

REFRAMING TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: A QUALITATIVE STUDY ON INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AND CAPACITY BUILDING IN SCHOOLS

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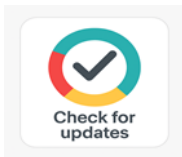
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Abstract

Keyword:

Teacher professional development, instructional leadership, capacity building, professional learning communities, qualitative research, Malaysia

This qualitative study examines the reframing of teacher professional development (TPD) through the lens of instructional leadership and capacity building in Malaysian school contexts. Drawing on in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis involving 24 participants comprising school principals, senior teachers, and instructional coaches across six secondary schools in Pahang, Malaysia, the study explores how instructional leaders conceptualize and enact professional development to build teacher capacity. Findings reveal four overarching themes: (1) instructional leadership as a catalyst for professional growth, (2) collaborative learning cultures as the foundation of capacity building, (3) the tension between top-down mandates and bottom-up teacher agency, and (4) context-sensitive approaches to sustaining professional learning communities. The study contributes a conceptual reframing of TPD as an embedded, relational, and leadership-driven process rather than a series of episodic training events. Implications for school leaders, policymakers, and teacher educators in the Malaysian educational landscape are discussed.



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Introduction

Teacher professional development (TPD) has long been recognized as a cornerstone of educational reform and school improvement. Globally, educational systems are increasingly confronted with the challenge of ensuring that teachers not only possess adequate subject-matter knowledge but are also equipped with the pedagogical competencies, adaptive skills, and reflective practices necessary to meet the demands of 21st-century learners (Darling-Hammond et al., 2019).

In Malaysia, the Ministry of Education's Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013–2025 has placed significant emphasis on transforming the teaching profession, recognising that the quality of teachers is the single most powerful determinant of student outcomes (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2013). Despite substantial investments in training programmes, workshops, and certification courses, the prevailing model of professional development characterised by short-term, one-size-fits-all training sessions has been widely criticised for its limited impact on sustained instructional change (Kennedy, 2019; Opfer & Pedder, 2011). This gap between the design and implementation of TPD and its intended outcomes in classroom practice underscores the urgent need to reframe how professional development is conceptualised and enacted in schools.

Instructional leadership has emerged as a critical mediating factor in the effectiveness of teacher professional development. School principals and senior educational leaders who prioritise instructional improvement, establish coherent professional learning structures, and foster collaborative cultures are more likely to produce durable changes in teaching practice (Hallinger, 2020; Robinson et al., 2019). Instructional leaders who engage directly with teachers' instructional challenges, provide targeted feedback, and model reflective inquiry contribute significantly to the growth of teacher knowledge and competence. Capacity building, as an organisational and pedagogical imperative, extends beyond individual teacher growth to encompass systemic efforts to develop collective expertise, shared leadership, and institutional readiness for continuous improvement (Fullan & Quinn, 2020). Understanding how instructional leadership and capacity building intersect in actual school settings is, therefore, a critical inquiry for educational researchers and practitioners alike.

Despite the growing body of literature on instructional leadership and professional development globally, there remains a notable gap in empirical research conducted within the Malaysian schooling context, particularly at the secondary school level and in semi-urban and rural settings. Research in South-East Asia has demonstrated that cultural norms, hierarchical school structures, and policy mandates often shape the ways in which professional development is experienced by teachers and enacted by leaders (Hairon et al., 2019; Wong et al., 2020). In Malaysia specifically, studies have highlighted the persistence of compliance-oriented professional development cultures, where participation in training is driven by administrative requirements rather than genuine pedagogical inquiry (Abdullah et al., 2021; Musa et al., 2022). This study, situated in secondary schools in the state of Pahang, seeks to contribute localised knowledge to the global discourse on TPD by exploring the lived experiences of teachers and instructional leaders as they navigate the complex terrain of professional learning within their institutional and cultural contexts.

This paper presents findings from a qualitative study designed to explore how instructional leadership practices shape the professional development of teachers and contribute to capacity building in schools. Using a phenomenological-interpretivist framework, the study draws on the voices and perspectives of principals, senior teachers, and pedagogical coaches to construct a nuanced understanding of how TPD is reframed — not as a bureaucratic obligation, but as an embedded, relational, and leadership-mediated process of professional growth. The significance of this study lies not only in its empirical contribution to the literature on instructional leadership and TPD in the Malaysian context but also in its practical implications for school leaders who seek to design more meaningful, contextually responsive, and capacity-enhancing professional learning experiences for their teachers. The following sections present the conceptual grounding of the study through a review of relevant literature, the research questions guiding the inquiry, the methodological approach adopted, and a detailed discussion of the findings and their implications.

