

School of Education

**Intercultural Coaching: Developing Educational Leadership in the
United Arab Emirates**

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Declaration

To the best of my knowledge and belief this thesis contains no material previously published by any other person except where due acknowledgment has been made.

This thesis contains no material that has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university.

The research presented and reported in this thesis was conducted in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007) — updated March 2014. The proposed research study received human research ethics approval from the Curtin University Human Research Ethics Committee (EC00262), Approval Number EDU-139-13

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Abstract

The global world of international work assignments is very real. The Abu Dhabi Education Council (ADEC) in the emirate of Abu Dhabi, in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) employ Western ‘experts’ on a large scale to progress their stated vision to be recognised as a world-class education system within a short time frame. ADEC has identified the development of leadership in school principals as a crucial component of the reform agenda. However, research has suggested that many successful leaders, when transitioned into an international, cross-cultural context, fail to function effectively in the position for which they have been employed and that many leaders are not prepared adequately for dealing with the complexity of this environment. Although extreme differences in culture do not preclude effective coaching, the lack of a common language can be a significant barrier to working together effectively. Further, preliminary research indicated a dearth of literature on definitive coaching approaches or guidelines that were relevant to a complex, intercultural context such as the Middle East, which could facilitate the desired outcome of improving educational leadership capability.

This doctoral study analysed the extent to which existing Western leadership coaches identified with and applied specific coaching approaches in developing the leadership capability of principals, before considering the factors that both enhanced and inhibited the coaching relationship in this unique intercultural context. The observed practices and interview responses were analysed in considering whether:

1. there was a unique application of intercultural coaching approaches
2. there were specific factors that enhanced and/or inhibited the coaching relationship.

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List of Abbreviations

ADEC	Abu Dhabi Education Council
AI	Appreciative Inquiry
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
HoF	Head of Faculty
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
KG	Kindergarten
NLP	Neuro-linguistic Programming
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education
SIP	School Improvement Plan
SLIP	School Leadership Improvement Plan
SLT	Senior Leadership Team
UAE	United Arab Emirates
VP	Vice Principal

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background

Since approximately 2007, the Abu Dhabi Education Council (ADEC) has employed Western educational leadership practitioners to work alongside local principals (predominantly Emirati nationals). Their expressed intent has been to develop and improve both local, individual leadership performance and school performance. These are determined predominantly by measurement tools such as principal evaluation, and independent inspections using a modified model from the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) from England and standardised international student equity indicators such as the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA). This research study focused on the Western leadership practitioners and the predominantly national principals they work with across the approximately 250 schools.

The central focus of this study was coaching leadership development. The specific coaching relationship studied was one in which the coach (a Western expatriate) had English as their first language and the coachee (an Arabic principal) had Arabic as their first language. In other words, there was no *lingua franca*, or sharing of a mother tongue (Scollon, Scollon, & Jones, 2012). Additionally, both participants had diverse cultural backgrounds and possibly educational experiences. Often, translators were used to assist communication between the coach and the principal, yet many of these translators were simply staff members within the school with no formal training in translation.

One specific component, situated in significant studies, informed the context of this intercultural setting. This component, called ‘cultural power-distance’ orientations, is common to two often-cited studies: Hofstede’s four dimensions of

culture, which was carried out between 1967 and 1973 (Chhokar, Brodbeck, & House, 2012; Hingston, 2012; Lucas, 2003) and the GLOBE study encompassing 61 countries with its nine cultural dimensions and power-distance measures (Hingston, 2012; Mansour, Dorfman, de Luque, & House, 2006). ‘Power-distance’ is defined as ‘the extent to which members of society expect power and influence to be distributed equally in that society’ (Chhokar et al., 2012, p. 849). Turkey was chosen as the representative country of the Arab culture and in relation to these two cultural dimensions, Turkey scored low on *performance orientation*, which is described as ‘the degree to which society encourages people to continuously improve performance effectiveness and achievements’ (Chhokar et al., 2012, p. 842), and high in *power-distance*. The country was considered a hierarchical society, ‘where employees are afraid to express disagreement with their managers’ (Chhokar et al., 2012, p. 849.).

Hingston analysed the works of Hofstede, elaborating on the above power-distance index definition by stating that this measures the ‘influence between a more powerful individual and a less powerful individual’ (Hofstede, as cited in Hingston, 2012, p. 23), giving the example of a manager and subordinate. Hingston’s study supported the above GLOBE study, which rated the Arab countries as having a high power-distance index, while it rated the Australians as being low on the power-distance index, meaning Australians in a subordinate role were found to be more prepared to challenge authority in situations more than their Arab counterparts (Hofstede, as cited in Hingston, 2012).

Power-distance orientation and performance orientation were particularly relevant to this research within the context of providing performance feedback.

1.2 Significance of this Study

The literature pertaining to coaching educational leaders in an intercultural context, in which the participants in the coaching relationship come from diverse cultural contexts, with no *lingua franca*, is limited. Many leaders are not provided with the prerequisites to deal with the complexity of this new cultural environment (Black and Mendenhall, as cited in Story, 2011; Lovvorn & Jiun-Shiu, 2011), in which language barriers may be considerable and influence project success or failure directly (Peterson, 2007). Yet, the ADEC, in employing Western ‘experts’ to develop the national educational leadership capability on a large scale, considers such an approach a critical determinant in building leadership capability and resulting in improved school and student performance outcomes.

This research took a naturalistic inquiry approach to identifying whether the various approaches in the intercultural setting identified with the coaching approaches and theories of learning outlined in the literature review, as well as the extent to which context-specific approaches existed. The study has provided empirical evidence in an area where there is a gap in the research. This data may be beneficial to several educational participants either in the Middle Eastern context, or in a comparable educational context. These participants would include, but not be limited to, the ADEC itself, the various companies and individuals contracted out to implement leadership coaching in the government schools, the various universities and companies working in government schools, and the research community in general. The research outcomes could assist these participants with future coaching improvements. Additionally, this research may be beneficial to similar educational agencies in countries utilising similar intercultural coaching approaches.

1.3 Research Objectives

The study aimed to examine the extent to which leadership coaches identify with and apply a specific coaching approach in developing principal leadership capability, within the context of ADEC government schools. Based on this context, the study also aimed to identify the factors that enhanced or inhibited the coaching relationship. The literature review has been divided into two parts: Part A begins by examining theories of learning; Part B examines the application of these theories within various coaching models and approaches.

Most literature on coaching educational leadership appears to be generic, originating from monocultural/monolingual research settings. All six English Western leadership-coaching participants in this research study were English first-language speakers who had substantial educational leadership experience and principalship in their countries of origin. These leadership coaches had been employed to coach leadership capability of Arabic first-language principals in a workplace setting that was, in general, unfamiliar to the leadership coaches.

This study consisted of six interpretive case studies examining the extent to which identifiable coaching approaches existed. Applying grounded theory design methodology, the empirical data was used to analyse the enhancing and inhibiting factors in a coaching relationship that consisted of a Western leadership coach and an Arabic principal.

The study specifically explored the following key research questions:

1. What coaching approaches are Western leadership coaches using in their work to develop the leadership capability of the (predominantly) national principals?

2. In the context described in Question 1, what factors enhance the coaching relationship?
3. In the context described in Question 1, what factors inhibit the coaching relationship?

1.4 Limitations of the Research

Although the six state schools, six leadership coaches and six principals encompassed all three regions of the emirate of Abu Dhabi, this research sample was quite small. With approximately 250 schools, 250 principals and 45 leadership coaches, future studies should include a larger sample of principals and leadership coaches. Second, due to a few extenuating circumstances, a 100% completion rate of interviews and observations at all six schools was not obtained. Further studies should aim for a higher completion rate at each research site. Third, with many of the conversations being in Arabic and owing to poor-quality translation of the principal responses, the research findings focused predominantly on the perspectives and responses of the six leader coaches, rather than on those of the six principals. Future studies in this area should consider the use of a trained Arabic translator in all observations and interviews. Given these limitations, generalisation of the results across all the state schools should be applied with caution.

1.5 Thesis Structure

Chapter 1: Introduction provides the background information for the educational context and nature of the reform process that is taking place in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The significance of the study is outlined, as well as the research objective and three research questions. The chapter concludes by addressing the limitations of this study and outlining the thesis structure.

Chapter 2: Literature Review is a review of related theory and previous research. This chapter provides definitions of coaching and mentoring, outlining important similarities and differences. Part 1 (Section 2.4) introduces relevant learning theories that inform educational coaching models and approaches. Part 2 (Section 2.5) presents reviews of the prevalent educational coaching models and approaches within the over-arching third-generation coaching model.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology is a detailed description of the way the research and analysis was conducted and is divided into two parts. Part 1: Methodological Theory (Sections 3.1 to 3.3) explains the research design related to the interpretive multiple case study, examining the selected approach of grounded theory applied during the data analysis. Part 2: Methodological Procedure (Sections 3.4 to 3.9) presents a breakdown of the research setting, participants involved and the data collected primarily through semi-structured interviews and observations. The application of the data analysis approach of grounded theory is also presented.

Chapter 4: Presentation of Data presents the results of the study in eight sections. Sections 4.2 to 4.7 are the six individual case studies. Section 4.8 presents a cross-case analysis of the six case studies. The chapter ends with a synthesis of the results related to the three research questions.

Chapter 5: Discussion examines the results derived from the data, presenting the findings in the form of reflections, followed by observations made within each of the three research questions.

Chapter 6: Conclusion presents a summary of the research findings and considers opportunities for further research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Overview

This literature review has been divided into two parts. Part 1 focuses on exploring the theoretical underpinnings of coaching by briefly tracing the origins of coaching and defining the practice. Mentoring is defined in this section and differentiated from coaching. The importance of the terms coaching and intercultural coaching is explained. The first part of the section on learning theory gives an overview of its theoretical framework, with two simple models presented. These two models form the ‘frame of reference’ to further discuss and explain theories of learning and coaching approaches. Secondly, three learning domains (adult learning, transformative learning and cross-cultural learning) are presented within the learning theory framework. Eight learning models are examined within these three learning domains.

In Part 2, consideration is given to practical coaching models and approaches, presenting six coaching models and approaches within Stelter’s three-generation coaching framework. These models were chosen for the following reasons:

- They generally have sound links to learning theory.
- They appear to represent a considerable proportion of coaching models and approaches used by many individuals and organisations in many countries.
- They appear to be well represented in research literature.
- They may be the most relevant to the setting of this research study.

To qualify this last bullet point, the background section of this thesis alerts the reader to this research context of focusing on developing educational leadership capability to improve school performance.

PART 1: COACHING AND LEARNING THEORY

2.2 Origins of Coaching

Contemporary use of the term ‘coaching’ is applied to a wide range of contexts and practices. Stelter (2014) suggested that the original use of the term derived from around 1830, as suggested in Cox, Bachkirova and Clutterbuck (2014), in a town located in northern Hungary. The original meaning of coach is that of an instructor or trainer. Later in that century, it was applied to athletes to improve their performance. Stelter (2014) and Whitmore (2010) agreed with this by positing coaching to have its origins in sport and originally defining coaching as ‘unlocking people’s potential to maximise their own performance’ (Gallwey, as cited in Whitmore, 2010, p. 22).

The original, rudimentary application of the notion of coaching in sport can be troublesome in understanding coaching in general. Parsloe and Wray (as cited in Ives, 2008) viewed sport coaching as akin to a form of mentoring. They elaborated by suggesting that aligning sports coaching to coaching in general has led to confusion and such rudimentary analogies have found their way into education. Parsloe and Leedham (2009) argued that the skills required to be a successful sportsperson are far narrower than are those required to be, say, a successful principal. The former is motivated more by competition and pleasure, whereas the latter is motivated by a mixture of reluctance, fear and resistance to change (Parsloe & Leedham, 2009). They warned about the dangers of applying such a narrow and simplistic approach.

Parsloe and Leedham (2009) suggested that from around 1980 onwards, coaching was influenced by a wide array of disciplines, or what they term ‘influencers’, these being management and academic influencers, human resource

professional influencers, counselling, psychotherapy, psychology and philosophy influencers, and the professional body influencers. Today coaching, as well as literature related to coaching, comes from a diversity of organisations, disciplines and interrelated fields (Lennard, 2010).

There are many forms of coaching (Cox, 2015) and because of the plethora of coaching approaches, offering a single, accurate definition can be challenging. The earlier quotation, ‘unlocking people’s potential to maximize their own performance’ (Gallwey, as cited in Whitmore, 2010, p. 14) provides a suitable place to start in defining coaching. There appears to be consensus among many researchers (Connor & Pokora, 2012; Forde, McMahon, Gronn, & Martin, 2013; Huff, Preston, & Goldring, 2013; Ives, 2008; Robertson, 2008; Stober, 2008; Whitmore, 2010; Wise & Jacobo, 2010) that coaching, on a broad scale, consists of a deliberate, purposeful, facilitated learning relationship between two or more people. Further, the aim of the coaching relationship is to release potential, resulting in development, whether in the form of improved capacity or performance, personal growth, achievement of identified goals or acquisition of skills valued by the coachee. The ultimate responsibility or motivation to change and learn lies in the hands of the coachee; that is, the client, not the coach. Connor and Pokora (2012), Huff et al. (2013), Ives (2008) and Wise and Jacobo (2010) termed this ‘potential resulting in development’ and capacity building. Capacity building, states Reeves (as cited in Wise & Jacobo, 2010), is a necessary element of coaching for sustainability.

The following coaching definition by Robertson (2008) possibly best-fits the nature and context of this research study—‘coaching, . . . is a special, sometimes reciprocal, relationship between (at least) two people who work together to set professional goals and achieve them’ (p. 4).

2.3 Coaching or Mentoring: Definitions and Differences

Researchers Parsloe and Wray (as cited in Ives, 2008) believe that coaching aligns with mentoring. Indeed, coaching and mentoring are terms often used interchangeably in research. Many researchers (Clutterbuck, 2008; Connor & Pokora, 2012; Forde et al., 2013; Ives, 2008; Whitmore, 2010) believe that both coaching and mentoring have struggled with problems of definition and boundaries that are blurred and ambiguous. It is therefore pertinent to explore the extent to which commonalities and differences exist between coaching and mentoring.

According to Parsloe and Leedham (2009, p. 19), Mentor, a character from Greek mythology, was a 'wise and trusted adviser or counselor'. Clutterbuck (2008) and Whitmore (2010) agreed that mentoring 'has its origins in the concept of apprenticeship, when an older, more experienced individual passed down his knowledge of how the task was done' (Clutterbuck, 2008, p. 26). Wise and Jacobo (2010) discussed the 'mentoring' of a recently arrived or younger individual. From an educational perspective, Bolam (as cited in Bush & Coleman, 1995) described mentoring as a process of 'peer support, which is intended to get beyond anecdote and sympathy' (p. 61). The context of this quote was in assigning mentors, or experienced head teachers, to newly appointed head teachers as they transition into their new roles. Thus, in this context, mentoring was associated with career transition, personal support, career development and even professional development. This context has been supported by (Carnell, MacDonald, & Askew, 2012), who saw mentoring as a longer-term process than coaching.

Contemporary research points to a growing recognition of coaching as being distinct from mentoring. Researchers (Bachkirova, Jackson, & Clutterbuck, 2011; Bush & Coleman, 1995; Forde et al., 2013; Wise & Jacobo, 2010) have suggested

that while mentoring was once the preferred term and coaching was considered a subset of mentoring, coaching is now recognised as a distinct process. In education, Bush (as cited in Forde et al., 2013) highlighted the National College in England's recognition of coaching as being a key approach to leadership development. Ives (2008) quoted multiple researchers who all listed numerous forms of educational coaching, from humanistic to adult learning to life coaching.

