claimed that the use of self-directed professional development may reduce the gap between teacher learning activities and teacher classroom practices. They also found that the main concern that leads teachers towards self-directed professional development is their concern for increasing their efficacy both professionally and in the classroom. This also is found to lead each teacher to take responsibility for their own learning depending on their own personal needs. It can be concluded that when a self-directed drive is instilled in teachers, making them take ownership of their learning, by highlighting how the professional development behavior would increase the teachers' efficacy; the teachers become the best agents for ensuring the sustainability of the professional development behavior. However, it is still a question of the ease with which this process can be initiated from within teachers.

Similarly, two in-service professional development programs at a university in Greece were compared by Gravani (2007), who aimed at extracting the practices which teachers found best help them achieve professional learning. She found that the teachers claimed that they would have preferred to be involved in the planning of the programs in terms of the material covered and that their needs should have been diagnosed earlier for the programs to target issues of importance to them. The teachers emphasized their desire to have been part of the decision process regarding the subjects discussed.

Moreover, Garet et al's (2001) sampled 1027 teachers in the U.S. for their study on what makes professional development effective, which revealed that the type of professional learning activity affects the time span for which teachers are engaged in the activity. Activities range from traditional activities such as workshops, conferences or courses, to "reform" activities, as the researchers called them, such as mentoring, coaching and study groups. They found that the use of active learning, such as meaningful discussions or practice, relates to enhanced knowledge and skills among teachers.

Dialogue and communication.

Regular communication among teachers has been empirically found to be the main aspect for the success of professional development programs (Heaney, 2004). Knight (2002) also pointed at dialogue as a factor enhancing professional learning and recommended that heads of departments should build a culture of sharing teaching stories at the school as an activity for learning.

Action research.

Action research has been found to be a useful method of professional development that leads to teacher learning (Ponte, Beijaard & Wubbels, 2004). Ponte, Beijaard and Wubbels (2004) identified action research as a method teachers could resort to in order to professionalize their work. They claim that since teachers make use of their professional knowledge throughout the process of action research; this makes action research a suitable method for teachers to improve their practice. They can use the experience of action research to reflect on their own practices, identify weaknesses, and improve their weaknesses. They refer to the findings of the Dutch case of the ARTE project (Action Research in Teacher Education) where 28 teachers were asked to use action research and four facilitators guided the teachers to, 1- link knowledge from the different domains of ideology, empirical and technology; 2- devote proportionate attention to each of the three domains; 3- link their objectives to others' objectives and; 4- deal with the knowledge presented by others in a critical manner and link it to their own knowledge. They found that through action research the teachers were capable of mastering the skills of linking three different domains of knowledge, freedom of choice of actions in certain situations, and the skill of dealing with new knowledge critically and making use of it through application.

McNiff (2002) also recommended the use of action research as a means of professional development because it 1- "helps you examine your own practice and see whether it lives up to your own expectations" (p. 23), 2- it helps establish a systematic evaluation procedure for the different activities taking place, such as a supervisor's support for teacher learning, 3-it helps identify clear criteria for judgment of both what the person them self is doing and of what others are doing.

Ongoing professional development with constant assessment.

Retallick (1999) conducted a study on 42 volunteer teachers and principals in New South Wales in search for the inhibiting and facilitating factors of teacher learning. He found that the practices of training and development played a great role in inhibiting or facilitating their learning. They mentioned four different types of professional development techniques used and criticized them respectively. They claimed that the "train the trainer" model, where one person from each school is trained and is then asked to train their colleagues at school, was not as effective because they found it hard to relay all the information they acquired in their training to their colleagues since to them it was merely just ideas that they had not worked with themselves. They also criticized that the "one day" training and development days were not enough. They claimed that there is too much to fit in such a short period of time. They continued to criticize poorly organized professional development programs that are neither interactive nor practical. On the other hand, teachers greatly emphasized the positive effect of ongoing professional training and development programs which included continuous and relevant follow up.

Teacher Characteristics

Teacher job commitment and willingness to learn.

Teacher personal characteristics were found to be one of the important aspects of teacher learning as was previously identified. Of these characteristics, teachers' motivation for learning and their attitude and commitment affect their learning.

Melville and Wallace (2007) studied the transcriptions of the monthly department meeting of a science department consisting of 10 staff members at a school for a year in an attempt to understand teacher professional learning at the workplace. They concluded that

teacher engagement in their department, their willingness to explore new territories and their commitment to their jobs are prerequisite conditions for teacher learning in the workplace.

Nir and Bogler (2008) sampled 841 teachers from 118 elementary schools about their willingness to participate in professional development programs and found that the higher the teachers' job expectations were in line with their abilities the more propelled they were to take part in processes that promote their proficiencies. It was concluded that "putting the right person in the right place serves as an important feature in determining teachers' inclination to become involved in professional development processes" (p.382).

Teachers' Practices Promoting Teacher Learning

Research has identified a number of practices that were found to promote teacher learning. Teachers' commitment and willingness to learn, reflection, mentoring, collaboration, dialogue, and the use of assessment tools, are all identified as factors that promote teacher learning.

Reflection.

Reflection has been described as a practice which expands teacher knowledge base and therefore the guidance of teachers through this practice is another of the multiple roles of a leader of learning through professional development (Sackney & Walker, 2006). Learning was described as requiring reflection on practice (Heaney, 2004). It has been identified as a crucial factor promoting teacher learning and many researchers called for its inclusion in professional learning activities (Kwakman, 2003).

Reflection, or "the active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which

it tends" (Dewey, J. (1933) as cited in Jones & Jones, 2013), was a key concern of many researchers. It was advised that reflection be focused and aimed at a specific task that has been identified as a primary task or a task of high importance to the organization as a whole in order to achieve a clear result (James, Dunning, Connolly, & Elliot, 2007).

O'Sullivan (2002) studied reflection and its effect on teaching in Namibia. She explored how she could develop the teachers' reflective practices. Through her facilitation, the teachers were able to achieve a basic level of reflective practice in the limited timeframe and were capable of improving their teaching through this reflection, as was apparent in student achievement. Teachers, whom at first felt that the reflective questioning was "nagging", were later capable of reflecting and attempting a reply to those questions.

Blasé and Blasé (1999) surveyed 809 teachers inquiring about their instructional leaders' characteristics that affected their classroom practices, both positively and negatively, from the perspective of the teachers. The results from teachers indicated that teachers found that when their instructional leaders spoke with them and promoted their reflection, this opened their eyes to new ideas which affected their classroom practices. The results also indicated that the instructional leaders' promotion of reflective practices among teachers affected teacher behaviors, thoughts and feelings.

Korthagen (2010) highlighted the importance of reflection for learning in his research on the implications of learning and teaching theories on teacher pedagogy, teacher behavior and teacher learning. He explained that we learn by practicing teaching rather than having knowledge about teaching transmitted to us. Once we practice teaching, then reflection on our teaching with others can help us see other perspectives through which an incident that took place, could be

viewed; hence, learning. He explained that from our experiences we form several different ideas about teaching. Through reflection we could link these several ideas into clear schemas, or networks, in our mind by *disituating* them or removing the experiences from their situations. Further reflection would allow for the different schemas to be linked together in a theory. He asserted that teacher education should shift from a simple transmittance of knowledge to teachers to an experience based program coupled with reflection at every possible instance.

Moreover, Opfer, Pedder and Lavicza (2011a) claimed that teachers may undergo pedagogical change if their "learning provides more and better reflection" (p.445).They inquired about the relationship between teacher preferred learning orientation or method, and teacher change in teacher learning. Teacher learning change was defined as change in teacher belief, practice and students' outcomes. From the feedback of 1126 teachers, the researchers were capable of finding a link between teacher orientation and teacher learning change.

James and McCormick (2009) studied 40 schools in England in search for answers regarding how teachers learn to learn. They conducted questionnaire surveys, recorded observations and interviewed teachers and pupils to collect their data. They concluded that belief and practice are interrelated and that they need to develop simultaneously. Telling teachers what to do was not found to be sufficient. Teachers who were successful at learning were found to have reflective thinking abilities. They also concluded that leadership is faced with the challenge of creating a climate of reflection.

Husu and Tirri (2007) emphasized reflection as a crucial part of teacher professional development. They found that "teacher reflection is considered an important means for developing teachers' pedagogical knowledge" (p395). They focused primarily on reflecting on

teacher moral ethical values claiming that teacher education and professional learning could be improved by helping teachers gain awareness of their ethical knowledge or values- otherwise identified as values relating to "good schooling". They inquired about the content and structure of teacher pedagogical values and worked with 24 teachers, encouraging them to articulate their values relating to the school community and their professional morality. They managed to group the results into three major sets of values namely, social and communal values (values relating to the democratic participation in everyday life), relational values (regarding interpersonal relationships) and individual values (values relating to their teachers' students and achievement). They concluded by emphasizing the need for teachers to reflect on their values and bring them forth as a critical approach to promote professional learning.

Another study that explored reflection on values and principles as a mean for change in teaching practices was the study of Butler, Lauscher, Jarvis-Selinger and Beckingham (2004) who reviewed a two year professional development program. The program aimed to help teachers identify what the principles under their best practices were, reflecting on their teaching, and coming up with new knowledge regarding best practices depending on their reflection and their experiences. They provided mentors to guide the teachers throughout the two year period and collaboration between teachers and between teachers and researchers was highly emphasized. In the first year, 10 teachers were studied for teacher reflection in teaching, teachers' gain of new conceptual understandings, teachers' shift in practice, and teachers' awareness of students' corresponding gains due to their shift in practice. The researchers found that teachers who were engaged in active reflection were also constructing new knowledge at teaching. The descriptions provided by teachers showed a possible link between teacher change in knowledge and actual change in teacher classroom practices.

Teachers' reflection regarding the results of a student evaluation leads to teacher pedagogical change or learning (Schnellert, Butler, & Higginson, 2008). Schnellert, Butler, and Higginson (2008) studied 6 teachers in Canada and found that teacher changes in teaching were coupled with the degree to which the teachers had engaged in reflective inquiry regarding the results of the assessments they constructed.

From all the findings of the different researchers that studied the effect of reflection on teacher learning, an emergent widespread agreement is that reflection plays a rather important role in expanding teacher knowledge base, to identifying ethical knowledge or values about teaching, to making it easier for teachers to connect different information they already have about teaching into clear schemata, to affecting teacher thoughts and feelings. One aspect was common among all the research findings, which was an agreement that reflection played a major role in improving teaching by facilitating teacher learning and promoting teacher pedagogical change.

Mentoring.

Seeking guidance has also been identified as a key to teacher learning. It has been characterized as enabling for teachers to discuss their development with someone able to help them identify their current developmental stage and their targeted stage (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2010). Therefore, the presence of a facilitator and guider of teacher learning at a school is a school condition that can be described as conducive of teacher learning.

Lyne (2013) worked with 22 teachers in Malaysia. She mentored them through a newly introduced child centered teaching methodology, using an action plan intervention and found that to a certain extent, teachers were taking in the new ideas and concepts introduced and applying

them in their classrooms; hence, emphasizing the importance of mentoring in teacher learning of new teaching methodologies.

Gregory (2010) studied 34 teachers in the US for teacher learning in teams aimed at student problems' solving and found that 60 % of the teachers reported that they had learnt new intervention skills from their teams. Yet, teachers reported that had they been mentored or had intervention skills been modelled to them, they would have developed their own skills further.

Moreover, Ponte, Beijaard, and Wubbels (2004) studied 28 teachers in depth to discover the degree to which facilitators play an important role in teacher development and found that the higher the degree of attention that facilitators provided to teachers during teacher development the higher the teachers develop. They also found that teachers did not voluntarily take responsibility for their development and required the facilitators to take on a proactive role at the beginning of the program; hence, the important role of a leader or supervisor of professional development. Therefore, it seems to be necessary for teacher development attempts to succeed at triggering teacher learning, that it be guided by facilitators at all times especially at the beginning.

Collaboration.

Reflection may seem to be the main factor that leads to teacher learning but collaboration among staff members and especially collaborative reflection has received great attention. James, Dunning, Connolly, and Elliot (2007) pointed out that schools are named as professional learning communities based on the idea that the work taking place in the school is collaborative. Therefore; collaboration is seen as a must in order to refer to schools as professional learning communities.

Teacher collaborative learning has been stated to lead to continuous teacher learning through shifting the school's culture to one that fosters collaborative and reflective norms and values (Vescio, Ross & Adams, 2008).

It has been claimed that creating the culture of collaboration among teachers allows teachers to learn how to lead their classes together creatively and take on the responsibility of their students' learning. Collaborative cultures at schools have been associated with the growth of faculty capacities, otherwise visible as improved instruction (Kohm & Nance, 2009). This stands to say that professional learning and teachers' growing instructional capacities are closely linked to the build-up of a collaborative community.

Collaboration was also found to be a factor that initiates change in teacher pedagogy. Some researchers have claimed that teachers would be more willing to undergo pedagogical change if their "learning provides more and better collaboration" (Opfer, Pedder & Lavicza, 2011a, p.445).

James, Dunning, Connolly, and Elliot (2007) also emphasized the role of others in triggering the reflective practice of individuals. They view that consulting with others- be them other teachers, mentors, coaches, managers or leaders- and reflecting with them on action can help individuals achieve the full potential of reflection, which is learning and developing through overcoming the difficulties faced by teachers when reflecting in isolation. They continue, to portrait joint working on reflection as a win-win situation, where the teacher finds new perspective and the other team can learn or develop their skills at enabling others' reflection and from the experiences of others.

Kwakman (2003) studied 542 teachers and called for collaborative reflection among staff to achieve professional learning. Inquiring about the factors that affect teacher participation in professional learning activities, she found that the workplace is currently not conducive to teacher learning since the culture at school is not conducive to learning and that structural and cultural changes are required.

Collaboration, as conducive to teacher informal workplace learning, was highlighted by Jurasaite-Harbison and Rex (2010). They studied the extent to which the school culture helps teachers undergo learning. They studied three different schools with different ethnographic backgrounds where one was a poorly developed American school, the second was a previously elite Russian school and the third was an elite Lithuanian school. They found that what distinguished the Lithuanian school was a high level of teacher exchange of knowledge, peer observations, and experimentation. The researchers concluded that having a teacher culture that highly values collaborative learning is the most productive culture for teacher informal workplace learning.

In their study on how to improve teaching practices, Thoonen et al. (2011) provided empirical support for the importance of collaboration for improving teacher learning and cause change in teaching practices**.** They studied 502 teachers from 32 schools inquiring about the impact of teacher learning, among other factors, on teacher change in teaching practices. Their results indicated a positive effect of collaboration on teacher quality of instruction, via path analysis.

Butler, Lauscher, Jarvis-Selinger and Beckingham (2004)'s study of a two year professional development program on collaborative inquiry revealed that 90% of teachers

stressed that talking with each other was the most effective professional development activity for helping them change their teaching practices and sustain that change. In other words, collaboration was highly valued by the teachers as an effective professional development activity that causes indirect learning and change in their teaching practices.

Dialogue.

Dialogue is claimed to affect the learning process of teachers. (Yeo, 2006)

Melville and Wallace (2007) studied the transcriptions of the monthly department meetings of 10 staff members at a school in an attempt to identify teacher professional learning at the workplace and noted the importance of communication between teachers relating to their workplace experiences as a form of professional learning.

Self-Evaluation.

Self-evaluation is found to be of great benefit to all leaders and teachers in a school. Heaney (2004), through her case study on leading professional development on the use of technology in teaching, adheres to the notion that effective professional development is one that utilizes evaluation of practices and procedures. In addition, school cultures that foster teacher learning should have a clear system of evaluation of the learning taking place (Knight, 2002).

Ross and Bruce (2007) discussed teacher learning basing it in teacher self-assessment. Self-observation, self-judgment and self-reaction were viewed as the components of self-assessment. They constructed a self-assessment tool and rubric and studied how the provision of a self-assessment tool is linked to teacher learning. They studied 7 teachers as they went through

an in-service development program and found that self-assessment using the tool affects teacher learning by affecting teacher beliefs of mastery excellence.

In sum, the factors promoting teacher learning were found to be:

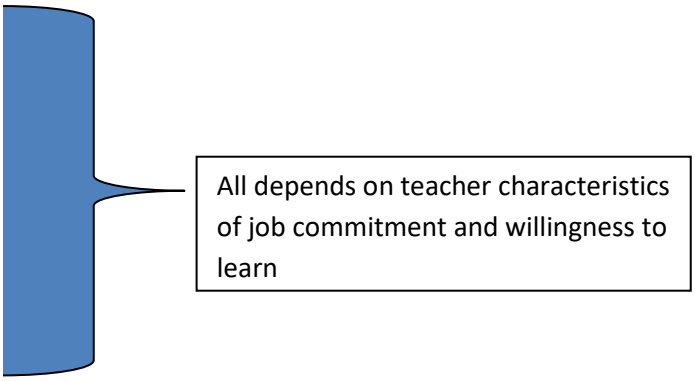
1- Reflection

2- Mentoring

3- Collaboration

4- Dialogue

5- Use of assessment tools



These factors were found to be induced through ***effective*** professional development, whose successful implementation leads to change in teacher beliefs and attitudes.

Organizational Conditions Promoting Teacher Learning

For teacher learning to occur, research has found that certain organizational conditions are required. The school's culture as a whole has been found to be conducive to teacher learning if it revolves around learning in all its aspects. This entailed having heads of departments as role models for continuous professional development, and that schools are characterized as professional learning communities in terms of their characteristics of shared values and norms, supportive leadership, apparent collaboration, co-learning and reflection.

Kolb, Osland, and Rubin (1995) explained that teachers learn in an organizational environment with five characteristics; namely, that learning is based on reciprocity, meaning that learning relationships are ones that have an equal amount of give and take. The second and third

characteristics are that effective adult learning is viewed as one based on the teachers' experiences. The fourth characteristic is that the learning environment caters to both learning and living in a way that allows the learning experience of each adult to be individualized and self-directed. Similarly, Vescio, Ross, and Adams (2008)'s review of literature of the phenomenon of teacher co-learning in professional learning communities highlighted the importance of continuous teacher learning as a value that should hover over a school's culture as a whole.

Knight (2002) suggested several important characteristics of an effective school culture that fosters teacher learning. He identified publicizing the learning message, having heads of departments as role models for continuous professional development and clear evaluation of learning as important characteristics of such a culture.

Schools as professional learning communities (PLC).

Many organizational models have been discussed as models that foster teacher learning (Caskey & Carpenter, 2012). Of these models, professional learning communities have been greatly discussed and are described as communities in which the culture of the school attributes great importance to teacher learning. Since the beginning of the 1990s, educational administration scholars, advocated the professional learning community as the organizational model that effective schools should adopt (DuFour, Dufour, Eakey & Many, 2006; Senge, P., 2006). Pescaru (2012) defined a school as a community of learners with great important links between the learning of each school head, teacher, parent and student at the school. Professional learning communities, also termed by Astuto et al. (1993) as professional communities of learners, consist of three groups of learners working together in a school; professional educators, teachers and students, and stakeholders.

Stoll et al. (2006), from their survey of practitioners, found a general consent on their definition of a professional learning community. They defined it as such: "An effective professional learning community has the capacity to promote and sustain the learning of all professionals in the school community with the collective purpose of enhancing student learning." (p.3)

For the sake of this paper, we will adopt Hord's (1997) definition of a professional community of learners to be a community "in which teachers in a school and its administrators continuously seek and share learning, and act on their learning. The goal of their actions is to enhance their effectiveness as professionals for the students' benefit" (p.10)

The characteristics of a professional learning community have been identified by many. However; five of these characteristics were found very commonly in the literature. These characteristics were supportive and shared leadership (Avenell, 2007; Hord, 1997), shared values and vision (Avenell, 2007; Stoll et al. 2006; DuFour, Dufour, Eakey & Many, 2006; Hord, 1997; Kruse (1995) in Fullan, 2006; Newmann, 1996), collective learning and application (Avenell, 2007; Stoll et al. 2006; DuFour, Dufour, Eakey & Many, 2006; Hord, 1997; Kruse (1995) in Fullan, 2006; Newmann, 1996), reflection and shared personal practice (Hord, 1997; Kruse (1995) in Fullan, 2006; Newmann, 1996; Stoll et al., 2006), and collaboration (DuFour, Dufour, Eakey & Many, 2006; Kruse (1995) in Fullan, 2006; Newmann, 1996; Stoll et al., 2006).

Supportive leadership was described as leading to a teacher's feeling of support in their learning processes and classroom teaching methods and hence becoming more committed and effective. Shared values and vision was found to lead to greater goal achievement (Branson, 2008). Collective learning indicates the promotion of group learning not just individual learning

(Stoll et al. 2006). Reflection and collaboration have been extensively discussed earlier. Hence, through each of their characteristics, professional learning communities increase teacher effectiveness.

Professional learning communities were found to be effective school arrangements that help sustain teacher professional learning. King (2011) studied five urban disadvantaged schools in Ireland inquiring about how leadership can sustain teacher professional learning and found that in order to sustain the teachers' learning, leadership need first align the values of the principal and the teachers. Second, it is essential to create a capacity for change in the school, and third, leadership need empower teachers to create PLC's and collaborative learning cultures.

Factors Hindering Teacher Learning

Just as some factors promote teacher learning with their presence, others hinder that learning. Inadequate resources such as time and money, isolation, and negative emotions of stress and anxiety and big change were all factors that were identified as hindering for teacher learning.

Isolation

Cameron, Mulholland, and Branson (2013) investigated how and why some Australian teachers engage in continuing professional learning and found that some teachers reported isolation as a factor hindering their learning; where some meant isolated from other teachers while others meant that their school was too far away from any college offering professional development activities. Lohman (2000) found similar results when she studied 22 teachers in search for environmental inhibitors of teacher informal learning. Her study revealed that

teachers' lack of proximity to libraries, other teachers' classrooms, department offices, and technology inhibited their learning.

Inadequate Resources

Inadequate financing for teacher learning is one of the major inhibitors of teacher learning (Ukusowa, M.P. 2012). Cameron, Mulholland, and Branson (2013) found that some Australian teachers discussed the monetary cost of attending external professional development activities as a barrier to their learning especially when no or limited professional development is provided at school. In Retallick (1999)'s study, teachers of rural schools explained that the additional cost of training and development was an issue that inhibited their learning.

Time was also found to be an inadequate resource. Poor timing has been claimed to be an inhibiting factor of teacher learning and professional development (Ukusowa, 2012). It has also been identified as the most recurring inhibitor to teacher learning (Lohman, 2000). Retallick (1999) 's study on the inhibiting factors of teacher learning revealed that finding time for teacher learning was a major issue that teachers frequently brought up as an inhibiting factor for their learning.

Negative Emotions

Retallick (1999) conducted a study on 42 volunteer teachers and principals in New South Wales in search for the facilitating and inhibiting factors of teacher learning. Teacher emotions of anxiety or stress from workplace learning, and guilt for having to sometimes leave students for workplace learning, were all identified by teachers as emotions they felt inhibited their learning. They also explained that when great amounts of change are imposed on them they feel reluctant to change.

Instructional Supervision and Teacher Learning

Supervision is important for learning to occur (Rudland et al., 2010; Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2007). Literature uncovered strategies used by instructional supervisors that range from allowing teachers to take on some leadership responsibilities depending on the situation, to helping them develop their skills through guidance, to working with them to solve problems, to guiding them through action research to helping identify problems they may be oblivious to, to identifying teacher values about teaching and planning professional development accordingly. These strategies all aim at guiding teachers develop professionally and become leaders themselves. However; a very important question remains. Are supervisors' practices helping teachers acquire the intended experiences that allow for them to become leaders in their classrooms?

In the following section, instructional supervision will be defined, its roles will be listed, its actions that are found to lead to improved teaching will be discussed, and a list of supervisory approaches will be detailed.

Definition

Instructional supervision is a widely used term in schools. Different schools and studies define it differently. After reviewing the literature many definitions have emerged. Supervision has been identified as a leadership position. Heaney (2004) defined leadership as a process of professionally learning and communicating this learning to those under their leadership. Ross L. Neagley and N. Dean Evans were cited by Oliva (1993) to have defined supervision as "any service for teachers that results in improving instruction, learning and the curriculum" (p.10). Jane Franseth was quoted to have said "today supervision is generally seen as leadership that

encourages a continuous involvement of all school personnel in a cooperative attempt to achieve the most effective school program" (Oliva, 1993, p.10). Burton and Brueckner also added that the goal of supervision is "improvement in the growth and development of the learners" (Oliva, 1993, p.10). Oliva (1993) defined supervision as a "service provided to teachers for the purpose of improving instruction" (p.27). He agreed with the notion that "instructional supervisors are employed to help teachers build on their strengths, improve, and remain in the profession instead of probing their deficiencies and seeking their dismissal" (p.9). In their book on supervision, Sergiovanni and Starratt (2007) noted that the purpose of supervision "is to help increase the opportunity and the capacity of schools to contribute more effectively to students' academic success" (p. 7).

Many of the definitions of school supervision link it to school improvement. Supervision as a whole is intended to identify areas for improvement within the members of the school community and help increase their capacities in order to achieve an increased organizational capacity (Yeo, 2006) towards school improvement.

Schon of 1998 and Glickman of 1992, were cited by Blasé & Blasé (1999) to have both emphasized instructional leadership to be a collaborative act between leader and teacher in a supportive environment. However; Schon explained that the ultimate aim of this collaboration was to help teachers achieve reflective teaching practices, whereas Glickman saw that improving the school as a whole should be the ultimate goal of instructional supervision. ("Schon, 1998; Glickman, 1992" as cited in Blasé & Blasé, 1999)

As for this study, instructional supervision is defined as any act performed by an instructional supervisor- be them a coordinator, head of department, head of section or any

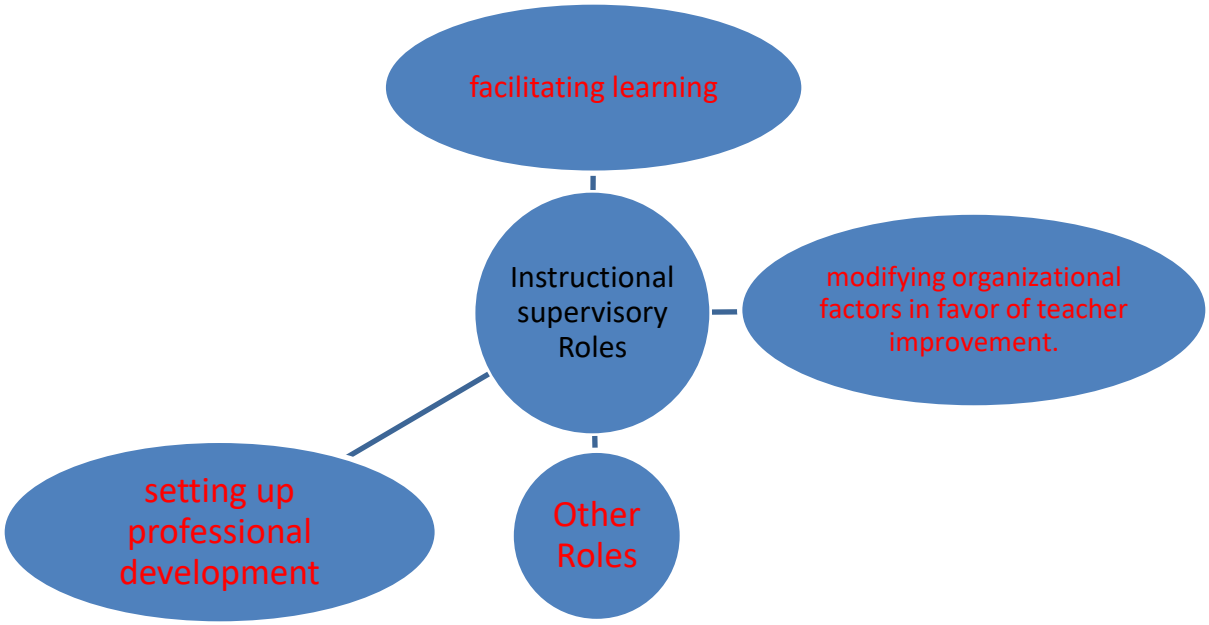
person in charge of over viewing the teaching and learning process at a school- towards a teacher aimed at promoting teachers' learning (shifting teacher beliefs about the teaching and learning process manifested in an improvement in teacher decision making skills regarding their students, learning content and their teaching practices) with the sole purpose of improving the teaching and learning process to achieve better student learning. This definition is one that makes use of the work and the definitions of Oliva (1993), Yeo (2006), and Sergiovanni and Starratt (2007).

Roles of an Instructional Supervisor

The roles of an instructional supervisor have been identified by many researchers. Demonstrating clinical performance, facilitating learning, leading and managing, developing problem solving skills, assessing, effectively communicating, and demonstrating reflective practice are some of the roles identified (Rudland et al., 2010). Direct assistance to teachers, group development, staff development, curriculum development, and action research, are another set of instructional leadership roles (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2010). Planning, organizing, facilitating change, and motivating staff are another set of roles attributed to the instructional supervisor (Pajak, 1989 as cited in Blasé & Blasé, 1999). All these roles seem to be revolving around supporting teachers through promoting their learning.

Figure 1

Instructional supervisory roles



Comparing the roles of instructional supervisors with the factors conducive to teacher learning, it becomes clear that many of the factors found to promote teacher learning and within the range of roles attributed to an instructional supervisor. Diagram 2 below shows a few of the instructional supervisory roles and the factor conducive to teacher learning that corresponds to each.