Literature Review

2.1 Evolving Conceptualisations of Teacher Professional Development

The conceptualisation of teacher professional development has undergone significant transformation over the past two decades, shifting from a deficit-oriented, transmission-based model toward a more constructivist, collaborative, and practice-embedded paradigm (Darling-Hammond et al., 2019; Desimone & Pak, 2017). Traditional approaches to TPD, characterised by one-off workshops, external expert-led training, and decontextualised content delivery, have consistently been found to produce minimal impact on teacher practice and student learning outcomes (Kennedy, 2019; Sims & Fletcher-Wood, 2021). In contrast, high-quality professional development that is sustained over time, rooted in subject-specific pedagogy, aligned with school improvement goals, and embedded in collaborative professional learning communities has demonstrated substantial positive effects on both teacher effectiveness and student achievement (Cordingley et al., 2020; Opfer & Pedder, 2011). This paradigmatic shift reflects a broader reconceptualisation of teachers not as passive recipients of externally generated knowledge but as active inquirers, co-constructors of professional knowledge, and agents of instructional improvement. Recent scholarship has further emphasised the importance of design principles in professional development, including coherence with curriculum standards, opportunities for active learning, modelling of effective practice, and the provision of coaching and expert support as essential components of transformative TPD (Darling-Hammond et al., 2019; Ingersoll & Strong, 2020).

2.2 Instructional Leadership and Its Role in Professional Development

Instructional leadership, broadly defined as the set of behaviours and practices through which school leaders influence the instructional quality of teaching and learning in their schools, has been identified as one of the most significant school-level variables affecting teacher development and student outcomes (Hallinger, 2020; Leithwood et al., 2020). Hallinger and Heck's (2010) seminal work established a positive indirect relationship between principal instructional leadership and student achievement, mediated primarily through teachers' professional capacity and motivation. More recent research has extended these findings to illuminate the specific mechanisms through which instructional leaders foster professional growth, including the establishment of clear instructional goals, the provision of structured opportunities for teacher collaboration, the use of data to inform teaching decisions, and the creation of psychologically safe environments for pedagogical risk-taking (Bush & Ng, 2019; Robinson et al., 2019). In the context of developing countries and Southeast Asian educational systems, instructional leadership has been linked to enhanced school effectiveness when leaders successfully navigate the tensions between hierarchical authority structures and the distributed, collaborative practices that meaningful professional development demands (Hairon et al., 2019; Wong et al., 2020). Leithwood et al. (2020) synthesised evidence from over 30 years of research to assert that transformational and instructional forms of leadership account for a significant proportion of variance in school quality indicators, reinforcing the centrality of leadership in any serious effort to reform TPD.

2.3 Capacity Building as an Organisational and Professional Imperative

Capacity building in educational contexts refers to the deliberate and systematic development of individual, collective, and organisational capabilities necessary to sustain school improvement and professional learning over time (Fullan & Quinn, 2020; Stoll & Louis, 2019). At the individual level, capacity building involves the growth of teachers' pedagogical content knowledge, reflective practice, and adaptive expertise. At the collective level, it encompasses the cultivation of shared norms of inquiry, collaborative planning, peer observation, and reciprocal accountability among professional learning communities (PLCs). At the organisational level, capacity building requires the alignment of leadership structures, professional development systems, resource allocation, and cultural conditions that support continuous learning as an institutional priority (Hargreaves & O'Connor, 2018; Stoll & Louis, 2019). Scholars have consistently argued that capacity building is most effective when it is co-constructed through dialogue between leaders and teachers, grounded in the specific instructional challenges of the

school context, and reinforced through coherent systems of support, feedback, and recognition (Fullan & Quinn, 2020; Sims & Fletcher-Wood, 2021). In the Malaysian context, capacity building initiatives have frequently been constrained by resource limitations, examination-oriented school cultures, and the predominance of top-down policy implementation that leaves limited space for teacher agency and school-based professional learning (Abdullah et al., 2021; Musa et al., 2022).