Various literature (Carnell et al., 2012; Clutterbuck, 2008; Connor & Pokora, 2012; Parsloe & Leedham, 2009; Pask & Joy, as cited Forde et al., 2013) has reported that there is a significant overlap in the skills and principles underlying both coaching and mentoring. The European mentoring and coaching council, for example, recommended that both coaching and mentoring are useful terms (Ives, 2008). While a consensus has emerged that distinguishes mentoring (instructional) from coaching (non-directive), Parsloe and Leedham (2009) believed that the boundaries were not set firmly. Thus, while some approaches to coaching strenuously discourage the coach from advice giving, others regard the coach as a guide (Cavanagh, 2006). Connor and Pokora (2012) defined both coaching and mentoring as learning relationships that help people take charge of their own development, release their potential and achieve results that they value.

The coaching and mentoring debate has two further contentious issues. The first involves whether a coach should have not just coaching expertise but also subject knowledge in the area being coached. Cavanagh (2006) insisted that expert knowledge is critical to coaching, without which the coach is no more than a 'well meaning amateur' (p. 342). Robertson (2008) saw coaching as a reciprocal process in which both the coach and coachee are from similar contexts and roles and in the most part, equal in terms of an authority or power relationship. Ives (2008) labelled this

domain-specific expertise and suggested that this issue can provoke intense disagreement and polarise opinion. The second issue or debate is centred on whether a coach/mentor should be a line manager and directly involved in performance evaluations. Although feedback is considered a feature of coaching, (Gundling, Hogan, & Cvitkovich, 2011; Peterson, 2007; Robertson, 2008), others (Carnell et al., 2012; Forde et al., 2013; Whitmore, 2010; Reiss, as cited in Wise & Jacobo, 2010) have suggested that is not advisable for the coach to be involved in the evaluation of the person being coached.

As noted earlier, the terms ‘coaching’ and ‘mentoring’ are often used interchangeably in both the workplace and research. Some researchers (Clutterbuck, 2008; Mosquera-Pardo, 2001; Parsloe & Leedham, 2009) believe that trying to arrive at single definition that can be applied to all situations is less important than allowing a specific situation or context to define the process that is applied. In other words, the organisational needs should define which of the terms is used. If the focus is performance improvement, then the term ‘coaching’ would be the appropriate terminology; if the focus is career transition and personal growth, then ‘mentoring’ would be considered the better term (Parsloe & Wray, as cited in Ives, 2008; Whitmore, 2010). Additionally, Parsloe and Leedham (2009) stated that while mentors in the workplace are seldom the direct line managers, a coach very often is.

2.4 Learning Theory

Regardless of the specific form of coaching, all coaching practices are underpinned by learning theory (Cox et al., 2014, 2015). How people learn, as well as the learning process, may determine not only *whether* someone is coaching or mentoring but also *how* people coach and mentor (Carnell et al., 2012; Lennard, 2010; Robertson, 2008; Whitmore, 2010). Lennard (2010) said that because coaches

facilitate the learning process of the people they coach, they must understand how adults learn, particularly if they use and apply coaching models. As applied to educational leadership, theories of learning are related and individual's beliefs and values and together, these form the 'educational platform' (Robertson, 2008, p. 29) on which leadership coaches base their decisions.

A definition of learning within this context is 'the extension and clarification of one's experience' (Knowles, Holton, & Thompson, as cited in Cox et al., 2014, p. 6). A further definition of learning has been offered by Askew and Carnell (2012), who stated that learning involves changes to behaviour, thinking or perceptions of something. These authors referenced Habermas' three domains of learning, but cautioned that they are more relevant to classroom learning and adult education than to coaching. Askew and Carnell (2012) presented the following three learning domains of their own:

Domain 1: Learning how to control, manipulate and act in the environment

Domain 2: Learning for personal meaning through making sense and developing insights and understanding

Domain 3: Learning about the self through reflection on the self in practice (i.e., reflective learning).

These three domains were based on the work of Mezirow (Askew & Carnell, 2012), whose theory on transformative learning is presented in this literature review. The importance of understanding learning principles cannot be underestimated (Askew & Carnell, 2012), as they underpin models of coaching. As models of coaching are an important element of this literature review, further detail about learning theory is pertinent at this point.

Table 2.1 presents two simplistic models regarding learning theories, from two separate authors. Although the authors do not reference each other, these models have been placed alongside each other to show their many similarities. When combined, these two models provide a reference point to examine the work of specific learning theorists whose work underpins coaching practices.

Table 2.1

Theories of Learning

Learning Theory: Model 1^a		Learning Theory: Model 2^b	
Model name	Conception of learning	Model name	Conception of learning
1. The instructional model	Learning by teaching	1. Knowledge <i>for</i> practice	Knowledge is disseminated
2. The construction model	Learning by understanding	2. Knowledge <i>in</i> practice	Knowledge gained by doing
3. The co-construction model	Learning by dialogue	3. Knowledge <i>of</i> practice	Knowledge gained in learning communities

a) From Watkins, as cited in Carnell et al., 2012, p. 5; b) From Cochran-Smith, as cited in Robertson, 2008, p. 35).

Model 1 for both authors (the instructional model and knowledge for practice model) is based on the principle that individuals learn through listening to someone, in this case a coach. Therefore, the coach applying this learning theory delivers by telling, by giving advice, by doing most of the talking and being the ‘expert’. The coachee plays a more passive role in these models.

At the other end of this learning continuum is the co-construction model or knowledge-of-practice model of learning, in which people learn through gaining understanding through dialogue, in this case with a coach. The role of the coach is mainly to facilitate dialogue and collaborative enquiry. Hargrove (2008) called this being a thinking partner. At this level, both the coach and the person being coached

are critically reflective. This co-constructing stage situates itself in social-constructivist principles (Carnell et al., 2012; Robertson, 2008). Social-constructivist principles entail learning at both the individual level and more importantly, at the group level.

A professional learning community (PLC), whereby individuals learn in a collaborative context, is an example of adult learning in a social-constructivist sense. The term 'PLC' is a relatively contemporary term (Foord & Haar, 2013) that appears to blend the terms 'coaching', 'professional development' and 'learning organisation' (Wise et al., 2010). The contemporary principal is charged with developing a learning culture where all members within an educational community continually interact in a collaborative manner, in the interests of school improvement (Wise et al., 2010). Foord (et al., 2013) points to growing evidence that having a high functioning professional learning community improves teaching and learning outcomes, leading to improved student learning outcomes.

Lastly, the construction, or knowledge-in-practice, models of learning lie in between these two extremes. This model is explored in more depth in the next section in David Kolb's experiential learning model (Kolb & Kolb, 2009, p. 298).

Lennard (2010) provided a framework of coaching models comprising three domains:

- adult learning
- transformative learning
- cross-cultural learning.

She listed various theorists within each of these domains, briefly describing the work of each, as outlined in the following sections.

2.4.1 Adult Learning: Andragogy

The term ‘andragogy’ was coined by Knowles in 1970 (Cox et al., 2014; Lennard, 2010) to link both adult learning theory and coaching (Cox, 2015) and to distinguish between pedagogic instruction of children (Cox et al., 2014) and adult learning principles (Lennard, 2010). Andragogy is an example of a constructivist learning approach, with prior experience having a major influence on both a person’s attitude to learning and the creation of new learning. Knowles argued that a readiness to learn is based on the relevance that learning will have to the person’s life. The ‘six characteristics of adult learners that are thought to influence how they approach learning’ (Cox, 2015, p. 29) are as follows:

1. *The need to know:* The relevance of learning to everyday life.
2. *Adults are self-directed:* Adults, being autonomous learners, respond better to facilitated, rather than directed, learning, which has direct links to coaching and the giving of feedback.
3. *Adults have an abundance of previous life and work experience.* Because adults have acquired a wealth of life and work experience, this may act as what Knowles termed a ‘gatekeeper’ to new learning, with the potential to both inspire and inhibit learning.
4. *Adults learn when they are ready and have a need to learn.* Here, Cox (2015) talked about entering a new job, or new challenge in an existing job, as being a time when adults are receptive to new learning. She linked the GROW (Goal Setting, Reality, Options, What) coaching model to this aspect of learning.

5. *Adults are life-centred in their orientation to learning.* New learning has an immediate effect on, or relevance to, a person's everyday work or personal life.
6. *Adults can respond to internal motivators.* Internal motivation or 'internal pay-offs' (Cox et al., 2014, p. 30) are more powerful than are external motivators such as government initiatives (Cox, 2015).

2.4.2 Adult Learning: The Experiential Learning Cycle

Though experiential learning has its foundations in the works of Dewey, one of the most influential pieces of work was carried out by David Kolb (Beaudin & Quick, 1995). In 1984, David Kolb developed the experiential learning cycle, which he defined as 'the process whereby knowledge is created through transformation of experience' (Kolb & Kolb, 2009, p. 298). The experiential learning cycle is central to understanding how people learn in any context, not just the context of coaching (Lennard, 2010). The cycle has the following four equally weighted stages (Robertson, 2008):

Stage 1: Concrete Experience. This stage is about engaging in actual experiences. The coaching activities each participant participates in at this stage of the cycle 'construct' future reflection and application.

Stage 2: Reflective Observation. Reviewing and critically reflecting on current or prior coaching experiences and actions, are features of stage two. The coach at this stage of the cycle would facilitate dialogue and help the coachee consider future actions.

Stage 3: Abstract Conceptualisation. The focus of stage three is about bridging the gap between theory and action. Robertson (2008) said this stage

involves the coach helping the coachee deconstruct and gain meaning from actions and reflections.

Stage 4: Active Experimentation. This stage actively exploring options and alternatives to problems and actively applying solutions. Once again, the coach's role is one of facilitation and confidence building, assisting the coachee with making sound leadership decisions.

2.4.3 Adult Learning: Theories of Action

In the 1970s, Schön and Argyris examined the role that prior experience plays in shaping and permitting new learning (Lennard, 2010). Schön's work studied two main concepts: knowing-in-action and reflection-in-action, with the associated reflection-on-action. Schön and Argyris noticed that people had mental maps of how they planned, implemented and reviewed their actions. In simple terms, they noticed that there was a disconnect between what people said they would do and what people did: in other words, a difference between 'espoused theory' and 'theory-in-use'. The challenge was to bring the two different 'theories of action' into congruence.

Knowing-in-action, which Schön refers to as knowledge-in-action, is similar to Stage 1 of Kolb's experiential learning cycle (concrete experience) and to the knowledge-*in*-practice, and knowledge-*of*-practice models mentioned in Table 2.1. That is, the learner is responding to experiences. These experiences form the basis of reflection-in-action. Although the differences between reflection-*in*-action and reflection-*on*-action are subtle, they can be differentiated: reflection-in-action being the process of an individual pausing amid action to 'think' without altering the outcomes; and reflection-on-action being the process of reflecting, after the event, on an action or actions. Schön said this latter process has a critical function (Schön, 1991), as the next step in the process is like Stages 3 and 4 of Kolb's experiential

learning cycle; that is, to make sense of phenomena. The purpose of making sense of phenomena is to consider future actions.

From a coaching perspective, Lennard (2010) termed this reflecting as experimenting in real time. The role of the coach is in facilitating these reflections, and structuring and re-structuring the learning conversations and future experiences and actions. The knowing-in-action, reflecting-in-action and reflecting-on-action form the basis of future actions and then the cycle starts again.

2.4.4 Adult Learning: Single-, Double- and Triple-loop Learning

Single-, double- and triple-loop learning is based on the work of organisational theorists Argyris and Senge (Eilertsen & London, 2005). Each loop is explained briefly here in relation to the role of a coach and later in this chapter, triple-loop learning is addressed in relation to a specific model of coaching in an organisation.

2.4.4.1 Single-loop Learning

This is when an individual within an organisation focuses on their actions and on how they could do these actions better. Eilertsen et al. (2005) stated that single-loop learning does not challenge one's mental models or existing learning framework. Such learning would be seen in jobs in which actions are repetitive and routine. Lennard (2010) suggested that an employee receiving some advice from a line manager or colleague regarding how to improve an action would be an example of this learning.

2.4.4.2 Double-loop Learning

Whereas single-loop learning is about assimilation (Eilertsen et al., 2005), double-loop learning is about learning by accommodation, with an individual reframing their mental models (Hargrove, 2008). Individuals ask the 'why' and 'so-

what' questions and reflect, to develop new knowledge and insight. From a coaching perspective, the coach needs to help the person to reframe his/her mental models and provide interpretations that are more accurate. Robertson (2008) believed that coaching creates the conditions for double-loop learning to occur, through feedback from a coaching partner.

2.4.4.3 Triple-loop Learning

Triple-loop learning 'challenges one's existing learning framework as well as one's mental models and assumptions' (Eilertsen & London, 2005, p. 4). Both Eilertsen et al. (2005) and Hargrove (2008) stated that ideally, triple-loop learning occurs within a learning organisation, tapping into collective knowledge. Hargrove said that for triple-loop learning to occur, the coach must reshape the person's way of being because their existing way of being will not provide the intended future results. The example Hargrove gave was of a person changing from being one who dominates to someone who empowers, or from a person who is suppressive to a person who is innovative (Hargrove, 2008).

2.4.5 Transformative Learning

Mezirow's theory of transformative learning has similarities with andragogy, as both are fundamentally about the role that experience plays in influencing learning needs, both link adult learning theory and coaching, and both are examples of a constructivist approach to coaching, which involves building on learners' experiences and subsequent needs (Cox, 2015). Mezirow (as cited in Cox, 2015) defined transformative learning as:

the process of learning through critical self-reflection, which results in the reformulation of a 'meaning perspective' to allow a more inclusive,

discriminating, and integrative understanding of experience. Learning includes acting on these insights. (p. 27).

The ‘meaning perspective’, also known as the ‘meaning scheme’ (Cox et al., 2014) and ‘frames of reference’ (Cox, 2015) is the beliefs, attitudes or assumptions that operate behind the scenes (Cox et al., 2014) and explain the way we act and react. Changing the way, we act and react emotionally requires critical self-reflection and rational discourse (Lennard, 2010). Critical self-reflection and rational discourse ideally take place within a social or organisational context. The resulting transformation is a radical change or reframing of perspectives and the way an individual thinks and acts.

This reframing of mental models is akin to the double-loop component of Argyris and Schön’s model presented above. Cox (2015) believed that Mezirow’s transformative learning theory is more profound, because it results in more philosophical changes in both learner outcomes and perceptions of self. Interestingly, Cox (2015) makes no mention of the ‘triple-loop’ component inherent in Argyris and Schön’s theory, which makes identical claims in respect to reshaping and transforming an individual. Both triple-loop learning and transformative learning involve shaping the learner because of experiences in a social context.

Within a coaching context, the coach is ideally situated to both influence and initiate these transformational practices. Hawkins and Smith (as cited in Cox et al., 2014) presented various transformational practices that should be applied during coaching, though Mezirow lists several transformational practices that he felt should be facilitated by the coach. As Part 2 of this literature review considers specific coaching approaches and practices within a theoretical framework, Mezirow’s coaching practices are not detailed here.

Meizrow's transformation theory sits at one end of the coaching spectrum (Hawkins & Smith, as cited in Cox et al., 2014) but as suggested by Askew and Carnell (2012), it 'fills an important gap in coaching theory, by acknowledging the central role played by the function of critical reflectivity' (p. 40).