Figure 2

Some instructional supervisory roles vs. some factors promoting teacher learning

Instructional Supervisor Practices for Improved Teaching

Blasé and Blasé (1999) inquired about the characteristics of a principal/instructional leader that lead to teacher change in teaching practices in the classroom. The characteristic conducive to teacher change in classroom practices were found to be 11, categorized into two major themes: talking with teachers to promote reflection, and promoting professional growth.

The characteristics under talking with teachers to promote reflection were making suggestions, giving feedback, modelling, inquiring and soliciting teacher opinions and advice, and giving praise. Under promoting professional growth the characteristics were: emphasizing the study of teaching and learning, supporting collaboration among teachers, developing coaching skills and relationships among teachers, encouraging the redesign of programs and supporting it, applying adult learning principles to the phases of staff development, and using action research to inform instructional decision making.

Research has shown that instructional supervisors have many approaches that are effective at working with teachers and triggering their learning. Developmental supervision, collegial supervision, values-driven supervision, situational leadership, and action research are all approaches that an instructional supervisor could apply to trigger teacher learning.

Developmental supervision.

Developmental supervision has been discussed under the motto of leadership for learning, where instructional supervisors are expected to aid teachers in their quest for improving their teaching effectiveness and efficiency. Hence supervisors would aid the teachers develop their skills and knowledge. (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2010)

Collegial supervision.

Collegial supervision makes it possible for teachers to work with supervisors through coaching, reflection, and collegial investigation and problem solving, among others. Teacher professional development would no longer revolve around supervisors being seen as superiors who tell teachers how to develop and improve but rather as colleagues who work together for the best interest of the student and who develop together. A shift from viewing teachers as the

objects of professional development to the agents for professional development is needed. This shift in perspectives allows for viewing teachers as individuals capable of learning through professional development and who require individualized development plans and an understanding of how they learn. Increased attention is needed for teachers as learners and their processes of learning (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2010). Kohm and Nance (2009) also discussed improving teachers' capacities as something that should be done *with* the teachers rather than something done *to* them.

Values-driven supervision.

Since values have been claimed to be the precursors of human behavior (Sagnak, 2005), values-driven supervision seems to be a possible effective method of supervision to cause a change in teacher teaching values, hence learning. Values-driven supervision is another approach for effective leadership. In their study on the principal's behaviors for professional development to increase the school's capacity in terms of teachers' knowledge, skills and dispositions, professional community, and program coherence, at seven schools- four of which were found to have a great potential for school wide comprehensive professional development- Youngs and King (2002) found that new principals should seek knowledge of the shared norms and values held by school staff before attempting to make any changes because the results of the exploratory quest of finding out teacher belief systems helps identify the type of change required; hence, the best method to achieve it. Teachers need to shift their beliefs and values for change to occur. This change in belief systems is learning, as was previously identified. Husu and Tirri (2007) worked with 24 teachers in an attempt to recognize and articulate their pedagogical values to investigate the structure of their values and the content. They claim that in order to achieve shared values among team members a need for identifying personal values of the members rises.

They also claim that identifying and articulating pedagogical values will help teachers develop their school into a learning community aware of the school's ethical rules. Values-driven supervision incorporates supervisors that seek to understand their teachers further by understanding the values and norms that the teachers hold about teaching and learning. Which would help instructional supervisors shift teacher beliefs towards ones of more effective teaching; also known as the process of learning.

Situational leadership.

Situational leadership allows teachers to take on leadership and make decisions on certain matters. In other words, teachers become the leaders in some situations (Heaney, 2004). Heaney (2004) found situational leadership evident in his case study of a primary school going through professional development in ICT. He found that situational leadership was an evident feature in the school that helped it achieve the results required from the professional development program set. Achieving the results implies that teachers have started the use of technology in their classrooms which, as the definition of learning adopted indicates, means that they have learnt. Hence the positive effect of situational leadership on teacher learning. Trusting in teachers and allowing them to act as situational leaders supports Mushayikwa and Lubben (2009)'s idea, which called for the need for empowering teachers to take initiative and act on their own needs.

Action research.

Action research has also been viewed as a supervisory approach instructional supervisors could resort to for triggering teacher learning. It assumes that teachers already own a great amount of knowledge but require a stimulus to provoke them. It allows for the clear

identification of what is currently going on, the gap between what is taking place and the required result and the setting of clear criteria for judgment. (McNiff, 2002)

Conclusion

Research has made it clear that teachers learn through different approaches; internally, externally, intentionally or unintentionally. They were found to learn better through reflection, dialogue, communication, collaboration, ongoing assessment, mentoring, effective professional development, job commitment, situational leadership, action research, active learning, and with them and their supervisors having awareness of the nature of their needs for learning. Some factors were found by research to hinder teacher learning such as time, cost, teacher negative emotions, teacher isolation, and teacher comfort with their professional stage and absence of will to progress further.

Most importantly, those in charge of promoting teachers' professional learning need to view teachers as individuals capable of learning themselves. Instructional supervision was found to be effective in promoting teachers learning so long as it endows trust among teachers and administrators, sponsors collaboration among teachers and administrators, promotes reflective practices among teachers, and provides opportunities for the professional development of teachers. Empirically, professional development was found to be effective when it is coupled with ongoing support, differentiated according to teacher needs, takes into consideration the cultural barriers of transferring research findings, and takes into consideration teacher learning processes. In order for teachers to learn they also need a supportive school culture. One that fosters continuing professional development, publicizes the learning message, evaluates learning, clarifies the reason for subject teaching, assumes all students can learn, and ensures teachers' job expectations are in line with their abilities.

Being responsible for teacher learning of different pedagogies required for different educational outcomes, the instructional supervisor goes about preparing for professional development activities that suite teachers, demonstrating clinical behavior, facilitating teacher learning, reflecting, collaborating, mentoring, communicating, assisting teachers, developing staff and curriculum, facilitating change, and planning, hoping that teachers will take in the new ways of teaching and apply them in their classrooms. However; the professional development activities prepared do not always achieve their desired outcomes. Perhaps a change in how professional development activities are executed might help. What are those specific acts of the supervisor that actually help teachers learn and what hinders this learning from occurring?

The instructional supervisor, with the aim of achieving teacher learning, plans professional development activities. However; as was earlier noted, teachers learn both intentionally and unintentionally. Therefore; professional development activities may not be the reason behind teacher learning. Instructional supervisors may not be aware of the specific action or conditions that led to teacher learning. Noting the instructional supervisor's intended actions for teacher learning and cross checking the actions with teachers may lead to an accurate list of actions that lead to learning. However the list may not be complete yet. The unintentional learning that occurs may happen due to actions on behalf of the instructional supervisor, of whose results they are unaware. In other words, instructional supervisors are not aware of the other actions they had done that also led to learning. A completed list of actions requires being a mediator and building a bridge of communication between the instructional supervisors and the teachers. This mediator, the researcher, could identify the nature of professional learning that teachers attribute to their instructional supervisors' practices, and the practices that promote or hinder their learning.

Research has identified factors promoting teacher learning and others that hinder teacher learning. It has provided possible settings in which teacher learning may be promoted and characteristics of teachers, and of the professional development activities teachers undergo, found apparent when teacher learning was noted to have occurred. It has also gone far enough to discuss the characteristics of a community which strives to adopt teacher professional learning. However; all these identified characteristics and factors were extracted from research conducted in the Western context. The cultures of these in the Western contexts are very different from those in the Eastern context to which we attempt to apply the research findings. Hallinger and Leithwood (1996) made strong calls for critiquing the cultural validity and salience of research findings being transferred from the Western context into other contests. Hence it seems necessary to adopt these factors and characteristics with great care and attention attached to the fact that they come from western contexts. Similar factors and characteristics may be discovered in the Eastern context but room for other factors and characteristics to emerge must be constantly kept. A lack of cultural validity of the factors and characteristics of professional learning communities might explain the reason why despite the provision of 3 of the major 5 components of a professional learning community, claimed to be effective for teacher learning, in the schools of the UAE, little teacher learning is being demonstrated through improvements in teaching and learning at schools. More so, teacher learning might be found to be taking place much more than some studies show, should the rubrics for teacher learning be amended according to the Arab World context.

For this reason, this study is be an *explanatory and exploratory* qualitative multiple case study investigating the perspective of teachers on the practices of instructional supervisors that promote or hinder their learning, as well as their perception of the professional learning they

attribute to their instructional supervisors. Instructional supervisors and teachers at two different schools were interviewed for their views regarding the actions of instructional supervisors that both promote and hinder teacher learning. Furthermore; the perspectives of the two parties were compared for similarities and differences. Apart from individual interviews, focus groups and member checking were done for the validation of the results found.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This multiple exploratory and explanatory case study is conducted to understand the nature of professional learning that is attributed to result from instructional supervisory practices and their related organizational conditions from the perspective of the teachers. It investigates the supervisory practices and organizational conditions that promote and hinder teacher professional learning from the perspective of the supervisors and the teachers. It also compares the perspectives of instructional supervisors and teachers for correspondences and contradictions. This section provides an overview of the research design, the method of participant selection, the tools used for data collection, and the method of data analysis adopted.

Research Questions

1- What are the teachers' perceptions of what they learn from instructional supervisory practices?

2- What do the instructional supervisors perceive they provide teachers?

3- What are the supervisory practices and organizational conditions that promote or hinder teacher professional learning from the perspective of the teachers?

4- What are the supervisory practices and organizational conditions that promote or hinder the professional learning of teachers from the perspective of instructional supervisors?

Research Design

A research design is the approach to formulating research questions and finding ways to collect data, analyze it and report it (Creswell et al., 2007). Researchers have called for the use of qualitative research as the approach of choice to study phenomena in their natural context

(Bryman & Burgess, 1999; Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2010; Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2009). Qualitative research is also a social research strategy which makes use of several methods to interpret a phenomenon from the point of view of the people being studied, in their natural setting, to finally generate theoretical understanding of these phenomena that is likely to help interpret it in various contexts (Bryman & Burgess, 1999; Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Meaning-making and interpretation lie at the center of qualitative research (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2010). The natural context for the phenomenon is where it can best be explored. Teacher learning facilitated through instructional supervision is a phenomenon that has not been fully explored. Investigations into what is happening between instructional supervisors and teachers to promote this learning, is one of the identified purposes of qualitative research (Walker, 1987).

In qualitative research, the case study is one of the most common research designs (Bryman & Burgess, 1999). Case studies, as opposed to other research methods, are used to answer questions of how and why, with no control imposed on behavioral events, but rather a study of phenomena in their natural context (Yin, 2009). It provides rich contextual data from which theoretical propositions can be derived to be later used for generalizations (Bryman & Burgess, 1999). Qualitative case studies reveal reality as constructed by those interpreting it, as is compatible with the interpretivist view (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2010). In accordance, the reality of how teacher learning occurs can best be interpreted by those directly involved, i.e., the teachers, followed by the instructional supervisors as other agents closely involved with the phenomenon. Case studies allow for the explanation and description of a phenomenon, as well as the identification of the conditions which trigger a causal mechanism (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2010; George & Bennett, 2004). As this research study seeks to explore the nature of the relationship of teacher learning and instructional supervisory practices in as much depth as possible, and since

the case study is known for its rich array of data collected, the exploratory case study design (Yin, 2009) was chosen. However; the case being studied would be the school but the units to be analyzed would be the actions of instructional supervisors and the reactions they lead to in teacher learning, making this case study an embedded case study (Yin, 2009). Furthermore; since analytical conclusions derived from the findings extracted from multiple schools would be more powerful than if extracted from a single school (Yin, 2009), and for the concept of teacher learning to be sufficiently well covered (Corbin & Strauss, 2008), and since more cases bring forth more variation and result in a more convincing interpretation with higher stability and validity of results (Merriam, 1998), this study adopts the design of an exploratory, embedded comparative case studies design (Merriam, 1998) where findings are compared within cases and across cases (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). The study explores two different schools and compares teacher and instructional supervisors' views within schools and across schools.

Since this study targets teacher learning that results from the practices of instructional supervisors, it explores the perspective of both instructional supervisors and teachers and hopes that through comparing the results it can identify not only the factors that impact teachers learning but also the instructional supervisors' intentions behind their actions and the implications of these actions on teachers. Apart from the perspectives of instructional supervisors and teachers, qualitative research maintains space for the researcher's own point of view (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2010). Therefore, after accumulating the points of view of both instructional supervisors and teachers, the data was analyzed by the researcher using the constant comparative method (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) to link it to the findings of other researchers in the literature and provide further recommendations.

Participant Selection

Research has found that certain factors lead to teacher learning. However; research in the UAE has found that these factors scarcely exist in schools (Al-Taneji, 2009). Yet these schools are still managing to improve their teaching methods and student outcomes according to the Dubai School Inspection Bureau (DSIB), which is a governmental committee responsible for the inspection of all schools in Dubai and rating them in accordance with previously set standards made public through the authority's website and through manuals distributed to schools. It is responsible for the growth, direction and quality of education in Dubai's private schools. It supports schools, universities and training institutes to improve their quality. The authority's highest priority is the students of Dubai. The authority conducts research which ranges from early childhood education to adult learning and uses their findings to both revise their standards and drive improvement initiatives; their main concern being to ensure that Dubai produces an educated and flexible workforce capable of meeting the needs of the globalized market. This bureau is part of the Knowledge and Human Development Authority founded in 2006. As is made clear in their manual, the KHDA aims to become among the 20 highest performing countries in the world according to the rating of PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) by the year 2021.

Through its website, each school's inspection reports from the academic year of 2009/2010 to this year can be seen by any person. The schools are rated as weak, acceptable, good or outstanding. The schools are rated according to their students' attainments in five identified key subject, their students' personal and social development, teaching for effective learning and the quality of their students' learning, assessments, curriculum quality, student protection and support, leadership and management, and self-evaluation and improvement

planning (KHDA, 2013). Instructional supervisors have not been identified in person; however, under the section of leadership and management, monitoring and evaluation of teaching has been identified as a quality indicator (KHDA, 2013) and as research has shown, these tasks are ones attributed to instructional supervisors (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2010; Oliva, 1993; Pajak, 1989 as cited in Blasé & Blasé, 1999; Rudland et al., 2010). Instructional supervisors have not been addressed and neither has teacher learning; yet, as part of their expectations, the KHDA clearly identifies that a variety of teaching methods is required from teachers as well as the use of multiple teaching resources. Since teacher learning has not been addressed as such, nor has the instructional supervisor been addressed as responsible for teacher learning, this study presumes that attributing such importance to teachers using multiple teaching strategies implies that teacher constant learning of multiple new strategies is considered important.

According to the Inspection Handbook of the academic year of 2014/2015, an exemplary school would be one whose students constantly achieve above international standards. The school's increased student attainments would be parallel among all groups of students including those with special educational needs and low order thinking students. Students at such exemplary schools would make links among subjects and would apply their learning and skills to unfamiliar learning contexts confidently and reflectively. Use of technology and higher order skills such as analysis, critical thinking and reflection are among the qualities of the students of exemplary schools. They are independent learners and thinkers that collaborate effectively with their peers to support and lead each other through the use of multiple sources of information for drawing conclusions. Personally, students would have a high sense of personal responsibility, demonstrated through their excellent behavior, self-discipline, strong commitment, and punctuality. Their sense of responsibility extends to their community and their environment.

They would also show independence of mind through their excellent relationships with their peers and staff, and a reported feeling of safety. The students would also demonstrate a clear understanding of their culture and of other cultures across the world. As for the staff and leaders of such schools, they constantly revise their curriculum, the quality of their teaching and the quality of their assessments through monitoring teaching methods and shifting to ones that lead to the evolution of an independent and critical thinking student. The school's environment would be characterized as healthy and safe. Students would be supported physically, mentally, emotionally, and intellectually. Self-evaluation and improvement would also be characteristics of such a school. Parental involvement and community integration would be important aspects of the school.

A purposeful sampling method for selecting participants was used. A two stage screening process took place to select the schools to be studied (Yin, 2009). The first stage was a collection of the ratings of all the schools inspected by KHDA. The greater majority of the schools were rated as acceptable with the minority rated as weak. Schools with a constant rating over the last five years were identified to ensure that the schools chosen have been constant in their achievements and that the KHDA claims that they have neither progressed nor regressed. For the second stage, and since the population for this study would be all the schools in Dubai and since the majority of the population were rated as acceptable (56 out of 151 schools) or good (56 out of 151 schools), one school was chosen at random for the study with a constant rating of acceptable and another with a constant rating of good and contacted via email. They were included as a representation of the majority of the population (Yin, 2009). Email contact was with the schools' principals requesting a meeting with them. During that meeting the researcher introduced themselves, the purpose of the study, and the ethical procedures of the study data, along with

IRB protocols. The principal was provided with copies of instructional supervisors' and teachers' consent forms. The principal was given an adequate amount of time for their decision making. Once permission was granted, the principal of each school was asked to sign a consent form to document their approval of including the school in the research study, flyers were hung up in staff rooms, and a meeting with the teachers and instructional supervisors took place in order to explain about the study and its procedures, and provide potential subjects with the researchers' contact information.

Since the KHDA identified five main subjects and studied the schools in terms of those five subjects; therefore, this study targeted one randomly selected teacher from each of these five subject areas and three randomly selected instructional supervisors, for feasibility, from each school. Purposeful selection was used to select the teachers (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2010). The main subject areas identified by KHDA are Arabic, Islamic Education, Mathematics, Science and English.

Teachers and instructional supervisors were told of the study through either flyers hung up in staff rooms about the study with recruitment letters placed there for willing staff to pick up, and/or through a mass email sent to staff with the recruitment letter, and/or through the researcher's attendance at a staff meeting and explaining about the study and providing recruitment letters for those who would like to pick them up. The method through which information about the study was disseminated depended on the choice of the principal. Willing volunteers were asked to contact the researchers. Those who did contact the researcher and were willing to participate were given a choice of either participating in an individual interview or in a focus group discussion of 10 teachers. Those who selected to participate in an individual interview were asked to set a date and time at their convenience for the interview to take place.

At the opening of each session with any participant or group of participants, participants were informed of their right to withdraw themselves with no penalty. Consent forms were signed and consent for audiotaping was obtained by signing the section of the consent form referring to audiotaping and by recording their consent orally on the tape itself. In cases where the researcher felt that tape recording was causing any irritation/absence of focus or withholding of any information by the participant, the researcher turned off the audiotaping and referred to taking notes. Participants received a copy of their consent forms. As for focus groups, similar procedures took place where the potential participants were informed of the study through the general meeting and the flyers hung up in staff rooms and were asked to contact the researchers in case they were willing to participate.

Data Collection Procedures and Tools

Sources of Data

This research study targets teacher learning as a result of instructional supervisory practices. Teachers are expected to learn on the job and instructional supervisors are assumed to play a major role in triggering and supporting this learning. This study targets the actions of instructional supervisors that are aimed at promoting teacher learning, and the result of these actions. Since instructional supervisors are taking the action and aim at a reaction from teachers, then the two parties from which data were collected were teachers and instructional supervisors.

As for contextual data about the school, these were collected from the school's website and from available documents about the school. The school principal was asked to provide any information pamphlet they may have about the school in terms of its size and background.

Data Collection Tools

To collect data about the phenomenon, interviews, focus groups, and member checking were employed. As Yin (2009) called for triangulation as a means of increasing data credibility, multiple sources of data were chosen for triangulation.

Teacher learning has been defined as a change in teacher beliefs; hence, the information to be extracted is the beliefs of teachers and how a change in their beliefs may occur. Interviews allowed for the exploration of interviewee views and beliefs (Doody & Noonan, 2013; Gill et al., 2008). Teachers and instructional supervisors were both interviewed to collect data about the phenomenon. Semi structured interviews are interviews in which several key questions are previously identified but room is kept for both the interviewer and the interviewee to use follow up questions to understand further the ideas being discussed and in more depth (Doody & Noonan, 2013; Gill et al., 2008). Since semi structured interviews allow for follow up questions from the interviewee which may bring up further hidden information, this works against any researcher bias (Yin, 2009). For these reasons, semi structured, focused interviews (Yin, 2009) have been adopted. Instructional supervisors were questioned for the actions they take to promote teacher learning and the expected results of their actions. Teachers were interviewed for information about factors that promote their authentic learning and the practices of instructional supervisors that lead to a change in their beliefs and/or practice.

Interviews are subject to interviewer poor recall or weak articulation (Yin, 2009). To overcome these biases, the researcher tape recorded as well as took notes throughout all the interviews. Furthermore, all data retrieved were put into themes, even if it were mentioned by only one teacher or instructional supervisor from one of the schools, so long as the teacher focus group or the member check interviewee respectively, agreed on it. Moreover, the data retrieved

from teacher interviews were subject to audit through teacher focus group discussions. Teacher focus groups were used to give feedback on the extent to which the results obtained from the participants in the study are representative of their views. Focus groups can succeed with a bare minimum of 3 and a maximum of 14 participants (Gill et al., 2008). In this study, the focus groups each had 10 participants. In these teacher focus groups teachers were provided with a list of the practices, identified from the interviews of all the teachers in the subject departments, as conducive or prohibiting of their learning. The teachers were asked to verify the validity of the practices identified.

Triangulation, overcomes the bias of a single data source (Yin, 2009). Furthermore, to ensure the accuracy and completeness - acquiring a complete understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Kirkman, 2008) - of the data discovered member check was employed. Member checking is the review of the themes by a participating member from the school in an attempt to confirm or correct the researcher's findings (Buchbinder, 2011; Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2010). This member was shown a list of all the themes that the researcher came up with from the collected data and was asked to review the themes in an attempt to confirm their validity or correct them.

Process of Data Collection

The research questions of this study require that interviews be conducted with both teachers and instructional supervisors. Prior to any interview, teachers and instructional supervisors were informed about the study, the procedure of the study, and the recruitment forms and the one week time period they have, to contact the researcher if they were willing to participate, through one or all of three methods proposed to the principal of the school and depending on the principal's decision of how to disseminate the information about the study. They were either informed about the study through a flyer posted in the teachers' lounge with

recruitment letters left there for them to pick up, and/or through a mass email with the recruitment letter, and/or through the researcher's attendance at a staff meeting and explaining to the staff about the study and making the recruitment letters readily available for those who would like to pick them up. The three instructional supervisors at each school were interviewed first to understand their intentions behind their practices. Then a single teacher from each subject area selected at random from the five main subject areas of English, Science, Mathematics, Arabic and Islamic Education was interviewed next. In both cases, the interviewee was assured regarding the confidentiality of the study (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2010).

Once all the interviews had taken place, coding was made for general themes to emerge from the collected data. These themes were then subjected to auditing by other teachers and instructional supervisors through focus group meetings and member checking. 10 to 12 non-interviewed teachers were randomly selected at each school for a focus group meeting while one randomly selected instructional supervisor was selected for member checking. These teachers and instructional supervisor were also provided with information about the study and a one week period to contact the researcher should they be willing to participate. Individual teacher interviews were semi structured, where a few questions on their perspective of teacher learning and how it manifests in their schools and their instructional supervisor's involvement in its occurrences were asked and space for probing was kept. As for the instructional supervisors' individual interviews similar questions on their perspective of teacher learning were asked along with questions on how it may occur and how they help in its occurrence. Focus group discussions were focused on re-visiting the emergent themes from all the teacher individual interviews and checking their reliability along with the addition of any other themes that may not have emerged during individual interviews. As for checking the validity of instructional

supervisors' emergent themes, single instructional supervisors were asked to review the themes, checking for their validity. Individual interviews took place in private rooms and were audiotaped after the consent of the participant had been acquired. These individual interviews lasted around 30 to 45 minutes. As for the focus group discussions, those were given longer time periods to accommodate any teacher discussions that may arise. Focus group discussions were allotted around one hour. As for member checking, around 30 minutes were assigned to such meetings. All interviews and focus groups took place in the school which the participants attend. In sum, each school was visited 11 times, 1 for a general meeting, 8 of these visits for individual interviews, 1 for a focus group discussion and 1 for a member checking discussion.

Table 1
Summary of Data Collection

Data Collection Tool	**Number**
Individual Teacher Interviews	10 (5 from each school)
Teacher Focus Groups	2 (1 at each school)
Individual Supervisor Interviews	7 (4 at School 1 and 3 at School 2)
Individual Supervisor Member Checking	2 (1 at each school)

Data Analysis

Grounded theory methodology, founded by Glaser and Strauss in 1967, is a popular qualitative research methodology used to simultaneously collect empirical data and analyse it. It calls for grounded observation of phenomena rather than preconceptions of it. The grounded

theory method employs inductive reasoning where many cases are described and from the descriptions an abstract conceptual set of ideas are induced (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). Underlying grounded theory is a line of thought that clearly identifies that no simple explanation can be given to any matter since events are viewed as the result of the interaction of multiple factors in complex ways. It continues to claim that capturing all the complexity of events is virtually impossible but makes it clear that the aim of any research is to capture as much of the complexity as possible. Variations in analytical schemes and multiple perspectives of experiences provide as much of the complexity as possible. The experience or event; however, cannot be separated from its environment or context within which it happens. The context is believed to play a major role in how an event or experience turns out. This theory also claims that analysis is based on groups of concepts of different levels of abstraction. Concepts are used as shared understandings between professionals or as differently referred to the "language" professionals' use amongst each other. This theory also allows for a researcher to study part of a phenomenon and leave their findings for future researchers to pick up the findings and continue. (Corbin & Strauss, 2008)

The aim of this research study is to develop grounded conceptualizations of teacher learning as occurring from the practices of instructional supervisors in the context of the UAE. In line with the constructivists' line of thought, the researcher aimed to construct concepts from the research participants' constructions of their stories with teacher learning (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). For this reason, data analysis took place in accordance with Strauss and Corbin's (1990) constant comparative interpretational approach and following the steps of grounded theory.

According to Corbin and Strauss (2008), analysis is both an art and a science simultaneously. The art lies in the creativity of the researcher in digging up data about a

phenomenon while the science lies in conceptualizing data and further developing the concepts whilst validating the concepts constantly against new data and participants coming in as the research moves on. Analysis also requires a constant interplay between three main skills: conceptualizing, asking questions and comparing. Conceptualizing is the skill of finding concepts that explain the experiences explained by research participants. Asking questions comes handy when the researcher is faced with an experience they themselves have not faced previously, or do not understand fully. Questions could be asked to further collect data about experiences in order to conceptualize them. As for comparing, it is a skill required constantly. Experiences explained by participants need to be compared constantly for similarities and differences among the experiences explained by different participants for conceptualizing purposes. The main aim for these skilful activities is to come up with a story of what is happening at the school that is leaning to, or inhibiting, a certain experience; in this case, teacher learning.

For data analysis Corbin and Strauss's (1990) approach was made use of. Their constant comparative interpretational approach to data analysis allows for data to be analysed in such a manner as to extract constructs, themes, and patterns which could be used to explain the phenomenon whilst constantly validating these constructs, against new data being collected. An incident in a first data set was interpreted and conceptualized. It was compared against the literature review conducted for this study and whenever applicable codes or concepts found in the literature were used as this approach calls for as much compatibility with the literature a possible to avoid multiple titles for similar incidents. These concepts were added to newer concepts derived from new data being collected as data collection continued. As more concepts emerged they were categorized. Whenever possible categories were also made compatible with

ones found in the literature. Once these categories emerged, they were compared to each other for further grander categories to emerge. This process continued until major themes were identified with which the whole data collected could be described. Hypothesis about the relationship of categories to each other were constantly established and verified.

Coding was also used while analysing pieces of data. *Open coding* was used to first dissect data and view it from different perspectives. Individual incidents were compared against each other and labelled conceptually. Systematic comparison of data helped remove errors of classification of incidents. Once categories and subcategories emerged, *axial coding* was used where the relationship between the categories and their subcategories were tested against further data. Further categories emerged through this process. During the final stages of analysis, *selective coding* took place. This is the stage where a core category was identified which usually represents the phenomenon being studied and other categories were related to it. (Corbin & Strauss, 1990)

As per the above described processes, and in compliance with Corbin and Strauss (2008), and, Gall, Gall and Borg (2010), data found through interviews were first recorded as transcriptions. Then it was broken into segments and coded into categories. A list of themes of effective activities, which has been presented earlier in the literature review, was compared to emerging data. In an attempt to capture the widest picture possible, any theme that was mentioned by a third of the population (5 out of the 15 teachers at each school, 2 out of the 5 instructional supervisors at School 1, and 2 out of the 4 instructional supervisors at School 2), or more, in each respective group of respondents, was kept. Those mentioned by less than a third, were dropped. Those mentioned by an individually interviewed teacher or instructional supervisor but were not approved by the focus group participants or the member check

interviewee, were also dropped. New themes which emerged from data collection were added to the list of themes retrieved from comparing the data with the themes found in the literature. Themes that were found compatible with the findings from data collection were kept while the others were dropped. The themes were divided into two sections, the first of which is related to the supervisors' perspective and the other to the teachers' perspective. It was started by comparing the responses of the respondents (teachers or instructional supervisors) within the same group (teachers or instructional supervisors) and within the same school under each research question. Next the responses of each group were compared and validated with the responses of the respective parallel group in the second school so for example the responses of the teachers of School 1 were compared to each other to come up with themes. Those themes were then validated through the responses of the teachers of School 2 and refined accordingly. Further data synthesis of teachers' and instructional supervisors' perspective under each research question resulted in refined themes that fit for both School 1 and School 2 which were then compared between teacher and instructional supervisors' perspective and across cases. This further comparison brought to light further refined themes.