2.4 Professional Learning Communities and Collaborative Professional Practice

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) have gained considerable traction as a structural and cultural mechanism for embedding professional development within the daily practices of school life (DuFour et al., 2021; Stoll & Louis, 2019). PLCs are characterised by shared values and vision, collective inquiry, collaborative working, and a focus on results and student learning as the ultimate measure of professional effectiveness (DuFour et al., 2021). Research from diverse international settings has demonstrated that PLCs contribute to improvements in teaching quality, teacher retention, instructional coherence, and school-wide learning cultures when they are genuinely collaborative rather than merely coordinative, and when they are sustained by supportive leadership, adequate time, and a clear focus on instructional improvement (Hairon et al., 2019; Tam, 2015). In Malaysian schools, the implementation of PLCs — formally mandated through the Professional Learning Community (KPM-PLC) policy — has produced mixed results, with many schools reporting surface-level compliance rather than deep professional inquiry due to time constraints, examination pressures, and a lack of leadership facilitation skills (Mohd Nor & Aziz, 2021; Siti Noor & Ainon, 2022). Wong et al. (2020) found that PLC effectiveness in Malaysian secondary schools was strongly mediated by the degree to which school leaders modelled collaborative inquiry and created structural conditions that protected teacher time for professional learning. These findings underscore the indispensable role of instructional leadership in translating PLC policy into genuine professional learning practice.

2.5 Teacher Agency and the Politics of Professional Development

While much of the literature on TPD has emphasised systemic and leadership-driven approaches to professional learning, a growing body of scholarship has foregrounded teacher agency as a critical dimension of effective professional development (Priestley et al., 2021; Vangrieken et al., 2017). Teacher agency, understood as the capacity of teachers to act purposefully, reflectively, and proactively in shaping their professional practices and identities, is both a prerequisite for and an outcome of meaningful professional development (Priestley et al., 2021). Research has documented the ways in which externally imposed professional development mandates, standardised curriculum frameworks, and performance management systems can undermine teacher agency by reducing opportunities for choice, creativity, and professional judgment in the design and pursuit of professional learning (Kennedy, 2019; Sims & Fletcher-Wood, 2021). At the same time, instructional leaders who successfully cultivate teacher agency through participatory leadership, professional autonomy, and inquiry-oriented cultures are more likely to sustain genuine professional learning and instructional improvement over time (Hargreaves & O'Connor, 2018; Leithwood et al., 2020). In the Malaysian context, the tension between top-down professional development policy requirements and the grassroots professional learning needs of teachers has been identified as a persistent challenge, with calls for more school-based, teacher-led, and contextually responsive TPD frameworks that honour teacher professionalism while aligning with national educational goals (Abdullah et al., 2021; Hairon et al., 2019; Musa et al., 2022).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study is guided by the following research questions:

- RQ1: How do instructional leaders conceptualise and enact teacher professional development within their school contexts?
- RQ2: What leadership practices and structures contribute to capacity building and professional growth among teachers?
- RQ3: How do teachers experience and respond to instructional leadership-driven professional

development initiatives?

RQ4: What contextual factors shape the effectiveness of professional development as a capacity-building strategy in Malaysian secondary schools?

Methodology

Research Design

This study adopted a qualitative research design, specifically employing a phenomenological-interpretivist framework to explore the lived experiences of instructional leaders and teachers in relation to professional development and capacity building. Qualitative methodology was deemed most appropriate given the study's aim to generate rich, contextually grounded, and interpretive accounts of social phenomena that are not amenable to quantification (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The phenomenological orientation of the study guided the research towards understanding the meaning that participants ascribe to their experiences of professional development, while the interpretivist epistemological stance positioned the researcher as an active co-constructor of knowledge through engagement with participants' narratives, contexts, and perspectives (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). The study drew on elements of case study design, treating each of the six participating schools as a bounded case within a cross-site multiple case study framework, allowing for both within-case depth and cross-case analytical comparison (Yin, 2018).