2.4.6 Cross-cultural Learning

Story (2011) points out that research exists suggesting cultural characteristics do impact leadership in organisations. Although there has been very little research on cross-cultural, or intercultural leadership, Story believes for a leader to be successful in an international context, they must be culturally sensitive and receive specific training otherwise they will miss the nuances of each culture, which can lead to many problems (Estienne, as cited in Story, 2011). Terms such as 'cultural intelligence' (Lovvorn & Jiun-Shiu, 2011), 'cultural adaptation' (Story, 2011), 'cultural knowledge' (Grisham, 2006) and 'intercultural sensitivity' (Gundling et al., 2011; Story, 2011) are all words commonly associated with leadership in the context of international placements.

Peterson (2007) and Scollon, Scollon and Jones, (2012) believe though, that extreme difference in culture, does not exclude effective coaching. Further, they suggest it presumptuous of researchers to assume negative research outcomes can be automatically attributed to cross-cultural or intercultural contexts. This may be construed as research bias. From an Arab researcher's perspective Al-Omari (2008) states that culture does not influence and dominate everything people do. 'People should not be pre-occupied with knowing everything that needs to be known about Arabs and their culture' (Al-Omari, 2008, p. 13).

Intercultural theorists on leadership believe culture should be considered from an individual's perspective and one's cultural orientation, or your culturally based

values, beliefs and assumptions (Gundling et al., 2011) rather than one's nationality. These authors believe it is paramount when considering the influence of culture on leadership coaching. Lennard (2010) elaborates by stating that each person is culturally unique. She goes on to state that you cannot be completely free of what she terms 'cultural conditioning' but it is an individual's cultural orientation, your world-view, which makes you culturally unique. This cultural uniqueness is what determines an individual's approach to leadership coaching.

Gundling (et al., 2011) states that language and culture cannot be analyzed as separate entities. They state that culture is embedded in language, because thinking is embedded in the language, and without knowing the language, many of the subtleties of a culture will be missed. To an extent, Hofstede (Chhokar, Brodbeck & House, 2012) agrees that adopting another language means learning to adopt someone else's frame of reference but where Hofstede disagrees is that one cannot naturally assume language differences imply cultural differences or cultural values.

As the Middle East is the context for this research, a relevant starting point in which to consider cross-cultural learning is provided by researchers Jarrod Hingston and Dr Jehad Al-Omari. Hingston's study focused specifically on Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, of which the UAE is a member and is included in the research data and analysis. In his study on cultural orientations on cross-cultural negotiation, Hingston (2012) examined three existing cross-cultural communication models. The first two models were based on the theories of Edward T. Hall and his high-context/low-context continuum and monochronic/polychronic time and space systems. The third was based on the work of Geert Hofstede and his four dimensions of culture. In his thesis, Hingston specifically made comparisons between the two cultures: Middle East Arabic and Australian English. Al-Omari (2008) similarly

focused on the same models and stated that these four cultural determinants were relevant to Arab cultures. He specifically referred to the following four cultural determinants: high-context cultures, polychronic time and space systems, high collectivism and high power distance. All four determinants were based on the theories of Hall and Hofstede.

2.4.7 Cross-Cultural Learning: Time/Space Systems

Hall (as cited in Hingston, 2012) contended that cultures perceive time and space systems that are predominantly either ‘monochronic’ (focusing on scheduling and concentrating on a single task at a time), or ‘polychronic’ (focusing on events and people and undertaking multiple tasks at a time). Arabic-speaking cultures, such as the UAE, are typically polychronic. People in such cultures are not driven by the clock and timing. Rather, priority is given to establishing relationships and respecting the cultural traditions of hospitality (Al-Omari, 2008). Polychronic cultures are characterised by multiple interruptions and distractions. This can appear to a monochronic coach as being disorganised (Hingston, 2012) and lacking a sense of urgency. Hingston (2012) stated that timing is everything to many Gulf Arabs. By timing, he means waiting ‘for the “right time”, “right place” and “right mood” to discuss issues of importance with people, as opposed to following an agenda set by time’ (Hingston, 2012, p. 20). Yet to an individual from one of the monochronic Western countries, this observed lack of necessity to focus on a specific event or task may be perceived as conflict avoidance.

Anglophonic cultures (Chhokar et al., 2012; Hingston, 2012) include the countries from which all the leadership coaches participating in this study originate, including Canada, England, New Zealand and the United States. These countries are typically considered monochronic (Hingston, 2012). As suggested above, this is

almost the antithesis of a polychronic culture. Time, schedules, agendas and single-task focus take priority over hospitality, feelings and relationships. Interruptions are regarded as being disrespectful and time wasting may lead to frustration.

Polychronic and monochronic cultures are at opposite ends of the time and space spectrum. However, both Hingston (2012) and Al-Omari (2008) have pointed out the dangers of applying such theory liberally. Al-Omari acknowledged that an individual could move along the continuum or spectrum depending on the circumstances. Hingston (2012) noted that invariably, the culture will draw an individual back into its time system.

2.4.8 Cross-Cultural Learning: High-context/Low-context Cultures

Hall's high-context/low-context cultural continuum is worth consideration in this research context, as cross-cultural communication ambiguities may be attributed to differences in high-context and low-context cultural disparities (Hingston, 2012). All the principals in this research study were from a high-context culture and all the leadership coaches were from low- or lower-context cultures.

High-context cultures are considered complex and multi-layered, relying on several means of communication to convey context, including non-verbal signs, hidden meanings and anecdotes, in addition to the spoken word. This contrasts with the language code of low-context cultures, in which the information is included in the spoken language and the meaning is explicit (Hingston, 2012). In high-context cultures, meaning is not immediately explicit (Al-Omari, 2008). Arab cultures of the GCC countries, such as the UAE, are classified as high context (Al-Omari, 2008; Chhokar et al., 2012; Hingston, 2012). In such cultures, meaning remains just below the surface and as such, may be a reason for ambiguity. Al-Omari advised that individuals working in high-context cultures must employ strategies, such as

reviewing and repeating, to reduce or mitigate this ambiguity. He also advised using several communication tools, such as writing notes before and after meetings.

In his book *Understanding the Arab Culture*, Al-Omari (2008, p. 166) presented a worked example of a communication tool he called a 'circular agenda'. This is as opposed to a linear agenda, which is moving through items in the order they are listed. A circular agenda shows how issues and items are raised on an ad hoc basis and returned to several times, but from different angles. He said this can be frustrating for a Western observer or participant from a low-context culture, who is used to dealing with an issue until some form of closure is reached.

PART 2: COACHING APPROACHES AND PRACTICES

2.5 The Three-generation Coaching Model

Part 1 of this literature review considered the knowledge base of coaching and coaching from a theoretical position within a framework that considered the three domains of adult, transformative and cross-cultural learning. Most of the learning theories were influenced by the principles of constructivism or social-constructivist theory. Part 2 of this literature review considers specific coaching genres, or what Stelter (2012) termed the coach's 'intentional orientation' and is closely linked to Research Question 1, to consider whether there are any identifiable coaching approaches within the specific research context.

The literature contains an extensive number of coaching approaches, techniques and processes. Invariably, most of the coaching approaches are described within a framework or structural categorisation of some form. Examples include Cox et al. (2014), who considered coaching approaches within four dimensions labelled 'I', 'We', 'It' and 'Its'. Lennard (2010) presented a complex structure she listed as 'five phases of breakthrough and 12 catalytic coaching conversations' (p. 20).

Clutterbuck (2010) unpacked coaching approaches within a simplistic framework consisting of four parts: model-based approaches, process-based approaches, theoretical approaches and managed eclecticism.

This literature review examined approaches within Stelter's (2012) 'three generations of coaching' model, chosen partly because it links closely with Table 2.1 as well as the three 'theories of learning' presented earlier (Sections 2.4.1 to 2.4.8). To elaborate, first-generation coaching approaches are akin to an instructional model, progressing up to third-generation coaching, with coaching firmly fitting within social-constructivist principles that require the coach and coachee to be involved in co-construction of knowledge and genuine dialogue. Stelter (2012) stated that second- and third-generation coaching approaches generally have a clear ontological and epistemological foundation. The three-generation coaching model consists of:

1. *First-generation Coaching*. This is coaching in terms of a problem or goal.

The focus here is helping the coachee address his/her challenges, to achieve specific goals and develop action strategies.

2. *Second-generation Coaching*. This is coaching from a solution- and future-oriented perspective. The focus is to generate positive future scenarios with a strong focus on an individual's existing strengths and resources, rather than on issues and challenges.

3. *Third-generation Coaching*. This is coaching from a reflective perspective.

Whereas first- and second-generation coaching are characterised by what Stelter (2012) termed 'asymmetry between the coach and coachee', third-generation coaching places a higher emphasis on the coach being genuinely involved in the coachee's challenges.

Next, the five major coaching approaches are examined within this three-generation model.

2.5.1 First-generation Coaching: GROW and its Derivatives

A search of the literature on coaching invariably includes a reference to John Whitmore's GROW model of leadership coaching, which is one of the most well-known coaching models in the United Kingdom (Dembkowski, Eldridge, & Hunter, 2006). Because of its outcomes-based focus, this model has a performance-based approach (Mullen & Fletcher, 2012). GROW is a model used in both business and education. The GROW acronym can be explained as follows:

G = goal setting, for the session as well as short and long term

R = reality checking to explore the current situation

O = options and alternative strategies or courses of action

W = what is to be done, including when and by whom (Whitmore, 2010, p. 83).

Whitmore (2010) discussed employing the following SMART targets to identify both an end goal and a performance goal:

S = specific

M = measurable

A = achievable

R = relevant

T = timely (p. 92).

There are multiple derivatives of the GROW model, including the GROUP model, in which 'U' stands for 'understanding others' and 'P' stands for 'perform' (Brown & Grant, 2010). The ACHIEVE model involves Assess the current situation, Creatively brainstorm the alternatives, Hone the goals, Initiate options, Evaluate

options, design a Valid action programme and Encourage momentum (Dembkowski et al., 2006, p. 85). The LEAP model involves Looking at goals, Exploring reality and Analysing Possibilities. This contrasts with the STRIDE model; Strengths, Targets, Reality, Ideas/opinions, Decide/commit and Evaluate (Thomas & Smith (2006) and the STEPPA model; Subject, Target/objective, Emotion, Perception, Plan, Pace and Act/adopt (Knight & Van Nieuwerburgh, 2012) and the OSCAR model involves Outcome, Situation, Choices, Actions and Review (Gilbert, 2015).

The GROW model and its many derivatives are not immune to criticism. Whitmore (2010) said they over-emphasise the role of the coach, suggesting that the focus should be on increasing coachee awareness and responsibility (Dembkowski et al., 2006). Mullen and Fletcher (2012) recognised the strengths of the model but cautioned that as a model for educational leadership, it is too mechanical because of the regimented series of steps to follow and in addition, there is danger of people becoming ‘stuck’ in the original goal. Both criticisms suggest the model may lack flexibility and fluidity. Knight and Van Nieuwerburgh (2012) added that GROW and its derivatives all have some merit, as initial coaching models in schools, but in regard to the professional development of teachers, more evidence-based models are required.

2.5.2 First-generation Coaching: Neuro-linguistic Programming

Neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) is a personal development discipline that originated in the 1970s with work of John Grinder and Richard Bandler (Day & Tosey, 2014). NLP has three distinct components. *Neuro* refers to the brain; *linguistic* refers to the verbal and non-verbal communication that the brain processes; and *programming* refers to the way these two forms of communication are interpreted (Gibson, 2009) to produce outcomes or results. In learning a new skill,

within the NLP framework, the learner or coachee may move through four levels of competence, classified as ‘subconscious incompetence, conscious incompetence, conscious competence and subconscious competence’ (Gibson, 2009, p. 28). This movement through these competence levels involves three main steps:

- Outcome (know what you want by setting outcomes)
- Acuity (being aware of external and internal feedback)
- Flexibility (in both thought and action to achieve your outcomes) (Day & Tosey, 2014).

The main construct of NLP coaching is that an individual has a mind map of reality that has been acquired through multiple, interrelated information systems (Cox et al., 2014). This reality often exists at the unconscious level and may not represent reality; therefore, the job of the coach is not to work at the level of content (the coachee’s reality), but at the level of subconscious process, to change the coachee’s reality by changing the details or coding of that content (Cox et al., 2014).

The three-step process outlined above aligns with the ‘plan, act, review and apply’ (Day & Tosey, 2014) experiential learning cycle presented previously. In comparison with the GROW and the SMART model, Day and Tosey (2014) held that NLP has the potential to offer a more rigorous, holistic and research-informed approach to goal setting and action planning than SMART, mainly due to the greater focus on exploring a person’s sensory elements to reach well-formed outcomes.

As with the GROW model, NLP is tarnished with criticisms like that of the GROW model and similar first-generation coaching models. One criticism is that the model is too rigid and advantages the coach in that the model, or process, drives the learning conversation, rather than the learning conversation driving the selection of tools and techniques (Clutterbuck, 2010). Other criticisms include the actual name

being off-putting (Gibson, 2009) and a lack of empirical evidence in literature for its efficacy in the context of coaching (Cox et al., 2014).

2.5.3 Second-generation Coaching: Appreciative Inquiry

Appreciative Inquiry (AI) originated in 1980 through the work of David Cooperrider in the United States. AI is considered a strengths-based, social constructivist approach that is based on the ‘simple assumption that every organisation has something that works well, and those strengths can be the starting point for creating positive change’ (Cooperrider, Whitney, & Stavros, 2008, p. 37). It utilises a 4D cycle or model—a derivative 5D model has also been developed (Stelter, 2012)—that consists of the following four stages: Discovery, Dream, Design and Destiny (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Stelter, 2012):

1. *Discovery (appreciating)*: The coachee explores the most positive topics or successes of the person or organisation and explores possibilities for a vision or goal through dialogue.
2. *Dream (envisioning)*: Visions and goals are explored more strategically.
3. *Design (co-constructing)*: Strategic intent is acted on in the form of co-constructing the future, so the design is more than just a vision.
4. *Destiny (sustaining)*: The individual or members of the organisation look for innovative ways to ‘act’ on the vision and make it reality.

Additionally, AI is based on five key principles:

1. *Constructivist Principle*: The relationship is considered the source of the knowledge and this knowledge frames the shaping of our realities. A coach and coachee who are appreciating what is and speaking about what can be is an example of shifting the boundaries and creating new realities.

2. *Principle of Simultaneity*: Positing inquiry and change as being considered simultaneous events, where inquiry is intervention. Change begins the moment one inquires in an appreciative manner. In the context of coaching, this is about the coach inquiring about accomplishments, successes, strengths, and so on. This creates the ‘fertile’ environment to inspire the coachee to learn and discover.
3. *Poetic Principle*: This principle is based on a coachee or organisation’s story being malleable. In other words, past and present stories create countless possibilities for possible future directions.
4. *Anticipatory Principle*: One of the most important determiners of sustainable change is positive and collective imagination and conversation, which in turn have a positive effect on an individual’s actions and future direction.
5. *Positive Principle*: This is based on the concept that sustainable change requires large amounts of positivity in the form of inspiration, cultural climate, thought and intent. From a coaching perspective, the coach is supportive in creating an environment in which positive change can take place, with the coachee as the co-creator of this change (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Stelter, 2012).

Since the advent of AI, the SOAR model has found favour in many organisations and by many individuals as a strategic planning and coaching tool. The acronym SOAR stands for Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations and Results. SOAR derived from AI and in many organisations, has replaced the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) model as the preferred strategic planning and coaching tool. Where SWOT is considered a deficit model, SOAR is considered a positive, strengths-based approach to building individual and organisational

capability (Swafford, 2013). As a relatively new model, little research critiquing the use of SOAR as a coaching tool exists.