At all points in this study, and in accordance with the Grounded Theory Methodology, perspectives were compiled and considered to each be representing a part of the complex situation available at the schools. Therefore, and for this reason, the themes or definitions that emerged from this study were a collection of the different perspectives of the participants and were not all mentioned by the same participant but were all validated by the focus group participants or the member check interviewee.

Trustworthiness, Credibility and Transferability

Study trustworthiness is a state that is achieved once the study has achieved credibility and transferability.

Research study transferability and credibility have been identified as components which lead to the accumulated trustworthiness of a study (Buchbinder, 2011). Credibility is the extent to which findings represent reality while transferability is a process that can occur if a study has been established as credible and representing reality (Kirkman, 2008). Transferability or generalizability is when the findings of a study can be applied to cases beyond the case studied (Yin, 2009).

Research has identified that research credibility can be achieved through triangulation and member check (Buchbinder, 2011).In order to ensure the credibility of the results of this study, and since this is a qualitative study whose results are built on the perspectives of teachers and instructional supervisors; triangulation (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) was used to increase result credibility from the perspective of the participants (emic). Interviews, focus groups and member check were all employed to complete triangulation and achieve credibility.

Furthermore, member check, also identified as a validation interview, is the review of the themes by a member of the school in an attempt to confirm or correct the researcher's findings. The member's input would help identify the credibility of the themes that emerged from data collection. (Buchbinder, 2011). Member check was completed for this study whereby participants were asked to review the emerging themes.

The coding and themes that are extracted from literature, and collected data, are all made by the researcher. For the findings to be credible, the coding made by the researcher needs to be reliable. According to literature on the topic, coding check is a measure that helps ensure data

reliability (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2010)**.** Since the study was completed by the researcher individually, an established researcher and professional in the field reviewed the coding system, discrepancies were discussed extensively until agreement was reached.

The natural context of the phenomenon in which the study takes place is in itself a component of external validity (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2010); however, since the phenomenon is context bound, then contextual data about the school and detailed documentation of any identified occurrences at the school was provided to allow for result transferability.

Furthermore; since this study follows the multiple case study research design, this increases the credibility and transferability of the results found.

Limitations

Due to the limited MA scope of the study, this research study was conducted on only two schools which represented the two major categories of ratings in the UAE, out of four available categories. This limits the study's comprehensiveness and ability to integrate all available perspectives. Extreme cases were not included due to the hardships of accessing those schools, where the lower extreme schools did not have emails to communicate with them, while the higher extreme were mostly schools that belonged to a group where access to one of the schools required approval from a higher authority, and the few schools who were contacted on an individual basis, refused to participate. This also limits the ability of the researcher to make further inferences and achieve theoretical saturation of the categories. Only one level of category of inferences was made and more needs to be done before further inferences can be made in accordance with the grounded theory.

Second, the findings were only validated in the school itself and with a small number of teachers and only one instructional supervisor at each school.

Third, the participant schools were only from within the limits of Dubai, although educational reform is the target of many of the seven emirates in the UAE.

Finally, this study cannot claim to have captured the promotive or hindering practices but rather the respondents' conceptions of these practices due to the fact that it relied on teacher and instructional supervisor recounts of the situation and did not include any actual observations at the school. During these recounts, some teachers seemed reluctant to answer the research questions, especially when it came to critical issues.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH FINDINGS

This chapter reports the findings obtained from the interviews with teachers and instructional supervisors at the two schools to answer the research questions of this study. The instructional supervisors' thoughts from both schools are reported separately from the thoughts of teachers under similar general themes as framed by the research questions. These themes cover definitions of teacher learning, perceptions of the factors that affect teacher learning positively and negatively, the role instructional supervisors play in promoting or hindering teacher learning, as well as the role of organizational conditions in promoting and hindering the same.

Results reporting was guided by the research questions. The first section is dedicated to reporting results pertaining to the first and second research question. Results on teachers' and supervisors' perceptions of what they define teacher learning is reported first including what teachers' perceive they learn from instructional supervisors, and how they believe teacher learning happens.

The second and third sections cover results that aims to answer the third and fourth research questions. The second section is reporting results from the teachers' perspective on factors that promote and hinder teacher learning, which is divided into two subsections; one dedicated to the supervisory practices or organizational conditions that promote teacher learning, and another for their thoughts of supervisory practices and organizational conditions that hinder teacher learning.

The third section is dedicated to reporting data from the instructional supervisors' perspective on factors that promote and hinder teacher learning, which is divided into two subsections; one dedicated to the supervisory practices or organizational conditions that promote teacher learning, and another for their thoughts of supervisory practices and organizational conditions that hinder teacher learning.

The results that are presented here come from interviews conducted at two different schools. They are referred to as School 1 and School 2. A total of 30 teachers and 9 instructional supervisors participated in this study from both schools. The reported results show all the categories mentioned by all of the teachers, even if they were mentioned by only one teacher or instructional supervisor, so long as the category was approved by the focus group participants or the member check interviewee, respectively.

The two schools that participated in this study came from different rankings. The rankings in Dubai are made by the Dubai School Inspection Bureau (DSIB), which in turn reports to the Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA). One of the schools from which data were collected was ranked as an "acceptable" school. The other school was ranked as a "good" school. The ranking of good is considered a better ranking than the ranking of acceptable. The KHDA rank schools into four categories namely; weak, acceptable, good, and outstanding, where weak is the worst ranking and outstanding is the best ranking. The majority of schools in Dubai belong to the two middle ranking classes, namely; acceptable and good.

The first school is School 1 which offers the American High School Diploma Program. It caters to around 2500 students, of whom around 40 percent are of an Emirati nationality. As for the 143 teachers at the school, the largest group amongst them are Arabs. According to its

website, a group of highly qualified and experienced heads of departments are responsible for overseeing teacher implementation of programs offered by the school, in each department. This school has been rated by the KHDA (Knowledge and Human development Authority) during the yearly ratings as an "acceptable" school from 2008 to date (KHDA website). At the school, the position of Head of Department is the administrative position directly responsible for overlooking teacher classroom instruction. These Head of Departments all report to a Curriculum Coordinator, who in turn reports to the Assistant Principal and Principal. Hence, the positions of curriculum coordinator, assistant principal and principal all overlook teacher instruction indirectly. All the instructional supervisors who were interviewed at this school held the position of Head of Department within their own respective departments. A total of five teachers and four instructional supervisors were individually interviewed. The focus group discussion that took place after interviewing all five teachers, to validate the themes obtained from the individual interviews, included ten participants. As for validating the themes obtained from the individual interviews with the four instructional supervisors, a member checking interview took place with a fifth instructional supervisor for that purpose. A total of fifteen teachers and five instructional supervisors participated in this study from School 1.

The second school is referred to as School 2 which is an international IB school that offers an international baccalaureate diploma and a high school diploma. It caters to about 1500 students of 75 nationalities and is located in Dubai. According to the school, its greatest asset is its faculty and staff. It is claimed to be a true community of learners where professional development is an integral component. Teachers are claimed to regularly attend off-site opportunities for professional learning, but, the school also values professional learning that is embedded in the daily life of teachers (school website). Of the 155 teachers at the school, the largest nationality group of

teachers are those with an American nationality. This school has been rated by the KHDA (Knowledge and Human development Authority) as a "good" school from 2009 to date (KHDA website). School 2 does not have a position named as an instructional supervisor, within its administrative team; however, different positions within the team are responsible for supervising teacher instruction. The three instructional supervisors that were interviewed and the member checking interviewee each had a different role at the school but were all responsible for the instruction of a specified group of teachers. Two held the position of curriculum leaders, one was an IB program coordinator and the last was an elementary principal. All four listed overlooking teacher instruction as one of their tasks. The school was explained as having multiple positions in the administration whom were responsible for teacher instruction in different subject matters; namely, curriculum leaders, IB program coordinators, technology coordinator, principals, vice principals, and lead teachers. At this school, a total of five teachers and three instructional supervisors were individually interviewed for this study. The focus group discussion that took place after interviewing all five teachers, to validate the themes obtained from the individual interviews, included ten participants. As for validating the themes obtained from the individual interviews with the three instructional supervisors, a member checking interview took place with a fourth instructional supervisor for that purpose. A total of fifteen teachers and four instructional supervisors participated in this study from School 2.

Teachers' Perspective on Conceptions of Teacher Learning

The main concern of this study is to explore what teachers learn from the instructional supervisor and develop an understanding of the supervisory practices that impact this learning. This section serves to provide results pertaining to the first research questions of this study; namely, what is the teachers' perceptions of what they learn from instructional supervisory

practices? It is divided into a subsection for the perceived definition of teacher learning, a second subsection for the perceptions of how it happens, and another subsection for the perceived learning that comes from instructional supervisors.

The Perceived Definition of Teacher Learning

All teachers and instructional supervisors at both schools were asked to define the term teacher professional learning. The compiled definitions that emerged from the two schools were very similar. In essence, they were both concerned with the constant improvement of teacher skills to improve student outcomes. The difference between the two lied in the details. Where in School 1 a specific teacher skill was highlighted and an emphasis was put on the change of teaching methods as the result of teacher learning, at School 2, the definition was more generic and emphasized the view of teachers as professionals.

When asked to define the term in School 1, two of the five individually interviewed teachers named the targets they see of learning, two others listed specific items to learn while the last individually interviewed teacher resorted to identifying methods for teacher learning clarifying “I don’t really have a definition” (S1T4).

S1T4 identified learning as continuous and as necessary saying “Learning doesn’t stop. No matter how old you are, especially these times. Every day there’s a new discovery and you have to be updated.” Other reasons mentioned for teacher learning were staying up to date with the current generation (S1T1), overcoming obstacles that teachers faced (S1T1), learning for the cause of student improvement (S1T1), and for professionalism purposes (S1T2). The focus group participants agreed to all of these reasons for teacher learning. As for what teachers stated they wanted to learn these were as follows: learning to question information (S1T5) and learning to

deal with students and their individual conditions (S1T3, S1T5). The focus group participants were content with all that was mentioned but unanimously added that learning is also for the ultimate purpose of changing teaching practices, where one of the focus group participants added "we change" referring to their teaching methods.

At School 2, when asked to define the term teacher professional learning, three of the five interviewed teachers started to directly list what professional learning includes, in terms of methods and workshops needed while one other teacher provided a characteristic of professional learning, and four teachers referred to the result of learning. Out of five interviewed teachers, the word "develop" was mentioned twice when asked to define the term teacher professional learning, while the word "improve" was mentioned three times. There seemed to be a consensus that teacher learning results in a development and improvement in teacher practices. Two of the five teachers linked the improvement and development of teachers to improved student outcomes, where one teacher specifically said "learning ourselves in order to better the education for our students" (S2T1). Two other teachers linked it to an improvement in teacher careers. In fact, only one teacher (S2T2) referred to teachers as professionals with professional learning being the development of these professionals.

Two teachers (S2T1; S2T3) characterized teacher professional learning as constant. They emphasized staying up to date on the educational spectrum and mentioned learning as a necessity in today's world. S2T1 said "when students start to achieve different levels we need to adjust …to keep moving forward with technology and any new practice that teachers around the world are finding worthwhile."

Perceptions of How Teacher Learning Happens

For their perception of how teacher learning happens, a list of seven factors were identified by the interviewed teachers at both schools as practices that lead to teacher learning. The teachers also identified two other factors that they strongly felt were the backbone of teacher learning, without which no practice could lead to it. The teachers mentioned reflection (S1T1; S1T4; S1T5; S2T1; S2T2; S2T3; S2T4; S2T5), reading (S1T2; S1T5; S2T1; S2T5), practice (S1T1; S1T2; S1T3; S1T5; S2T1), attending PD workshops (S1T2; S1T4; S2T1; S2T2; S2T3; S2T4), trialling and experimenting (S1T1; S1T3; S1T4; S2T1; S2T2; S2T4; S2T5), observing others in action (S1T1; S1T2; S1T3; S1T5) and dialogue (S1T1; S1T3; S1T5; S2T1; S2T2; S2T3; S2T4; S2T5) as factors that directly affect their learning. Elsewise, two factors were identified as precursors to and the backbone of all teacher learning. They were named to be teacher awareness of the need for learning (S1T3; S1T4) and teacher willingness to learn (S1T1; S1T3; S1T4; S2T1; S2T2; S2T3; S2T4; S2T5). All the participants of the focus group discussion at both schools agreed that these factors have a positive effect on teacher learning.

Table 2
Teacher perceptions of how teacher learning happens, as mentioned across schools.

	School 1		**School 2**		**Total**
Teachers' perception of how teacher learning happens.	No. of teachers N=5	No. of Focus Group Participants N=10	No. of teachers N=5	No. of Focus Group Participants N=10	N=30
Reflection	3	10	5	10	28
Reading	2	10	2	10	24
Practice	4	10	1	10	25
Attending PD Workshops	2	10	4	10	26
Trialling and Experimenting	3	10	4	10	27
Dialogue	3	10	4	10	27
Teacher Willingness to Learn	3	10	5	10	28
Observing Others in Action	4	10	-	10	24
Teacher Awareness of the Need for Learning	2	10	-	10	22

When asked how they felt teachers learnt, the teachers used different words to speak about each of the factors. S1T3 was content with simply stating “from experience” giving importance to the act of practice as a means for teacher learning. S2T2, also identified practice as their method of learning, saying “just like anything, if you don’t practice it there’s no memory, it’s not second nature.” S1T4 explained how she uses reflection to learn and improve her teaching saying “you don’t actually explain the same way in all the sections. So this is an example [of reflection]: ‘this part [of a lesson] I could have explained in a better way’ so I improve it in another section.”

This was similar to S2T4’s words about reflection being essential for teacher learning saying “teacher learning is the teachers’ abilities to improve themselves and reflect on one’s teaching.” S1T4 also identified “effective workshops” as another learning mechanism for teachers similar to S2T3 who said “the head of professional development in the school is usually there to give teachers workshops… all these factors help in improving the practices of Arabic and Islamic Studies teachers.” After more probing S1T4 also mentioned an example of how they learn through trying and experimenting with new techniques they are introduced to, emphasizing that “I will try it more than once. Maybe I will improve it, amend it.” S2T1 explained the importance of continuous trialling on teacher learning and selecting what works best saying “…just “trialling!” I mean you gotta be willing to just try everything because for different students, different things will work.” S1T5 mentioned the importance of reading for their learning saying “go back to resources, to books, to sites, that would increase my knowledge more about certain topics.” S2T1 felt similarly about reading as a source of learning, saying “kind of just taking bits and pieces from there and from literature I read whether it’s online or in journal

articles. That probably is where I would find my best practices." S1T2 spoke of observing others in action as having a big role in teacher learning. S1T1 also gave dialogue a role in teacher learning saying "teachers can learn from their colleagues by the exchange of their experience." S2T1 also emphasized the role of dialogue in teacher learning as ""you can see how different practices in different societies help the students so just being constantly engaged with others online or in your community with other teachers can definitely help." S2T3 enlisted, while S2T3 expanded dialogue to also include dialogue with superiors, saying "communicating with colleagues, communicating with instructional supervisors, communicating with the Ministry of Education."

However; all these methods for teacher learning were preceded with S1T1's statement of "first of all it is the teacher will. When there is a will obstacles diminish." S1T3 also gave importance to learning itself saying "if the teacher didn't learn he would be a failure teacher." S1T4 identified awareness for the need for learning by applying it to herself saying "I do know that I still need to work lots on my work."

The Perceived Learning from Instructional Supervisory Practices

At both schools, the teachers found it very hard to identify specific topics that their instructional supervisor helped them learn, but the ease with which the teachers identified the instructional supervisor's role after probing was slightly higher, at School 1, two of the five interviewed teachers gave their instructional supervisor credit for introducing them to new information or teaching methods. At School 2, the results were the same where only two of the five individually interviewed teachers asserted the instructional supervisors' role in teacher professional learning. In school 1 phrases such as "they don't help me learn" were used by the teachers who were not able to identify the instructional supervisor's role in their learning. In

School 2 the teachers used phrases such as "they can *if*...," (S2T1, S2T4) which were used at school 2. S1T4 indirectly anticipated the learning of new teaching methods to their instructional supervisor saying

> I tried once a method called micro teaching. At first when they [the IS] told me about it, I found it weird and a waste of time…The HOD [instructional supervisor] introduced this method to us. I don't know his sources…and then I tried it and then I told my colleagues that it's greatly efficient.

The focus group participants at School 1 were also extremely opposed to the idea of the instructional supervisor having a role in their learning. However, when they were given the example of what one of the teachers had mentioned, three of the participants agreed with the teacher' quote while the rest were still insistent that the instructional supervisor had no role in their learning. The focus group participants at School 2 were less aggressive with their disagreement with the instructional supervisor's role in teacher learning where four of the ten teachers asserted the contribution of the instructional supervisor to teacher professional learning, while another five participants hesitantly agreed at the conditional instructional supervisor's contribution. Eight members of the focus group agreed that they would like to be treated as students when supervisors try to teach them new learnings. However, three individually interviewed teachers were not able to identify a moment which they felt was a good learning moment between them and their instructional supervisor, when asked to identify at least one. Noteworthy was the fact that the same teachers whom when directly asked to identify a moment of learning they shared with an instructional supervisor were not able to provide such an example, after probing and further questioning, used instances of learning they shared with an instructional supervisor as examples to explain other points. S2T5 went further to voice their view of the coordinators' and heads of departments' role as mere messengers between the administration and the teachers, passing along information and messages.

Instructional Supervisors' Perspective on Conceptions of Teacher Learning

The Perceived Definition of Teacher Learning

As for the instructional supervisors who were also asked to define the term teacher professional learning, at both schools were very concerned with the final result of teacher learning as revolving around the students' improvement.

At School 1, two of the four instructional supervisors explained teacher learning as learning that would lead to a change in teaching visible in the classroom while one made a long list of factors and organizational conditions that they viewed affect teacher learning. Compiling the instructional supervisors thoughts on the definition of teacher learning, lead to the following definition: Learning, through certain factors and under certain organizational conditions, which leads to a change in teaching practices, which in turn leads to a change in student feedback.

S1IS2 explained it as "I would walk into classes and notice a difference in the flow of the classes…this change will affect students' feedback [positively]." The member checking interviewee agreed with all the expressions of teacher learning giving emphasis to the part of the definition of teacher learning as leading to a change in classroom teaching.

At School 2 the instructional supervisors also reverted to listing characteristics of teacher professional learning (S2IS1; S2IS2; S2IS3), methods for teacher professional learning (S2IS1; S2IS2; S2IS3), their role in teacher professional learning (S2IS1; S2IS2; S2IS3), the qualities that professional learning could develop in teachers (S2IS1; S2IS2) and the purpose of teacher professional learning (S2IS2; S2IS3).

Compiling the instructional supervisors' views yields the following definition: It is the continuous and collaborative development of teachers as educators through explicit reflection on practice and professional development opportunities, among other methods, to improve student

abilities. A fourth supervisor who was interviewed for member checking confirmed the cumulative definition.

The key consensus in the definitions given by the interviewed instructional supervisors of School 2 seemed to be that teacher professional learning is a lifelong continuous collaborative process and that its ultimate goal is to improve students' abilities. The instructional supervisor S2IS1 stated that "everybody learns together". As for S2IS3, they characterized teacher professional learning as "learning all the time". As for the ultimate goal of teacher professional learning, S2IS2 mentioned the topic as "the more teachers know, the more it impacts the students in the class, and that's the general goal, asserting that "we wanna make learning better for students." Professional teacher learning was also defined as the outcome of effective PD which was clarified by S2IS3 to be visible through "the quality of the lessons improves… you see a level of increased familiarization with the courses. You see an increased level of confidence in delivery." It was also noted as the result of teacher reflection on practice where S2IS1, when asked to define teacher professional learning, directly labelled it as teacher reflective learning and said "I think that you are as a professional, a lifelong learner if you are reflective in your practice and explicitly reflective." As for the member checking interviewee, they agreed to all these utterances of teacher learning.

Perceptions of How Teacher Learning Happens

Instructional supervisors came up with a somehow similar list of factors that affect teacher learning, to the list identified by the teachers. A total of seven practices were identified as ones that affect teacher learning positively, along with two other factors that were identified as precursors to all those practices. Of the seven practices, four were mentioned at both schools while the other three were mentioned at one of the two schools. The mentioned practices were

reflection (S1IS1; S1IS2; S2IS1), attending PD workshops (S1IS1; S1IS2; S1IS3; S2IS1), experimenting and practice (S1IS1; S1IS2; S1IS3; S2IS1; S2IS3), peer observations (S1IS1; S1IS2; S2IS2; S2IS3), research and reading (S1IS1; S1IS2; S1IS3), receiving feedback (S1IS2), and peer collaboration (S2IS1). The two factors that were labelled as the most important and the precursors of teacher learning were: teacher awareness of the need for learning (S1IS2) and teacher willingness to learn (S1IS1; S1IS2; S1IS3; S1IS4; S2IS1; S2IS2; S2IS3). The member checking interviewee at each school added their voice to all the factors mentioned at their respective schools.

Table 3
The number of instructional supervisors to mention each factor that affects teacher learning from their perspective at each school.

	School 1		**School 2**		**Total**
Instructional supervisors' perception of how teacher learning happens.	No. of Instructional Supervisors N=4	Member Checking Interviewee N=1	No. of Instructional Supervisors N=3	Member Checking Interviewee N=1	N=9
Reflection	2	1	1	1	5
Attending PD Workshops	3	1	1	1	6
Experimenting and Practice	3	1	2	1	7
Peer Observations	2	1	2	1	6
Teacher Willingness To Learn	4	1	3	1	9
Research and Reading	3	1	-	-	4
Receiving Feedback	1	1	-	-	2
Teacher Awareness Of The Need For Learning	1	1	-	-	2
Peer Collaboration	-	-	1	1	2

S1IS2 mentioned teacher learning to happen through reflection, named by the instructional supervisor as self-evaluation, saying "I realized that a teacher can learn at every

moment and it's very important for teachers to have self-evaluation at all points, after each lesson." At School 2 reflection was explicitly noted by the member checking interviewee who referred to the effect of reflection on teacher learning when they said "the teacher's own reflection is the most important source of learning." S2IS1 was able to identify reflection, attending PD workshops, experience and practice, peers and peer observation, and reading, as means for teacher learning, all in one statement, saying "they [teachers] learn from their experience, whatever they've practiced, they can evaluate. They learn from colleagues, what others do. They learn on their own, their own readings. They learn through superiors like me for example. They learn through PD."

Peer collaboration was mentioned as especially important amongst teachers who teach several subjects. S2IS1 spoke of an example of how a group of teachers who teach similar groups of subjects would each take responsibility of expanding their knowledge in one subject matter and then sharing with their colleagues. The instructional supervisor said "it just becomes this big sharing circle, if you will, where people are respected for the knowledge that they have, but then learning from other people as well." Attending PD workshops was linked by S2IS1 to teacher learning saying "professional learning can come externally, so external forces, it can be through attending workshops." As for experimenting as a method of teacher learning, the supervisor interviewed for member checking clarified their thoughts during the interview saying

> I think that a huge percentage of teacher learning comes from what they try or experience. What they try that works and what they try that doesn't work. I think experience is a big factor and the results of practice.

When discussing peer observations S2IS2 explained its link to teacher learning, noting "teachers that look at other teachers' classes for peer observations and learn."

S1IS2 spoke of the importance of teacher awareness of the need for learning and the importance of teacher willingness and motivation for teacher learning to happen saying “the teachers should have awareness that they need to know more… They should have the willingness and motivation to learn and then all these [a list of factors with a negative impact on teacher learning] factors diminish.” S2IS3 clearly stated that “you can’t learn anything if you don’t want to learn,” while S2IS2 also added, “in order for you to learn something, you first have to be passionate … self-driven. I can’t make someone learn something. I can only recommend, I can give suggestions, I can give feedback.”

The Perceived Learning Provided to Teachers

When it comes to the learning they provide to teachers, the view of instructional supervisors at the two schools were not aligned. At School 1, most of the individually interviewed IS’s spoke of an absence of knowledge of the expected role of the instructional supervisors and what to provide teachers with, and, of random processes through which they attempt to help teachers improve. In the words of S1IS3 “depends on the job description, and we don’t know the job description.” The case was somehow different at School 2 where all three instructional supervisors voiced their ultimate goal as facilitating any and all that they perceive as necessary for teacher learning to occur. Just as teachers compared themselves to students with regards to learning from the instructional supervisor, the interviewed instructional supervisors also described themselves as the teacher of teachers. S2IS2 clearly said “so I'm essentially, if you look at the role of my job, I'm essentially the teacher for the teachers if that makes it simple.”

However, at both schools, the instructional supervisors thought teacher professional development was their role and that it was what they provide teachers with.

At School 1 all four of the individually interviewed instructional supervisors identified that training teachers was the most important role in their position, but continued their phrases with doubts in their abilities to do so. S1IS3 responded to the question of their most important role with "train the teacher but am I able?" S1IS4 asked and answered another question saying "has someone told me how to be a 'head' kind of thing? No!" and when asked how they would help their teachers learn, the same instructional supervisor said "I don't know. I feel like I need to be learning myself." However, their intent seemed almost unanimous. Three of the four individually interviewed instructional supervisors claimed to want to provide help to the teachers for the sake of the students. S1IS2 expressed their thoughts of helping the teachers for the sake of the students by saying "My target is the student. The teacher is my link to the students. I work on the teacher to get to the student." The instructional supervisors at School 1 were able to identify a specific learning that they pass along to their teachers as being new information and new teaching methods where S1IS2 said "sometimes I show teachers videos of new skills they can apply. I can help teachers sometimes by providing example."

At School 2, S2IS2 labelled providing professional development as a great part of their role saying "a big part of my responsibility is helping teachers move forward in their teaching practices" rationalizing that "the more the teacher knows the more it impacts the students in the class and that's the general goal." However, S2IS3 noted that providing teacher professional development "should be facilitated by schools. Schools should make teachers better at what they do."

Teachers' Perspective on Factors Affecting their Learning

This section presents results pertaining to the third and fourth research questions; namely, what are the supervisory practices and organizational conditions that promote teacher

professional learning from the perspective of the supervisors and the teachers? And, what are the supervisory practices and organizational conditions that hinder the professional learning of teachers from the perspective of teachers and supervisors? It aims to cover the teachers' perspective of factors that affect their learning both positively and negatively. It is divided into a subsection for the factors that promote learning, and another for the factors that hinder teacher learning. Both subsections will be divided further into a part for instructional supervisory practices and another for organizational conditions.

Factors that Promote Teacher Learning

As mentioned earlier, this subsection will cover the factors that promote teacher learning mentioned as either instructional supervisor practices or as organizational conditions that serve to promote teacher learning, from the teachers' viewpoint.

Instructional supervisor practices that promote teacher learning.

The five interviewed teachers at each school identified several practices of the instructional supervisor that they felt promoted their learning and were supported by the focus group participants at their school. While the list of instructional supervisor's practices attained from the interviews at School 1 was shorter than that from School 2 it was also more primitive. The case at School 2 was somehow interesting where at first, four out of the five interviewed teachers could not identify a promotive practice of the instructional supervisor. After probing, at many instances during the interviews, as the teachers responded to this question, I sensed that their hesitation spurred from the fact that they could not decide whether to report what the teachers would like to happen and what is actually happening. Most of what they said was wishful thinking, as came to light from the responses of teachers through their use of terms such

as “they could” or “they should” whilst referring to the instructional supervisor’s practices. The teachers in their answers were alternating between pointing out what they have already experienced as positive learning and what they wish they would experience. Overlapping between the lists from School 1 and School 2 was their belief in the promotive nature of the instructional supervisor’s practices of being responsive to teacher needs, providing constructive feedback, and building a trusting relationship with teachers. However, other practices were also mentioned but at only one of the two schools. Those were: collaborating with teachers, modifying organizational conditions to support teachers, providing differentiated learning opportunities, holding teachers accountable through follow up, leading by example, and mentoring.

Table 4
The number of teachers to mention each instructional supervisory practice that promotes teacher learning from their perspective, at each school.

Teachers’ perspective of instructional supervisor practices that promote teacher learning.	**School 1**		**School 2**		**Total**
	No. of Teachers N=5	No. of Focus Group Participants N=10	No. of Teachers N=5	No. of Focus Group Participants N=10	N=30
Being responsive to teacher needs	5	10	4	10	29
Addressing teacher frustrations	5	10	1	10	26
Sharing experiences and best practices	5	10	4	5	24
Providing constructive feedback	3	10	5	8	26
Building a trusting relationship with teachers	2	10	2	8	22
Openness to teacher ideas	1	10	-	-	11
Preparing teacher guidelines and giving suggestions	1	10	-	-	11
Being available for teachers	3	10	-	-	13
Collaborating with teachers	3	10	-	-	13
Conveying positivity towards teachers	1	10	-	-	11
Acknowledging teacher effort	-	-	2	10	12
Leading by example (modelling)	-	-	2	10	12

Teachers' perspective of instructional supervisor practices that promote teacher learning.	**School 1**		**School 2**		**Total**
	No. of Teachers N=5	No. of Focus Group Participants N=10	No. of Teachers N=5	No. of Focus Group Participants N=10	N=30
Mentoring	-	-	4	10	14
Modifying organizational conditions to support teachers	-	-	5	10	15
Providing differentiated learning opportunities	-	-	5	10	15
Bringing in professionals to address teachers for in-house training	-	-	1	5	6
Sending teachers to PD workshops	-	-	4	10	14
Adapting PD methods of instruction to teacher conditions	-	-	1	10	11
Holding teachers accountable through follow up	-	-	3	10	13

Being responsive to teacher needs.