Research Setting and Participants

The study was conducted in six secondary schools (Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan) in the state of Pahang, Malaysia, selected purposively to represent variation in school size, geographical location (urban, semi-urban, and rural), and School Performance Band (Band 1 to Band 4). Participants were selected through purposive and snowball sampling strategies to ensure that the sample included individuals with direct experience of instructional leadership and professional development processes. A total of 24 participants were recruited, comprising six school principals, eight senior teachers (Penolong Kanan) with instructional leadership responsibilities, and ten classroom teachers with varying years of teaching experience (ranging from 3 to 28 years). Participant demographics included both male and female educators, representing Malay, Chinese, and Indian ethnic backgrounds, and teaching a range of subjects across the humanities, sciences, and technical vocational streams. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and institutional ethical approval was secured from the relevant educational authorities prior to data collection.

Data Collection

Data were collected through three primary methods: in-depth semi-structured interviews, non-participant classroom observations, and document analysis. Semi-structured individual interviews were conducted with all 24 participants, lasting between 45 and 90 minutes each, in Bahasa Malaysia and English according to participant preference. An interview guide was developed based on the research questions and informed by the theoretical literature, with questions exploring participants' understandings of professional development, their experiences of instructional leadership, and their perceptions of capacity building processes in their schools. Three participants also participated in follow-up member-checking interviews to verify the accuracy of preliminary interpretations. Non-participant classroom observations were conducted in 18 classrooms across the six schools, with each observation lasting a full instructional period (approximately 60 minutes), focusing on evidence of professional learning, instructional leadership influence, and capacity-building practices in teaching. Document analysis encompassed school improvement plans (Pelan Pembangunan Sekolah), PLC meeting minutes, teacher evaluation records (PBPPP forms), professional development schedules, and school leadership committee documentation. Field notes, interview transcripts, and documents were systematically coded and organised using NVivo 12 qualitative data management software.

Data Analysis

Data analysis proceeded through an inductive thematic analysis process, following the six-phase framework proposed by Braun and Clarke (2021): (1) familiarisation with the data through repeated reading and memo-writing; (2) initial coding of meaningful units across interview transcripts, observation notes, and documents; (3) generating preliminary themes from clusters of related codes; (4) reviewing and refining themes against the full dataset; (5) defining and naming themes with clear analytical descriptions; and (6) producing the final analytical narrative. To ensure rigour and trustworthiness, several strategies were employed including member checking with selected participants, peer debriefing with two academic colleagues, investigator triangulation through team-coded sub-samples, and thick description of participants' contexts and quotations to enable transferability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Nowell et al., 2017). Negative case analysis was also employed to identify and account for cases or perspectives that deviated from or challenged emerging thematic patterns, strengthening the credibility of the final interpretations (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

4.5 Positionality and Reflexivity

As a researcher situated within Malaysian higher education with prior experience in teacher education and instructional leadership development, I maintained an ongoing reflexive journal throughout data collection and analysis to monitor the influence of my positionality on interpretive decisions. Reflexive memos documented moments of researcher-participant resonance and dissonance, epistemological tensions, and analytical choices, contributing to the audit trail necessary for establishing the dependability and confirmability of qualitative findings (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Particular attention was paid to bracketing assumptions derived from my familiarity with the Malaysian educational system and to remaining open to participant-generated meanings that challenged or complicated my prior understandings.

Findings

Thematic analysis of the data yielded four primary themes, each encompassing a set of sub-themes that together construct a comprehensive understanding of how instructional leadership shapes professional development and capacity building in Malaysian secondary schools.

Theme 1: Instructional Leadership as a Catalyst for Professional Growth

Participants consistently identified the role of the school principal as the primary driver of professional development culture in their schools. Principals who actively engaged with teachers' instructional challenges, modelled reflective practice, and communicated a clear vision for instructional excellence were perceived as creating conditions that motivated and sustained professional learning. One principal articulated this orientation explicitly: *My job is not just to manage the school. My job is to make sure every teacher grows that every year, they are better than the year before.* Senior teachers similarly described how principals who engaged in 'learning walks' (pemerhatian instruksional) and provided specific, non-evaluative feedback on classroom practice significantly enhanced teachers' confidence and pedagogical knowledge. In contrast, schools characterised by principalships focused primarily on administrative compliance reported markedly lower levels of professional engagement among teachers, with one experienced teacher noting: *"We go to the courses because we have to. Nobody really asks us what we learned or how we will use it in class".* Across all six schools, a direct relationship was observed between the degree of principal instructional engagement and the depth and coherence of professional development activities, consistent with findings reported by Hallinger (2020) and Robinson et al. (2019).