2.5.4 Second-generation Coaching: Five-phase Model of Coaching

The previously mentioned study by Huff et al. (2013) in the United States focused specifically on coaching school principals. Their study, which acknowledged the lack of empirical research linking coaching models to improved performance outcomes, focused on the need for combining effective feedback with a five-phase model of coaching. These phases can be described as follows:

1. *Groundwork*: This involves building an effective working relationship in preparation for reviewing feedback. The focus is on active listening, questioning of the coachee and collaboration, rather than prescribed actions and evaluative judgements.
2. *Assessment and Feedback*: This phase is characterised by the principals' trying to obtain a clear picture of themselves, as provided by a form of 360-degree feedback. The coach's role is in helping the principal to interpret this feedback and its meaning.
3. *Goal Setting*: Though like the 'G' in the GROW model and the use of SMART targets, the two previous steps are designed to ensure a more 'informed' perspective in identifying a goal, as opposed to Whitmore's (2010) model, which holds that the current reality is not crucial to setting goals.
4. *Action Planning*: The focus here is on a collaborative design of specific steps and actions leading to accomplishing the goal. The role of the coach is guiding and facilitating.

5. *Ongoing Assessment and Support*: A key aspect of this stage is the way both parties monitor progress, measure progress, address emerging challenges and maintain momentum towards the goal, with the desired outcome of positive and continual improvement (Huff et al., 2013, p. 508).

Step 1 and Step 2 of the Huff et al. (2013) coaching model, provides an important variation to the previous models, linking well with the earlier adult learning theories and concepts of double-loop learning and reflection-in-action.

2.5.5 Third-generation Coaching: Collaborative Coaching and the Boundary-breaking Leadership Model

Robertson and Weber's (2000) school leadership development framework, known as the boundary-breaking leadership model, fits firmly within Stelter's third-generation narrative/collaborative practices, in which the coach and coachee are mutual, highly reflective, dialogic partners. Third-generation coaching attempts to combine approaches that consist of experiential, social-constructivist and ontological elements (Stelter, 2012). The first two elements have been discussed previously. The ontological coaching methodology explores the three domains of language, emotions and body systems (Cox et al., 2014). The traditional asymmetrical coach/coachee approach is diminished within third-generation coaching (Stelter, 2012). Cox et al. (2014) asserted it has been replaced by each person becoming:

a more powerful observer of themselves, others and how they constructively engage in the world. Ontological coaching is beneficial across a wide range of coaching contexts and genres because it deals with the fundamental ways people understand themselves, the world and what is possible for them in life. The coaching methodology facilitates the emergence of new perspectives as the basis for the development of expanded ways of thinking . . . all of which

have become so essential in increasingly unpredictable and uncertain times (p. 114).

The boundary-breaking leadership model was first developed towards the end of the twentieth century. The need for what Robertson and Webber (2000) termed a cross-cultural model was due to leaders having to respond to economic competitiveness, the links between education and long-term employment and income, as well as educational reforms that included 'site-based management, increased accountability measures, charter schools and school choice' (Robertson & Webber, 2000, p. 316). They added that the framework moved some way towards closing the gap between the earlier mentioned theories-in-action and espoused theories.

Parts 1 and 2 of this literature review have been based on the same beliefs as those held by Griffiths (2005); that is, for coaching to be effective it must be underpinned by theories of adult learning and lifelong learning. This theme is central to the boundary-breaking leadership model, which is reliant on educational leaders articulating their educational platforms and moving out of their 'comfort zones and established habits and ideas' (Robertson, 2008, p. 176). Both Robertson (2008) and Griffiths (2005) were advocates of the experiential and reflective learning models. Additionally, the triple-loop learning model (Eilersten, 2005) and Huff's (2013) five-phase model of coaching are underpinned by both experiential and reflective learning models. All the authors of these models or approaches have believed that ultimately, the various steps lead to learning that is transformational in the sense of achieving intended results, positive outcomes, new skill levels and changed perspectives of self, as well as improved ability to operate in the educational leadership role.

The boundary-breaking leadership model rests on eight principles:

1. *Developing a sense of community*: This is based on the principle of having multiple leaders, with support mechanisms in place for all leaders to thrive. The notion of professional learning communities and professional partnerships is included in this principle (Robertson, 2009).
2. *International perspectives*: In today's global world, this principle involves thinking and looking globally to aid critical reflection. The term 'boundary breaking' could be confused for this international perspective, but it appears that the term is more a metaphor to describe the nature of educational institutions and all the participants. Robertson (2008, 2009) uses the term boundary breaking in such a context to explain the necessity for a leader to be able to cross the borders of teacher, student, parent, theory and practice, and so on. Coaching provides the means of doing this by working together and breaking down the boundaries between these roles.
3. *Using generative approaches*: Including planned and deliberate professional study, lifelong learning and making connections between theory and practice.
4. *Validating personal knowledge*: Valuing the knowledge that each person/leader brings to each situation.
5. *Encouraging formal and informal leadership*: Related to (4) above and allowing individuals opportunities to exhibit and practice leadership skills.
6. *Providing a forum for discussion*: In another article, Robertson (2009) called this moving from conversation to dialogue. This is a deliberate design of ensuring that time and space is created for deep articulation of values, beliefs and practices.
7. *Shared construction of meaning*: This relates to Robertson's (2009) belief that the most powerful and meaningful learning is learning with and from

others, which Robertson terms co-learning or co-constructed learning. This has its roots in the paradigm of constructivism, which in terms of coaching, is about being client-centred, authentic, goal-directed and problem-based (Woolfolk, as cited in Griffiths, 2005).

8. *Encouraging the growth of a counter-culture*: Creating possibilities to challenge the status quo, with the intention of considering alternative perspectives and solutions (Robertson, 2008).

Several authors (Clutterbuck, 2010; Forde et al., 2013; Griffiths, 2005; Huff et al., 2013; Peterson, 2007; Robertson 2008, 2009) have all advocated for future educational coaching models not being a ‘one size fits all’ approach, that learning conversations and dialogue should drive the selection of coaching tools or approaches, not the other way around. These approaches need to be cognisant of the context in which they operate, embedded among the people within this context and based on sound educational platforms.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

PART 1: METHODOLOGICAL THEORY

3.1 Interpretative/Constructivist

The selected methodology of this research was an interpretive multiple case study, using a derivative of grounded theory design as the data analysis component. The derivative was in the form of an emergent design, constant comparative method (Bryman, 2012b; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007; Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993), in which this researcher acted in an observer-as-participant role (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012), although participation was only at a superficial level. The case study approach has a long history in educational research (Erlandson et al., 1993). The type of case study chosen essentially determines whether the case studies reside in the educational research paradigm of post-positivism or in the more naturalistic forms of inquiry such as interpretivism and constructivism. Explanatory case studies, for example, are often chosen to test a theory (Cohen et al., 2007) and focus on objectivity and the quality standards of validity and reliability, which are traits of post-positivist research within the larger source paradigm of modernism. Ethnographic or interpretive case studies, in which an understanding emerges from the data or analytic induction, aim to provide new insight. They use the parallel criteria of trustworthiness and authenticity (Lincoln, as cited in Bryman, 2012a), which are traits of the naturalistic researcher within the larger source paradigm of post-modernism.

Interpretive case studies are a particularly well-suited qualitative methodology in which there exist ‘complex interrelationships and multiple realities’ (Erlandson et al., 1993, p. 163), or where there are ‘real people in real situations’ (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 253). The term ‘multiple realities’ sits within a constructivist

paradigm in which what counts as knowledge and truth is dependent on one's perspective (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Research participants tell their stories or describe their views of reality, resulting in multiple views of reality or a shared construction of knowledge (Hill, as cited in LeCompte, 2002, p. 296). The researcher can provide thick descriptions (Cohen et al., 2007; Erlandson et al., 1993) or a database (Guba & Lincoln, 1989) of the constructed realities, each one being unique to that case study setting or setting in terms of culture and social context.

In an interpretive or ethnographic case study design, justifying findings from one research setting to another is not paramount, because each research setting is unique and has its own constructed realities, or what Foley and Valenzuela (2005) termed 'multiple epistemologies'. Meaning is created not through one single reality or truth but through these multiple realities or multiple truths (Erlandson et al., 1993). The ontology (what counts as truth) and epistemology (what counts as knowledge) of interpretive case studies could thus be summarised as having multiple truths and multiple realities, with knowledge being acquired through the realities of various research participants in collaboration with the researcher.

3.1.1 Researcher Role and Transferability

Often, the naturalistic researcher is integrally involved, his/her principal task to capture multiple realities and complex interrelationships. Generalising or transferability, with a statement or claim made because of some research and then applied across more than one context, individuals or groups (Fraenkel et al., 2012), is generally not made by the naturalistic researcher. Instead, the onus lies on the individual reader or observer, who may be in similar situations or settings, to interpret the applicability of the findings or conclusions. The preferred data-gathering tools within the interpretive paradigm are observation studies, semi-structured and

open interviews, as well as document analysis (Cohen et al., 2007). Data are often gathered over a longer period, with the researcher developing a more informal and collaborative relationship with the research participants in a more natural, less reactive environment compared to one in which experiments and surveys are conducted (Erlandson et al., 1993).

3.1.2 Reliability and Validity v. Parallel Research Criteria

Invariably, comparisons are made regarding the suitability of naturalistic methods compared with more conventional, positivist criteria.

Naturalistic/interpretive criteria are often referred to as the parallel or foundational criteria because the criteria for judging quality standards are ‘intended to parallel the rigor criteria within the conventional paradigm’ (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p. 223). The parallel criteria are trustworthiness and authenticity (Cohen et al., 2007; Erlandson et al., 1993).

Ontological authenticity, or objective reality (Guba & Lincoln, 1989), is not the goal of the naturalistic researcher, nor is it the primary research driver. Instead, idiographic interpretation (Cohen et al., 2007), found in the authenticity criteria, is a prerequisite for the qualitative interpretive researcher. To elaborate further, idiographic interpretation places the emphasis on each individual case (also known as emic constructions). The focus for the naturalistic researcher is to improve subjective meaning for participants (Cohen et al., 2007; Evers, Mruck, Silver & Peeters, 2011); Guba & Lincoln, 1989; LeCompte, 2002).

The trustworthiness criteria, the ability of inquiry research to demonstrate what Guba and Lincoln call ‘truth value’ (Erlandson et al., 1993) consists of credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability. The idea of

transferability has already been explained earlier. Credibility is considered the most important of the remaining parallel criteria and is described as follows:

- Prolonged engagement in the research context leads to credibility gained through being immersed in the context of the research study.
- Persistent observation complements prolonged engagement and allows the researcher to pursue the interpretations that are provided by prolonged engagement, but at a much deeper level.
- Peer debriefing allows the researcher to ‘step out’ of the immediate research context and engage with disinterested peers. Key aspects of this relationship are confidentiality, obtaining objective feedback in the form of robust debates and dialogue, and checking on perceptions and insights.
- Triangulation through incorporating multiple data-gathering methods and sources, as presented earlier, though not limited to only qualitative techniques. Cohen et al. (2007) stated that triangulation ensures a researcher does not become reliant on one or two ‘pet’ methods. Member checking is a form of triangulation on a respondent’s construction of data to ensure perspectives have not been misunderstood. Member checking therefore involves returning to the field to allow respondents time to check the accuracy of the data.

3.2 Data Collection: Interviews and Observations

As noted earlier, interviews and observations are the preferred tools of the interpretive researcher. Both are considered excellent for promoting quality interaction between the researcher and participants. According to Bishop (2007), semi-structured, in-depth interviews that use open-ended questioning encourage a reciprocal and interactive approach, particularly if they are within a series of

interviews. Additionally, observations whereby the researcher operates in a participant–observer role allows some engagement in the very activities they set out to observe (Cohen et al., 2007). Both Cohen et al. (2007) and Erlandson et al. (1993) have suggested that the inherent advantages of such a role include being able to observe non-verbal behaviour, the development of more natural and informal relationships (which are often part of ongoing case studies, compared to those of surveys and experiments) and the researcher being less reactive to the data.

3.3 Data Analysis: Grounded Theory

Grounded theory, along with an interpretive case study approach, is acknowledged as being an important method of theory generation (Cohen et al., 2007). Cohen et al. listed the key features of grounded theory as:

- theory not being predefined but emerging from the data
- theory generation being a consequence of systematic data collection and analysis
- patterns and theories being implicit in data waiting to be discovered (p. 491).

They explained that grounded theory is powerful at capturing the naturalistic element of research and formulating it into a systematic methodology. Grounded theory, like many research theories, has evolved into derivatives. The following sections describe the main elements of grounded theory.

3.3.1 Coding, Categories, Concepts and Constant Comparison

Coding is a core process of grounded theory in qualitative research methodology (Bryman, 2012a) and is the process of disassembling and reassembling data (Cohen et al., 2007). Disassembling involves deconstructing the research data into manageable chunks according to whether [or not] it may have some theoretical significance. The reassembling is indicative of the need for data analysis to be in a

‘constant state of potential revision and fluidity’ (Bryman, 2012a, p. 568). The researcher is constantly analysing the data and creating new codes, categories and sub-categories, also known as properties (Creswell, 2005), in the hope that these will be indicators of concepts. Bryman (2012a) substituted indicators for behavioural actions and events or phenomena (Cohen et al., 2007).

Categories in grounded theory design are ‘themes of basic information identified in the data by the researcher and used to understand a process’ (Creswell, 2005, p. 440). A process is ‘a sequence of actions and interactions among people and events pertaining to a topic’ (Strauss & Corbin, as cited in Creswell, 2005, p. 440).

Bryman (2012a), Cohen et al. (2007) and Creswell (2005) have referred to three types of coding methods in grounded theory: open, axial and selective. As this research study was based on an emerging design approach, constant comparative method, only coding in relation to this approach is discussed here. The emerging design approach was a result of Glaser articulating that the original form of grounded theory was too prescriptive (Creswell, 2005), with pre-set categories such as those found in axial coding. Thus, the emerging design approach is less stringent than ‘pure’ grounded theory in that it allows theories to emerge from the data rather than having these pre-set categories. The concept of constant comparison appears to have originated from the emerging design approach. Constant comparative coding procedures involve comparing ‘incident to incident, incident to category and category to category. The focus is on connecting categories and emerging theory, not on simply describing categories’ (Creswell, 2005, p. 438). Cohen et al. (2007) suggested that constant comparison resonates with the methodology of triangulation presented earlier, as a method appropriate for case studies, allowing new data to be compared with existing data and categories.

Grounded theory, as well as case studies, exists as a separate form of naturalistic inquiry rather than as part of the more conventional ethnographic design (Arsenault, Anderson & Flick, as cited in Cohen et al., 2007). In many ways, this is a moot point; Taylor, Settlemaier and Luitel (2012) pointed out that it appears acceptable for a contemporary researcher to utilise multiple methods of inquiry and use multiple data sources within a naturalistic research inquiry.

3.3.2 Theoretical or Purposive Sampling and Theoretical Saturation

This element focuses on the researcher using intentional and focused sampling in the hope that a theory is generated (Creswell, 2005). This is also referred to as purposive sampling (Bryman, 2012a; Erlandson et al., 1993; Fraenkel et al., 2012; Merriam, 2009). These authors have suggested that as well as generating specific data unique to each research setting, purposive sampling generates information upon which emerging design and grounded theory can be based (Erlandson et al., 1993, p. 148). Purposive or theoretical sampling is central to naturalistic research (Erlandson et al., 1993), does not rely on statistical sampling (LeCompte, 2002) and is more recursive and ad hoc (Cohen et al., 2007).

There are many types of purposive sampling available to the researcher. The two used in this research study have been presented in Part 1 of this chapter (*Section 3.3.2*). The concept of theoretical saturation is important here. Creswell (2005) described this as a ‘subjective determination that new data will not provide any new information or insights’ (p. 443).