Mentioned by all five interviewed teachers at School 1 and four of the five interviewed teachers at School 2, being responsive to teacher needs covered a wide range of teacher needs which the teachers felt the instructional supervisors should be both aware of and take action to attend to. The teachers from the different schools spoke of addressing teacher frustrations, sharing experiences and best practices, openness to teacher ideas, preparing teacher guidelines and giving suggestions, and, being available for teachers. The focus group participants at both schools approved the positive effect of this practice on teacher learning.

Addressing teacher frustrations. The instructional supervisor's practice of addressing teacher frustrations was mentioned as helpful and important for teacher learning and for effecting change in teaching practices by all five interviewed teachers at School 1 and one of the five interviewed teachers at School 2. At School 1, it was discussed as either simply providing emotional support or helping teachers resolve problems they face. S1T5 expressed her

experience of her instructional supervisor supporting her learn how to deal with students by saying “for example when I first came to the school, I was new and the students didn’t accept me directly since they loved their previous teacher, so my HOD helped me…he supported me.” S1T2 spoke more generically, saying “we always discuss things together. If we have any problem, any question we come to the HOD [instructional supervisor] and he’s always there for us to search for information.” At School 2, the teacher who mentioned this practice had previously identified that the instructional supervisor could not help promote their learning. After probing for a person to refer to with any questions or frustrations. The teacher replied “my own Curriculum Leader in my own department (their instructional supervisor). I feel he’s a calm, humble and open person. I would be able to speak with him about it.” (S2T5); hence, identifying the instructional supervisor as a referral for learning how to overcome frustrations or resolving questions. The focus group participants at both schools agreed to the promotive effect of addressing teacher frustrations on teacher learning.

Sharing experiences and best practices. All five individually interviewed teachers at School 1 spoke of their instructional supervisor as an experienced person in the field of teaching. They all noted that when their instructional supervisor shared their teaching experiences and best practices the teachers were able to learn. At School 2, the case was similar where four of the five interviewed teachers mentioned this practice as giving teachers some time to share experiences and discuss them. It was supported by all of the ten focus group participants at School 1 where four of the ten approvals were conditional approvals, claiming the sharing of experiences to be promotive of teacher learning if coupled with research. At School 2 the focus group participants were divided in half where five of the ten participants agreed and the other half disagreed. Interestingly, the agreement in the focus group came from elementary teachers, while the

disagreement came from secondary teachers. Teachers participating in the focus group agreed that instructional supervisors occupying middle management positions are likely to share expertise with their teachers, instructional supervisors at higher levels of the school hierarchy (i.e. principals, upper management) would not share. One focus group participant claimed that knowledge about teaching as viewed by some management personnel in the school, as secrets that could not be shared, referring to best practice by sarcastically saying "It's a secret."

At School 1, S1T5 described the sharing of experiences by the instructional supervisor as helpful "since he would be more experienced than myself. This experience includes plenty of class situations, teaching situations, I might not, with my little experience, be able to deal with such situations."

At School 2, three of the five interviewed teachers spoke of the instructional supervisor as an experienced individual, where one of them used a metaphor saying "I feel like coming from the horse's mouth is actually maybe more effective versus somebody just talking about learning….. I'm kind of comparing somebody who's been in the trenches versus not in the trenches" (S2T2).

Openness to teacher ideas. This was a practice mentioned only at School 1 where only one of the five interviewed teachers mentioned this practice from the instructional supervisor as promotive to their learning, where S1T2 said, while discussing how the instructional supervisor provides the teachers with many different solutions to a certain situation "he tells us you could either choose one of those or if you come up with any idea refer to me first to see if it's fine or not and then you can apply it." The focus group agreed to this practice's enhancing effect on

teacher learning but explained it as happening due to the instructional supervisor's inability to come up with solutions themselves.

Preparing teacher guidelines and giving suggestions. This was another practice that was mentioned only by the interviewed teachers at School 1 where one of the five individually interviewed teachers mentioned the provision of guidelines as helpful for their learning where they discussed it as a proactive method, as opposed to the reactive nature of the practice of addressing teacher frustrations. While the focus group participants did agree to this factor's helpfulness in discovering new methods but were not content with this factor as enough for their change of practice. S1T2 spoke of how the instructional supervisor's guidelines were helpful for them to deal with new situations saying "our HOD is very helpful…he prepares ahead of time things for us like guidelines for us to follow in certain situations. He would also give certain suggestions."

Being available for teachers. This was yet another practice that was mentioned only at School 1. Three of the five individually interviewed teachers mentioned the instructional supervisor's availability to teachers as very welcoming and indirectly promotive to their learning. S1T2 explained it as "I view my HOD as someone I can learn from because he had made it easy to come close to him, he's always there whenever we ask him." The teachers' content with this practice was met by the focus group participants' agreement, but with the statement of "but it all comes down to time to go and ask."

Providing constructive feedback.

The provision of constructive feedback from the instructional supervisor was mentioned by teachers in both schools. At School 2, all five individually interviewed teachers spoke of

receiving feedback from the instructional supervisor that both highlights teacher areas for improvement and provides possible ways for improvement, as a method for promoting their learning. Interestingly, at School 1, three of the five individually interviewed teachers, mentioned for different purposes. All ten of the focus group participants of the focus group discussion at School 1 approved this practice's promotive effect on teacher learning and were joined in approval by eight of the ten focus group participants at School 2.

At School 1, S1T1 described it as useful for teacher learning because "outside observers see things clearer than people in action. Therefore when they observe me in action they can identify strengths and weaknesses I may not know which they could guide me through improving" where the teacher identified that the feedback given is feedback on teacher method of instruction and conduct in class. Another teacher discussed feedback from the instructional supervisor as feedback given on teacher written work as opposed to conduct in the class. S1T3 explained that "I always make activities in my planning. He checks if there's anything wrong." This teacher emphasized the need for feedback to be constructive giving an example of an instance where their instructional supervisor observed a session and did not simply highlight the mistakes they identified but rather provided advice. At School 2, S2T4 clearly stated this practice as helpful saying "they may enter a class and find that I may need to work on some point. They could help by monitoring my actions to identify my areas for improvement or missing areas that I may not have noticed."

Building a trusting relationship with teachers.

Mentioned by two of the five individually interviewed teachers, at both schools, this practice's promotion of teacher learning received agreement from all ten participants of the focus

group at School 1 and eight of the ten at School 2. It was discussed as acknowledging teacher effort, and conveying positivity towards teachers, at School 1, while the teachers at School 2 spoke of it as acknowledging teacher expertise.

At School 1, S1T2 linked the instructional supervisor's promotion of teacher learning to a feeling of trust in the instructional supervisor's good intention to help teachers. This trusting relationship between the instructional supervisor and teachers was seen by the teacher to be greatly helpful to their learning in that

> We're confident now coming to him, knowing he would answer us. He would help us. Knowing he would never look at us in a way saying 'uh you don't know'. He's not judgemental. He's always there to help us improve and he always does his research before coming back to us in anything.

With this statement, the teacher indirectly identified the trust in the instructional supervisor's knowledge as coming from the fact that their answers are research based. At School 2, one teacher (S2T4) spoke of building trust explaining that

> I also like to be taught by a person who is more advanced than myself and knows more things so I can trust that person and be open to learn from them… they should have details and be able to guide me… rather than just tell me about a new idea. This is to build the trust within me that this person actually knows what they're saying…having a trusty relationship between the teacher and the instructional supervisor makes the teacher accept any feedback provided from the instructional supervisor, naturally.

When discussing the meaning of the term "more advanced" used by S2T4, the teacher clarified "if they are qualified… if they demonstrate knowledge of the subject matter and shows outstanding teaching practice and that they do as they preach." S2T4 also added "the instructional supervisor should be extremely conscientious. They should evaluate teachers and speak of teachers depending on teacher actions and not include any of their personal emotions."

Acknowledging teacher effort. was discussed by two of the five interviewed teachers only at School 1 as a means to building trust between teachers and instructional supervisors. S1T4 spoke of trust and comfort between the instructional supervisor and the teachers as the result of acknowledging teacher work and the great effect of this acknowledgment on teacher willingness to learn. The teacher said "experience made me feel comfortable with him; working with him. First of all he knows that we are hard workers. Yeah he acknowledges that." The focus group participants agreed that this factor was helpful in motivating them to learn more; however, they claimed that once the instructional supervisor acknowledges the teacher's work and expertise, they stop observing the teacher for the sake of helping them learn further. One of the focus group participants mentioned that "they [the instructional supervisor] have too much trust in us that they let us work alone." One other participant noted "it is the instructional supervisor's role to help but there is trust in our work. We are all experienced teachers" pointing that to the teachers, the instructional supervisor's lack of interference to help in learning and improving is a positive sign of trust in teacher expertise and experience.

Conveying positivity towards teachers. On a psychological note, also at School 1 alone, one of the five interviewed teachers, namely S1T3, voiced their thought that linked the instructional supervisor's positivity while dealing with teachers to the teacher's increased learning. The teacher gave an example of a moment where the instructional supervisor's positivity boosted their willingness to learn, ending the example with the statement of "he was there to help. He was very positive." Said with a smile as the teacher recalled the incident. The focus group participants expressed that the presence of this practice is helpful but not essential for teacher learning.

Acknowledging teacher expertise. Two out of the five interviewed teachers at School 2 expressed their viewpoints stating the supervisory contribution to teachers learning can be enhanced if supervisors acknowledge the existing expertise of the teachers they are working with and differentiate accordingly. The focus group completely agreed with this factor except for one person who felt that the instructional supervisor's acknowledgment of their knowledge does not affect their learning. S2T5 said

> I am motivated [to learn] if I feel that I'm important…I enjoy to feel that the school appreciates me because if I feel that invitation them I'm gunna give my hundred percent back. That's my feeling, and that helps me. If I involve more in the school activities, in that way, I also learn much more.

Collaborating with teachers.

This was a practice of the instructional supervisor that was mentioned only by teachers at School 1. The instructional supervisor's collaboration with teachers was mentioned by three of the five individually interviewed teachers, as a factor that promotes their learning. The focus group participants claimed this factor to be effective at promoting teacher learning but described it as a rare phenomenon at the school. In the short response that S1T2 provided to the question of how the instructional supervisor's actions help promote teacher learning, they mentioned the word 'together' three times. S1T2 identified the collaboration between the instructional supervisor and teachers to happen when teachers are in need of learning how to deal with a certain situation or are lost for action and require answers. The teacher said "So for example I would ask him a certain thing. [Hand gesture quoting the instructional supervisor] 'Let's search for it together', we would start searching how are we supposed to find an answer for a specific problem that we have, and we'd search for it together."

Not only were the instructional supervisory practices to be collaborative with teachers, to promote their learning, though rarely, but were also identified, by one of the five interviewed teachers, to encourage peer collaboration as a method for teacher learning. S1T3 said "he motivates us to work with each other, especially parallel teacher…if he likes an activity, he asks me to pass it on to another teacher."

Leading by example (modelling).

This practice was brought up at School 2 only and was mentioned by two of the five individually interviewed teachers but was fully supported by the focus group participants at the school. One teacher who mentioned this factor spoke of the need for the instructional supervisor to seek personal learning as a method of leading by example. S2T4 said "the person teaching me should also seek to improve their practices." S2T2 explained

> I do think that modelling it is helpful for me. I am a visual learner so when somebody gives me information, they only speak the information, I don't take away as much as if they were to model it or even have us like try it.

Mentoring

Only at School 2, four of the five interviewed teachers mentioned the effect of mentoring on teacher learning. The practice was placed in a scenario by one interviewee in which the instructional supervisor acted as a teacher's teacher where they introduced new ideas and provided guidance and support through the application of such ideas. The focus group teachers agreed that while mentoring was a helpful practice, it did not happen as often, and that it is mentioned to be offered by the instructional supervisor, more than it actually happens. One of the focus group teachers said "some instructional supervisors say that they would do that and they would, *if* you were to go and ask for it but it's almost like it's said in passing." S2T2 linked

mentoring to teacher learning by drawing a cycle for teacher learning which starts with modelling by the instructional supervisor of a new method. This is followed by teacher trials, followed by reflection among peers who tried the new method, ending up with collaboration among peers and the instructional supervisor to improve teacher practices. Members of the focus group agreed to the efficacy and logic behind the cycle. Five secondary teachers in the focus group claimed that when an expert was brought to school, in the past, to model a method and then supervise teachers as they tried the method out in their classes, they found it extremely efficient for their learning. One teacher (S2T4) spoke of mentoring in the form of guidance emphasizing how crucial it is for new teachers, and the negative impact of its non-existence, saying

> New graduates should be given a chance to learn. They have theoretical knowledge but not application experience and so we should teach them…they need guidance, otherwise they will face many challenges and by the time they learn by themselves, generations would have been lost.

Modifying organizational conditions to support teachers.

All five interviewed teachers, only at School 2, mentioned some form of modifications of organizational conditions that the instructional supervisor does to support teachers. They all discussed the modification of the organizational condition of time, for learning purposes. Teachers pointed out that learning needs time and considered providing time designated for learning as supportive supervisory action. One of the teachers (S2T5) explained that

> The mind takes some time to get use to ideas and I think when you relax, when you have a break [from teaching duties] time, you can read what you're honestly interested in or you can think about stuff without the pressure of performing and I think that's better.

More specifically, teachers identified that peer learning was a method that teachers found promoted their learning. They identified that it is a learning method that requires extra time. Peer

learning was identified as happening through communicating and collaborating with peers. It was described by four out of the five individually interviewed teachers and eight out of the ten focus group participants. One teacher, S2T5, who spoke of the efficacy of peer communication on learning, said "I think like maybe I learn the most in the staffrooms in the coffee breaks when I speak to others." Similarly, S2T1 added that "by going together to workshops or having doing readings together and then conversing over it and discussing it, you're able to see different perspectives because you need to come at new methods with new perspectives."

Since teachers considered peer learning as a factor promoting their own learning, they also assigned high importance to the instructional supervisor's practice of providing time for this learning to take place. One teacher, S2T1, described it as beneficial to "create time within the school that teachers are learning together where you have designated meetings for professional learning." Eight of the ten focus group participants agreed on providing time for peer learning as a factor capable of promoting their learning.

Providing differentiated learning opportunities.

Only interviewed teachers at school 2 identified this practice. All teachers mentioned knowing the teachers' characteristics, as a supervisory action that can contribute to enhance their professional learning. S2T4 added "I like to be dealt with according to my standard and level of knowledge. The person who is to teach me should know me and my qualifications." Respondents explained that when instructional supervisors provide different types of learning opportunities to match teacher needs it impacts positively their learning. The focus group participants completely

agreed with the generic term of the factor, but their approval varied when different types of learning opportunities were discussed. One of the teachers said "they should know my characteristics from my work with them, and teach me as such" (S2T4). This teacher explained the importance of the instructional supervisor being aware of her level of knowledge in order to avoid underestimating teacher abilities. Another teacher (S2T2) who also spoke of differentiation mentioned that the instructional supervisor should match between the main objective of the learning and the specific teacher needs. The teachers discussed different learning opportunities that may cater to different teacher needs. They suggested bringing in experts to address teachers for in-house training, sending teachers to PD workshops, and adapting PD method of instruction to teacher conditions.

Bringing in professionals to address teachers for in-house training. Addressing teachers through bringing in an expert in the field, was mentioned by one teacher of the five that were interviewed individually. The teacher described it as bringing in a professional trainer to conduct some training in the school, then follow up by observing teachers apply their learning in their own classrooms. Half of the ten focus group participants, specifically the upper school teachers, agreed with this practice's promotive impact on teacher learning, and claimed they had previously enjoyed this opportunity. The elementary teachers of the focus group participants could not identify this as an opportunity they had experienced but thought it would be helpful should it happen. S2T1 asserted the instructional supervisor's contribution to teacher learning as the ability to "provide learning opportunities by bringing in educators to help us."

Sending teachers to PD workshops. This specific learning opportunity was mentioned by four out of five individually interviewed teachers. The teachers spoke of the promotive role of the instructional supervisor in finding workshops that suite teacher needs and then sending

teachers to these workshops. The focus group completely agreed to this factor but identified two points that they felt greatly affected the degree of teacher learning that results from this practice. The proved efficacy of the PD workshop was one point that the focus group participants identified, while the second was the match between the PD workshop's focus and teachers' specific needs. S2T3 voiced that the instructional supervisor "could stop at teacher and student needs and weakness and according to those he provides workshops." The same teacher pointed that instructional supervisors that are successful in assigning useful workshops examine the PD workshop's effectiveness against the extent to which it was "proved efficient at other schools."

Adapting PD methods of instruction to teacher conditions. This factor was only mentioned by one of the five individually interviewed teachers. S2T2 explained that teacher conditions need to be taken into consideration further, during workshops. The teacher identified that tired teachers, at the end of a school day, require short "precise, quick modelling techniques" to learn rather than long lectures, since, as the teacher claims, they are "trying to think and be open but your brain is just blocked." Participants in the focus group were split between some nods and some who decided not to comment, but there were no disagreements.

Holding teachers accountable through follow up.

Holding teachers accountable based on set standards was mentioned as the instructional supervisor's contribution to teacher learning, by three of the five interviewed teachers at School 2 alone, and gained complete agreement by the focus group participants at that school. One teacher (S2T4) explained "if teachers know that the instructional supervisor is observing them and expecting them to improve then they will change and improve…they [instructional supervisors] also help if they set time frames."

A participant of the focus group discussion said "that's definitely a condition that's needed. I don't think it's done here," pointing out that they believed that in actual practice, follow up on teacher learning happens mostly from teachers themselves, as opposed to working on set growth plans in collaboration with the instructional supervisor.

Organizational conditions that promote teacher learning.

Where at School 1 the five interviewed teachers faced some difficulty when asked to identify organizational factors that promoted their learning, at School 2 the case was very different. In fact, only one of the five interviewed teachers at School 1 was able to actually identify a promotive organizational condition; namely, having some scheduled learning time. At School 2, the five interviewed teachers captured six such conditions. The interviewed teachers found it very difficult at points to separate the instructional supervisory practices from the organizational conditions. They attributed many organizational conditions to the instructional supervisor such as the provision of time or funds for teacher learning. Interestingly, half of the organizational conditions that were mentioned as promotors, were explained to increase communication between teachers, which was identified as a factor that promotes teacher learning. The organizational factors mentioned were having a flattened organizational structure and facilitating horizontal communication, budget allocation of discretionary funds for department and individual teachers spending, the provision of workshops on schoolwide curriculum issues, having a climate of cooperation at the school, teachers sharing office space, and positive teachers' attitudes towards learning.

Table 5
The number of teachers to mention each organizational condition that promotes teacher learning from their perspective, at each school.

Teachers' perspective of organizational conditions that promote teacher learning	**School 1**		**School 2**		**Total**
	No. of Teachers N=5	No. of Focus Group Participants N=10	No. of Teachers N=5	No. of Focus Group Participants N=10	N=30
Scheduled learning time	1	5	-	-	6
Having a flattened organizational structure and facilitating horizontal communication	-	-	1	8	9
Budget allocation of discretionary funds for department and individual teachers spending.	-	-	2	10	12
The provision of workshops on school wide curriculum issues	-	-	1	5	6
Having a climate of cooperation at the school	-	-	1	10	11
Teachers sharing office space	-	-	-	10	10
Positive teachers' attitudes towards learning	-	-	5	10	15
Teacher desire, willingness and self-motivation for learning	-	-	5	10	15
Perception of positive impact on student learning	-	-	5	10	15
Teacher awareness of the importance of life-long learning	-	-	1	10	11
Teacher's acceptance of positive criticism	-	-	1	10	11

Scheduled learning time.

This promotive organizational condition was mentioned at School 1 only and by only one of the five individually interviewed teachers while it received approval from five of the ten participants of the focus group. These five participants gave some form of a shy approving shred at the existence of these times but questioned the effectiveness of how they are spent. S1T2, who was the only teacher who mentioned this promotive condition, also coupled it with doubts of its current effectiveness. The teacher said

> What we have in school is that we are obliged to stay till 4 two days a week. These 2 days are supposed to be for department work or for staff meetings or for workshops. There is time set every Tuesday from 3-4 and every Thursday from 2-4, but what's happening is…They're not getting someone professional from the outside to teach us certain new things.

Having a flattened organizational structure and facilitating horizontal communication.

Brought up only at School 2, these conditions were mentioned by only one of the five interviewed teachers, as promotive organizational conditions and received eight out of the ten focus group participants' approval. S2T5 identified horizontal communication as a factor that promotes teacher learning saying "the more horizontal-like, the more flat, the school organization is, the easier it is to have a fruitful discussion between peer". Eight participants of the focus group agreed with this point. The teacher explained it further by providing a counter example, saying

> Like if you have an organization where the boss sits on his golden desk somewhere up here (teacher pointing up high), and then you have the bosses and the sub-bosses, or whatever (teacher points half way down between the table and his top point), and I am down here (teacher points to the table level), the communication will be hindered…so you wanna flat things out to have as little tension as possible.

Budget allocation of discretionary funds for department and individual teachers spending.

Also mentioned only at School 2, allocating budgets at the discretion of teachers for professional development purposes and at the discretion of departments for funding required learning resources, was mentioned by two of the five interviewed teachers as an organizational condition promoting teacher learning. The focus group participants all agreed with the positive effect of these budget allocations on teacher learning. S2T4 said "they provide the teachers with money to take professional development. It is an accumulated amount over more than 1 year.

They also provide any resources you may want. I give the school an outstanding mark regarding this issue."

The provision of workshops on schoolwide curriculum issues.

This promotive condition was mentioned by one of the five individually interviewed teachers of School 2. The focus group were split up between half who supported this point, while the other half mentioned that this is not typically offered and only available if it were requested by teachers; which according to them almost never happens. This condition was mentioned amongst the list of helpful acts taken by the school for teacher learning. The teacher included in their list "we also have, are sent to conferences where we can learn, especially for the school's curriculum, if we're gunna follow an IB model." (S2T1)

Having a climate of cooperation at the school.

This organizational condition was mentioned once during the five individual interviews at School 2, but received full agreement during the focus group discussion. A cooperative climate between the instructional supervisor and the teachers, as well as amongst teachers themselves, where experiences and best practices are shared, was attributed a promotive role for teacher learning. An individually interviewed teacher mentioned that "a cooperative climate and…help in improving the practices of Arabic and Islamic Studies teachers." (S2T3)

Teachers sharing office space.

One other helpful organizational condition that came up during the focus group discussion of School 2 while discussing teacher learning, was that since teachers of elementary

work in their classrooms then they face some trouble meeting with their colleagues, whereas teachers at the secondary level have desks in a single office which makes communicating with colleagues during planning a much easier task. Therefore, having teacher desks set in a shared physical space may enhance teacher learning through communication with colleagues. The present colleagues of this focus group participant all agreed with this point. In the words of the focus group member that suggested this point,

> I think that depends on whether you're teaching elementary or secondary. In secondary we work in an office and so it's easy to communicate all the time but if you're in elementary and you're in your class all the time, it's a little bit more difficult.

Positive teachers' attitudes towards learning.

All five individually interviewed teachers only of School 2 mentioned the great effect of teacher positive attitudes towards learning. The focus group participants all endorsed the great effect of this factor on teacher learning. They mentioned teacher desire, willingness and self-motivation to learn, perception of positive impact on student learning, teacher awareness of the importance of life-long learning, and teacher's acceptance of positive criticism.

Teacher desire, willingness and self-motivation for learning. This factor was mentioned by all five individually interviewed teachers and fully asserted by the focus group participants. In the words of S2T4 "Desire is so important for learning." S2T5 said "obviously, it's gunna have to do with motivation…like how motivated am I to invest my own energy and time…the willingness to participate in the school's [learning] activities." Also linked to willingness to learn, one teacher (S2T3) mentioned that

> Of course [they would learn] unless it objects with the tradition of the Arabic language and the Islamic studies. My only condition is that is does not challenge the Arabic or Islamic culture. I try it to learn and to improve my practice.

When this was mentioned to the focus group as an example of teacher willingness to learn, all the focus group participants instantly nodded. One of the participants in the focus group said "that would be number one." Noteworthy, was one participant's look of questioning for the need to mention this factor as the participant uttered "YES"; it was as if to say it was an expected condition.

Perception of positive impact on student learning. All five individually interviewed teachers, mentioned the great effect of believing in an expected student benefit on teacher learning. It also received full approval from the focus group members. S2T2 explained that "how beneficial is it for the students" is one of the main factors that affects motivation for teacher learning. S2T3 identified a clear belief in a link between teacher learning and student improved learning as promoting teacher learning saying "it makes me happy to learn something, personally. Academically, I will find a positive feedback from students who will be positively affected through the increased speed of their progress."

Furthermore, all the teachers spoke of evidence of teacher learning effectiveness as promoting teacher learning where S2T5 said it the clearest

> If you're trying to convince me then you're gunna have to show me a minimum five research based clinical studies with students from different cultures over a certain period of years where you show using some key factors that their learning has increased through that method.

Teacher awareness of the importance of life-long learning. This factor was mentioned by one of the five individually interviewed teachers. The focus group participants all agreed with this importance attached to learning and its effect on teacher learning. At one point, S2T3 said

> If they believe that they have already studied at university and that their learning is complete. If they don't have the concept of the human being is a constant learner and that at every moment they could learn something new, then they won't learn.

Teacher's acceptance of positive criticism. The individually interviewed teacher who mentioned this factor, mentioned it as a necessity for teacher learning; albeit, they were the only individually interviewed teacher who mentioned it. When this teacher was asked about a reason for teacher lack of learning, S2T3 stated "if they [teachers] do not accept others' points of view and if they stick to their points of view." All members of the focus group in school 2 went along with this factor as having an effect on teacher learning.

Factors that Hinder Teacher Learning

As mentioned earlier, this subsection will cover the factors that hinder teacher learning mentioned as either instructional supervisor practices or as organizational conditions that serve to hinder teacher learning, from the teachers' viewpoint.

Instructional supervisor practices that hinder teacher learning.

At School 1, some teachers were very enthusiastic when asked to identify the instructional supervisor's practices that they considered hindered their learning. This was not mirrored in School 2. There, the teachers were extremely cautious and pulled back when asked to identify the instructional supervisor's practices that they considered to hinder their learning. One teacher from school 2 spoke of hinderers by explicating the wanted scenario. Another teacher, who was able to clearly identify the practices that they felt were not as helpful, directly followed with excuses for the instructional supervisor for taking such actions, or lacking in taking promotive actions. Despite their initial enthusiasm at School 1 to respond to the researcher inquiry on this matter, yet the teachers only mentioned one hindering factor related to the instructional supervisors' practices. Even this one factor was mentioned in the form of absence a

specific action on behalf of the instructional supervisor as oppose to the hindering nature of a specific act they may take. All the mentioned actions fell under the theme of an absence of job-embedded training. This was very similar to the case in School 2 where only one hindering action of the instructional supervisor was mentioned, while the rest of the factors were the absence of a promotive practice. The absence of job-embedded training was also mentioned at School 2 along with six other factors linked to the hindrance of teacher learning at the school. The added factors were adopting a punitive supervisory approach, absence of differentiation in PD workshops, absence of accountability for teachers' learning, reluctance to share experiences and best practices, absence of guidance for new teachers, and limited in-class observations.

Table 6
The number of teachers to mention each instructional supervisory practice that hinders teacher learning from their perspective, at each school.

Teachers' perspective of instructional supervisor practices that hinder teacher learning	**School 1**		**School 2**		**Total**
	No. of Teachers N=5	No. of Focus Group Participants N=10	No. of Teachers N=5	No. of Focus Group Participants N=10	N=30
Absence of job-embedded training	3	9	3	10	25
Adopting a punitive supervisory approach	-	-	4	10	14
Absence of differentiation in PD workshops	-	-	2	10	12
Absence of accountability for teachers' learning	-	-	2	10	12
Reluctance to share experiences and best practices	-	-	1	10	11
Absence of guidance for new teachers	-	-	1	10	11
Limited in-class observations	-	-	3	10	13

Absence of job-embedded training.

The absence of job embedded training was the only mentioned hindering factor at School 1 and was one that was paralleled in School 2. Three of the five individually interviewed teachers at School 1 and at School 2 mentioned the absence of job embedded training as hindering to teacher learning and received a nine out of ten approval from the focus group participants at School 1 and a parallel full set of ten approvals at School 2.

Modelling for observation was one of the instructional supervisory practices mentioned under job embedded training, at both schools. At School 1, S1T5 brought up the issue of modelling in a teacher's own environment or classroom as having a big effect on their learning and that its absence forms a hindrance to her learning. The teacher said "Like no one ever gave a model class for me to observe. I'm like that. I learn like that." S1T2 mentioned the bringing in of professionals to the school to address teachers and follow up as another practice that was lacking at the school. S1T4 referred to the workshops that are taking place as ineffective and called for their improvement saying

> Yes, they did more than one workshop; however, I found most of them not effective at all. They were just a waste of time and I informed the administration about it. I insist on .workshops but I want them to fix the effectiveness of these workshops.