Theme 2: Collaborative Learning Cultures as the Foundation of Capacity Building

The findings highlight collaborative professional culture as the organisational infrastructure through which instructional leadership translates into teacher capacity building. Schools where PLCs were genuinely collaborative involving co-planning, mutual classroom observation, shared data analysis, and

reflective dialogue demonstrated substantially higher levels of teacher-reported instructional growth compared to schools where PLC meetings were primarily administrative in function. A senior teacher in one of the higher-performing schools described the PLC culture: *"We look at the students' work together. We ask, what worked? What did not? And then we plan together how to do better next time. It is normal for us now"*.¹ Teacher participants in these schools also reported greater confidence in experimenting with new instructional strategies, attributing this to the psychological safety created by collaborative professional relationships. Significantly, the data revealed that collaborative learning cultures were not self-sustaining but required deliberate cultivation through structural supports dedicated PLC time within the school timetable, clear facilitation roles for senior teachers, and principal participation in selected PLC sessions to signal leadership commitment to professional learning.

Theme 3: Tension Between Top-Down Mandates and Teacher Agency

A prominent and recurring tension in the data concerned the conflict between externally mandated professional development requirements and teachers' professional agency and self-directed learning. Many participants expressed frustration with nationally prescribed training programmes (e.g., *Kursus Dalam Perkhidmatan*) that were perceived as disconnected from their actual classroom realities and pedagogical needs. As one veteran teacher observed: *'They send us to courses in the city about 21st-century learning, but when we come back, the system, the exams, the culture nothing has changed. So, what do we do with what we learned?'* This dissonance between mandated TPD content and school-level instructional realities is well-documented in the literature (Abdullah et al., 2021; Kennedy, 2019) and was vividly illustrated across multiple participant narratives. However, the findings also documented instances of constructive tension, where teachers with strong professional agency actively adapted, contextualized, and shared externally acquired knowledge within their school's collaborative learning structures, thereby bridging the gap between policy intent and classroom practice. Instructional leaders who explicitly created 'translation spaces' structured opportunities for teachers to critically examine externally provided professional development content in the light of their specific school contexts were found to significantly mitigate the negative effects of top-down mandates on teacher motivation and learning transfer.

Theme 4: Context-Sensitive Approaches to Sustaining Professional Learning Communities

The fourth theme that emerged from the data concerns the critical importance of contextual sensitivity in the design and sustainment of professional learning communities as vehicles for capacity building. Participants from rural and semi-urban schools described unique contextual challenges including multi-grade teaching demands, limited access to specialist subject colleagues, teacher shortages, and community expectations centred on examination performance that necessitated adaptations of PLC structures and professional development approaches found in urban or well-resourced school contexts. Several principals from smaller rural schools described the development of cross-school PLCs, facilitated through video conferencing and collaborative online platforms, as an innovative response to the challenge of professional isolation. Additionally, the data revealed the importance of cultural sensitivity in professional development design, particularly in relation to the Malaysian school context where hierarchical respect norms (*budaya hormat*) and collegial face-saving practices (*menjaga air muka*) can inhibit the honest professional dialogue central to effective collaborative learning. Instructional leaders who successfully navigated these cultural dimensions of professional development establishing trust, modelling vulnerability, and creating safe spaces for constructive professional feedback were able to build more authentic and impactful learning communities, regardless of the resource or geographic constraints of their school settings

Discussion

The findings of this study offer several significant insights that extend and nuance the existing literature on teacher professional development, instructional leadership, and capacity building in school contexts.

The overarching argument emerging from the data is that TPD must be reframed theoretically, structurally, and culturally from a set of episodic, compliance-driven training events to an embedded, relational, and leadership-mediated process of professional growth that is responsive to the specific instructional realities and cultural contexts of individual schools.