PART 2: METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURE

3.4 Research Setting

The introduction and literature review sections of this document have provided a superficial overview of this research in terms of location and context. A

more in-depth description may be beneficial in terms of both insight into this unique educational context and justification for the chosen research methodology. As previously mentioned, since around 2009, the ADEC reform agenda has been unique for the following reasons:

- The sheer scale of the reform agenda: Although exact school numbers change monthly and yearly due to school closures and new school openings, a quick search of the ADEC website carried out in June 2016 listed 185 private schools in which 25% of the students in the emirate of Abu Dhabi are educated (<https://www.adec.ac.ae/en/Parents/PrivateSchools/Pages/default.aspx>). Most the remaining 75% of students is educated in what are known as government schools, of which there are approximately 250. Theoretical sample decisions in this research study were only based on these 250 government schools. Data was gathered over an 18-month period to April 2015.
- *The unique location of the reform:* Many perceive the Middle East to be a ‘hotspot’ both in terms of temperature extremes and social, political and religious unrest. Yet, the UAE is a destination of choice for thousands of educationists from numerous English-speaking countries, many of whom make a conscious choice to remain well beyond their initial contract lengths. This researcher was employed in ADEC government schools in the emirate of Abu Dhabi for almost eight years, from August 2007 to April 2015.
- *The unique cultural mix of the educationists involved in the reform:* A major prerequisite for employment as a Western educator in ADEC schools was, and is, a country of origin in which English is the first language. Most Western teachers originate from anglophonic countries such as the United

States, Canada, New Zealand, Australian, Ireland, Britain and South Africa. Indeed, all the Western research participants in this study were from one of these countries. On arrival in an ADEC government school, these Western educators are immersed immediately in an Islamic culture in which most teachers' *lingua franca* is Arabic. This multicultural mix creates the intercultural working relationship presented in the literature review.

- *The focus of this study:* The leadership-coaching agenda presented in the introduction is, on paper, non-complex. To reiterate, the focus of the 40+ Western leadership coaches is to develop and improve individual leadership capability, resulting in improved overall school performance. The majority of coaching recipients are local (Emirati) principals, although invariably, coaching extended to the senior management teams. Five of the coaching recipients in this research study were local Emirati and one was a Jordanian.
- *The financial investment:* Without trying to place a dollar (dirham) figure on the reform, the share cost of employing (just) the thousands of Western educators over an eight- to nine-year period, including salary, housing, medical provision, and so on, is astronomical. This excludes the sizeable outlay on infrastructure, such as new schools, professional development programmes, consultants and advisers, as well as recruiting costs.

The approximately, 250 ADEC schools are located within three specific geographical locations or zones in the emirate of Abu Dhabi: Abu Dhabi, Al Ain and Al Gharbia. Over 200 of these schools are in the zones of Abu Dhabi and Al Ain. All schools in these zones are divided into four cycles:

- Kindergarten (KG) schools (non-compulsory)
- Cycle 1 schools: Grades 1–5

- Cycle 2 schools: Grades 6–9
- Cycle 3 Schools: Grades 10–12.

All Emirati principals participating in this research study have been exposed to English-speaking Westerners for an extended time. These principals have levels of English, as determined by the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), ranging from bands scores of 3 to 7 overall, on a nine-point scale (IELTS, 2016). It is worth noting that an IELTS overall band score of 6 is often the minimum required to access an Australian University (IELTS, 2016). Untrained translators, often teachers themselves, generally have IELTS scores of 6.5 or greater and are sometimes available to assist with Arabic/English translation.

3.5 Sampling: Participant Selection

The following two forms of purposive sampling were chosen for this research study:

1. *Typical case sampling.* A wide range of schools was included in the study. These are described below.
2. *Reputable case sampling or criterion sampling.* Only leadership coaches who had worked in the research setting for two years or more were approached, because according to the research on cultural adaptation and acculturation, this critical variable could affect the outcomes of the research.

The introductory sections of this study have highlighted two studies that suggested high failure rates when otherwise successful leaders in their domestic contexts are transitioned into international assignments. Also, emphasised in the introductory section was a questioning of whether the institution employing the Western principals and educational leaders assumed that such individuals would transition successfully to what for many is a new role, in a new cultural context

such as the Middle East. This research needed to consider whether these factors affected the coaching relationship, whether negatively or positively.

Various studies have suggested that ‘culture shock’ and the ability to acculturate is a very real condition (and process) for many individuals when placed in a new foreign context (Al-Omari, 2008; Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010; Lucas, 2003; Thomas & Inkson, 2009). Culture shock is simply the feelings, negative or positive, experienced by an individual when placed in a new environment; acculturation can be described as the time frame associated with the ability of the individual to adjust to their new environment. Adjustment is defined as the period in which the individual becomes ‘fully competent’ (Lucas, 2003, p. 306) in their new culture. This research study recognised that cultural adaptation, which involves a period of psychological and social adjustment, could not be discounted as a variable in determining the ability of an individual to function competently in a new foreign context. Therefore, selecting leadership coaches who had been immersed in the educational leadership context for two years or more helped to reduce the influence of such a variable.

Beyond this criterion, a variety of schools from KG to Cycle 3, or school entry to school exit, were included in this study. Because ADEC’s expectations and requirements of leadership coaches is the same in all schools (i.e., to develop principal leadership capacity), having schools across each of the three regions was not a criterion. However, once the initial criteria were applied and research consent processes finalised, all zones were represented in this study, as presented in Table 3.1.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

Often, ethical considerations in naturalistic research are divided into procedural ethics and ethics in practice (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004; Wilkinson, 2001). Ethics in practice are the ethical dilemmas that are embedded in everyday encounters. These are also termed relational ethics (Van Maanen, 2010) or situated ethics (Cohen et al., 2007) and are about the researcher thinking rationally, as well as ensuring the rights, privacy and welfare of educational participants are protected (Berg, 2009). However, procedural ethics govern research integrity and are the guiding principles when undertaking research.

Ethics approval was obtained from Curtin University (see Appendix 1) and the Director General's office of ADEC, via the research department of ADEC (see Appendix 2). All ethical considerations were adhered to throughout this study, including those outlined below regarding confidentiality and anonymity, participation and consent, and translation and transcription.

3.6.1 Confidentiality and Anonymity

In obtaining research consent, potential participants were guaranteed confidentiality. A bilingual (Arabic and English) information sheet (see Appendix 3, English version only) was attached to the bilingual consent form (see Appendix 4, English version only). Though there was additional wording, the key wording in the document was as follows:

- The name or address of the school and any person(s) at the school, including the principal or leadership coach, will not be disclosed at any time.
- Data related to the names of research participants, at the various research sites, will be coded to protect participant identities.
- I transcribed all audio recordings and erase the audio tapes after transcription.

Pseudonyms were used to protect the identification of participants. The list containing the actual names of schools and research participants resided solely with the researcher.

3.6.2 Participation and Consent

The ethical protocol was developed prior to commencing the research. Informed consent forms were provided prior to collection of data. Information pertaining to the research was given to the research participants, together with a formal letter (see Appendix 2) from the Head of School Operations at ADEC, in Arabic and English. Case study participants were given the opportunity to read the Arabic or English information sheets, followed by a verbal explanation and the opportunity to ask questions about the study. The information included an outline of the research aims and the implications of the study, the research participant requirements, that their participation was voluntary and the choice of withdrawing from the study at any time. All participants were assured that their identities would remain confidential. All participants were given time to consider their participation in this study (see Appendix 3).

3.6.3 Translation and Transcription

To protect confidentiality and anonymity further, this researcher carried out all data transcription. The project faced some challenges in this respect. Where a translator was used, many 'side' conversations took place in Arabic. Invariably, many of these 'side' conversations were not just direct translations of what was said in English; some were about the questions and their thinking in general. The richness of these discussions was not captured, as only the dialogue that took place in English was translated.

Additionally, though some principals had IELTS band scores of 3 to 7, the following scenarios were encountered:

- In most of the case studies, translators were used. These translators had not been formally or officially trained as translators but were merely staff members who had a higher level of English than that of the principal.
- In one of the case studies, where the principal's IELTS score was three, the translator also had a limited level of English. The quality and depth of the first principal interview was substantially limited by this fact. A return interview of the principal was not carried out, owing to the decision that further quality data would not be forthcoming.

Table 3.1 is an overview of the six schools and participants who were involved in the six case studies.

Table 3.1

Summary of Research Participants and Research Sites

Leadership Coach or Principal	Number of Participants	Gender of Participants	Nationality of Participants	Years of Experience as a Principal
Principal	6	Female x 3 Male x 3	5 x Emirati (local) 1 x Jordanian	5 principals with 7–9 years' experience 1 principal with 6 months' experience All with substantive experience as a principal as well as various 'other' leadership roles in country of origin
Leadership coaches	6	Male x 5 Female x 1	New Zealand x 3 United Kingdom x 2 United States x 1	
School zones	School cycles		School gender	
Abu Dhabi x 3	1 x Cycle 2 (Grades 6–9)		3 x boys only	
Al Ain x 2	2 x Cycle 2/3 (Grades 6–12)		2 x mixed gender	
Al Gharbia x 1	2 x KG (pre-primary)		1 x mixed gender to lower grades, then girls only	
	1 x KG/Cycle 1 (Pre-primary–Grade 5)			

3.7 Data Collection

Two sets of methods for collecting data were used: sequenced, semi-structured, in-depth interviews; and natural-setting observations. All research participants were provided with information sheets outlining the following intentions:

Visit 1:

- Observation of both the Principal and the Leadership Coach.
- Depending on the context, observations would last for the duration of the coaching session, but no longer than two hours.
- Data gathering to consist of note taking and taped audio recording.

Visit 2:

- Separate follow-up interviews with the Principal and the Leadership Coach.
- Principal interview to take place at the school site.
- Leadership Coach interview to take place at a site that is mutually agreeable.
- The follow-up interview will take place either on the same day or within one working week of the observation. This will be in form of a semi-structured interview using note taking and taped audio recording.
- Initial data from the first interview to be analysed before the return semi-structured interview questions were developed.

Visits 3 and 4:

- Repetition of the process, as outlined above, in subsequent weeks or months.
- All data transcription to be carried out by the researcher.

General:

- All participants were informed that this researcher would be interacting at a superficial level and not interfering with the coaching direction.
- Where a deeper level of questioning was required, the participants were supplied with the responses to Interview 1 questions; that is, the questions were not one-off (see Table 3.2).
- All participants were informed, via the consent form, that all observation and interview transcripts would be available at any stage. Only one participant requested the complete Interview 1 transcript and this participant did not require any changes to it.

3.7.1 Interviews

The data collection process outlined above indicates the approach used with every research participant. A key component of the two-stage interview process was the analysis of the initial participant responses to core questions related to the three research questions, which Lather (as cited in Bishop, 2007) suggested has the potential to maximise reciprocity and construction of meaning. Table 3.2 highlights the questions that were explored in greater depth at the second interview. Having participants re-read their initial participant responses allowed for member checking and provided an opportunity to delve deeper into this participant's construction of meaning. The process used in this research study was simply, *'Last time you stated . . . is this correct/is there anything else you would like to add or change?'* In some cases, further interview questions, not listed below, were asked, based on their previous responses.

The above process fits within the emerging design, constant comparative data approach, as the interview questions in Table 3.2 were not based on any hypothesis

and needed to be flexible to allow for the context of each site. A good example of this was the case study described in the section 3.6.3, in which the Emirati research participants had only limited English. In this case study, the interview questions in Table 3.2 had to be condensed, re-worded and even omitted. The Interview 1 questions changed slightly from Case Study 1 to Case Study 6, as a result of analysis of the initial responses, as did the Interview 2 questions, although these changed mainly because of within-case study responses from Interview 1.

In relation to the three research questions, the 16 to 19 questions in Table 3.2 formed the basis of the semi-structured interview. The questions were categorised as follows:

Contextual questions:	Questions 1–5
Related to Research Question 1:	Questions 6–15, 18–19
Related to Research Question 2:	Question 16
Related to Research Question 3:	Question 17.

It should be noted that Questions 16 and 17 were often asked in multiple ways and consisted of multiple sub questions, to delve deeper into an important aspect of this research.

Table 3.2

Initial Semi-structured Interview Questions

	Leadership Coach Questions	Question a one-off? Yes/No	Principal Questions ✓ = same question × = not asked <i>(Italics) = variation</i>
1	Briefly outline your leadership experiences in education and any other fields.	Yes	<i>Variation: Number of years' Principal experience/and at this school.</i>
2	Have you attended or received any formal training in leadership coaching?	Yes	✓
3	Did you attend an induction or receive training that focused on leadership coaching on arrival in the UAE?	Yes	×
4	For how long have you been the Leadership Coach of this Principal?	Yes	<i>Variation: How long has the Leadership Coach worked with you?</i>
5	For the length of time you have worked with this Principal, how frequently would you visit him/her? How long would these visits last?	Yes	<i>Variation: Frequency of visits/length of visits by Leadership Coach.</i>
6	What is your understanding of coaching? How would you define it?	No	✓
7	In this working environment and with this Principal, outline what you perceive to be your main responsibilities of coaching this Principal.	Yes	<i>Variation: What do you perceive to be the main roles of the Leadership Coach?</i>
8	Do you use any specific coaching approaches or models that have been identified in coaching literature in working with the Principal? If yes, please outline this process. Do you use any personally developed approaches or models?	No	<i>Variation: Is there a coaching model, framework, approach or structure that the Leadership Coach uses with you when at your school?</i>
9	In what ways, do you feel you have developed/are developing the Principal's leadership capability?	No	<i>Variation: In what ways has the current Leadership Coach developed your leadership capability?</i>
10	In your capacity working with this Principal, on average, how much of your time is spent	Yes	<i>Variation: List some areas in which the Leadership Coach focuses his/her coaching;</i>

Leadership Coach Questions		Question a one- off? Yes/No	Principal Questions ✓ = same question × = not asked <i>(Italics) = variation</i>
	coaching the Principal?		<i>e.g., teaching and learning, facilities, financial, strategic planning.</i>
11	When you are not coaching the Principal, outline the 'other' aspects of your working relationship.	Yes	<i>Variation: Outline the 'other' ways in which the Leadership Coach works with you (tasks, activities, requirements).</i>
12	Are there particular areas in which you focus your coaching; e.g., teaching and learning, facilities, financial, strategic planning?	Yes	× <i>Asked in previous questions.</i>
13	Do you structure your coaching on the current or existing Principal's experience or capability? In other words, in working with multiple principals, do you alter the way you coach according to the specific needs of each principal? If yes, how? If no, why not?	Yes	×
14	When you coach, do you use/refer to a specific agenda? Do you agree in advance to these agenda items?	Yes	<i>Variation: Does the Leadership Coach send you/have/use a specific agenda each time they come? In other words, are there set tasks, activities, steps that they work through?</i>
15	What part does goal setting play in your leadership-coaching sessions?	No	<i>Variation: Do you and/or the Leadership Coach use goal setting in any way? How is this done?</i>
16	What factors inhibit the coaching relationship?	No	<i>Variation: Are there any factors that make it difficult to work together?</i>
17	What factors enhance the coaching relationship?	No	<i>Variation: Are there factors that lead to having a productive working relationship?</i>
18	Are there any specific tools or documents you use when coaching the Principal?	Yes	<i>Variation: What specific tools or documents does the leadership coach use when working with you?</i>
19	Was the session I observed a typical coaching session?	No	✓

3.7.2 Observations

Operating in the role of participant observer, as outlined in Part A of this chapter, this researcher engaged in a limited capacity, interacting only enough to assist in maintaining and respecting the natural coaching environment. However, this researcher was also a leadership coach in ADEC state schools, a point conveyed to all research participants before they gave their consent to participating in this research.