At School 2, the absence of job embedded training was discussed as the absence of a mentoring process where one focus group participant expressed

> That does not happen, I've never really requested it but my supervisor keeps offering. I know that they're available if we need them. That's up to us to take them up on it. And we don't most of the time because it's an organizational thing. We would have to be thinking ahead and book them ahead and a lot of us don't do that. Time!

Observing models done by the instructional supervisor was explained as part of a mentoring process. S2T2 identified that they learn best if they observe a modelling session of the

strategy followed by their own application of the strategy, stating “I do think that modelling it is helpful for me, I'm a visual learner so when somebody gives me information, they only speak the information, I don’t take away as much as if they were to model it or even have us like try it”. S2T4 expressed that once a new technique is modelled to them they can use their own personal judgement to separate those strategies that may be beneficial in their classrooms from those that may not.

Adopting a punitive supervisory approach.

Adopting a punitive supervisory approach, was the only hindering practice mentioned at both schools. All the others were discussed in the form of an absence of a practice. This practice was mentioned at School 2 only and by four of the five individually interviewed teachers in different forms. One teacher spoke of it as calling teachers out on their mistakes, another two discussed it as absence of productive feedback, while a fourth teacher mentioned it in the form of an absence of openness to teacher ideas. It was shocking to the focus group participants to have mentioned this practice and all expressed that at their school this was not an issue but that its existence would certainly hinder teacher learning.

S2T4 identified the need for the IS to be “smart” in their method of discussing single teacher challenges with groups of teachers, in terms of avoiding personal identifiers. The absence of productive feedback in terms of highlighting teacher blind spots and recommending or guiding teachers through improving their practice. Two teachers and half of the focus group participants agreed to this. The agreement came from the secondary teachers at the focus group discussion, while the elementary teachers felt it did not apply to them at the school. However they mentioned that should this happen then it would hinder their learning. S2T4, who identified that feedback from the instructional supervisor as extremely important for her learning, made it

extremely clear that the way in which this feedback is provided to teachers plays a role in the degree to which the teachers will learn and work according to the feedback given. The teacher insisted on the importance of providing positive feedback along with the negative with great emphasis on providing positive feedback. S2T4 used the words

> They could help by monitoring my actions to identify my areas for improvement or missing areas that I may not have noticed. But they should say it in a positive, rather than a negative feedback…they should also help me learn how to correct my mistakes, not just highlight them.

Furthermore an absence of openness to teacher ideas was mentioned by one of the five individually interviewed teachers at school 2 and received agreement from secondary teachers at the focus group discussion. Elementary teachers of the focus group discussion complained of the extreme opposite, where they noted an excess of listening to teacher views and inability to make decisions among the school administration. S2T5, the individually interviewed teacher who mentioned this practice, said

> Anyway what I feel here in this school is that some people are quite stuck with the curriculum that they learned and that they use which hinders fruitful discussion on something that would be unique for us maybe…I have felt a hindrance there.

Absence of differentiation in PD workshops.

Mentioned only at School 2, this learning-hindering practice was mentioned by two of the five individually interviewed teachers through presenting that it needs to take place. It received full acceptance at the focus group discussion. S2T4 said "differentiation in teaching teachers is necessary," while S2T3 added "the things that pose as obstacles [to learning] are those that do not take into consideration my current needs."

Absence of accountability for teachers' learning.

Also brought up only at School 2, the absence of accountability for learning, was identified as a hindering practice for teacher learning by two of the five interviewed teachers and received widespread agreement among the participants of the focus group discussion. S2T1 said "I think possibly, there could be, maybe teachers aren't held as accountable to the [learning] plan" and "maybe the follow up at the end of the year could be better." Another teacher went with stating the 'if' stance to identify this practice as absent. S2T4 said

> Some teachers stick to their methods and activities for many years with no desire to improve and so in such cases the teachers are at fault too. *If* teachers know that the instructional supervisor is observing them and expecting them to improve then they will change and improve.

Reluctance to share experiences and best practices.

Where the teacher from School 2 who mentioned this practice mentioned it as a hindering practice, the focus group members all expressed that the instructional supervisor's reluctance to share did not hinder their learning, but rather did not help them learn. S2T1, the only teacher who mentioned this hindering practice, mentioned the opposite stance of what the instructional supervisor could possibly do to promote further the teachers' learning. The teacher said

> Generally, administrators have been, I guess, working in the profession sometimes longer than many teachers, especially if you're a young teacher, so for them to see what, to go back on their experience of teachers that they've seen and to provide insight into what best practices.

One teacher at the focus group discussion sarcastically said "It's a secret!" when the practice of sharing best practices and experiences was mentioned.

Absence of guidance for new teachers.

The absence of this practice from the instructional supervisor as a hindrance to teacher learning, was added by one of the focus group participants of School 2, who directly mentioned

afterwards a possible reason for the instructional supervisor's holding back. The colleagues of this teacher, present at the focus group discussion also approved this teacher's view. The teacher said

> I would like to see more support for new teachers though, cause they hire a lot of new graduates or new to PYP and I don't think there's enough. Again coming down to time, not because they don't want to necessarily.

Limited in-class observations.

A lack of abundance of administrative time dedicated to visiting teacher classrooms for constructive feedback was mentioned by three of the five individually interviewed teachers and School 2 only. S2T1 said

> For administrators it's also difficult for them to, if you're in a large school, to dedicate enough time to really see what a teacher is doing in a classroom, they might come in for 10 mins or 20 mins but you're not gunna see the whole spectrum of what that teacher is capable of doing, where their weaknesses are.

This factor received full acceptance from the members of the focus group discussion, where five participants made clear that this practice does not completely impede learning but just hinders it. Another teacher linked this factor to the absence of productive feedback as the teacher spoke of feedback saying "wasn't always the most helpful…since she didn't come in my classroom a lot, she didn't always see, it would just be what I would voice. She would not see what would happen" (S2T2).

Organizational conditions that hinder teacher learning.

At both schools, the interviewed teachers were able to identify several organizational condition that they felt hindered their learning. Of the lists they came up with at their respective schools, four hindering conditions were common between the perspectives of the teachers from the two schools. Those were the absence of scheduled learning time dedicated solely to teacher

learning, the frequent change in school wide improvement initiatives, high student numbers per class, and the absence of relevant resources for teacher learning. Apart from these four, the teachers at School 1 mentioned a low importance attached to teacher learning, while the teachers at School 2 mentioned an absence of constant teacher accountability and weak teacher organization and planning skills.

Table 7
The number of teachers to mention each organizational condition that hinders teacher learning from their perspective, at each school.

Teachers' perspective of organizational conditions that hinder teacher learning	**School 1**		**School 2**		**Total**
	No. of Teachers N=5	No. of Focus Group Participants N=10	No. of Teachers N=5	No. of Focus Group Participants N=10	N=30
Absence of scheduled learning time dedicated solely to teacher learning	5	10	3	9	27
Frequent change in school wide improvement initiatives	2	10	1	10	23
High student counts per class	2	10	1	10	23
Absence of relevant resources for teacher learning	2	10	5	10	27
Low importance attached to teacher learning	3	10	-	-	13
Absence of constant teacher accountability	-	-	0	10	10
weak teacher organization and planning skills	-	-	1	10	11

Absence of scheduled learning time dedicated solely to teacher learning.

All five interviewed teachers at School 1mentioned time as a major obstacle to their learning stating that scheduled learning times, which are dedicated solely to teacher learning, did not exist. At School 2, three of the five interviewed teachers mentioned this setback, claiming

that although time slots are booked for this purpose but the time is wasted on other matters. All the participants of the focus group discussion at School 1 fully agreed with the inhibiting characteristic of the absence of time for teacher learning, while nine of the ten participants at the focus group discussion at School 2 shared a similar view.

Each teacher at School 1 mentioned the factor of time for learning in their own way where one teacher, S1T4, mentioned an absence of time to learn from reading, while another teacher, S1T5, mentioned the absence of time for collaborating with and observing the instructional supervisor as a role model. S1T1 mentioned the absence of time generically saying "I can hardly do what is asked of me. Let alone learn something new." The other two teachers identified time for learning as a "problem". At School 2, S2T5 explained the condition as,

> I would have to learn it in my free time. I would have to make time. I don't feel that the school is giving me time for that…I mean we should have just extra teacher days where we sit down together without any students. That's good… you can think about stuff without having the pressure of performing and I think that's better.

S2T2 explained this hindering condition as an absence of time for collaborative learning, saying

> Well I mean let's face it, we don't have enough time in the day to actually be able to integrate and to plan as much as we would like, and like I said that collaborative part of planning and learning amongst professionals is really lacking…we're not really given the time to do it and I mean all of us are quite busy and it's like other components, like we're just very stretched thin.

Since reflection was also identified as a strategy conducive to learning by the teachers, the same concern applied to time for reflection where S2T5 had mentioned "Where would I sit down and reflect upon my own position. I don't feel I have space for that during the school year." However, one focus group participant disagreed stressing on the inability to invest the

available time in reflection saying “there's more prep time here, then anywhere else I’ve ever seen. Like what obstacle is prep time. It depends on how people choose to use their time”. This teacher identified the hindrance of teacher learning to lie not in the provision of time itself but in the allocation of time. Some of the teachers who had already agreed with the point absence of time, also nodded to this teacher’s suggestion but not in that the teacher is spending their time elsewhere, but rather that their time is being taken up. One of those teachers said “the roles and expectations are different between elementary and secondary and yes that would be right to say time is being eaten up by other responsibilities.”

Frequent change in school wide improvement initiatives.

Two of the five individually interviewed teachers at School 1 captured the frequent change in schoolwide improvement initiatives with their words, along with one of the five interviewed teachers at School 2. This perceived hindrance to learning received widespread agreement from the ten participants of the focus group at their respective schools. They both explained the good intention behind changing improvement initiatives but voiced that this change was hindering their learning. It was explained as a rapid change in modern teaching strategies that the school takes on as a whole.

At School 1, S1T4 expressed the idea very clearly, saying

> In our school here they tend to change the systems regularly so there’s no fixed system for the teachers to learn or to teach. They are trying to make it best for sure but this is happening very fast so we’re not getting used to a certain system. So this is taking plenty of our time so all our work now is getting accommodated to the new system so we’re not having time to learn so this is the main problem.

At School 2, S2T2 explained

> This is where our problem rests. So I feel like that's a big thing that we adopt these new strategies and then, you know, if you know maybe 4 years later we're onto another, it's like a fat diet, ok we're gunna do this right now, and so schools often change what they view as significant.
>
> The teacher questioned "the time frame of really taking away valuable information."

Although the teacher discussed a change of strategies every few years, the focus group participants agreed with this hindering condition in the school and brought up as examples school initiatives that change on a yearly basis in subject matters. The teachers claimed that they prefer to have a certain program or teaching style fixed for several years so that for the first year they would search for activities and experiment with the program and the following years would be used to learn further about the method, and perfect skills within the program. One of the teachers at the focus group discussion expressed their views as "it feels like every time there's a change of personnel there's a change in whatever they're doing. Sometimes it's a change in curriculum. It's not helpful." Another teacher explained the importance of sustaining certain initiatives by saying

> if you've been through something for a year, you kind of know what you're gunna do for next year, instead of hunting again for new activities" which would give teachers more time for learning.

High student counts per class.

This organizational condition was identified by two of the five interviewed teachers at School1 and by one of the five individually interviewed teachers at School 2, as a condition that hinders their learning time. At School 1 the focus group participant all strongly agreed to the need for more space in the classrooms and to the hardships they face due to the high number of students in the classrooms, which keep them from learning through trying new methods. Similar was the view of the focus group participants at School 2 where the participants of the focus group all agreed to add that having smaller class sizes was necessary, especially at a PYP school

where differentiation is expected, where classes included students of different learning levels, and, where hands on engaging activities that cater to all learning styles is advocated for.

At School 1, the classroom was explained to also be too small for the high number of students in the classes where S1T2 presented the case, saying

> Our problems in school is not what we need to learn to do it's what are the things we are able to do in class, because for example we have very small classes with a minimum of 30 students where you cannot even move between students.

As for teachers at School 2, their focus was on the idea that these class conditions were taking up a big piece of the teacher's available time, leaving very little for learning. One teacher at the focus group best expressed the case saying:

> We need smaller class sizes especially for a PYP school. Like a better ratio for kids who need learning support, and counselling…When schools want us to differentiate or do hands on engaging activities, that cater to all these abilities we need smaller class sizes.

Absence of relevant resources for teacher learning.

Insufficient resources was a hindering condition mentioned by two of the five interviewed teachers and was expressed as a limitedness in both teaching and learning resources, at School 1. At School 2, all five interviewed teachers mentioned some form of absence of relevant resources. Focus group participants at each school endorsed these statements. This relevancy of the available resources was discussed at School 2 as accessibility of subject and topic specific PD, the quality of PD offered, the language of instruction at the offered PD, the teacher's choice in selecting their required PD topic, and the relevancy of introducing several improvement initiatives at once. The teachers expressed that the little available resources were not as relevant to them as needed.

At School 1, one of the teachers who mentioned this inhibiting condition assertively claimed that "we don't have enough resources in school. That's for sure!" (S1T2). However, the specificity that it was mentioned with at School 2 was extremely different. The teachers went into details of the relevancy of the available resources. Although the focus group endorsed the generic teacher's claim of this condition as hindering of teacher learning, yet the individual teachers' views varied in the in the extent of which a specific challenge is manifested in their practice or not. Accessibility was explained as finding subject and topic specific PD, as opposed to generic ones. The focus group was split between elementary teachers who did not agree to this factor, and secondary teachers who did agree. An elementary teacher at the focus group discussion said "no they're always asking us for what kind of PD we want, and we're always taking these surveys and we have these growth plans so I don't feel that way." A secondary teacher stated "there's quite a mismatch every year". A third present teacher said "I would say they send PE teachers to PE conferences. So if you're a specialist they do but if you're a generic then no."

Two of the five individually interviewed teachers brought up the absence of online teaching resources and professional development resources that are in varied languages besides English, and in varied subject matters, including Specials such as Arabic or Islamic Studies. However, the focus group teachers found that online teaching resources were plentiful. An absence of online resources came from teachers who taught in languages other than English, whereas the focus group participants all taught in the English language. However; they showed support to this factor after listening to the quotes of the anonymous teacher who said

> Professional development resources, especially in Arabic and Islamic Studies, are not readily available or available in specific time frames within the year. As

> well as online professional development resources. They are lacking in comparison with the online resources available for other subject matters. (S2T3)

Elsewhere, the same teacher said "language could be a barrier if professional development methods were in a different language than the teacher's language." The focus group showed support to this factor and to the negative effect of its absence on teacher learning.

Also on the relevancy of the professional development provided to teachers, four of the five individually interviewed teachers spoke of teacher choice on the topic of PD as a promotor to their learning and at different instances, spoke of teacher absence of choice as a hinderer to their learning. A teacher who spoke of absence of teacher choice as a hindrance to their learning pointed that as result of the absence of choice "professional development is more often not helpful than helpful." Elsewhere the same teacher had mentioned that "I know there's a lot of teachers who feel that professional development isn't always aligned to what they need in order to develop" (S2T2). The focus group participants all showed support for this absence of match and relevancy between provided professional development and teacher needs.

Low importance attached to teacher learning.

This hindering organizational condition was mentioned only at School 1, although the instructional supervisor was said to attach importance to teacher learning on a personal level; however, the organization as a whole was not said to attach the same importance. Three of the five interviewed teachers claimed that very low importance, if any, is attached to teacher learning. S1T4 explained that "mainly in school they don't care for us learning also than for the students how to be taught. Even the workshops they do it on student learning abilities. I have never, attended a workshop for how to help teachers learn." When the focus group was faced with the fact that one of the interviewed teachers had mentioned that the school attached great

importance to their learning, they showed shock towards the suggestion where one of the participants asked “Wow, were they explaining our school?” while another participant exclaimed “they were not being honest.” All ten participants united on that low importance is attached to teacher learning.

Absence of constant teacher accountability.

This was a hindering factor that was added by the focus group participants of School 2 only. This factor was marginally touched upon by the individually interviewed teachers who felt the instructional supervisor should hold teachers more accountable. The focus group went further to ask for a system of accountability that is built into the school structure as a whole. The participants agreed the school organization should be built around this system so that all teachers are motivated to learn rather than having some teachers floating due to no accountability.

Instructional Supervisors’ Perspective on Factors Affecting Teacher Learning

Having covered the teachers’ perspective of factors that affect their learning both positively and negatively, this following section will cover the instructional supervisors’ perspective on the same, aiming to provide the other part of the results pertaining to the third and fourth research questions; namely, what are the supervisory practices and organizational conditions that promote teacher professional learning from the perspective of the supervisors and the teachers? And, what are the supervisory practices and organizational conditions that hinder the professional learning of teachers from the perspective of teachers and supervisors? It aims to cover the instructional supervisor perspective of factors that affect teacher learning both positively and negatively. It is divided into a subsection for the factors that promote learning, and

another for the factors that hinder teacher learning. Both subsections will be divided further into a part for instructional supervisory practices and another for organizational condition.

Factors That Promote Teacher Learning

As mentioned earlier, this subsection will cover the factors that promote teacher learning mentioned as either instructional supervisor practices or as organizational conditions that serve to promote teacher learning, from the instructional supervisors' viewpoint.

Instructional supervisor practices that promote teacher learning.

All the instructional supervisors have identified their contribution to teacher learning as part of their role. They listed actions they took that would promote teacher learning, in varying levels. The instructional supervisors at the two different schools made quite the list of promoting practices they took but five of these practices were common amongst the two schools. These common identified practices were being responsive to teacher needs, setting a supportive learning environment, providing differentiated learning opportunities, holding teachers accountable through follow up, and collaborating with teachers. Elsewise, other practices were mentioned at one of the two schools. Those were being available for teachers, modelling, providing constructive feedback, building a trusting relationship with teachers, leading by example, and, mentoring.

Table 8
The number of instructional supervisors to mention each instructional supervisory practice that promotes teacher learning from their perspective, at each school.

Instructional Supervisors' perspective of instructional supervisory practices that promote teacher learning	**School 1**		**School 2**		**Total**
	No. of Instructional Supervisors N=4	Member Checking Interviewee N=1	No. of Instructional Supervisors N=3	Member Checking Interviewee N=1	N=9
Being responsive to teacher needs	4	1	3	1	9
Modifying organizational conditions to support teachers	1	1	3	1	6
Setting a supportive learning environment	3	1	3	1	8
Providing differentiated learning opportunities	3	1	3	1	8
Holding teachers accountable through follow-up	3	1	3	1	8
Collaborating with teachers	3	1	3	1	8
Openness to teacher ideas	2	1	-	-	3
Addressing teacher frustrations	3	1	-	-	4
Attaching importance to teacher learning	2	1	-	-	3
Guiding new teachers	1	1	-	-	2
Being available for teachers	4	1	-	-	5
Modelling	2	1	-	-	3
Providing constructive feedback	-	-	3	1	4
Building a trusting relationship with teachers	-	-	3	1	4
Leading by example	-	-	1	1	2
Mentoring	-	-	2	1	3
Building high expertise capacity	-	-	1	1	2
Empowering teachers to extend their abilities	-	-	2	1	3
Raising awareness of the importance of learning	-	-	1	1	2
Celebrating teacher successes and embracing their failures	-	-	1	1	2

Instructional Supervisors' perspective of instructional supervisory practices that promote teacher learning	**School 1**		**School 2**		**Total**
	No. of Instructional Supervisors N=4	Member Checking Interviewee N=1	No. of Instructional Supervisors N=3	Member Checking Interviewee N=1	N=9
Building a culture of constant collaborative learning between teachers and instructional supervisors	-	-	2	1	3

Being responsive to teacher needs.

Mentioned by all seven of the interviewed instructional supervisors from both School 1 and School 2, being responsive to teacher needs was identified as a promoter of teacher learning. The instructional supervisors mentioned it differently as: modifying organizational conditions to support teachers, openness to teacher ideas, addressing teacher frustrations, attaching importance to teacher learning, and guiding new teachers. The member checking interviewee at both schools agreed to the expressions, mentioned at their respective school, of being responsive to teacher needs and to the promotive effect of these actions on teacher learning.

Modifying organizational conditions to support teachers. One of the four interviewed instructional supervisors at School 1 and all three of the interviewed instructional supervisors at School 2, mentioned modifying the organizational conditions of time and finances as important for teacher learning. The member checking interviewee at School 1 noted that everything needs time including learning, and that modifying this organizational condition is of the hardest practices to an instructional supervisor.

At School 1, S1IS3 clarified that should any relevant PD workshop happen to occur during a teacher's lesson, they would provide a substitute teacher for the class. They identified

that as “I’m dedicating time for teacher learning”. They also discussed funding teacher PD saying

> We try in the net as much as we can to check about any seminar or workshop or whatever that is free of charge to send our teachers and if it is charged we have to check with the administration if it is possible. Mostly it is possible. Not always.

At School 2, the emphasis was on modifying the organizational condition of time, more than funding, since teachers already receive an annual professional budget. S2IS1 spoke of the teachers need for the provision of time for learning through the different methods of dialogue and reflection, saying

> They’re smart, they just need the time to get together to sit and talk about it…so that’s how they access the professional development is through structures and time, and giving them the time to have those professional learning conversations…So I think there need to be systems and structures in place so that people do have the *time* to reflect where it’s required that they're actually reflecting.

S2IS2 also felt the need to make some time available for some professional learning where they said

> You have to do the training, your professional development, that’s mandatory. You provide time for, and you ensure that there is time and you create the importance for it. So you find time in teacher schedules; set up a professional development day, but you’re saying ‘this is important for us to make some time’.

Openness to teacher ideas. This was a practice that was mentioned only at School 1 by two of the four individually interviewed instructional supervisors and supported by the member checking interviewee. It involved communicating with teachers. S1IS4 mentioned mutual learning due to openness to teacher ideas “some things I feel like the teachers may know more than I do. So I’m very open to give me ideas, we’ll share. We’re very like team oriented.”

Addressing teacher frustrations. Three of the four individually interviewed instructional supervisors only at School 1 mentioned addressing teacher frustrations as one that enhances teacher learning, through helping teachers vent and solve their issues, and were supported by the member checking interviewee. S1IS1 spoke of helping teachers with their frustrations for teachers to be able to teach better saying "helping them all the time find solutions for their problems…with the pressure and the many requirements asked of teachers, unluckily the class and students became at the bottom of the duty list according to the time available."

S1IS1 also spoke of teacher fear of change as another frustration that teachers face and require support from the instructional supervisor. She explained this fear as either an inhibitor of teacher learning or a motivator for teacher learning. S1IS1 said

> We have cases of teacher fear. New change is a big challenge to teachers. We had first to convince teachers that we can do it, we can do it in many ways and that they're able to do it…Sometimes, the fear of change, at times it was positive and others it was negative. For some teachers their fear of the change made them go and research the topic and hence get more information while for others the change was very hard to accept. Their fear prohibited their learning.

Another frustration mentioned by S1IS4 was a feeling of absence of acknowledgment of teacher efforts saying

> I think motivation and maybe some praise like maybe some people don't feel like they're getting enough. You know they're doing all the work but nobody is saying "good job, you're doing a great job". They always tell me, 'we're just like students, we always want to encourage them and we also would like some encouragement'.

Attaching importance to teacher learning. This was a practice also mentioned only at School 1 by two of the four interviewed instructional supervisors as an important practice for enhancing teacher learning and was approved by the member checking interviewee. S1IS2 expressed the importance of teacher learning saying "teacher professional learning is something

very important and necessary because no teacher should reach a point of no more needed". They expressed in belief in peer learning and attaching importance to teacher learning through "Set up of teacher to teacher class visits." S1IS1 spoke all about convincing teachers of the importance of learning and its positive effects saying

> We try to show them how this will help them in the field, how it make it easier for them, how it will reflect on their students, for some it helps if you tell them how it will reflect on their appraisal so the motivation can take different forms, also you try to show them how this will make a change in their careers as teachers.

Guiding new teachers. As a final nuance of being responsive to teacher needs, the practice of guiding teachers was only mentioned at School 1. New teachers were mentioned as needing the most help and guidance by one of the four individually interviewed instructional supervisors and was supported by the member checking interviewee. Being responsive to this teacher needs was explained by S1IS1 who said "I learn things and I try to deliver the message to them [teachers]…especially when it comes to new teachers, who may not have had time for practice teaching. The smallest things make a difference in their careers."

Setting a supportive learning environment.

Providing support to teachers in a learning environment was generally mentioned by three of the four individually interviewed instructional supervisors at School 1 and all three interviewed instructional supervisors at School 2, as promoting to teacher learning, and were fully supported by both member checking interviewees at School 1 and School 2 respectively.

At School 1, S1IS1 explained helping teachers as important for teachers to learn and improve on the job saying

> My policy with them is to ask for things without very strict deadlines and at the same time supporting them all through. I ask for things this way, if they can't do it they can do it another way and if they can't do it 'I can help you do it another way' and so on, so helping them all the time.

At School 2, S2IS1 linked providing teachers with a supportive environment, to learning through saying "in terms of working with teachers it all comes back to support and supporting teachers through embedded professional development." The instructional supervisors only at School 2 mentioned three different nuances of the practice, identified as, raising awareness of the importance of learning, celebrating teacher successes and embracing their failures, and finally, building a culture of constant collaborative learning between teachers and instructional supervisors.

Raising awareness of the importance of learning. Only S2IS2 from School 2 mentioned this component, saying "in this age, where we are now, if you're not a life-long learner, you will be left behind…because the world is moving quickly, you need to adjust…if you don't keep learning and you don't keep growing as a person, or as an individual, you don't get anywhere."

Celebrating teacher successes and embracing their failures. S2IS1, the only instructional supervisor of the three interviewed supervisors at School 2 that mentioned this practice, spoke of celebrating teacher failures as part of making the environment more supportive of learning, even if that learning did not help much. The instructional supervisor said

> They're [the teachers] documenting their 'misses', if you will. We don't call them failures, we call them misses, just because its ok to miss … because they tried something new and they were risk takers, and that's what we're trying to celebrate, is those 21st century skills that we're asking of our students, that creativity, that collaboration that communication, that's what we want our teachers to embody. So as far as professional learning goes, as long as they're embodying that and they're modelling that, it just all falls into place.

S1IS1 also spoke of failure as a learning opportunity and insisted on the need to let teachers know that failing is accepted and that "the only thing I [the instructional supervisor] request is that when you [the teachers] blow it you come and share it with me so that we can all learn from each other."

As for celebrating teacher successes, S2IS3 spoke of valuing teacher success and contributions as part of motivating teacher learning. When asked how the instructional supervisor motivated their teachers, they said

> We carry every small heir of positivity. We try to celebrate teacher successes. And also let teachers know that they're a really important part of that students' attainment…It's valuing stuff and letting them know that they are valued and that their contributions are valued.

Building a culture of constant collaborative learning between teachers and instructional supervisors. Two of the three interviewed instructional supervisors, only at School 2, explicitly noted this instructional supervisory practice as promotive of teacher learning. S2IS2 expressed their view of the importance of building a culture of learning at the school as "you have to create a culture of being a lifelong learner within the school and a culture of learning" to expect teachers to learn. The same instructional supervisor discussed the need for building collaborative learning into the culture by saying "at our school *that* essentially is our model. We develop a culture of the fact that everybody learns together. We organize opportunities for teachers to do so in PD." The member checking interviewee agreed with this point.

Providing differentiated learning opportunities.

The practice of providing differentiated PD activities was mentioned by three of the four individually interviewed instructional supervisors at School 1 and all three interviewed

instructional supervisors at School 2. The member checking interviewee at each school approved of the presence of these practice as mentioned at their respective schools.

At School 1, S1IS1 explained the necessity of differentiating learning opportunities saying

> There are many things you give to teachers but the way you provide is different…Actually we use the expression we differentiate for students and it goes without saying that we should differentiate for teachers as well. The way you deal with one teacher and what you ask her to do should be different than from another teacher, based on their personality, character, knowledge, abilities.

Differentiation in learning opportunities was explained as setting PD in line with teacher abilities (S1IS1) and in accordance with teacher needs (S1IS1; S1IS2; S1IS3). It was also identified as necessary to deal with teacher needs through setting individual teacher action plans (S1IS1).

At School 2, differentiation in providing learning opportunities, and, ensuring that the provided opportunities fit each teacher needs; hence, ultimately achieving teacher satisfaction with the provided learning opportunities, were nuances of how this practice was mentioned. S2IS2 said

> It's like children, you have to look at a multitude of different learning styles. So your responsibility, again if I count myself a teacher and they are my class, then I have to be aware that there are lots of different ways that teachers learn so I have to provide lots of different opportunities and also give them the option of different opportunities…..as long as you listen to them [teachers] and listen to what they want, specifically what they need training on, and try to facilitate that also, then it works.

Teacher satisfaction from learning opportunities tailored to teachers' needs was directly linked to the degree of teacher learning. S2IS1 made clear that teacher needs and satisfaction should drive the decisions regarding the choice of PD opportunities.

Holding teachers accountable through follow-up.

Visiting teacher classrooms after teacher attend workshops or go through learning experiences was viewed as necessary to teacher learning by many instructional supervisors. Three of the four individually interviewed instructional supervisors at School 1 and all three of the interviewed instructional supervisors at School 2, identified a link between effective teacher learning and holding teachers accountable for applying their learning. The member checking interviewee at both schools supported this practice.