The centrality of instructional leadership as a catalyst for professional development, as evidenced in Theme 1, reinforces and extends findings from global leadership research (Hallinger, 2020; Leithwood et al., 2020; Robinson et al., 2019). However, the study's Malaysian data adds contextual nuance by illustrating how the instructional engagement of school principals can be both enabling and constraining depending on the degree to which it is exercised through collaborative rather than directive leadership modes. Principals who functioned as instructional partners and learning facilitators, rather than as evaluators and compliance monitors, were found to be more effective in building sustainable professional learning cultures. This finding aligns with the distributed leadership literature (Spillane, 2005) and with recent calls for a shift from 'instructional leadership' as a principal-centric model to 'leadership for learning' as a shared, collaborative, and morally grounded school-wide practice (Hallinger, 2020; Stoll & Louis, 2019).

The identification of collaborative learning cultures as the foundational infrastructure of capacity building (Theme 2) corroborates the PLC literature's emphasis on collective inquiry and shared professional responsibility (DuFour et al., 2021; Stoll & Louis, 2019). Importantly, however, the study's findings underscore that PLCs in the Malaysian context function most effectively when they are directly linked to classroom instructional evidence student work, assessment data, and lesson observations — rather than being confined to curriculum planning or administrative discussions. This aligns with Sims and Fletcher-Wood's (2021) argument for 'implementation-focused' professional development and with Cordingley et al.'s (2020) meta-analytic finding that the use of pupil outcome data as the anchor for professional learning conversations is a key differentiator between effective and ineffective PLCs.

The tension between mandated professional development and teacher agency documented in Theme 3 represents a particularly salient finding for Malaysian educational policy. The persistence of compliance-oriented TPD cultures, driven by Ministry of Education training quotas and performance evaluation requirements, appears to systematically undermine the intrinsic professional motivation and contextual responsiveness that are essential conditions for meaningful learning transfer. These findings echo Kennedy's (2019) influential typology of professional development impact, which distinguishes between approaches that generate surface compliance versus those that foster transformative change in teachers' instructional thinking and practice. The concept of 'translation spaces' spaces in which teachers can critically and creatively adapt externally generated knowledge to their specific classroom and school contexts — offers a practical and theoretically grounded mechanism for bridging the policy-practice gap in TPD, representing an original contribution of this study to the practical knowledge base.

Finally, the fourth theme's emphasis on context-sensitive professional development approaches challenges the tendency in both international TPD research and Malaysian educational policy to apply standardised, one-size-fits-all professional development frameworks across diverse school settings. Rural and under-resourced schools face unique structural, cultural, and professional challenges that require distinctly tailored approaches to capacity building including cross-school PLCs, distance-facilitated professional learning, and culturally adapted models of reflective professional dialogue. This finding aligns with Hairon et al.'s (2019) regional research on PLCs in Southeast Asia, which similarly calls for the contextualisation of professional learning frameworks to honour local institutional cultures, resource conditions, and teacher professional identities. For the Malaysian Ministry of Education and school improvement policy, the implication is clear: effective capacity building cannot be achieved through standardised training protocols alone but requires the development of school leaders' capacity to design, facilitate, and sustain contextually responsive professional development ecosystems within their own schools.

Conclusion

This study has presented empirical evidence and interpretive analysis in support of a fundamental reframing of teacher professional development in Malaysian secondary schools. By foregrounding the role of instructional leadership, collaborative learning cultures, teacher agency, and contextual sensitivity, the study contributes a theoretically coherent and empirically grounded reconceptualization of TPD as an embedded, relational, and leadership-mediated process of professional growth. The four themes generated through phenomenological-interpretivist analysis instructional leadership as catalyst, collaborative learning cultures, the tension between mandates and agency, and context-sensitive sustainability collectively paint a picture of professional development as a complex, multi-dimensional, and deeply contextual social process that cannot be reduced to training events or compliance metrics.

For school leaders and educational policymakers, the findings offer concrete and actionable insights: invest in developing principals' instructional leadership competencies; create structural conditions for genuine collaborative professional learning; design professional development policies that honour and build upon teacher agency and local knowledge; and develop differentiated, context-responsive capacity-building frameworks for schools operating in diverse geographic, cultural, and resource contexts. Future research should examine the long-term impact of leadership-driven, collaborative professional development on teacher instructional quality and student learning outcomes across different school contexts, and explore the potential of technology-mediated professional learning communities to extend capacity-building opportunities to under-resourced and geographically isolated schools in Malaysia and the broader Southeast Asian region.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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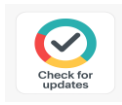
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