Unlike the interview process described above, the observation process changed little from the first case study observation to the last, regardless of the data being observed, gathered and analysed during the 18-month process. This is because of the research design; that is, naturalistic inquiry. Often the observation process acts as a probe for interviews and vice versa, the interview providing a lead for a researcher's observations (Erlandson et al., 1993). The two data collection instruments are therefore not independent of each other but have a reciprocal relationship. The data pertaining to all three research questions were perhaps even more reliant on the observations than on the interviews.

The researcher's own prolonged engagement in the research context meant he was familiar with the multitude of occasions in which coaching happens, whether formally or informally. The only request given to leadership coaches was that the coaching session be as authentic as possible. Indeed, the last interview question at each interview was to ask if the session observed had been a typical coaching session. Coaches were simply asked to give the researcher one or two days' notice of a coaching session taking place. The research participants in each case study determined the theme or topic of the coaching sessions. Table 3.3 summarises the

intended interview and observation design sequence prior to research taking place.

Table 3.4 summarises the reality of what took place within each case study; that is:

- the actual number of interviews and observations that took place
- the topic of the various observation sessions
- the duration of each interview and observation
- why all six data sets may not have been completed at each research site.

Table 3.3

Data Collection: Pre-research Interview and Observation Sequence

Data Collection	
<i>Per Research Site (Intra)</i>	<i>Focus/Detail</i>
<i>Site Visit 1</i>	
Observation 1	Leadership-coaching conversations: Topic and context chosen by research participants
Interview 1 with Leadership Coach only	Semi-structured Interview 1
Interview 1 with Principal only (translator where applicable)	Semi-structured Interview 1
<i>Site Visit 2</i>	
Observation 2	Based on Observation 1 data collection and analysis: At some research sites, researcher may have requested a leadership-coaching focus different from the first observation
Interview 2 with Leadership Coach only	Semi-structured Interview 2 Previous question responses re-read to participant for many questions (member checking) Participant asked to agree, disagree, expand upon or clarify
Interview 2 with Principal only (translator where applicable)	Semi-structured Interview 2 Participant asked to agree, disagree, expand upon or clarify Further questioning as required

Table 3.4

Data Collection: Actual Interview and Observation Completion Summary

Per Research Site (Intra)	Sequence and Completion	Duration (Minutes)	Comment
Research Site 1	Observation 1	65	100% completion over 5 months
	Principal Interview 1	15	
	Leadership Coach Interview 1	26	
	Observation 2	90	
	Leadership Coach Interview 2	40	
	Principal Interview 2	21	
Research Site 2	Observation 1	25	10-month period Principal Interview 2 not completed due to sensitive issues as explained in Chapter 4
	Principal Interview 1	25	
	Leadership Coach Interview 1	33	
	Observation 2	50	
	Leadership Coach Interview 2	50	
Research Site 3	Observation 1	30	Two-month period Principal Interview 2 not completed due to issues with communication and translation
	Principal Interview 1	24	
	Leadership Coach Interview 1	49	
	Observation 2	68	
	Leadership Coach Interview 2	Written	
Research Site 4	Observation 1	75	100% completion over 3 months
	Principal Interview 1	45	
	Leadership Coach Interview 1	32	
	Observation 2	55	
	Principal Interview 2	25	
	Leadership Coach Interview 2	20	
Research Site 5	Observation 1	44	Only 50% completion rate over 5 months, as coaching partnership ended
	Principal Interview 1	16	
	Leadership Coach Interview 1	52	
Research Site 6	Observation 1	90	Only 50% completion rate due to limited coaching approach with Principal 6 (P6) as explained in Chapter 4
	Principal Interview 1	26	
	Leadership Coach Interview 1	45	
Total	28/36 data samples completed =		78% completion rate

3.8 Data Analysis: Grounded Theory

The analysis of data began early in the research and was an ongoing process over the 18-month data-gathering process and beyond. Because the research analysis was based on the emerging design, constant comparative method, as advanced by Glaser (Creswell, 2005), there was a deliberate intention not to force the data into pre-set and emerging categories. Using the open-coding method (Bryman, 2012a; Cohen et al., 2007; Creswell, 2005), the data were analysed from the very first interview and observation and preliminary categories were developed. At subsequent interviews and observations, the categories were refined and re-refined throughout the data collection stage. A visual representation of this has been provided by Creswell (2005), as presented in Table 3.5.

This researcher believed that after 28 data samples were collected, the point of saturation (Bryman, 2012a; Cohen et al., 2007; Creswell, 2005; Erlandson et al., 1993) had been reached and no new data or categories would emerge from carrying out further interviews or observations. The process of developing and refining the categories, as presented in Table 3.5, was part of the process described by Miles and Huberman, 1984 (as cited in Erlandson et al., 1993) whereby the data are reduced and then displayed, and then conclusions are drawn.

The inductive constant comparative method, as described earlier in this methodology section, was used throughout the data-gathering process. Generally, the interview and observation responses or statements were analysed as paragraphs that were then placed into categories. As advised in Erlandson et al. (1993), some paragraphs or statements were cross-classified into more than one category. These responses were then compared to previous responses in the category or placed into a sub-category. These initial categories and sub-categories formed the emerging theme

and the new raw data were then placed into existing categories or further categories and sub-categories were developed. A better representation of this is provided by Table 3.6, which shows the various levels at which data analysis took place. Coding and categorising took place at all four levels.

Table 3.5

Zigzag Data Collection and Analysis

Data Collection	Data Analysis	
First interview	Preliminary categories	
Second interview	Refined categories	Towards saturation of categories
Third interview	More-refined categories	
Close to saturated categories		

Note. From: Adapted from Creswell (2005, p. 442)

Table 3.6

Levels of Data Analysis for the Three Research Questions

Level 1	Individual case analysis of Interview 1 Individual case analysis of Observation 1
Level 2	Individual case analysis between Interview 1 and Observation 1 (similarities and differences)
Level 3	Individual case analysis between Interview and Observation 1 and Interview and Observation 2 (where applicable), per case study
Level 4	Cross-case analysis Comparative analysis across the six research sites

One outcome of using the process outlined in Table 3.6 was that some of the initial interview questions were either deleted or re-phrased. An example of this was Question 15 about goal setting. This question was only asked if goal setting was

observed in the observation process or the topic arose during the discussion of other interview questions.

3.9 Research Design and Analysis Summary

Table 3.7 provides a summary of the research design points.

Table 3.7

Summary of Research Design

Research design	Interpretive case study (multiple—six case studies)
Data analysis	Grounded theory: open coding, emergent, constant comparative
Source Paradigm	Post-modernism
Educational research paradigm	Naturalistic: interpretive and constructivist
Data-gathering instruments	Observation: semi-structured, natural setting (school site) Interview: sequential, semi-structured, open-ended
Data transcription	All observations and interviews recorded electronically, with participant consent; the researcher transcribed all data
Data sampling	Theoretical or purposive: typical and criterion sampling
Quality standards	Parallel research criteria: trustworthiness and authenticity Triangulation: credibility (persistent observation, prolonged engagement, peer debriefing, participant checks)
Researcher role	Observer-as-participant (superficial participation only); researcher had been operating as a leadership coach for over 4 years but none of the researcher's schools participated in the study

Chapter 4: Presentation of Data

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the six individual case studies, with each of them divided into four subsections: contextual overview, concepts of coaching, coaching approaches and factors enhancing and/or inhibiting the coaching relationship. Section 4.8 contains a cross-case analysis of all six case studies and three of the above four subsections are synthesised: concepts of coaching, coaching approaches and factors enhancing and/or inhibiting the coaching relationship. Section 4.9 contains a further synthesis of the results that were pertinent to the three research questions.

The format for each case study follows the outline presented in Tables 3.3 and 3.4. The ‘contextual overview’ subsection in each case study gives a brief overview of each research site, mainly using Interview Questions 1 to 5 as outlined earlier in Table 3.2. The ‘concepts of coaching’ subsection in each case study presents the perspectives held by each research participant, mainly using Interview Questions 6 and 7. As all three research questions were related to coaching, ascertaining perceptions of coaching from both research participants was relevant to the findings.

The ‘coaching approaches’ subsection in each case study presents the views that both research participants expressed regarding a particular coaching approach or model that was applied in their regular coaching sessions, with an observable approach or theory-in-action. Mainly using Interview Questions 6 to 15, 18 and 19, the interview data (espoused) are presented alongside coaching observations (observable) using the grounded theory methodology of this study. The interview and observation data were analysed for every case study in the following steps:

- The data were analysed firstly to identify whether there were any identifiable ‘coaching characteristics’ in the coaching conversations.
- Where there were key characteristics, the data were then categorised into a broader category, termed ‘coaching elements’.
- Finally, these coaching elements were categorised into a broad category termed ‘coaching component’.

One example of this was the use of humour. In Case Study 1, humour was used consistently enough by the Leadership Coach to consider this a characteristic of his coaching approach. Alongside another characteristic, this was then classified under the coaching element of ‘establishing and maintaining coaching climate’, which was then categorised under the broad category termed ‘relational’. The ‘coaching approaches’ subsection in all six case studies concludes with a table that summarises the grounded theory data analysis.

The ‘factors enhancing and/or inhibiting the coaching relationship’ subsection in each case study examines the espoused and observable views (from both research participants) regarding factors that enhanced or inhibited the coaching relationship. Using all interview questions, but mostly Questions 16 and 17, the interview data (espoused) were analysed alongside coaching observations (observable) using the same process of coding and categorising raw data; that is:

- Espoused and observed responses were recorded from the raw data.
- These responses were then classified as being either enhancing or inhibiting factors in the coaching relationship, or a combination of the two.
- The initial responses were then grouped into specific factors that enhanced or inhibited the coaching relationship.

- Finally, these specific factors were categorised into a broad category termed ‘major factors’.

An example of this was the Case Study 1 translator, who was both viewed and observed as being both an inhibiting and enhancing factor in the coaching relationship. Along with another specific factor, these two specific factors were grouped ‘holistically’ under the broad category of ‘major factors’ that enhanced or inhibited the coaching relationship. This section in all six case studies concludes with a table that summarises the grounded theory data analysis.

4.2 Case Study 1

4.2.1 Contextual Overview

Research Site 1 was a large Cycle 2 and 3, boys-only government school in the emirate of Abu Dhabi, otherwise known as an ADEC school. The two research participants were an Emirati principal and a Western leadership coach, henceforth referred to as Principal 1 (P1) and Leadership Coach 1 (LC1). P1 had 10 years’ experience as a principal and LC1 had over 30 years’ experience in various leadership positions, including principalship in his country of origin. P1 had an IELTS score that suggested there would be language difficulties when communicating in English. Neither research participant had received formal leadership training. Further, LC1 had not received any induction or professional development on leadership coaching upon arrival in the UAE, before being placed in schools. LC1 stated that he visited the school at least once a week for between one and three hours, depending on the needs of P1 and the school. P1 supported this fact. LC1 worked with seven other schools in a similar capacity. In the interviews, he described P1 as being the most capable out of the eight principals.

Two coaching observations and four interviews were conducted at Research Site 1 over a five-month period. The topic of Observation 1, as selected by the research participants, was an impending evaluation for P1. LC1 used levels of questioning to explore where P1 believed he was situated in relation to the ADEC performance evaluation tool produced by the governing body. The topic of Observation 2 was related to strategic planning and involved P1 sharing progress made on the school's annual school improvement plan (SIP). The role of LC1 in this session appeared to be one of listening, giving feedback, questioning and suggesting improvements and solutions. A translator was present for all four observations and P1-only interviews. The Interview 1 questions, for both P1 and LC1, were based on the semi-structured format described earlier and the Interview 2 questions were based on the researcher re-reading the Interview 1 responses. Because of the language issues, the participant responses necessitated a paraphrasing of some questions, particularly in the case of P1.

4.2.2 Concepts of Coaching

LC1 expressed strong views on his definition of coaching and understanding of the role of the coach in this context. He felt he was more a mentor than a coach with P1. He described coaching as follows:

I look at coaching from the view of a football coach—repetition of skills, analysing what you did and what went wrong.

He defined the differences between the two concepts as follows:

Coaching is more a structure about how to do things and the processes to follow, then repeating, going over it again and again.

And:

Mentoring is to give someone ideas. Allowing him to learn from his own experiences and conversations about how he might do it differently

Mentoring is more a light touch. In some schools, I tell them to do this and do that, that's coaching.

P1 was brief in his response on this topic and talked about coaching as being the leadership coach assessing his needs, supporting him, motivating him, giving him the 'benefit of his experience' and giving him some professional development.

4.2.3 Coaching Approaches

4.2.3.1 Good Practice

LC1 stated that he did not follow any specific coaching approaches when working with P1 but that his 'way of working' was based on best practice. When asked what he meant by best practice, he offered the following comments:

You know, I know what I think is good practice. But I know that someone else's perception of good practice is over here . . . you know, it's different than mine. I know that I can learn from other people about . . . where I've got certain expectations and because of those, that's how I see good practice, because [that's] based around my expectations. However, I learn a lot from working with other cluster managers and what they're saying and seeing the way different cluster managers work and their different expectations. That's the beauty of working in a country where you're working with Americans, Canadians, Brits, Irish, even Australians.

LC1 went on to talk about leadership coaches having what he termed a pool of understanding about what constitutes good practice and ensuring conversations match existing principal capability.

4.2.3.2 *Eclectic*

It was evident from the two observations, four interviews, the topic of one of the observation sessions and direct conversations between the two participants, that leadership coaches are required to operate in multi-modal roles. This has been termed eclectic, as no single role dominated and often it was difficult for this researcher to ascertain whether the leadership coach was coaching, mentoring or speaking as a supervisor. The following comments are further evidence of LC1 and P1 switching between modes of leadership. The conversation outlined below was about P1's evaluation, which would eventually be carried out by the same leadership coach who is directing this conversation:

OK, so you were 'emerging developing' last year, so you think . . . you say . . . you are at 'established/developing'? (LC1)

Yes. (P1)

OK, well we're actually quite close. For me, because I did the self-evaluation too, I put you at 'emerging developing', but we're close. What are some of the things that you think you've done this year that would be indicators of the change? (LC1)

The potential for role confusion (i.e., changing from supervisory to coaching modes in the same session) was evident in both the coaching sessions and in the comments made by both participants. The following are examples of possibly contradictory statements and in a later section, these statements are considered in the section on 'factors that inhibit and/or enhance the coaching relationship':

I talk to him about things are meant to be done. (LC1)

Even though I'm his supervisor, I don't come here telling him how to do his job. The onus is on him to change. (LC1)

I tell him where I think he is going wrong, but at the end of the day, it's his decision. I don't even think I would tell them if they are going wrong. I don't think I would say it in so many words. I say if you do this, then these are the consequences. (LC1)

4.2.3.3 Communication and Language

There was a plethora of evidence to suggest that language was a determining factor in how this LC1 not just communicated with the P1 during coaching sessions, but structured his coaching sessions. In both observed sessions, a translator was used and while this appeared to be advantageous for both parties, it was a source of concern as well. The translator, from here on referred to as Translator One (T1), was simply an English teacher from within the school, rather than a trained translator. Apart from possible ethical issues, there were many instances of word-for-word translation being summarised and only a brief version articulated by T1. Additionally, there were multiple occasions of T1 directly answering or responding to questions without referring the question to either P1 or LC1. This was not only observed but also was articulated by LC1 to this researcher during the two interviews. On the positive side, having T1 present appeared to add a greater level of depth and meaning to the conversations, as well as allowing time for P1 to process questions and conversations before responding.