At School 1, S1IS4 claimed effective teacher learning experiences that lead to an impact on teacher practices in class, need to include follow-up from the instructional supervisor to ensure that teachers are transferring this learning into their daily practice, saying "They have to actually apply it [teacher acquired learning] and I would have to follow up and see, I would have to like visit classes and observe."

At School 2, S2IS2 said

> So as a school if you're not expecting them and you're not demanding that of teachers, not demanding in the horrible way you know, we're not modelling that we're expecting it or providing opportunity for them, there's a chance that they're not necessarily following through with that.

Holding teachers accountable for their learning through follow up was discussed interestingly by S2IS1 as a key venue to promote their professional learning. The instructional supervisor spoke of team meetings where a decision for improvement is taken amongst the team for which each member would have to undergo some form of learning to enact the decision. She continued to explain that follow up of PD attended is not the sole role of one person but rather "we're all taking care of each other and supporting each other so it doesn't really fall on one

person. We're all holding each other accountable for those original conversations that we have", where the instructional supervisor striped accountability of its formality and dressed it up as an informal form of group work.

Collaborating with teachers.

Three of the four individually interviewed instructional supervisors, at School 1, mentioned the practice of collaborating with teachers as important for promoting teacher learning in general. All three of the interviewed instructional supervisors at School 2 mentioned collaborating with teachers as part of a process of working with teachers for teacher improvement in practice. The member checking interviewee at both schools expressed the essentialism of this practice for teacher learning, where member checking interviewee at School 1 claimed it to be very important to collaboratively work with the teachers in order to foster their understanding and promote the learning they are undergoing.

At School 1, S1IS4 explained collaboration as important for teacher learning saying

> I have to be flexible with the teachers, maybe at sometimes they might have like a block so you have to sit there and work with them, maybe they just couldn't come up with something so I have to rely on someone else to help us out or maybe I have to me and her kind of sit and talk more.

At School 2, collaboration was explained as part of a process which includes dialogue, and reflection. The process of collaborating with teachers was explained by S2IS3 by saying

> It's generally dialogue at first, and then, it's collaborative dialogue, cause we're identifying things that they may or may not have, and then its collaboration, you know I work with teachers, and once everything is done then its reflection. Reflecting on how it went.

S2IS1 had a similar idea but as interesting one, when they exclaimed

> I prefer to think of like an instructional coach, kind of thing, and so yes it's a supervisory role but I try to keep it very level plain fields if you will. So it's not a top down "you will do this" kind of thing. It's more about I'm going to be working with you so that you can be trying this out, you try this out you then go and reflect on it with me and then we try to improve your practice together.

As for the importance of reflection for teacher learning, which all the instructional supervisors agreed on in School 2, S2IS1 mentioned it the clearest, saying "I think that you are as a professional, a lifelong learner, if you are reflective in your practice and explicitly reflective…It's explicit as far as professional learning goes."

As for the importance of collaborating with teachers for promoting teacher learning, two instructional supervisors at School 2 explained its importance by giving examples of how they collaborate with teachers to guide them through the planning process. S2IS3 pointed to the instructional supervisor's ability to see problems coming, ahead of time, and collaborating with teachers to highlight possible problematic areas and learn from them before a problem strikes, when problem solving would become the goal as opposed to learning from the situation.

Being available for teachers.

Spending time with teachers was mentioned by all four interviewed instructional supervisors at only School 1, in different forms. The member checking interviewee at the school claimed that almost all the instructional supervisor's work requires spending time with teachers. Some thought to take the time for explaining change to teachers and helping them cope with it while others spent the time to help teachers learn through moderating their work. When one of the instructional supervisors expressed their belief in teacher learning as happening best "in person, one to one" (S1IS3) emphasizing the term *in person* to indicate importance of the instructional supervisor giving their time to each teacher.

Modelling.

Two of the four interviewed instructional supervisors at School 1, discussed modelling as interfering in classrooms when necessary. This practice was not brought up in School 2. The member checking interviewee at School 1 agreed with the positive link between the two factors of modelling and teacher learning yet claimed that this was not a widely accepted practice by teachers, especially if it happens in the classroom. S1IS2 linked modelling it to teacher learning, saying "When I attend new teacher classes, I might ask to interfere so that the teacher can know the right way to act".

Providing constructive feedback.

Providing feedback to teachers was identified as a possible promotor for teacher learning by all three of the interviewed instructional supervisors only at School 2 and by the member checking interviewee at the school. S2IS1 linked feedback to teacher learning by defining teacher learning as "perfecting their practice to impact student learning…through feedback." S2IS1 separated evaluation from feedback in order to remove the threatening component attached to feedback. The IS explained

> So we came up with, if you will, a learning walk form, and we shared that with the teachers, as a form of feedback, and you know it's not an evaluation, it's just a little feedback and so we're building this culture of non-threatening feedback within the school.

Building a trusting relationship with teachers.

The factor of building trust in its different components, was mentioned only at School 2 by all three of the instructional supervisors of. It was also given full support from the member checking interviewee at the school. It was mentioned to be boosted by advocating for teachers. It

was also mentioned as a necessary action for teacher empowerment, hence encouraging teachers to push their comfort zones and extend themselves. S2IS1 made a link between teacher learning and building a trusting relationship with them by saying "I think they [teachers] enter the profession motivated [to learn] and I think they become de-motivated when they become burnt, if you will. When trust has been broken down." The same instructional supervisor continued to say "and so you motivate them by building those relationships." The instructional supervisors spoke of different ways to build trust. They each mentioned building trust in their own way, where S2IS3 explained it as doing the work they ask of teachers to show that they will 'walk the walk', S2IS1 mentioned advocating for teachers and teacher needs, and S2IS2 explained building trust as undergoing personal professional development so teachers could trust in the instructional supervisor's skills and knowledge.

Leading by example.

S2IS2 repeatedly mentioned this practice as a promoter of teacher learning. This was the only instructional supervisor to mention this practice at both schools, making it only identified at School 2. The participant in the member checking interview at the school also agreed to the promotive effect of this practice. This instructional supervisor emphasized leading by example twice, as a motivator for teacher learning, saying

> Modelling it yourself, in terms of, am I a professional learner. Right? If I don't model it, people are not gunna follow in my example…leading by example, supporting them, encouraging them, teaching them to question, and again leading by example

Mentoring.

Mentoring teachers was discussed by two of the instructional supervisors of only School 2, under different nuances; namely, building high expertise capacity, and, empowering teachers to extend their abilities. It supported by the member checking interviewee at the school. It was discussed as providing guidance to teachers to set them on a learning track, or guiding them towards building teacher internal capacities and abilities.

Building high expertise capacity. This practice was extensively mentioned by one of the three instructional supervisors at School 2, who mentioned this factor as important "especially in international school…I think that internal capacity is very very important to have a sustainable approach as people are moving in and out of the school" (S2IS1). The same instructional supervisor explained building internal capacity as

> It's just building the internal capacity through professional learning conversations…putting those structures in place so the adults can have those non-threatening conversations, where they're supporting each other and my job is to facilitate those conversations, to facilitate the timings, to facilitate the structure of how those conversations are going to happen.

Building internal capacity was mentioned by S2IS1 as extremely necessary especially for elementary teachers who, as the instructional supervisor described it, teach too many subjects and cannot be held responsible for being experts at all the subjects. The instructional supervisor continued to explain that "you have to have pockets of masters, if you will." The instructional supervisor continued by giving an example of the Math subject, where at each grade level, one teacher took on the responsibility of Math professional learning and would then share their learning with the team. The instructional supervisor continued by saying

> That way it takes the burden off the other teachers so that they can be masters of something else, and then it just becomes this big sharing circle, if you will, where people are respected for the knowledge that they have, but then learning from other people as well.

Empowering teachers to extend their abilities was brought up by two of the three interviewed instructional supervisors at School 2, where S2IS1 mentioned empowerment insistently as an instructional supervisor practice to promote teacher learning, by saying

> I know I keep saying that, but you have to empower people. You have to say 'you know what, you've been trained on this. I trust you do the right thing. Go do this…I'm getting out of your way, I trust you, I know you, you do this, you do this really really well, just let me know what you're doing, let me know how I can support you, go get it done.

The member checking interviewee added their belief in giving teachers opportunities for autonomy and hence freedom of choice of how to approach targets, projects or initiatives, which in turn will lead to feelings of responsibility and empowerment to seek whatever learning is needed to continue.

Organizational conditions that promote teacher learning.

The seven interviewed instructional supervisors from School 1 and School 2 were asked to identify organizational conditions that they felt were promotive of teacher learning. They pointed elaborately and repeatedly to their belief in the supportive organizational conditions of the school for teacher learning. Cumulatively they were able to identify 8 such conditions, however only one of these conditions was common between the two schools. The rest of the conditions were mentioned by instructional supervisors at only one of the two schools. The common organizational condition mentioned was having scheduled learning time. The other seven conditions identified were: giving teachers a voice on schoolwide initiatives, budget allocation of discretionary funds for department and individual teachers spending, having intra-school agreements to exchange best practices, having a climate of support for learning, having a

system of accountability, having an open door policy, and, positive teachers' attitudes towards learning.

Table 9
The number of instructional supervisors to mention each organizational condition that promotes teacher learning from their perspective, at each school

Instructional supervisors perspective of organizational conditions that promote teacher learning	**School 1**		**School 2**		**Total**
	No. of Instructional Supervisors N=4	Member Checking Interviewee N=1	No. of Instructional Supervisors N=3	Member Checking Interviewee N=1	N=9
Scheduled learning time	2	1	3	1	7
Giving teachers a voice on schoolwide initiatives	1	1	-	-	2
Budget allocation of discretionary funds for department and individual teachers spending	-	-	2	1	3
Having intra-school agreements to exchange best practices	-	-	3	1	4
Having a climate of support for learning	-	-	3	1	4
Having a system of accountability	-	-	3	1	4
Having an open door policy	-	-	1	1	2
Positive teachers' attitudes towards learning	-	-	2	1	3

Scheduled learning time.

This organizational condition was deduced from the explanations of two of the four individually interviewed instructional supervisors at School 1 and all three interviewed instructional supervisors at School 2. It was a condition that received approval from the member checking interviewees at both schools.

At School 1, S1IS2 said “I work on teachers through the weekly meetings we have” identifying a scheduled weekly time slot during which teacher learning is the main concern.

At School 2, the instructional supervisors expressed their belief in the critical effect of this factor on teacher learning and the need for its existence. S2IS1 spoke positively of the scheduled time provided for teachers to collaborate and learn, but wanted this factor to expand further, labelling the existing scheduled times as “a great gift”, saying

> Organizational conditions that are working right now: teachers have the time to plan and collaborate and this is what we call PYP meetings that we have once a week. That’s very great. That’s a great gift to have that time.

Giving teachers a voice on schoolwide initiatives.

This organizational condition was indicated as promotive to teacher learning through different statements mentioned by one of the four interviewed instructional supervisors at School 1 only. The member checking interviewee, at the school, agreed to the existence of this promotive condition and its link to teacher learning. S1IS4 mentioned that schoolwide initiatives sometimes take into consideration teacher opinions through saying “sometimes they [the teachers] take like surveys or whatever and we [admin] take the main opinion and then we say maybe we should apply it.” They continued to explain a positive correlation between teacher agreement with schoolwide improvement initiatives and teacher learning.

Budget allocation of discretionary funds for department and individual teachers spending.

This promotive organizational condition of having funds available to be spent by the departments and by the individual teachers for learning purposes, was mentioned by two of the three individually interviewed instructional supervisors at only School 2. At School 1, this was

not even mentioned as an expectation. The member checking interviewee at School 2 expressed their extreme agreement with both the existence and the promotive effects of the provision of funding for teacher learning. S2IS3 mentioned attending PD workshops as an enhancer of teacher learning by speaking of the school provided individual teacher PD budget, saying "we have had a sizeably increased budget, which is fantastic…technically you could take flights and a workshop anywhere in the world which is phenomenal. The school does a really good job on that front". On the topic of departmental budgets for teacher learning purposes, the same instructional supervisor said "We have huge amounts of resources. Our departmental budgets, there's plenty of cash there to buy stuff, and we buy stuff."

Having intra-school agreements to exchange best practices.

This organizational condition was mentioned as promotive to teacher learning by all three of the individually interviewed instructional supervisors and by the member checking interviewee of only School 2. S2IS2 linked intra school visits to teacher learning by saying

> I might say a lot of people are visual learners. They wanna see it full on. So I organize school visits for them to go visit other networks, other schools and they can go look at other practices outside the school.

S2IS1 pointed out that having such a relationship with other schools could help resolve issues that are hindering teacher learning. They gave an example of a teacher frustration that the teachers voiced, where the instructional supervisor contacted five other schools to review how they dealt with the issue in order to resolve it.

Having a climate of support for learning.

The promotive effect of having a climate supportive of learning at the school was expressed by all three of the interviewed instructional supervisors and supported by the member

checking interviewee of only School 2. S2IS2 explained the culture of support for learning as a motivator for teachers who seem to be holding back on learning. The instructional supervisor said

> It's basically in the culture you create within your school. If you're creating a culture in your school of where teachers are learning, and it's a positive thing and they're being recognized for their learning then those teachers who aren't doing it are certainly gunna jump on board pretty quick…our administrative team is very supportive…Everyone is very supportive towards learning. That's not always the case in schools but it's very much the case here though, which is great.

Furthermore the instructional supervisor at School 2 expressed that the administration not only supports learning but also models being lifelong learners. The climate of supporting learning was also expressed through the provision of a structure that enhances teacher learning which S2IS2 mentioned as

> Teachers have a professional growth plan that they have to fill out every year and so they set goals in the beginning of the year and then they have to do some professional development based on their goals and then that's followed up as well. So I think it's a very conducive atmosphere for professional development in the school.

Having a system of accountability.

All three instructional supervisors and the member checking interviewee mentioned this organizational condition as an enhancer of teacher learning only at School 2. S2IS1 and S2IS3 spoke of a new system of evaluation that the school has launched where the instructional supervisor is evaluating the teachers at five different points throughout the year and at every evaluation, they are providing some form of feedback on the teacher's attainment of previously specified targets and possible areas for improvement which is then discussed with the teachers and followed up on through a second visitation. This system is discussed as embedding the expectation of teacher learning in the evaluation process.

Having an open door policy.

This was an organizational policy mentioned only at School 2, by S2IS3, and supported by the member checking interviewee, where S2IS3 explained "we have a pretty good learning community here in that we have an open door policy. Anyone can walk into any classroom any time". The instructional supervisor elaborated the existence of transparency and openness for sharing practices which they identified as a factor that promotes teacher learning.

Positive teachers' attitudes towards learning.

Only at School 2, two instructional supervisors mentioned the necessity of teacher conviction of the importance of learning and teacher awareness of self-learning style, for teacher learning to occur. The member checking interviewee at the school agreed to the necessity of both, for teacher learning. S2IS3 discussed teacher conviction of the necessity of learning saying

> I think most teachers, if they can see that its [teacher learning] gunna have an educational affect, and if they can see that it's going to improve their teaching, and if they can see it as a potential support for them, they can't but get on board,

On the other hand, S2IS2 discussed their belief in the necessity of being aware of teacher self-learning style for teacher learning to occur, saying "I think as a teacher you need to be responsible for knowing your individual learning strengths and adapting your learning to those strengths basically and taking the opportunities being given to you that are more conducive to you."

Factors that Hinder Teacher Learning

As mentioned earlier, this subsection will cover the factors that were viewed in both schools to hinder teacher learning mentioned as either instructional supervisor practices or as organizational conditions from the instructional supervisors' viewpoint.

Instructional supervisor practices that hinder teacher learning.

At School 1, all the instructional supervisors were able to identify personal practices that they found hindered teacher learning but they identified those practices as ones they cannot change or have no control over. They were able to list the absence of effective teacher training, befriending teachers, the inability to set sufficient learning time for teachers, the absence of planning for teacher learning, the absence of sufficient training of instructional supervisors, and the absence of knowledge and understanding of administration imposed ideas and concepts. At School 2 the case was somehow different. None of them was able to identify a practice they took that hindered teacher learning, even after multiple probing. They all identified that should teacher learning be hindered by someone's practices, then it would be the teachers' practices that would be in question.

Table 10
The number of instructional supervisors to mention each instructional supervisory practice that hinders teacher learning from their perspective, at each school

Instructional supervisors' perspective of instructional supervisor practices that hinder teacher learning	**School 1**		**School 2**		**Total**
	No. of Instructional Supervisors N=4	Member Checking Interviewee N=1	No. of Instructional Supervisors N=3	Member Checking Interviewee N=1	N=9
Absence of effective teacher training	1	1	-	-	2
Befriending teachers	1	1	-	-	2
Inability to set sufficient learning time for teachers	2	1	-	-	3

Absence of planning for teacher learning	1	1	-	-	2
Absence of instructional supervisor personal learning	1	1	-	-	2
Absence of knowledge and understanding of administration imposed ideas and concepts	1	1	-	-	2

Absence of effective teacher training.

One of the four interviewed instructional supervisors at School 1 only, expressed the absence of belief in the efficiency and sufficiency of the training they provide to teachers. S1IS1 said "we are not doing the training as good as should be." The member checking interviewee agreed with this reason that the instructional supervisor provided for this absence of sufficient training although noted that it was "not as bad as it sounded."

Befriending teachers.

This practice was noted to have been taken with good intentions but which the instructional supervisor found was hindering teacher learning at School 1. The case seemed the opposite at School 2 where building relationships and strengthening trust between teachers and supervisors was mentioned as a promotor of teacher learning as opposed to a hinderer. Befriending teachers was mentioned by one of the four individually interviewed instructional supervisors at School 1 and noted by the member checking interviewee as "might be". S1IS3 had been explaining that teachers were not willing to learn from them. They gave examples of some teachers who were not learning and when discussing one of the teachers the instructional

supervisor said “the second teacher is not taking me seriously, I can’t tell. He’s a friend. He’s my friend as well, but maybe because of this. Maybe this is the obstacle.”

Inability to set sufficient learning time for teachers.

Two of the four individually interviewed instructional supervisors expressed their inability to find time for teaching teachers as a major inhibitor to teacher learning. Time was also expressed as rare by the member checking interviewee. S1IS2 explained “Teachers don’t learn due to lack of time for me to provide this learning opportunity. Teachers are tired after school. We are trying to set these workshops during the weekly meetings [which take place afterschool].”

Absence of planning for teacher learning.

One of the four individually interviewed instructional supervisor of School 1 spoke of a hinderer of teacher learning to be the fact that learning takes place in a very spontaneous form rather than having a planned sort of learning. The member checking interviewee at the school slightly agreed with this point saying “not all learning is spontaneous but some is.” S1IS4 said

> Maybe that’s my problem. Because we kind of, it’s very spontaneous. We’ll just come up with a new idea, ‘let’s try it’. And then we’ll do, and if we feel it’s successful. Now how do I feel like its successful? By just their feedback. And then they continue with it, if they try something else, and we know that was a terrible idea, but there wasn’t really actual, like lets write it down, plan…kind of try it kind of thing. Cause I don’t know what else to tell them.

Absence of sufficient training of instructional supervisors.

Mentioned by only one of the four interviewed instructional supervisors of School 1 and with no mention at School 2, the absence of sufficient training provided to instructional supervisors before and after being assigned to this position was identified as a hinderer to the

instructional supervisor's ability to promote teacher learning. S1IS1 identified the fact that being a new instructional supervisor requires learning about the position which keeps the instructional supervisor from having time to teach teachers. The member checking interviewee noted that this is a true hindering practice; however, identified it as one that only happens during the first year of an IS's experience in the position. In the words of S1IS1

> Actually I rarely give them personal PD activities…But I always feel I should be doing more. In the years before I had a class to teach and I was a new person in the post and I was learning myself. I didn't have time to provide teachers with PD.

Absence of knowledge and understanding of administration imposed ideas and concepts.

One of the four individually interviewed instructional supervisors at School 1 mentioned their absence of knowledge and understanding of administration imposed ideas and concepts as an inhibitor of teacher learning. There was no mention of the same at School 2. S1IS4, who mentioned this practice, gave an example of an educational practice that the administration had asked the instructional supervisors to implement in their departments without explaining it to the instructional supervisors or providing them with any training on the topic. The member checking interviewee was not very comfortable agreeing with the point but did mention that the instructional supervisor has to go ahead and do their own research and figure it out, which on its own endorses S1IS4's perspective of leaving the instructional supervisors to figure concepts out on their own without support. The instructional supervisor was asked of how they went about introducing the trend, where they replied saying

> I don't think I can be like, 'ok let me show you. So easy.' No! Because I don't think I understand it fully, maybe others won't admit it but I'll admit…that's something that the school wants us to implement, and we've been trying to do it for the past 3 to 4 years, but it's still kind of foggy…it hasn't been really explained exactly how to do it to us, so I can then convey to teachers.

Organizational conditions that hinder teacher learning.

All four interviewed instructional supervisors at School 1 did not list any organizational conditions that they felt hindered teacher learning when asked a direct question. After much probing, one instructional supervisor mentioned one condition that inhibited teacher ability to try and apply new learnings. They identified the class sizes to be too small for the number of students in class. At School 2, the case was different in that all three interviewed instructional supervisors were able to identify at least one hindering organizational condition. They cumulatively listed four conditions, of which two were identified as out of the school's control. They identified the absence of a unified vision of excellence in teaching among the instructional supervisors at the school, a high teacher turnover rate, the geographic location of the school, and, teacher lack of acceptance of positive criticism.

Table 11
The number of instructional supervisors to mention each organizational condition that hinders teacher learning from their perspective, at each school

Instructional supervisors' perspective of organizational conditions that hinder teacher learning	**School 1**		**School 2**		**Total**
	No. of Instructional Supervisors N=4	Member Checking Interviewee N=1	No. of Instructional Supervisors N=3	Member Checking Interviewee N=1	N=9
Small physical class sizes and high student counts per class	1	1	-	-	2
Absence of unified vision of excellence in teaching	-	-	1	1	2
Having a high teacher turnover rate	-	-	1	1	2
The geographic location of the school	-	-	2	1	3
Lack of teacher acceptance of positive criticism	-	-	1	1	2

Small physical class sizes and high student counts per class.

The physical size of the classrooms in comparison with the number of students in class was identified as an inhibitor of teacher learning at School 1 only and was mentioned by one of the four interviewed instructional supervisors and agreed with by the member checking interviewee at the school. S1IS3 explained group work as a new teaching methods the teachers were being introduced to but sympathized with the teachers when it came to applying their learning, saying "we aren't able to do the group work in a good way why? Because I have 30 students, small areas in class."

Absence of unified vision of excellence in teaching.

Mentioned only at School 2 and only by one instructional supervisor, this organizational condition was noted as an obstacle to providing teachers with the maximum teacher learning experiences. It was elaborated as being able to get the administrative team together and discuss new procedures or methods for teacher learning and achieving a common understanding rather than a compromise about the topic and making decisions to which all the administrative team would have loyalty and full heartedness towards. S2IS1 said

> As far as obstacles go with moving forward, I think it's making sure that the administrative team has time to sit down and have meaningful conversations, and not necessarily come to a compromise…but they need to have an understanding…when they walk out of the room, once the decision was we're gunna do this, they need to support it. I'm not saying that's not happening, but the quality with which that's happening

referring to unified support in the face of teachers who might not directly accept these new procedures. The member checking interviewee agreed to the importance of having a positive attitude and consistency among the administrative team especially when dealing with teachers.

Having a high teacher turnover rate.

This was an organizational condition that was mentioned by one of the three interviewed instructional supervisors of School 2 and was supported by the member checking interviewee at the school. S2IS3 said "I suppose that's a little obstacle the rate of teachers' turnover makes it hard to build those kind of lasting links between schools." The instructional supervisor gave a personal explanation for this obstacle saying "I think partly because Dubai is so new and the schools are so new." The member checking interviewee fully agreed to this factor and added that this factor leads to "a reduction in longevity for team building, for the establishment of the relationships and the collaboration to learn, and frequent disruptions in long-term planning and long term initiatives."

The geographic location of the school.

This factor was mentioned by two of the three interviewed instructional supervisors of School 2 as having an effect on teacher learning. It was also somehow supported by the member checking interviewee who accepted after a long pause. The member checking interviewee explained that the availability of financial support at their school and its effect on teachers' ability to access many workshops limits the actual effect of this organizational condition on teacher learning, but that it would affect teacher learning in general. S2IS2 and S2IS3 spoke of teachers attending PD workshops as a factor that promotes teacher learning but that access to such PD workshops depends on the schools geographic situation, where S2IS2 said "the major factors that affect teacher learning, are first opportunity, I would imagine. You know in the international school system sometimes, it depends where you are in the world. Sometimes opportunity may not be available."

Lack of teacher acceptance of positive criticism.

Only S2IS2 mentioned this hindering organizational condition, making it an organizational condition identified at School 2 by one of the three interviewed instructional supervisors. The hindering nature of teachers' lack of acceptance of critical feedback from the instructional supervisor was approved by the member checking interviewee. S2IS2 explained that "not everybody wants help…there often are teachers who do not receive feedback very well at all, that do not want to be told that they're not doing something properly."

Summary of Collected Data

The participants of this study were a group of 30 teachers and 9 instructional supervisors. They provided their perspective regarding the definition of teacher learning, how teacher learning happens, the perceived teacher learning from the instructional supervisor, the instructional supervisory practices that promote or hinder teacher learning, and, the organizational conditions that promote or hinder teacher learning.

A cumulative definition to the term teacher professional learning, gained from the perspectives of teachers from both schools is: teacher constant learning and improvement of their skills to improve student outcomes. As for the instructional supervisors, an attempt at compiling the definitions acquired from both schools yields the following definition: teacher professional learning is continuous learning under certain conditions and through certain practices that develops teachers as educators that manifests in a change in teaching practices which leads to a change in student abilities. As for teacher learning from the instructional supervisors, the teachers identified that they learn new information and gain awareness of new teaching methods from the instructional supervisor. As per the teachers' perspective of how teacher learning comes

about, they identified teacher learning to be the result of personal efforts limited by certain factors out of the teachers' control. The instructional supervisors could not identify a specific learning teachers gain from them but all agreed that they provide teachers with professional development opportunities.

As for the factors identified to affect teacher learning, teachers identified those as teacher awareness of the need for learning, teacher willingness to learn, reflection, reading, practice, attending PD workshops, trialling and experimenting, observing others in action, and, dialogue. The instructional supervisors identified quite similar list which included teacher awareness of the need for learning, teacher willingness to learn, reflection, attending PD workshops, experimenting and practice, peer observations, research and reading, receiving feedback, and peer collaboration.

The teachers also identified instructional supervisory practices that they felt promoted their learning and those were: being responsive to teacher needs, providing constructive feedback, building a trusting relationship with teachers, collaborating with teachers, modifying organizational conditions to support teachers, providing differentiated learning opportunities, holding teachers accountable through follow up, leading by example, and mentoring. The instructional supervisors constructed a list also pertaining to the instructional supervisors' practices they took to promote teacher learning. Their list included: being responsive to teacher needs, setting a supportive learning environment, providing differentiated learning opportunities, holding teachers accountable through follow up, collaborating with teachers, being available for teachers, modelling, providing constructive feedback, building a trusting relationship with teachers, leading by example, and, mentoring.

When asked to identify organizational factors that promoted teacher learning from the teachers and the instructional supervisors' perspective, the teachers named having a flattened organizational structure and facilitating horizontal communication, budget allocation of discretionary funds for department and individual teachers spending, the provision of workshops on schoolwide curriculum issues, having a climate of cooperation at the school, teachers sharing office space, and positive teachers' attitudes towards learning. As for the instructional supervisors, they discussed the promotive effect of having scheduled learning time, giving teachers a voice on schoolwide initiatives, budget allocation of discretionary funds for department and individual teachers spending, having intra-school agreements to exchange best practices, having a climate of support for learning, having a system of accountability, having an open door policy, and, positive teachers' attitudes towards learning.

As for the instructional supervisory practices described as hindering to teacher learning, the teachers identified those as: the absence of job-embedded training, adopting a punitive supervisory approach, absence of differentiation in PD workshops, absence of accountability for teachers' learning, reluctance to share experiences and best practices, absence of guidance for new teachers, and limited in-class observations. The instructional supervisors described the hindering practices they take as completely out of their control. They listed the absence of effective teacher training, befriending teachers, the inability to set sufficient learning time for teachers, the absence of planning for teacher learning, the absence of sufficient training of instructional supervisors, and, the absence of knowledge and understanding of administration imposed ideas and concepts, all as practices hindering of teacher learning.

The teacher-identified organizational conditions that were described as hindering of teacher learning, those were the absence of scheduled learning time dedicated solely to teacher

learning, the frequent change in school wide improvement initiatives, high student numbers per class, the absence of relevant resources for teacher learning, low importance attached to teacher learning, the absence of constant teacher accountability, and, weak teacher organization and planning skills. The instructional supervisors' list of the same category of factors included: the absence of a unified vision of excellence in teaching among the instructional supervisors at the school, a high teacher turnover rate, the geographic location of the school, and, teacher lack of acceptance of positive criticism.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The aim of this study was to first identify, and explicate, teacher and instructional supervisor perspectives on how teachers learn, what they learn from their instructional supervisor, the instructional supervisory practices that promote or hinder teacher learning, and, the organizational conditions that promote or hinder teacher learning. The constant comparative interpretational approach was utilized to generate a theoretical understanding that answers the research questions of this study. Accordingly, the data collected were compared within groups of respondents, then between groups of respondents within the two schools. Emerging categories were reported and the results presented. Further, cross case analysis guided by the research questions compared the results across the two schools which resulted in refining the individual cases themes, combining others or generating new themes that represent both cases. This discussion is based on the result of the cross case analysis guided by the research questions of the study. While each school case provided insights on that particular school, the resulting synthesis represents a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under study in the context of the UAE. The discussion of the results will be based on the combined themes as synthesized by the researcher, taking into account teacher and instructional supervisor responses. This chapter will present a comparison of the two viewpoints (instructional supervisor and teachers) across the refined themes followed by a comparison of the results with the literature. Finally, the chapter concludes with some recommendations for practice and research.