The coaching conversations appeared to be characterised by short question and answer responses and constant checking for understanding and meaning.

Following is an example of a typical conversation from Observation 1:

The first part he thinks he has not achieved it, but he's going to achieve it.

The second part he thinks he's achieved it. (T1)

So, he thinks he's sitting at 'established/developing'—is that correct? (LC1)

Yep, that's what he thinks. (T1)

So do I. (LC1)

What? (P1)

So do I. I agree. I agree. (LC1) (Laughter by all)

How about teaching effectiveness? Last year we placed you at 'establishing/developing'. (LC1) (P1 speaks with T1 in Arabic)

Ummm, I agree with you. The first paragraph is an area that still needs much greater depth of work. (LC1) (P1 and T1 talk in Arabic)

Ummm, accomplished. (T1)

OK, I've got you down as . . . 'established'. (LC1)

This was typical of the conversation throughout the 150 minutes of the two observed coaching sessions. Developing depth in a conversation took a considerable amount of time, a point also evident from the following comment:

One of the things I've learned about being here is what I do in five steps in [home country] I [need] about 50 steps here. But that's something you need to understand. We might get there but it might just be a lot slower. (LC1)

LC1 often checked and re-checked for understanding using questioning techniques or statements.

Another characteristic of the conversations was the apparent loss of meaning when lengthy statements or questions were used by LC1, or when LC1 used analogies, colloquial terms or rhetorical questions. Following are two examples, in which the colloquial terms 'nutshell' and 'whereabouts' appeared to confuse P1:

Can we just go back? Have a look at learning environment and look at the column for a variety of student learning needs. That is actually the nutshell of teaching. (LC1)

Sorry? (P1)

And:

Whereabouts in accomplished? (LC1)

Sorry? (P1)

Which part? (LC1)

Ummm, developing. (P1)

4.2.3.4 Relational

The interview responses from both participants, as well as observation data, highlighted the importance of relationship building being a vital component of leadership coaching in this case study. Establishing and maintaining the three components (relationships, credibility and trust, and coaching climate) were apparent in the data. LC1 commented that 20 to 30% of his time was spent on relationship building, sitting down in all coaching sessions and having the ‘required cups of tea and the dates’. He also highlighted that during these relationship-building times, coaching conversations were taking place and work was being done.

Establishing credibility and trust were important to both participants. P1 talked about the importance of LC1 having a lot of experience and being effective in his home country before coming to UAE. LC1 agreed, talking about his increased credibility in the eyes of P1, owing to his own years of experience as a principal.

Lastly, there appeared to be a positive tone or climate throughout both coaching sessions. Humour was employed on many occasions by LC1, to lighten the mood as well as the occasional use of positive feedback.

4.2.3.5 Session Structure

The last theme in this case study has been termed ‘session structure’, to describe the unique features and sequencing of both coaching sessions. As noted

earlier, LC1 admitted to not following any literature-based coaching approach but structured his sessions according to a best-practice approach. The leadership modes presented above were all accompanied by actions and behaviours. Modelling was one such action that LC1 said he used extensively:

I give them tons of models. I show them, I write things up, but I never have the expectation that they must use it.

In Observation 1, LC1 was observed modelling self-reflection with P1. Additionally, conversation directing and facilitation were hallmarks of these coaching sessions.

In both this section and in the section on factors enhancing and/or inhibiting the coaching relationship, mention is made of language being a major inhibiting factor in coaching principals. LC1 used a combination of strategies to negotiate around language issues to develop quality, in-depth discussions. Questioning techniques were a core strategy and examples of successful questioning techniques have been presented earlier. Other core strategies were LC1 building principal leadership capacity by offering alternative options and solutions to issues and problems. Negotiation and compromise were also key strategies LC1 used to develop depth and keep the discussion moving in a positive direction. Practical or real examples were often used by LC1 in structuring conversations. Examples of this included the following conversation from Observation 2, about development of the school's strategic plan:

Yes, I agree with some of your words but I would put 100. I would put 100%.

(LC1)

The draft with the goals, the draft with the numbers 90%, maybe we make it 95 and the second goal, with the teachers, maybe we make 75 to 85%. We will discuss. (P1)

Two points. If you may it 100% this year and at the end of the year you only achieve 90%, the target group for the following year would be the 10% that didn't make any improvement. (LC1)

Following is another good example of LC1 pointing out the repercussions of an action and offering feedback and alternatives or solutions:

Here's something for you to wonder about. You've got 20% of your teachers who won't do this—right? That's what you're saying, right? So 80% will and 20% won't. You're going to get a six in Irtiqaa—you know that? Because of 10% of your teachers. (LC1)

Yeah, that's what we discussed. (T1)

Because 10% of you have been performing below that level of a five. Is that what you are saying here? (LC1) [Translation made to P1]

If I said to you tell me the 20% of teachers who will not achieve the goal, you will be able to tell me. We know which 20% it will be, right now. (LC1)

So, we could concentrate on the 20% if we know the 20% and forget about the rest? (T1: use of humour) [laughter]

No, no, no, that's not what I'm suggesting. You could have two separate goals but you could also look at differentiating the professional development as a strategy. (LC1)

Table 4.1 summarises the five coaching components (both espoused and observed) that have been presented in this section.

Table 4.1

Case Study 1: Summary of Espoused and Observable Coaching Approaches

Coaching Component	Coaching Element	Coaching Characteristics Evident in Conversations
<i>Section 4.2.3.1</i> Good practice	Needs-based coaching (LC1 using prior knowledge and experience and applying to coaching context)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LC1 passing on and applying knowledge and experience gained in country of origin • LC1 passing on and applying knowledge and experience gained from colleagues, from many different countries, working in the same context
<i>Section 4.2.3.2</i> Eclectic	Supervisory forms of coaching/mentoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing P1 for the upcoming evaluation • Meeting job description role expectations • Functioning in multiple roles during direct session conversations • Role clash and confusion
<i>Section 4.2.3.3</i> Communication and Language	Translator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Translator’ as a loose term • Role issues/ethical issues • Examples of translator adding clarity to coaching conversations
	Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Often brief and surface-level discussions • Lengthy questions/statements = lost meaning • Rhetorical questioning = lost meaning • Analogies = lost meaning • Questions used to check understanding and meaning • Repetitive questioning to gain meaning and establish importance of a point
<i>Section 4.2.3.4</i> Relational	Establishing and maintaining relationships	20–30% of coaching time spent on developing and maintaining the relationship
	Establishing and maintaining trust and credibility	More important to P1

Coaching Component	Coaching Element	Coaching Characteristics Evident in Conversations
	Establishing and maintaining coaching climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequent use of humour • Positive feedback beneficial to the session outcomes
Section 4.2.3.5 Session structure	Leadership mode	Multi-modal: modelling, facilitating, directing, etc.
	Topic coverage and depth	Use of questioning, exploring options, offering solutions, compromising, negotiating, using real/practical examples

4.2.4 Factors Enhancing and/or Inhibiting the Coaching Relationship

4.2.4.1 Language

In the previous section, language was presented as being a major factor influencing the coaching approach used. Correspondingly, identical factors emerged in this section. In Case Study 1, T1 was viewed as both an enhancing and inhibiting factor in the coaching relationship. Evidence and examples have been presented in Table 4.1. An additional factor was the observed inconsistencies in when, and how, P1 used T1. This inconsistency was characterised by T1's personal opinions and summations of conversation, rather than word-for-word translations, and the many conversations in Arabic that were not translated back into English for the benefit of LC1. The following conversation is an example of a conversation ending in a question to P1, yet T1 answers this directly:

Umm, there are little things we could discuss, like, for example, we have talked about English as being reading, writing, listening and speaking, right? And you've got reading there but you and I know that reading is a whole of a sub-strand, so in reading we are looking at structure and reading and a whole lot of things, so when you look at reading in general, you are looking at all those things that comprise reading, right? (LC1)

Yes, that's right. That's what we wrote in the strategies. For example, we have some skills in Arabic and some skills in reading, so we look at the skills that we are improving we look at only two to three skills in reading. OK? Or we look at maybe two skills in writing, so I look at maybe the content, maybe about speaking and punctuation, so we are going to identify the skills. (T1)

Language was both observed and perceived by both research participants in this case study as a potentially inhibiting factor when working in an intercultural context. In addition to the factors listed in the previous section, LC1 stated that most of the documents he used were in English and any Arabic documents that were available were often not of the same quality. A previous comment from LC1, presented earlier, highlighted that depth and quality of coaching conversations was attainable, but at the expense of topic coverage.

4.2.4.2 Role Dichotomy

The previous section presented evidence that LC1 operated in multi-modal leadership roles. This has the potential to create role confusion for both research participants. Neither participant had received coaching training, or indeed any training prior to working together. As noted previously, many statements in the transcripts indicated the complexity of the working relationship. The following statement, extracted from ADEC functional job descriptions, is another example of this: 'supervise, mentor/coach and evaluate school principals'. The responses and analysis of this case study lead this researcher to ask an additional question in subsequent case studies; that is, to what extent does evaluating the principal affect your working relationship?

4.2.4.3 *The Principal*

LC1 stated that a specific inhibiting factor in coaching P1 was his limited depth of experience. He stated that P1 had experience and professional development as a manager, but not as a leader and he felt there was a significant difference. An additional factor is what may be best described as ‘not knowing what you don’t know’. The following statement by LC1 is an example of this:

You know, you can drive a car and you think the car is wonderful and then I put you into a Mercedes. Now it’s just still a car, but now you have all these things you didn’t have in your other car, right? . . . Now, he’s driving the car but if he doesn’t know what the Mercedes is like, then he’s happy with his car. (LC1)

LC1 felt there was a possible lack of motivation on the part of P1 to aspire to higher levels of performance. He suggested that this might simply be a personal perception he held, based on the higher performance levels common in the educational environment from which he had come.

The last specific factor within this section on ‘The Principal’ has been termed ‘organisation standards and expectations’. LC1 mentioned the lack of autonomy by P1, and indeed all principals, in being entrusted by the organisation with leadership decision making. Linked to this is what has been termed ‘distractors’. LC1 referred to the number of occasions P1 was off-site attending mandatory meetings, professional development, and so on. He considered this a significant inhibiting factor in coaching P1. He gave the following example:

I don’t think we are doing a very good job of walking the line . . . you know, a good balance of letting the principal do the job they are in. I think it is tipped to one side and principals are way too often at the beck and call of (the

organisation) and they are out of the school, or Tamkeen or something.

(LC1)

Is it getting worse? (Researcher)

Yeah, they've been called out for [name of a programme], they've been called out for timetabling, they've been called out for health and safety and all sorts of other things, just even this trimester. (LC1)

4.2.4.4 Culture

The principal in Case Study 1 viewed cultural difference as positive.

Although he did not articulate this in depth, his comments such as '*I want to add more*' and '*real life is out there and this is the way we do things out there*' has connotations of him wanting to enrich the cultural knowledge and experiences of LC1. LC1 listed cultural difference as only being a minor inhibitor, because a Western educator with all his/her knowledge will never truly understand the part that 'local knowledge' and 'context' plays in developing both the principal and the schools.

4.2.4.5 Ways of Working

Two specific factors contributed to 'ways of working' being a major factor in enhancing or inhibiting the coaching relationship. These are listed in Table 4.2 as relationships and session structure. At least 20 to 30% of LC1's time was spent on relationships. LC1 went on to say that 'relationships were everything':

I don't come here (and he knows this) . . . and tell him how to do his job and that's part of relationship building. I don't tell him, he can choose or not to, to do anything of what we've talked about. (LC1)

This was intertwined with gaining respect and credibility, as both a person and leader from whom P1 can learn. The use of the term ‘learn from’ was deliberate and signified a lack of evidence to suggest that P1 ‘learns with’ LC1.

The previous section suggested that although no coaching model was identified by LC1, consistent themes and characteristics were observed. LC1 called this ‘best practice’. This best practice is at the heart of all coaching conversations. How LC1 questions, gives feedback, directs, facilitates, models, responds, consults, follows-up, prepares, and so on has a direct bearing on the coaching relationship, in addition to LC1’s experience and educational standing. Table 4.2 summarises the five major factors that enhanced or inhibited the coaching relationship as presented in this section.

Table 4.2

Case Study 1: Summary of Factors that Enhanced or Inhibited the Coaching Relationship

Major Factors	Specific Factors	Espoused and Observed Responses
<i>Section 4.2.4.1</i> Language	Translator	Multiple examples of the translator as both an asset and a liability: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spasmodic and ad hoc use • Opinion and summary v. direct translation • Side conversations by P1 and T1
	Holistically	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty in obtaining depth and meaning in coaching conversations • Limited topic coverage • Coaching documents and artefacts mainly in English
<i>Section 4.2.4.2</i> Role dichotomy	P1 perspective LC1 perspective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisor v. coach v. mentor • No induction or training
<i>Section 4.2.4.3</i> The principal	Knowledge and understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of depth of leadership experience • Principal does not know what he does not

Major Factors	Specific Factors	Espoused and Observed Responses
		know
	Personal expectations and standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of motivation • ‘Not knowing what you don’t know’
	Organisational expectations and standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distractors • Historically limited leadership autonomy
<i>Section 4.2.4.4</i> Cultural difference	Context	Local v. Western knowledge and understanding
<i>Section 4.2.4.5</i> Ways of working	Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘At the heart of everything’ • Credibility and respect
	Session structures	Prior/during/follow-up

4.3 Case Study 2

4.3.1 Contextual Overview

Research Site 2 was a medium-sized Cycle 2, boys-only government school in the emirate of Abu Dhabi, otherwise known as an ADEC school. The two research participants were an Emirati principal and a Western leadership coach, henceforth referred to as Principal 2 (P2) and Leadership Coach 2 (LC2). P2 had 15 years’ experience as a principal, though he was in his first year at this particular school. LC2 had 18 years’ experience as a principal in his country of origin. P2 had an IELTS score that suggested language difficulties when communicating with a fluent English speaker. P2 had received a very small amount of formal leadership training through an external company, authorised by ADEC. LC2 had received a limited amount of training in leadership coaching from ADEC, after he had been in the organisation for many years, as well as some theoretical understanding via a Master’s course. LC2 stated that he visited the school at least once a week, which contradicted

P2's view that visits from LC2 were less frequent. LC2 had seven other schools with whom he worked in a similar capacity. In Interview 1, LC2 stated that he had worked with P2 in a previous school and felt that he was quite capable, but that in this school he was 'struggling' as a principal.

Two coaching observations and three interviews were conducted at Research Site 2 over a 10-month period. Interview 2 with P2 was not completed for mainly ethical reasons held by the researcher. As will be shown in the discussion of this case study, the apparently dysfunctional nature of the school, as evident from observing and interviewing in the school, reading inspection reports, and the interview comments from LC2, may have given rise to tensions and a 'blame' culture in the school. Additionally, this researcher felt that the actions of the translator (T2), who was also an English teacher in the school, were unprofessional. This researcher therefore deemed further interviewing of P2 and T2 to be counterproductive in terms of producing authentic data.

The topic of Observation 1, as selected by the research participants, was analysing and interpreting the results from a high-stakes external test. The topic of Observation 2 was related to a teacher–student issue that evolved into a broader conversation about how to deal with various disciplinary matters. A translator was present for Observation 1, but not for Observation 2. He was also present at P2's interview. The Interview 1 questions, for both P2 and LC2, were based on the semi-structured format described earlier and the Interview 2 questions were based on the researcher re-reading the Interview 1 responses.

4.3.2 Concepts of Coaching

LC2 believed he was more a mentor than a coach with P2:

When I mentor, I walk beside but when I coach, I might walk beside but I'm more direct.