Comparing Teachers and Instructional Supervisors' Conceptions of Teacher Learning

This section compares the teachers and instructional supervisors' perspective on issues pertaining to their perceptions of teacher learning; namely, how teacher learning happens and the perceived nature of teacher learning that happens directly from the instructional supervisor. The discussion will be based on the themes that emerged after comparing the perspectives of teachers and instructional supervisors within their respective groups, within each school and across schools.

Perceptions of How Teacher Learning Happens

After synthesis across cases and across groups of respondents (teachers and instructional supervisors) the following themes emerged. Both teachers and the instructional supervisors agreed that teachers learn through reflection, reading, daily practice, attending PD workshops, and observing the practice of peers/ instructional supervisors. They also both agreed that teacher willingness to learn was a building block of teacher learning. The differences between the two points of view lay in the teachers' identification of dialogue as important for teacher learning while none of the supervisors in both schools mentioned that aspect. Additionally, while instructional supervisors' felt that receiving feedback and peer collaboration were important, none of the teachers in both schools mentioned that aspect.

Table 12

Teachers' and instructional supervisors' perspective on how teacher learning happens as mentioned across schools

How teacher learning happens.	Teachers' Perspective		Instructional Supervisors' Perspective	
	School 1	School 2	School 1	School 2
Teacher willingness to learn	✓	✓	✓	✓
Daily Practice	✓	✓	✓	✓
Reflection	✓	✓	✓	✓
Attending PD workshops	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observing the actions of peers/instructional supervisors	✓	✓	✓	✓
Reading	✓	✓	✓	✓
Dialogue	✓	✓		
Peer collaboration				✓
Receiving feedback			✓	

Table 13

The number of teachers and instructional supervisors to mention each theme relating to how teacher learning happens.

How teacher learning happens.	Number Of Teachers N=30	Number Of Instructional Supervisors N=9
Teacher Willingness To Learn	28	9
Daily Practice	29	7
Reflection	28	5
Attending PD Workshops	26	6
Observing the actions of peers/instructional supervisors	24	6
Reading	24	4
Dialogue	27	-
Peer Collaboration	-	2
Receiving Feedback	-	2

Overall, the greatest weight of the responses pertaining to how teacher learning happens, pointed at teacher willingness to learn as the most recurring theme, which both teachers and instructional supervisors referred to as a main building block of learning. 37 of the 39 respondents mentioned this theme, of which 28 were teachers (out of 30) and 9 were instructional supervisors (out of 9). Whether at School 1 or at School 2, all teachers agreed that teacher willingness to learn was manifested in their ability to change their methods on the spot in class, if they sense that students are not benefiting from the lesson, and presented these actions as evidence of their learning.

Teachers from both schools made several referrals to their pedagogical knowledge base as a toolbox or bag of tricks and explained that their learning takes place while they are responding to the daily demands of their teaching responsibilities along with reflection in practice or on practice. Reflection as a means of identifying the needed learning was unanimously identified by the majority of the respondents (teachers and supervisors) of this study (33 of 39). They identified their learning as reflecting on their practice and making changes in teacher pedagogy from their current pedagogical knowledge base. Interestingly, while there was consensus across the members of both schools that the need for teacher learning has become inevitable in light of the continuous changes in the education knowledge base, not all teachers explicitly identified the need to add new teaching methods to their toolbox whilst all the instructional supervisors did.

On the other hand, viewing dialogue as a source of learning, seemed to be the major difference between the two perspectives. The results indicated that teachers' view of dialogue included exchanges between teachers and their instructional supervisor in terms of sharing experiences and best practices for learning, a practice mentioned by 27 of the 30 teachers, and

none of the instructional supervisors. The teachers' call for an oral face to face dialogue, seeking a rich medium of communication with the instructional supervisor was met by the instructional supervisors' call for a more formal encounter through written communications. According to supervisors, teacher learning happens through supervisors' written communications to teachers that include documented constructive feedback on planning or on lessons delivery. Moreover, instructional supervisors seem to envision a limited passive role for the instructional supervisor in triggering teacher learning. While they noted the importance of collaboration in contributing to this learning, they viewed that it should mainly happen among peers. If instructional supervisors are to be involved, it is up to the teacher to initiate and request this collaboration. This view of collaboration limits the supervisory role and offers few opportunities for engaging in collaborative reflections and dialogue. The different emphasis supervisors and teachers allocate to dialogue and collaboration among them, highlight a major mismatch in their professional belief pertaining to teacher learning and how it is likely to take place.

The teachers and instructional supervisors agreed on the general view of teacher learning as happening through the observation of other in practice. Teachers' identification of learning through observing the instructional supervisors' in practice by 24 of the 30 teachers, was met by 6 of the 9 instructional supervisors' perspective that teachers learn best whilst observing their peers. This further emphasizes the teachers' need for direct assistance from their supervisors, and the limited scope of supervisory practices especially when it comes to supervisors responding to the teachers' needs for guidance and resources. Rather than enhancing their role as a resource and a coach for their teachers as recommended in international models of effective instructional supervision (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2007; Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2010; Pawlas & Oliva, 2008), instructional supervisors seem to be distancing themselves from this task. Rather,

instructional supervisors seem to be directing teachers to find resource people among their peers, and calling them to be responsible to engage in this form of learning on their own. Moreover, this view threatens to broaden the gap between teachers and instructional supervisors even wider and draw light on the risks of miscommunication between teachers and instructional supervisors regarding the nature of the need for learning and teacher preference of learning methods. In fact, McNiff (2002) points at the importance of identifying current teachers' need as a preamble for their engagement in professional development. She advances that reflection and dialogue whether among peers or between teachers and supervisors is key for the identification of these needs and critical to the ability of both teachers and supervisors to enhance their learning and ultimately their practice.

The literature review of this study uncovered the teachers' perspective of several preferred methods for teacher learning; namely, reflection (Korthagen, 2010; Kwakman, 2003; Sackney & Walker, 2006), dialogue and communication (Heaney, 2004; Knight, 2002; Melville & Wallace, 2007), collaboration (James, Dunning, Connolly, & Elliot, 2007; Kohm & Nance, 2009; Vescio, Ross & Adams, 2008), mentoring (Lyne, 2013), effective professional development (Opfer, Pedder & Lavicza, 2011b; Thoonen et al., 2011; Youngs & King, 2002), action research (McNiff, 2002; Ponte, Beijaard & Wubbels, 2004), and with them and their supervisors having awareness of the nature of their needs for learning (McNiff, 2002) and with the teacher characteristic of willingness to learn (Melville & Wallace, 2007). While some of these factor were mentioned by the respondents; namely, reflection, dialogue, collaboration, research, and practice, the main difference was in the factors of mentoring, action research, and the need of being aware of the nature of the need of teachers as essential for learning, which did not emerge in this study. Based on the results, it appeared that the teachers and the instructional

supervisors in the study were focused on learning from one time stops such as reflecting on a certain practice, or discussing a certain topic with a colleague, once. Little referral was made to any continuous process of learning such as the research-identified factors of ongoing-assessment (Retallick, 1999), or action research (McNiff, 2002) or even mentoring (Lyne, 2013), which are all long term processes that require planning and commitment over time.

According to the international literature, teachers learn through different approaches that could come internally, externally, intentionally or unintentionally (Knight 2002; Maaranen, Kynaslahti & Krokfors, 2008; Webster-Right, 2009). The results of this study were very focused on the- external and intentional learning of teachers without giving much importance to unintentional learning that was reported by research to occur through the casual encounters that teachers go through during their day at school (Knight 2002; Maaranen, Kynaslahti & Krokfors, 2008). While teachers' responses pointed at this unintentional learning and reflected awareness of its importance, instructional supervisors were not giving this method as much importance and seemed to have missed completely their role in enhancing these opportunities and their active role in taking part in it through rich interactions and communication with their teachers.

The above puzzling results, invites the question of how is it then possible for teachers' to remain "experts", as some teacher respondents referred to themselves, without continuous learning to stay up to date with the changing educational spectrum. One possible interpretation that while supervisors view learning as the outcome of intentional actions, teachers' views mostly point at accidental learning, something that happen to them through their daily practices rather than something they seek. Data analysis shows that teachers seemed aware of the role that the changing educational context had played in enhancing their learning and enlarging their

repertoire of teaching tools, claimed unanimously their willingness to learn, however, their responses lacked explicit mention of their responsibility to initiate their own learning process.

Therefore, one can deduce that for teachers, learning is a passive and reactive process and that what they have acquired so far was accidental and reactive rather than intentional and proactive. This seem to suggest that teachers' underlying assumption that it is somebody else's job to provide them with the learning they need and that all they have to do is wait for the opportunity that enlarges their toolbox to happen to them. As such, those teachers seem to exemplify the dependency and learned helplessness of teachers within the educational institution often discussed in the literature (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2007)

In addition, the strong agreement among both teachers and supervisors on associating teachers' willingness to learn with how learning happen draws the attention to the perceived importance of the affective dimension. Though the literature supports the key role positive attitudes and motivation plays (Darling- Hammond et al., 2009; Thoonen et al., 2011; Owens & Valesky, 2011) in enhancing learning, the overemphasis on this factor coupled with the "passive" role teachers seem to take in enhancing their own learning, suggests that the meaning the respondents accord to "willingness" to learn adds to the teachers' image as the passive recipient whose main responsibility is to have the right attitude and will to receive the learning they are offered.

The Perceived Nature of the Learning Provided to Teachers

Comparative analysis of the results show that both teachers and supervisors attribute a limited role to the supervisors in actively contributing to teachers learning. Noteworthy, that upon repeated probing and pinpointing of the connection ,most teachers agreed to attribute

learning new information and being introduced to new teaching methods, to their instructional supervisor, albeit, insisted that it often takes place indirectly. On the other hand, the instructional supervisors at both schools could not attribute specific learnings of the teacher to themselves. They claimed to provide teachers with professional development opportunities and shared openly their doubts with regard to the effectiveness of these opportunities at actually inducing noticeable teacher learning. The instructional supervisors' inability to identify a learning the teachers went away with from their efforts at providing professional development opportunities raises questions on their effectiveness in the role the literature pinpoints as the most important in their positions; namely, providing professional development opportunities to teachers to develop teacher abilities (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2010; Hallinger, 2011). While promoting professional learning of teachers is seen as the central function of instructional supervision, the conceptions that can be constructed from the teachers' responses gives this function a very marginal contribution if any.

Comparing Teacher and Instructional Supervisors' Perspective on Instructional Supervisory Practices and Organizational Conditions That Affect Teacher Learning

This section serves present the instructional supervisory practices and organizational conditions that affect teacher learning, that emerged as a result of the researchers' synthesis of the data and to discuss the similarities and the differences between teacher and instructional supervisor perspectives in relation to the synthesized themes. It is divided into a section for the instructional supervisory practices and another for the organizational conditions.

Instructional Supervisory Practices that Affect Teacher Learning

Of all the questions asked of the participants of this study, the question of the role of instructional supervisor in relation to teachers' learning had both teachers and instructional supervisors talking the most. It is noteworthy that in most of the interviews teachers and supervisors were referring in their answers interchangeably to what should happen and what has actually happened in their experiences. Discussions during the focus group interviews revealed clearly that in order to answer the researcher they mixed both their ideal and actual practices.

Instructional supervisory practices that promote teacher learning.

Beginning with the instructional supervisory practices that have been identified as promotive of teacher learning, and after synthesis across cases and across groups of respondents (teachers and instructional supervisors) the following themes were decided upon by the researcher: being responsive to teacher needs, setting a supportive learning environment, holding teachers accountable, providing constructive feedback, building a trusting relationship with teachers, leading by example, mentoring, and building a culture of constant collaborative learning between teachers and instructional supervisors. Of these eight major emergent themes, seven were mentioned directly by teachers, while all eight were mentioned by instructional supervisors. The eighth theme that was not mentioned directly by the teachers, they had mentioned a few of its subthemes without generalization. As for the differences in the identified practices between teachers and instructional supervisors, those were most apparent in the meanings they accorded to the actual practices and were mainly reflected in the subthemes of each of the identified practices.

Table 14
Teachers' and instructional supervisors' perspective on instructional supervisory practices that promote teacher learning as mentioned across schools

Instructional supervisory practices that promote teacher learning	**Teachers' Perspective**		**Instructional Supervisors' Perspective**	
	School 1	**School 2**	**School 1**	**School 2**
Being responsive to teacher needs	✓	✓	✓	✓
Modifying organizational conditions to support teachers		✓	✓	✓
Openness to teacher ideas	✓		✓	
Addressing teacher frustrations	✓	✓	✓	
Being available for teachers	✓		✓	
Providing constructive feedback	✓	✓		✓
Acknowledging teacher effort		✓		
Celebrating teacher successes and embracing their failures				✓
Conveying positivity towards teachers	✓			
Building a trusting relationship with teachers	✓	✓		✓
Building a culture of constant collaborative learning between teachers and instructional supervisors		✓	✓	✓
Holding teachers accountable		✓	✓	✓
Mentoring		✓		✓
Sharing experiences and best practices	✓	✓		
Guiding teachers and giving suggestions	✓		✓	
Modelling		✓	✓	
Empowering teachers to extend their abilities				✓
Leading by example		✓		✓
Setting a supportive learning environment			✓	✓
Providing differentiated learning opportunities		✓	✓	✓
Attaching importance to teacher learning and building high expertise capacity			✓	✓
Bringing in professionals to address teachers for in-house training		✓		

Sending teachers to PD workshops	✓

Table 15

The number of teachers and instructional supervisors to mention each theme relating to instructional supervisory practices that promote teacher learning

Instructional supervisory practices that promote teacher learning	**Number of Teachers** **N=30**	**Number Of Instructional Supervisors** **N=9**
Being responsive to teacher needs	**29**	**9**
Modifying organizational conditions to support teachers	15	6
Openness to teacher ideas	11	3
Addressing teacher frustrations	26	4
Being available for teachers	13	5
Providing constructive feedback	**26**	**4**
Conveying positivity towards teachers	11	-
Acknowledging teacher effort	12	-
Celebrating teacher successes and embracing their failures	-	2
Building a trusting relationship with teachers	**22**	**4**
Building a culture of constant collaborative learning between teachers and instructional supervisors	**13**	**8**
Holding teachers accountable	**13**	**8**
Mentoring	**14**	**3**
Sharing experiences and best practices	24	-
Guiding teachers and giving suggestions	11	2
Modelling	12	3
Empowering teachers to extend their abilities	-	3
Leading by example	**12**	**2**
Setting a supportive learning environment	**-**	**8**
Providing differentiated learning opportunities	15	8
Attaching importance to teacher learning and building high expertise capacity	-	6
Bringing in professionals to address teachers for in-house training	6	-

Of interest, among the listed supervisory practices that were claimed to promote teacher learning, was the supervisory practice of being responsive to teacher needs which was almost frequently mentioned practice of all. All the respondents of the study; namely, 38 of the 39 participants, of whom 29 were teachers (out of 30) and 9 were instructional supervisors (out of 9) agreed on associating supervisors' responsiveness to teachers' needs with the supervisor's contribution to enhance teachers' learning. From the respondents' perspective, being responsive meant: modifying organizational conditions to support teachers, addressing teacher frustrations, openness to teacher ideas and being available for teachers. The international literature on this supervisory practice showed that the instructional supervisor's awareness of exact teacher needs and their responsiveness to those needs was indeed conducive to teacher learning (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2010; McNiff, 2002; Yeo, 2006). McNiff (2002) discussed identifying the current state, and the required state as a means of identifying the exact learning needed to achieve the required state. The terminology used by instructional supervisors, included concepts such as teacher empowerment and building a culture of constant collaboration, as well as setting a supportive learning environment or attaching importance to teacher learning or embracing teacher failures. All except one practice that were mentioned by the instructional supervisors were aligned with the instructional supervisory practices deemed effective in the international literature (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2010; Kohm & Nance, 2009; Sagnak, 2005; Youngs & King, 2002).

Despite the apparent agreement, most teachers mentioned it as a wishful statement, while all the instructional supervisors discussed it as a practice they engage in. A belief that seemed to

hover over School 1 was that teacher learning should be a personal effort with no help. An instructional supervisor that helps was described as very good and generous, and learning was very clearly labelled as something that should be done alone. This disagreement in the views suggests that instructional supervisors uphold a supervisory platform that they are yet to translate into action plans with specific strategies and practices. In contrast, teachers' answers reveal a strong level of specificity in the practices they pinpointed as enhancing or hindering their learning. Teachers recall more concrete actions such as sharing experiences or preparing guidelines, or bringing in experts to address teachers, or sending teachers out to PD workshops. This questions the belief system of the teachers at School 1, specifically beliefs pertaining to the role of the school and the instructional supervisor in teacher learning, as well as teacher beliefs about teacher learning as a one-time shot as opposed to continuous, which is very intriguing given that the teachers at School 1 defined teacher learning as an on-going process. It also raises the issue of viewing teacher learning as a personal benefit as opposed to being viewed as a benefit for the whole school. It also raises a question regarding the way teachers are viewed at the school and whether they are considered to be "workers" who conform to the platform of excellence in teaching of the school and the instructional supervisor, or, professionals hired for their knowledge and ability of continuously engaging on a quest of expanding that knowledge base.

In fact, the instructional supervisors, especially at the more successful school, showed commendable awareness of international theories of effective supervision for teacher learning but seemed to lack the link between these theories and concrete action plans that take into consideration teachers' perspective of how to address their needs. Noteworthy was that at the less successful school, the instructional supervisors did not demonstrate this theoretical

background but in comparison, discussed more concrete practices of promoting teacher learning, however their practices were random and did not have much theoretical support.

Setting a supportive learning environment was a theme which teachers did not call for per say, but mentioned 3 of its 4 practices. Interesting was that all the practices mentioned were done by teachers at School 2. At School 1 setting a supportive learning environment was not mentioned at all. This was similar to the case of the practice of holding teachers accountable for learning which 13 of the 15 participants from School 2 identified as promotive to their learning, yet no mention of it existed at School 1. Overall responses of teachers at both schools show no clear indication that teachers and supervisors' supervisory platform are anchored in professional learning. Rather, their responses reflect a preoccupation with the practices that needs to be done rather than with their focal intended outcome. This comes in contrast to scholars' calls for focusing on teacher learning as a means of improving teacher practices (Webster- Wright, 2009) connecting the latter with improving student outcomes.

International researchers gave great importance to viewing teachers as individuals capable of learning by themselves (McNiff, 2002). However, this assumption was not reflected in the results of this study. The results of this study showed that the instructional supervisors' main aim was that teachers comply with the instructional supervisors' platform of excellence in teaching rather than aiming for promoting active teacher learning or development. This implies a view of teachers as followers of instructions as opposed to one that sees them as holding their own pedagogical values and in charge of their belief systems pertaining to excellence in teaching.

Building a trusting relationship between teachers and instructional supervisors was another practice that was mentioned by 26 of the 39 respondents of whom, 22 were teachers (out if 30), and 4 were instructional supervisors (out of 9). In fact, the international literature viewed instructional supervision as effective in promoting teachers' learning when they endow trust among teachers and administrators (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2010). All teachers at School 1 seemed to trust in their instructional supervisor's pedagogical knowledge but did not view them as capable of teaching teachers. At School 2 the case was slightly different, where teachers expressed trust in their own knowledge and did not trust that their instructional supervisors would be able to add much to their existing knowledge. They emphasized that their experience with supervisors' attempts to guide them did not add much to their repertoire of pedagogical knowledgebase. Trust was very much related to the instructional supervisors' qualifications to be a mentor to teachers as well as to the level of pedagogical expertise those teachers hold. The pedagogically trained teachers at School 2 were less trusting of their instructional supervisors. On the other hand, most of the teachers at School 1 who did not have pedagogical training expressed trust in the ability of their supervisors to mentor them and guide their work. This result resonated with studies examining teachers' satisfaction, of teachers in the UAE (ADEC, 2012), finding that licensed teachers in the UAE, as opposed to other teachers, reported the least satisfaction with the current situation of professional development and effectiveness of school leadership at schools.

Second, punitive approach as a hindrance to their learning while the teachers of School 1 were satisfied with only calling for conveying of positivity as a practice that potentially promotes teacher learning. It was also the teachers of School 1 who felt that the cost of personal PD for teachers was a valid reason for not sending teachers to PD workshops outside the school,

although they did report that being sent to PD workshops was potentially promotive of the teachers' learning

Instructional supervisory practices that hinder teacher learning.

As for instructional supervisor practices that were identified as hindering of teacher learning, the teachers mentioned six practices, while the instructional supervisors identified three such practices. One theme was in common between the teachers and the instructional supervisors, but was discussed completely differently, making the common ground between the two groups of respondents null. The teachers mentioned the absence of effective teacher training, adopting a punitive supervisory approach, the absence of accountability for teachers' learning, reluctance to share experiences and best practices, the absence of guidance for new teachers, and, limited in-class observations. As for the instructional supervisors, they mentioned the negative impact of the absence of effective teacher training, befriending teachers, and the absence of adequate training for instructional supervisors as the key impediments to teacher learning. The distribution of the responses also reveal an interesting pattern. While most impediments to learning were articulated by the higher ranked school 2 teachers' respondents, most of the impediments mentioned by supervisors came from school 1 supervisors. The instructional supervisors of School 2 did not mention any practices they take that hinder teacher learning. This phenomenon could be pointing out again at the gap between the supervisory platform and that of the teachers highlighting a key reason of the challenge that these teachers are facing. As explicated by Drago-Severson (2004) an alignment in the professional beliefs on how teachers learn best is critical for providing an enabling learning environment where on-going reflective dialogue and close collaboration between supervisors and teachers prevail.

Table 16

Teachers' and instructional supervisors' perspective on instructional supervisory practices that hinder teacher learning as mentioned across schools

Instructional supervisor practices that hinder teacher learning	**Teachers' Perspective**		**Instructional Supervisors' Perspective**	
	School 1	**School 2**	**School 1**	**School 2**
Adopting a punitive supervisory approach		✓		
Lack of accountability for teachers' learning		✓		
Reluctance to share experiences and best practices		✓		
Absence of guidance for new teachers		✓		
Limited in-class observations		✓		
Absence of effective teacher training			✓	
Absence of job-embedded training	✓	✓		
Absence of differentiation in PD workshops		✓		
Inability to set sufficient learning time for teachers			✓	
Absence of planning for teacher learning			✓	
Befriending teachers			✓	
Absence of adequate training for instructional supervisors			✓	

Table 17

The number of teachers and instructional supervisors to mention each theme relating to instructional supervisory practices that hinder teacher learning

instructional supervisor practices that hinder teacher learning	**Number Of Teachers**	**Number Of Instructional Supervisors**
	N=30	**N=9**
Adopting a punitive supervisory approach	**14**	**-**
Absence of accountability for teachers' learning	**12**	**-**
Reluctance of sharing of experiences and best practices	**11**	**-**
Absence of guidance for new teachers	**11**	**-**

Limited in-class observations	**13**	**-**
Absence of effective teacher training	**-**	**2**
Absence of job-embedded training	25	-
Absence of differentiation in PD workshops	12	-
Inability to set sufficient learning time for teachers	-	3
Absence of planning for teacher learning	-	2
Befriending teachers	**-**	**2**
Absence of adequate training for instructional supervisors	**-**	**3**

The results of this study revealed that School 1 had a majority of Arab teachers while School 2 had a majority of American teachers. Although there is no budget allocation for teacher learning at School 1 yet teachers avoided identifying the lack of monetary funding as a hindering condition. No teacher brought the issue up or even expected it. And none seemed to mind. On the other hand, respondents from School 2 who reported that their school provide an abundance of resources to teachers with big departmental budgets, a personal PD budget for teachers, less students per class as compared to School 1, and more professional development workshops for teachers; were ready to critique the instructional supervisors' practices that hinder their learning and demanded their improvement. This striking difference in the above results between School 1 and School 2 point at the effect of societal culture on teachers values and practices, which was a topic discussed by several researchers in the field (Hallinger & Leithwood, 1996; O'Sullivan, 2002). Looking through a cultural comparative lens, the variance in teachers' responses could be attributed to the differences in their societal values pertaining to their readiness to offer critical views of their instructional supervisor or the school. In the Arab culture, criticism is considered a negative practice. It is also considered a negative practice to identify the shortcomings of a

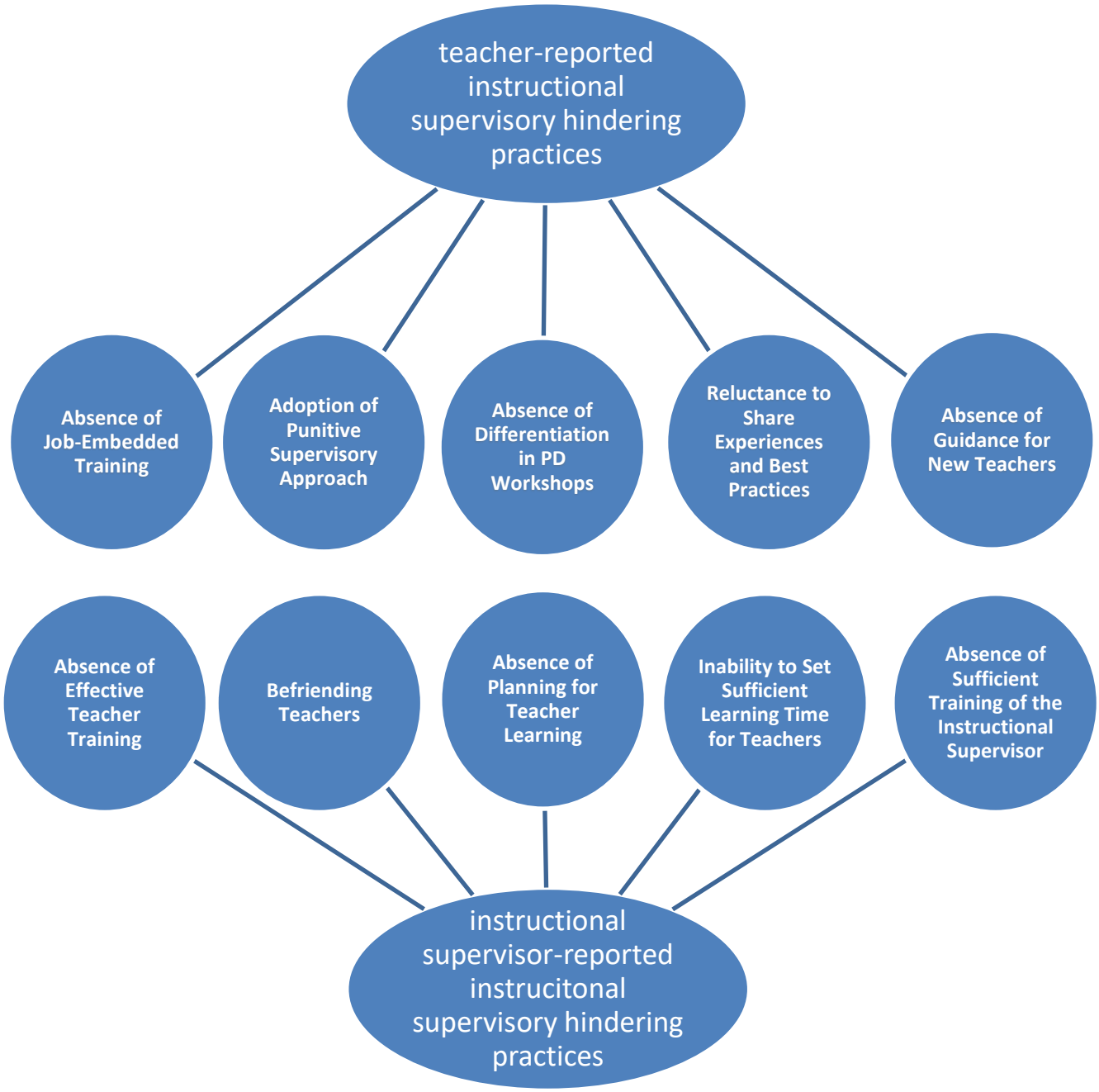
person, especially an employer, and almost a taboo to express publicly criticism of one's supervisor. The effect of societal values were also apparent through School 1 respondents' lowered voices when discussing any negative impact of the school on their learning, and through the instructional supervisors lowered voices when stating that they allow teachers to vent about the school's shortcomings, as if to say it's not accepted but that they allow it from time to time to help teachers cope because they understand and support the teachers' claims but cannot go further in terms of communicating these shortcomings of the school to the administration.

Further analysis of the results reveal four issues reported in relation to instructional supervisory practices that hinder teacher learning that are worthy of discussion.

First, it was the hindering practices reported by the instructional supervisors of School 1 that turned out to be ones that explained the hindering practices that were reported by teachers of School 2. For example, where the teachers of School 2 named the absence of new teacher guidance as a hindrance to their learning, the instructional supervisors at School 1 identified the absence of sufficient training of the instructional supervisors as a hinderer of teacher learning. The following diagram shows a visual representation of the same.

Figure 3

Teachers' vs. instructional supervisors' perspectives of instructional supervisory hindering practices.



Second, the results of this study did not show that instructional supervisory practices are built on processes that are found to be effective in promoting teachers' learning. Research studies found professional development to be effective when it is coupled with ongoing support,

differentiated according to teacher needs, and takes into consideration teacher learning processes (Gravani, 2007; Hallinger & Leithwood, 1996; McNiff, 2002; O'Sullivan, 2002; Webster-Wright, 2009). The absence of differentiation in PD workshops, was a practice overwhelmingly identified by the respondents as hindering by teachers. Although, instructional supervisors' have claimed that they uphold the principle of differentiating according to teacher needs in the supervisory practices as a mean to enhance teachers' learning and that PD offered should be satisfying to teachers to ensure the sustainability of teacher learning, they proclaimed their inability to visit all teacher classrooms for extended periods of time. Based on the analysis of the interview data, the current supervisory practices reveal that supervisors are still setting PD according to what they sense is needed, in the methods they find suitable, rather than setting PD according to teacher identified needs or teacher identified methods of PD instruction. When asked about the PD workshops that each instructional supervisor offers to their teachers, there seemed to be a common pattern in their response pointing at the fact that teachers are seldom involved in the process and that the supervisors are indeed the ones that determine from their perspective what these teachers' needs are. Selection of PD workshops is found to be decided by the supervisors in accordance with curricular reviews, yearly inspections, or, whole school action plans, all of which include no teacher input. This hints at the instructional supervisors' assumption that they possess the knowledge of what teachers want and need without referring to teachers and undermine the foundation of their claimed differentiated practices. Moreover, the instructional supervisors did show awareness of different types of learners among their teachers, but when asked about the preferred learning methods of their teachers, showed that they do not see it as part of their responsibilities to identify teachers' needs and diverse learning style.

Additionally, supervisors blamed teachers for not seeking various types of learning, and considered them solely responsible of identifying their own preferred methods and seeking the learning opportunities that suite them best. This laissez faire approach coupled with supervisors being the sole decision maker when it comes to assigning teachers to professional development activities leaves in doubt their ability to offer differentiated PD. All supervisors spoke of mandatory professional development that all teachers must attend and viewed it as conducive to teacher learning while completely ignoring catering it to teacher preferred learning methods, or providing alternatives. While instructional supervisors seemed very versed in the existing knowledge base of what constitutes effective supervisory practice, yet appear oblivious to the inherent dissonance in their expressed views and practices.

Organizational Conditions That Affect Teacher Learning

The results of this study revealed a set of conditions that teachers and supervisors identified as affecting teacher learning. These conditions will be discussed below under factors that promoted and those that hindered learning.

The constant comparative analysis across the cases revealed ten major promotive organizational conditions to teacher learning, of which four were common amongst the perspectives of both the teachers and the instructional supervisors. The common grounds between the two were in the themes of having scheduled learning time, budget allocation of discretionary funds for department and individual teachers spending, having a climate of support for learning, and, having teacher learning as an upheld organizational value. The teachers added the themes of shared office space for teachers, and, the provision of workshops on school wide curriculum issues. As for the instructional supervisors, they added, shard decision making that

gives teachers a voice on schoolwide initiatives, having a system of accountability, having a schoolwide open door policy, and, having intra school agreements to exchange best practice.

Table 18

Teachers' and instructional supervisors' perspective on organizational conditions that promote teacher learning as mentioned across schools.

Organizational conditions that promote teacher learning	**Teachers' Perspective**		**Instructional Supervisors' Perspective**	
	School 1	**School 2**	**School 1**	**School 2**
Scheduled learning time	✓		✓	✓
Budget allocation of discretionary funds for department and individual teachers spending.		✓		✓
Having a climate of support for learning		✓		✓
Teacher learning is upheld as an organizational value.		✓		✓
Teacher desire, willingness and self-motivation for learning		✓		
Perception of positive impact on student learning		✓		
Teacher's acceptance of positive criticism		✓		
Shared office space for teachers		✓		
The provision of workshops on school wide curriculum issues		✓		
Shared decision making that gives teachers a voice on schoolwide initiatives			✓	
Having a system of accountability				✓
Having a schoolwide open door policy				✓
Having intra-school agreements to exchange best practices				✓

Table 19

The number of teachers and instructional supervisors to mention each theme relating to organizational conditions that promote teacher learning

Organizational conditions that promote teacher learning	**Number Of Teachers**	**Number Of Instructional Supervisors**
	N=30	**N=9**
Scheduled learning time	**6**	**7**
Budget allocation of discretionary funds for department and individual teachers spending.	**12**	**3**
Having a climate of support for learning	**11**	**4**
Teacher learning is upheld as an organizational value.	**15**	**3**
Teachers' desire, willingness and self-motivation for learning	15	-
Perception of positive impact on student learning	15	-
Teachers' acceptance of positive criticism	11	-
Shared office space for teachers	**10**	**-**
The provision of workshops on school wide curriculum issues	**6**	**-**
Shared decision making that gives teachers a voice on schoolwide initiatives	**-**	**2**
Having a system of accountability	**-**	**4**
Having a schoolwide open door policy	**-**	**2**
Having intra-school agreements to exchange best practices	**-**	**4**

International research studies pointed that for teachers to learn they need a supportive school culture, one that fosters continuing professional development, publicizes the learning message, evaluates learning, and ensures teachers' job expectations are in line with their abilities (Caskey & Carpenter, 2012; Kolb, Osland, & Rubin, 1995; Vescio, Ross, & Adams, 2008). Similarly, the teachers participating in this study referred to the desire for further PD, and more

accountability for and facilitation of teacher learning, implying awareness of the necessity of these factors for promoting teacher learning. The instructional supervisors reported setting a supportive learning environment at the school as a practice they take to promote teacher learning with limited reference, though not attending to any of the nuances identified under setting a supportive learning environment, as mentioned by teachers. The model of a school as a professional learning community, was discussed by many researchers (Avenell 2007; DuFour, Dufour, Eakey & Many, 2006; Hord, 1997; Kruse (1995) in Fullan, 2006; Newmann, 1996; Stoll et al. 2006; Vescio, Ross, & Adams, 2008), to incorporate many of these characteristics. Specifically, shared decision making was identified as a characteristic of a professional learning community (Avenell, 2007; Hord, 1997) and as a promotive condition for teachers learning (Avenell, 2007; Hord, 1997).

However, cross case comparison of the results reveal that most of the promotive conditions that aligns with the professional learning community were mentioned by teachers and instructional supervisors of the higher ranked School 2. The higher prevalence of these views at School 2 as compared to the lower ranked School 1 reinforces the school ranking that has at its foundation promoting the school as a professional learning community (Al Taneiji, 2009). However the discrepancies revealed between the views of teachers and supervisors on the prevalence of these characteristics suggest that the organizational conditions in both schools still lag behind what the literature portrays to be the ideal characteristics of a professional learning community. Teachers and supervisors in both schools noted practices that contradicts the tenants of the professional learning community. Namely, participative decision making when it comes to assigning professional development activities is still absent. Many respondents in both schools

agree that even when the supervisor seek teachers' views of their needs, their input is quickly discarded should it contradict with the supervisor opinion.

As for the hindering organizational conditions, and after identifying themes using the constant comparative approach across cases and within cases, only one of the nine emergent themes were common amongst the perspective of teachers and that of the instructional supervisors. The common condition was the high student counts per class. The teachers mentioned the hindering conditions of lack of scheduled learning time dedicated solely to teacher learning, frequent change in school wide improvement initiatives, lack of relevant resources for teacher learning, low importance attached to teacher learning, and the lack of constant teacher accountability. As for the instructional supervisors, they agreed that a lack of unified vision of excellence in teaching in the school, a high teacher turnover rate, and, the lack of norms of accepting criticism, were all conditions that contributed to hindering teacher learning.

Table 20

Teachers' and instructional supervisors' perspective on organizational conditions that hinder teacher learning as mentioned across schools

Organizational conditions that hinder teacher learning	**Teachers' Perspective**		**Instructional Supervisors' Perspective**	
	School 1	**School 2**	**School 1**	**School 2**
High student counts per class	✓	✓	✓	
Lack of scheduled learning time dedicated solely to teacher learning	✓	✓		
Frequent change in school wide improvement initiatives	✓	✓		
Lack of relevant resources for teacher learning	✓	✓		
Low importance attached to teacher learning	✓			
Lack of constant teacher accountability		✓		
Lack of unified vision of excellence in teaching				✓

Having a high teacher turnover rate	✓
Lack of norms of accepting criticism	✓

Table 21

The number of teachers and instructional supervisors to mention each theme relating to organizational conditions that hinder teacher learning

Organizational conditions that hinder teacher learning	**Number Of Teachers**	**Number Of Instructional Supervisors**
	N=30	**N=9**
High student counts per class	23	2
Lack of scheduled learning time dedicated solely to teacher learning	27	-
Frequent change in school wide improvement initiatives	23	-
Lack of relevant resources for teacher learning	27	-
Low importance attached to teacher learning as an organizational value	13	-
Lack of constant teacher accountability	10	-
Lack of unified vision of excellence in teaching	-	2
Having a high teacher turnover rate	-	2
Lack of norms of accepting criticism	-	2

Teachers and instructional supervisors both discussed teacher acceptance of positive criticism as a critical condition that affects teacher learning. In parallel, teachers discussed the instructional supervisors' punitive approach as a hindrance to teacher learning and spoke of the need to acknowledge teacher effort and provide praise, while the instructional supervisors discussed teacher acceptance of criticism as a missing element in the quest for teacher learning.

The described lack of acceptance of criticism among teachers might be the result of their defensive mechanism to the punitive supervisory approaches that shapes their school organizational cultures.

Teachers and instructional supervisors from both schools considered the existence of scheduled learning time on a weekly basis a necessary condition to promote teachers learning. However, the teachers identified this time as being spent on non-learning matters and identified an absence of time dedicated solely for the purpose of teacher learning. Alternatively teachers' responses pointed at the existence of informal means of teacher learning such as dialogue with peers, sharing experiences and best practices with peers, and, reflection, as main practices for teacher learning. Almost all teachers identified that informal learning in the staff room was the most efficient means of teacher learning along with personal reflection, hence drawing a question mark on the need for scheduled learning time and raising the need for time and organizational conditions that promote informal learning. Moreover, dialogue, which was identified by teachers as a means for teacher learning, was mentioned as a hindrance when absent. Teachers claimed that the instructional supervisors are reluctant to share experiences and best practices. Although the instructional supervisors boasted about their open-door policy where teachers could walk in for a discussion at any time, yet this policy seems not much of a promotor of teacher learning, since teachers could not make use of it to engage in the dialogue that promotes their learning with the instructional supervisor due to restricting factors such as time. Providing conditions that allow for unstructured opportunities for teacher learning aligns with the recent shift in the literature on teacher professional learning pointing at the importance of on-the job continuous learning (Webster-Wright, 2009) and calling for organizational arrangements that support interaction among teachers and allow this naturally occurring form of learning to emerge.

On the other hand, the instructional supervisors believed that a positive organizational condition was that teachers were given a voice on schoolwide initiatives yet the teachers reported a frequent change in schoolwide improvement initiatives as a hindrance to their learning. Teachers reported that they were not given a chance to have an input on the timeliness or priority of a new initiative. Literature on effective school improvement highlight the importance of shared decision making especially when it comes to felt need among teachers to the salience of a certain initiative (Fullan, 2011a).

Some factors were found by research to hinder teacher learning and were reported through the literature review as time (Ukusowa, 2012), teacher negative emotions (Retallick, 1999), teacher isolation (Cameron, Mulholland, & Branson, 2013; Lohman, 2000), and teacher comfort with their professional stage and absence of will to progress further (Retallick, 1999). This study has identified teacher willingness to learn to be just as important at promoting teacher learning, as research reported its absence to be a hindering factor. Time, cost and isolation, were also identified as hindering factors by the participants of this study. Teacher negative emotions identified by literature as a hindrance to teacher learning was translated by the participants of this study as fear of too much change or teacher dislike of the instructional supervisor's adoption of a punitive supervisory approach. It was also apparent in the teachers' insistence of the need for the instructional supervisor to break down teacher negative emotions in order for teachers to learn. Their insistence was highlighted in their identification of the instructional supervisor's roles of conveying positivity towards teachers, acknowledging teacher efforts, and, addressing teacher frustrations, as promotors of teacher learning.

Conclusion

After completing the study and analysing the data, nothing in the results stood out as needing categorization beyond the categories present in the literature. Also, I, as a researcher, was able to paint the following understanding of supervisory practices in relation to teacher learning. All which follows is a reflection painted from the researcher's understanding of the scenario at the schools and tentative explanations of what is happening.

First the definition of teacher learning at the two schools seemed somehow similar with little detail differences. A tentative explanation of the term teacher professional learning, yielded from compiling the responses of the teachers at School 1, was: Continuous learning of how to deal with students and a means for teacher professionalism in questioning information for the purpose of overcoming obstacles that stand in the way of student improvement, through changing teaching methods. A similar tentative explanation yielded through similar means at School 2 was: The ongoing development of teachers as professionals in terms of their practice and improvement of teachers' skills to improve student outcomes and teacher careers, through different methods. Participants in the focus group at the respective schools completely agreed with these conceptions of teacher professional learning yielded at their schools.

According to the teachers and instructional supervisors, teacher learning is not something that worries them or is central to their professional life. Teacher learning is not seen as a necessity but more of a luxury. They expressed their belief in its added value but they don't see it as crucial or as necessary. This lack of necessity attributed to teacher learning was manifest in their lack of identification of their active role in sustaining professional learning. There seemed to be a very low commitment to learning per say, and as a researcher I did not sense any outrage, from their part, to not being able to actively engage in learning despite their identification of

teacher learning as crucial and necessary and of sharing a list of factors that they perceive to hinder their learning. While feeling content of their knowledge base, teachers were passively waiting for the instructional supervisors to teach them. In parallel, most supervisors blamed the teachers for their unwillingness to learn, and considered them to be the main responsible of triggering and sustaining this learning regardless of the organizational conditions these teachers face, or the presence of lack of supervisory support. There seemed to be a substantial misalignment between the views of teachers and instructional supervisors regarding their role in promoting teacher learning which kept them from being fully engaged in practices for promoting teacher learning.

Consequently, the instructional supervisor, faced with passive teachers, felt the need to adopt a directive supervisory approach, through which they direct teachers. This directive approach did not include allocating substantial time for supervisors to survey their teacher's needs, or to engage with them in a dialogue that allows for teachers' concerns and aspirations for learning to emerge. As such, instructional supervisors were left with limited information regarding teachers' actual learning needs and their preferred methods of learning, information that is essential to guide their decisions of assigning differentiated professional development activities capable of promoting effective teacher learning. This lack of communication might have accentuated the teacher passiveness as learners and has led the instructional supervisor to not attach much importance to promoting continuous teacher learning. Rather, supervisors seem to be mostly preoccupied with ensuring that the teachers' performance is not problematic and once this is ensured, they consider their role as a promoter of teacher learning completed.

The teachers on the other hand, feel overwhelmed by the responsibilities endowed on them and feel that their energy is already being drained by their daily responsibilities. They

manage their day to day practices and have little energy left to actively pursue learning, hence their passiveness. They refer to minimal learning through technical reflection on their practice to adjust small areas only when faced with a difficulty.

Finally, the teachers seemed to be content with the instructional supervisor on a personal level, but not as content with their effectiveness in their role of supervisors especially when it comes to their contribution to promote teacher learning.

Perceptions of Teacher Learning

Based on the responses of teachers and instructional supervisors, teacher learning seemed not to be central the teachers' profession from both perspectives and although they identified its added value yet neither seemed to insist on it. Which could be the result of their lack of understanding of its importance. Vescio, Ross and Adams (2008) identified the need for a hovering sincere understanding of the importance of continuous teacher learning.

It also seemed that teachers could not identify their active role in pursing and sustaining professional learning. They seemed to be passively waiting for learning to be bestowed upon them. In fact, research supports the claim that self-directed professional development is the most efficient types of professional development due to its association with the high teacher conviction of the need for learning and actively pursuing it (Mushayikwa & Lubben, 2009).

Moreover, instructional supervisors seem to view teacher learning as a personal gain with no resonance on the school, hence the lack of enthusiasm to actively spend resources and energy on promoting it. Stoll et al. (2006) advocated for collective learning as indicating the promotion of group learning not just individual learning, whilst linking it to building a collective purpose among teachers and instructional supervisors of enhancing student learning.

Perceptions of How Teacher Learning Happens

The respondents viewed teacher learning as triggered through reflection. However, most of the reflection they discussed was technical reflection (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2010; Schon, 1995). Based on Schon's (1995) lens, teachers' and instructional supervisors' learning is engaging in critical reflection which questions the fundamentals underlying their work. Critical reflection did not seem to occur to them. It is not just to better the current state but to reflect on the values underlying the methods used and improving those.

Instructional Supervisor's Contribution to Teacher Learning

Teachers in this context barely seem to learn and should any learning take place, it seems to happen through the personal efforts of the teachers without the instructional supervisor's facilitation. For some teachers, it was for the consequence of the instructional supervisor failure to fulfil that function of their role. The other part of the teachers, view that the instructional supervisor shouldn't have that big of a role in their learning since they were very doubtful of the instructional supervisor's qualification to take on such a role. The teachers' inability to identify a figure from whom they learn from at the school and the view of instructional supervisors as solely a link between teachers and the administration, leads to a concern regarding the instructional supervisor's role as a promotor of teacher learning. Despite the teachers' expressed need for help in promoting their learning the existing supervisory and organizational conditions seem to fall short of fulfilling this sought after need. While the international literature is full of assertions of the centrality of the supervisor as an instructional leader to promote teacher learning (Hallinger, 2011; Rudland et al., 2010; Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2007) the study reveals that their role is at best marginal in the context of the case schools. This conclusion replicate the results

reached by El Murr (2015) that Lebanese teachers view their instructional supervisors as links to the administration rather than as agents who contribute to enhancing teachers' learning.

While downplaying the importance of the effective supervisory contribution to promoting their learning, teachers in this study emphasized the call for supportive organizational conditions that are responsive to their needs. When reflecting on the nature of these supportive conditions, teachers' responses were focused on finding means to overcome alone the difficulties they face on a daily basis. Seeking facilitative conditions for learning while allocating a marginal role to supervisors could be promising in that it supports the calls in the international literature for professionalizing teaching (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Sergiovanni, 2005; Webster-Right, 2009) and for giving more discretion to teachers to lead their own professional development. However, this same result warrants a different interpretation of the culturally shaped role of teachers as passive executors with no sense of responsibility for promoting their own learning or that of their schools (Karami-Akkary, 2014). Teachers might be overemphasizing the role of supportive organizational conditions in their learning as an excuse to not engage in that learning. The respondents parallel emphasis on the importance of teachers' willingness to learn, leave the researcher wandering whether this willingness is even present.

On the other hand the instructional supervisors in this study mostly spoke of a directive supervisory approach, where the supervisor is the sole source of information, and the main authority behind all decisions pertaining to the structured professional development activities. Supervisors seem to feel justified to adopt this approach with no expressed interest for differentiation and have shown no signal of valuing their teachers' potential for independent learning. Although scholars postulate that using a directive supervisory approach is necessary with novice teachers and in situations where there is acute lack of basic skills among teachers

(Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2010) they warn against the overuse of this approach and consider it an impediments to professional growth and a reflection of a restrictive bureaucratic organizational arrangement. According to researchers, professional growth thrives in organizational context that value learning and facilitate the building of both individual and social capital (Dufour et al., 2006; Fullan, 2011a; Pawlas & Oliva, 2008; Senge, 2006).

Hinderers of Teacher Learning

Analysis of the results of the study presented a discrepancy in instructional supervisors' and teacher platforms. Where research called for the identification of teacher pedagogical values and aligning them with the school's platform of excellence in teaching (Youngs & King, 2002), this study showed a mismatch in the pedagogical values between teachers and instructional supervisors and in their educational platform. There seemed to be mismatch in the values pertaining to how teachers learn and specifically how to communicate with teachers to promote teacher learning, where the instructional supervisors focus on abstract concepts while teachers were more concrete with their discussions. At the conclusion of this study and in light of the data analysis, one is left to wonder whether supervisors or teachers are aware of their respective educational platform, and whether their actions are aligned with its underlying professional beliefs. While the teacher platform seem to allude to a profile of a teacher who is an independent learner, the supervisors' unquestioned adoption of the directive approach reveals a supervisory platform plagued with contradictions. On one hand, teachers are blamed for their unwillingness to learn and are invited to be the leaders of their own learning, on the other, decisions regarding those teachers learning and the kind of guidance they offered point at a view of the teachers as the dependent worker. While it is commendable that the supervisors are aware of theoretical best practices, and that they have incorporated these practice into their educational lexicon,

supervisors seem to fall short of translating these practices into strategies that support the growth of their teachers and that stand true to the underlying assumptions of their stance. Supervisors' lack of investment in getting to know, first-hand, the needs of their teachers and to listen to their perspective on how they can be addressed, constitutes further evidence of the road yet to be travelled to bridge the gap between their announced beliefs and the supervisory practices reported by their teachers. The Arab cultural background of the teachers and the instructional supervisors was also found to be a hindering factor of teacher learning. A mismatch between teacher culture and norms and the norms and culture required for the enactment of teacher learning. Researchers call for special attention need to be given when creating the conditions found in the literature to promote teachers learning on the barriers that can be faced (O'Sullivan; 2002; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). Introducing the democratically based norms of a professional learning community into a paternalistic authoritative society is a major challenge that requires high levels of participation and collegiality among all involved.

Recommendations for Practice

This section will present recommendations to schools, instructional supervisors and teachers on how to further promote teacher learning after having analysed the data and compared it to the international literature on the topic.

The results of the study point at a clear mismatch among supervisors and teachers when it comes to their professional beliefs pertaining to teacher learning and the factors that contribute to enhancing it. It is strongly recommended that values-driven leadership (Youngs & King, 2002) is adopted and that individual pedagogical platforms are made clear and that action research is used to facilitate any required change in such values to align them with the school's platform of

excellence in teaching to achieve shared pedagogical values (Glickman, Gordon & Ross-Gordon, 2010; McNiff, 2002; Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2007).

It is also strongly recommended that a collaborative developmental supervisory approach or a collegial supervisory approach (Glickman, Gordon & Ross-Gordon, 2010; Kohm & Nance, 2009), is adopted with learning as its central concern and collaboration as the main practice used. It seems inevitable that instructional supervisors and teachers communicate and collaborate to identify teacher values and learning needs, set a plan of the required change, and work to close the gap between the two states. Glickman, Gordon and Ross-Gordon (2010) in their call for developmental supervision, demanded an extensive awareness and knowledge from the instructional supervisors of teacher needs.

The absence of teacher accountability for their own learning was named as a hindrance to teacher learning showing that teachers do not feel responsible for their learning or feel ownership of the learning initiatives set by the instructional supervisors. Promoting a self-directed (Mushayikwa & Lubben, 2009) learning style is recommended as it gives teachers a sense of ownership and accountability for their own learning.

Instructional supervisors do not fully highlight the importance of informal learning and are recommended to support creating organizational arrangements that allow more space for teachers to interact informally, and to facilitate teacher peer learning. Moreover, the focus seems to be on supervisory practices and professional development, rather than professional learning (Webster-Wright, 2009; Darling-Hammond, 2003). It is recommended that a shift in perspective happens from focusing professional development activities to focus on professional learning that occurs from these activities (Webster-Wright, 2009). Also a shift from viewing professional

development as an initiative done *to* teachers, to more of a collaborative scenario where professional development in done *with* teachers (Kohm & Nance, 2009). It is also recommended that informal learning be given importance and value be given to a job embedded approach where a need for the instructional supervisor to be observant and use opportunities that emerge through interaction and work to enhance teachers' work beyond the planned learning experiences (Webster-Wright, 2009).

Schools are also recommended to provide the instructional supervisors with training on how to gain the teacher trust as a trusted mentor and training on how to become good mentors. Knowledge and training on adult learning theories, or andragogy (Kolb, Osland, & Rubin, 1995), is also recommended since the instructional supervisors seemed to lack awareness of teacher learning preferences or the nature of the learning they need, and yet research claims its importance (Glickman, Gordon & Ross-Gordon, 2010).

This study revealed that teacher willingness to learn was the most important factor for teacher learning. It was noted as such by both parties participating in this study. The culture of the society in which the school lies was also identified as having a great impact on teacher learning. It is strongly recommended that schools invest abundant time and resources to spread awareness of the importance of teacher learning and convince teachers of the need for change, whilst building a culture of professional learning at the school, shifting the school into a professional learning community.

Finally, reflection was a practice that research gave great importance to as a teacher learning method. It was also strongly identified by both teachers and instructional supervisors participating in this study. It is recommended that school administrations and instructional

supervisors allow for more teacher reflection, and since teachers learn best informally, it is recommended that their reflection is done with their peers and instructional supervisors in informal settings.

Research Recommendations

This study was conducted on two schools, each one from different rating category and covers two of the four available categories. It is recommended to study more than one school from each category and to cover all the rating categories of the UAE. It is also recommended to make the results into a questionnaire and send it out to a bigger number of teachers. Making the results into a questionnaire passed out to teachers may bring to light more information that the teachers were reluctant to mention during the interviews. It is further recommended that observations at the school take place for the researcher to better understand the practices and conditions that take place. Also, the results of this study can become the foundation for large scale investigation that examine the nature and the extent of impact the effect of organizational conditions that emerged from this study as affecting teacher learning.

It is also recommended to have two parts to each interview conducted with each participant. One for identifying how they prefer to learn and the practices and conditions they feel promote or hinder their learning and a second part where the practices identified by the instructional supervisors are reflected on in terms of effectiveness.

APPENDIX A

Teacher Individual Interview Protocol

Part 1- opening the session

The researcher will explain about thesis topic, and ethical perspective and confidentiality

1- What do you understand by the term professional learning, how would you define it?
2- What are the general factors that contribute to this learning?
3- Do you think instructional supervisor contribute to promoting the professional learning of their teachers? In what ways?

Part- 2- Core of the interview

1- What would you like to learn from your instructional supervisor and how do you think you would learn it best? Give examples.
2- What are the factors related to instructional supervision and the actions of instructional supervision that contribute to enhancing your professional learning? Give specific examples.
3- What are the factors related to instructional supervision and the actions of instructional supervision that you consider obstacles for your professional learning? Give specific examples.

Part 3 - Ending the session

The researcher will review the findings of the interview and thank the teacher for their time and cooperation and reemphasize confidentiality

APPENDIX B

Supervisor Individual Interview Protocol

Part 1- opening the session

- The researcher will explain about the purpose of the study as well as the ethical protocols

  1- What do you understand by teacher professional learning? How would you define it?

  2- What are the general factors that contribute to the teacher professional learning?

  3- Do you think instructional supervisor contribute to promoting the professional learning of their teachers? In what ways?

Part 2- Core of the discussion

1- What would you do as an instructional supervisor to help teachers learn and grow? Give examples.

2- What are the factors related to instructional supervision and the actions you take as an instructional supervisor that contribute to enhancing your teacher professional learning? Give specific examples.

3- What are the factors related to instructional supervision and the actions you take as an instructional supervisor that you consider obstacles to your ability to promote the professional learning of your teachers? Give specific examples.

Part 3 - Ending the session

The researcher will review the findings of the interview and thank the teacher for their time and cooperation and reemphasize confidentiality

APPENDIX C

Teachers Focus Group Protocol

Part 1- opening the session

1- The researcher will briefly explain the topic of the research study as exploring teacher professional learning in light of the practices of instructional supervisors and emphasize confidentiality

2- Explain that instructional supervisors and teachers were interviewed looking for their perspectives on how they believe teachers learn as professionals and on the factors, especially those related to the instructional supervision practices, that promote or hinder this professional learning.

Part 2- Core of the discussion

1- The researcher will present the themes that emerged from the analysis of the data that were collected from teachers and supervisors. Namely, she will present the instructional supervisor practices that were identified by teachers as promoting or hindering their learning then ask the respondents if they agree or disagree with each theme and why. They will also be asked to identify any other themes that may have been missed.

Part 3- Ending the session

The researcher will review the finalized themes and thank the teachers for their cooperation and time.

APPENDIX D

Individual Instructional supervisor Member Checking Protocol

Part 1- opening the session

3- The researcher will briefly explain the topic of the research study as exploring teacher professional learning in light of the practices of instructional supervisors and emphasize confidentiality

4- Explain that instructional supervisors and teachers were interviewed looking for their perspectives on how they believe teachers learn as professionals and on the factors, especially those related to the instructional supervision practices, that promote or hinder this professional learning.

Part 2- Core of the discussion

2- The researcher will present the themes that emerged from the analysis of the data that was collected from teachers and supervisors. Namely, she will present the instructional supervisor practices that were identified by instructional supervisors as promoting or hindering their learning then ask the respondent if they agree or disagree with each theme and why. They will also be asked to identify any other themes that may have been missed.

Part 3- Ending the session

The researcher will review the finalized themes and thank the instructional supervisor for their cooperation and time, along with re-emphasizing confidentiality.

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