Based on that response, LC2 was then asked if coaching is more explicit than mentoring. His response in Interview 1 was:

It is, it is. I'm now more explicit than I was, right? . . . I knew where I was going today. I knew what I wanted. I wanted that form at the end. That was the explicit learning of today and we got there in the end.

LC2 went on to explain that the explicit aspects of the session would continue in the form of P2 processing and 'doing his share'.

When Interview 1 responses were read to P2 during Interview 2, the only additional comment was:

Coaching for them [the principals] means that I have to do what he says but the mentoring thing is what creates the sustainability.

When P2 was asked the same questions, his opinions were difficult to ascertain as T2, even at this early stage of the interview, dominated the proceedings and offered personal opinions and innuendo. What did come out was that P2 felt the most important job of LC2 was 'to monitor'. Further opinions were offered but they appeared to be only the views of T2 and were related to LC2 giving them better advice and training.

4.3.3 Coaching Approaches

LC2 said that although he did not follow any specific coaching approach or model, there were certain characteristics to his approach:

I change my approach depending on the principal but I always try and do some explicit learning . . . I try and leave the personal stuff, the relational stuff, to the end like I did today. They accept my doing this . . . I ask a lot of

open-ended questions—‘Why did you do that?’, etc. I let the principals know I will not tell them the answer.

He explained that reaching an outcome was not initially a feature of his coaching sessions, but since the inception of a new school leadership improvement plan for leadership coaches, he had taken on a more outcomes-based focus:

I now cut back on the just-in-time learning and focus on the trimester foci. I look for a lead in to a conversation to bring in our foci; i.e., data.

When LC2 was asked how he felt he had developed P2’s leadership capability, he offered the following comment:

To be fair, not at all. There’s a lot of power play and situations in the school that prevent the principal from benefitting from my sessions. He’s a good listener but people in the school hijack the meetings and as a cluster manager, I cannot jump in and tell them what I think.

This comment is symptomatic of the frustrations that LC2 was experiencing in his attempts to build leadership capacity with P2. Such factors are listed later in Case Study 2 as inhibiting factors and LC2 was forthright in stating:

Much of my time is spent on just-in-time business. Most of the time I’m doing reactionary stuff.

Only two coaching components were identified in Case Study 2. The relational and structural components observed in Case Study 1 were not a strong feature of this case study, perhaps because of the challenging nature of the school in which LC2 had to operate. Both P2 and LC2 said the two sessions this researcher observed were not typical coaching sessions. LC2 said:

No, it wasn’t typical. It wasn’t staged but typical would be heaps of interruptions . . . The second coaching session was possibly over-structured

because you were here and I wanted to play safe. If you were not here, I would've done something similar but not quite so step by step.

4.3.3.1 Eclectic

The espoused coaching approach outlined by LC2 above contrasted with the perspectives of P2 and T2. When the same question—what is the role of leadership coach—was put to P2, a brief conversation took place in Arabic between T2 and P2 and the following response was given:

To monitor. (T2)

Just monitoring? You think that is the most important role? (Researcher)

Yes. (T2, without confirming with P2)

Later in the interview, the question of the role of LC2 came up within another conversation and the following comments were added:

Rarely, he offers advice about solving or problems at school—rarely, occasionally . . . Mr [LC2] [is] supposed to be supporting and training . . . and Mr [P2] was hoping he would get more instruction and more direction. (T2, via P1).

The above conversations indicate diverse perspectives regarding the role of LC2. This was also evident throughout both observations. In Observation 2, LC2 operated mainly in a supervisory mode. While LC2 was walking around the school, he had observed unprofessional behaviour in a middle manager towards a student. (The nature of the incident is not important for this study and has been edited below.)

The following conversation took place directly upon LC2 meeting with P2:

I just want to tell you that I'm going to give him an oral warning. Don't do it again or next time I'm going to write it down. (LC2)

OK. Can you give me this? The last time from here, I speak to him. (P2)

OK, as long as it's an official oral warning—official. (LC2)

OK. (P2)

[The behaviour by the teacher] is a no-no. He's the man who is the leader of behaviour and he's behaving as a model—the wrong way—for everybody.

Please, Mr [P2], I will leave it with you and I'm going to put a note in my diary. This is the last one. Next time it will be in writing and I will do it, not you. (LC2)

As with Case Study 1, both observations were beset with occasions in which LC2 positioned himself in multiple leadership modes, with a reactionary approach. In other words, LC2 was operating in difficult and complex situations in which many factors and variables were in play, over many of which neither LC2 nor P2 had direct control.

4.3.3.2 Communication and Language

As already highlighted, T2 was a dominant participant in both Interview 1 and Observation 1. On multiple occasions, T2 moved outside his role, influencing the conversation and possibly the thinking of P2. Observation 2 took place without T2 present and appeared to be much more productive and positive, even though the conversations were related to a disciplinary matter. LC2 admitted that he did not usually use a translator:

No, I choose not to. If he gets really stuck he'll ask for one, but that's normally in a . . . complaints format or in a formal situation . . . he'll have a translator if it's formal, like we did today or like we did the other day. We don't want that guy back. We usually just muff our way through.

As with Case Study 1, language barriers appeared to dictate the session structure, depth and outcome:

You know, if maybe a letter come from ADEC, I know what it will say. He say halas [in this context, this means finished or terminated]. (P2)

And that's right and that's going to help us with the discussion we're going to have next. OK, not next one but soon. Next. Remember you and I had talked about [name of another teacher]? (LC2)

OK. (P2)

And he's working hard, doing his job but not enough. Yes? In talking with the people above me . . . they want to know that if I write my report and say we need some help because [name of teacher] can't cope, cannot cope with the work. He gives up, it is too much. You will say, 'Yes I agree', not say 'No, no, no, he's a good man'. (LC2)

I think, if this school be smaller than this school, maybe is better? Maybe this school is too big? (P2)

Sure. I agree with you. We need one more VP [Vice Principal] for sure.

(LC2)

May be we need one principal. [laughing] (P2)

We have a good principal already. (LC2) [P2 still laughing and shrugging]

Yes, we do. What I'm saying to you though, is that if I write the letter . . .

(LC2)

I know. (P2)

This shows the typical flow of the 50-minute conversation. Compared to a conversation with a fluent speaker of English, LC2 has to simplify his English substantially, choose key words to make a point and omit words that carry little meaning. It almost appeared that LC2 structured his sentences to match the structure used by P2. In both observations, body language was used extensively to reinforce

spoken English in developing depth and meaning in the conversation. In the above excerpt, when LC2 said ‘next’, he gestured with his hands to signal that he was moving on. Such gestures were not prevalent in both interviews with this researcher. Table 4.3 listed additional language and communication characteristics that were evident in both observations, which are the same characteristics as those listed in Table 4.2, referring to LC1.

Table 4.3

Case Study 2: Summary of Espoused and Observable Coaching Approaches

Coaching Component	Coaching Element	Coaching Characteristics Evident in Conversations
<i>Section 4.3.3.</i> Eclectic	Supervisory forms of coaching/mentoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role clash and confusion—P2 sees LC2 as mainly a supervisor • Meeting job description role expectations • Functioning in multiple roles during direct session conversations • Reactionary coaching, owing to negative climate and culture in school—characterised by lack of structure, distractions, blame • Few examples of capacity building • LC2 working with a principal with apparent limited ability, skills and authority to act
<i>Section 4.3.3.2</i> Communication and language	Translator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Translator’ a loose term • Role issues/ethical issues—T2 very unprofessional • Examples of translator adding clarity to coaching conversations
	Conversation type: Questioning and statements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplified English, words omitted from sentences and change in sentence structure by LC2 • Slowing down speed of delivery • Body language exaggerated to compensate for language barrier • Frequent checking, use of rhetorical questioning • Brief and superficial discussions • Lengthy questions/statements = lost

Coaching Component	Coaching Element	Coaching Characteristics Evident in Conversations
		meaning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rhetorical questioning = lost meaning • Analogies = lost meaning • Repetitive questioning to gain meaning and establish the importance of a point

4.3.4 Factors Enhancing and/or Inhibiting the Coaching Relationship

4.3.4.1 *The Principal and the Organisation*

Three specific factors contributed to P2 being considered an inhibiting factor in this coaching relationship. Some of these factors could be considered indirect inhibitors rather than direct inhibitors. The first is termed ‘school, community and organisational influencers’. LC2 talked about P2 not being able to ‘stay on track’:

So why you get to what you got today is because a) he locked the door and b) the student services VP was away and they, the staff, are beginning to realise than when the door is locked from the outside and we’re sitting here, they don’t come in. However, if he opens the door for one, as you would know, it’s all over. (LC2)

So, distractions are a huge problem? (Researcher)

Yeah, and not of his making. (LC2)

And would that be the same in the rest of your schools or is it just with him?

(Researcher)

No, just with him. In a couple of other schools, I could say it’s definitely not the case. And the reason for that is two-fold. One is because, at this school we spend time on ‘. . . just-in-time business’, all right? And the other thing is distractions. So, we didn’t see any distractions today?

Well, we did in some ways because we had to wait half an hour. (Researcher)

An hour. (LC2)

And:

I cannot pin him down. This is the example we saw today. In your schools if you say you are coming at 10 o'clock, I imagine . . . because it's happened for me in the past, nine times out of 10, I get there at 10 and by 10 past 10, we're in solid conversation. With him, I can say I'll be there at eight o'clock and by nine o'clock I'm still waiting to get my teeth into something. That's the biggest inhibitor—10 out of 10.

Although LC2 suggested the school and its staff were the inhibiting factor here, another perspective may be that P2, as leader of the school, is a major influencer on school climate and culture, in which case the inhibiting factor may be P2's lack of professional leadership and management to take control of the above distractors. The following comment by LC2 was further evidence that multiple factors needed to be considered:

There's quite a bit of power play that I didn't previously realise, but now He's a very good listener, right? He listens to everybody and I've been in a couple of situations where I know that what I'm saying is the right way to go. I am so confident. But in a meeting, there were two guys who hijacked the meeting and it went psss [gesture to say downhill] and I can't jump up and say, listen pal, you're wrong.

Therefore, P2's professional standards, expectations and capability were inhibiting factors. LC2 went on to give an example of P2 not reading translated emails each day as an example of no 'pattern of work'.

The other thing is that he's treading lightly with the stuff. So he's not prepared to say (LC2)

He won't commit? (Researcher)

Yes. This is what we're going to do, this is what we're going to do. He might say this is what we're going to do and people say to him, blah, blah, blah and he says, oh, that's right and he'll go and change it all. So, he won't go through the process of thinking something through and sticking to it because then he has a discussion that changes his mind. Instead of having the discussion that changes your mind, then saying, this is what we're going to do. (LC2)

So, is he lacking confidence in his leadership? (Researcher)

No, no, I just think he's lacking an accurate knowledge of process. (LC2)

LC2 suggested there could be cultural factors that need to be considered here, meaning that P2 wanted to keep everyone happy. Additionally, LC2 stated that the cultural factors of P2 having to move to a new region were having a significant effect on the P2 being able to do his job well. Each region has different tribes and families who make up that tribe and the cultural nuances associated with this new location were something he believed even this Emirati principal was struggling to come to terms with. This could have potential flow-on effects to the coaching relationship if the leadership coach was not cognisant of such a cultural distinction and sensitivities.

The last specific factor in this section is the perspective P2 had, and to a certain extent LC2 as well, that the organisation was an inhibitor to an effective working relationship. LC2 outlined a chronological account of P2 initially being afraid to place arrows in heavy traffic areas to direct students, without first seeking ADEC approval. An academic year later P2, possibly because of coaching and mentoring by LC2, was prepared to act without ADEC consultation.

I suppose what I'm trying to say in here is that because they are in a structure that is centralised, it doesn't give them the opportunities to do the

twenty-first-century learning stuff like problem solving, critical thinking, and yet he's now in a position where he hasn't even thought about ADEC and he's already coming up with some solutions. (LC2)

4.3.4.2 Language

As noted earlier, T2 was considered and observed as an inhibiting factor in this coaching relationship. Giving an example of T2 is problematic here, as the interview and observation transcripts did not record what was said in Arabic, or acknowledge the time taken for P2 and T2 to convey messages. However, the field notes showed the time discrepancies that occurred when T2 spoke, relative to when P2 and T2 conversed in Arabic.

LC2 felt that conceptual language, rather than 'just language', was an inhibiting factor, yet he gave many examples of language being an inhibiting factor and it was certainly observed during the two observations:

Conceptual language, not language, because you can see that he understands 90% of what people say, but conceptual language is something we're working on.

In relation to conceptual language, LC2 said:

More the way we say things than what I say. The nuances, the colloquial expressions, English verbiage. Also, the speed at which we speak. When I get excited and speak fast, he cannot understand me.

In Interview 2, LC2 related the following example of P2 struggling with conceptual language:

We had an incident today where I was talking about school culture. So, in my previous discussions about school culture, he knows what I'm talking about but the example I did today was drawn from his school and he said to me,

'I'm half following it but I'm missing the good ideas. Can you put it in writing so that I can . . . ' . . . so he can have people who can read it and talk to him about it and if that's what he wants to do, then I will follow what he wants to do.

In relation to LC2 stating that language in general was not an issue, the following comments contradict this assertion:

So, he can't read English. So, then I looked for understanding . . . so it has to be translated . . . so there's a limited amount of documentation because of his inability to understand English and you don't have the resources . . . so number one, it's the language . . . language is a factor with this principal.

4.3.4.3 Role Dichotomy

Role dichotomy was initially viewed by LC2 as an inhibiting factor in the coaching relationship. However, over the 10-month data-gathering stage, there appeared to be considerable change in perspectives of both LC2 and P2. The following conversations and comments highlight this evolving viewpoint. The context of the conversation that follows is related to performance evaluations. All leadership coaches in the ADEC context are required to carry out annual performance appraisals of the principals they support. In Interview 1, LC2 said the following on this topic:

I think the evaluation killed the trusting and respect thing we had. Doing the evaluation of the principal is an inhibiting factor.

In Interview 2, LC2 felt that both he and P2 were 'rationalising' the effect the appraisal was having on their relationship. He qualified this by stating that both parties realised it is a non-negotiable part of the working relationship and both need to cope as well as possible:

So, it's now less inhibiting than it was, certainly at the end of last year and, also at the beginning of this year. I wouldn't say we've grown together but we are closer now than we were at the beginning of the year and I think it's a good thing.

This contrasted with the perspective of P2, who stated that the process of the appraisal was a problem, as the presented evidence was not accepted by LC2 and the feedback was always negative.

The following comment is possibly further evidence of role dichotomy:

OK, he want . . . to support us, with the stability of our school. Teachers are always changing schools and we have been here for many months now and there is no staff stability. (P2)

This comment possibly goes further than simply role confusion and may be an articulation of the frustrations P2 was experiencing at the school, owing to the existing culture and climate. Finally, LC2 had this to say about the role:

Yes, he does see me as the cluster manager and he does see me as his supervisor; however, my vision of it is that he sees me as a reasonable equal, except for that once instance in the year [performance appraisals]. He sees me as an equal, speaks to me as an equal, listens to me as an equal; however, he does have expectations where, in that meeting you attended . . . ummmm, with [university name], he does have expectations of me doing what I do at meetings, which I guess is taking over and putting it on track.

Therefore, in relation to LC2, role dichotomy was viewed as both an enhancing and inhibiting factor.

4.3.4.4 Relationships

The last major factor in this section has simply been termed ‘relationships’.

LC2 said it took a long time for P2 to become personable:

So, it's been a trimester. Like he'll give me little bits and pieces and that's good. So, the converse of that is like our little discussion today, like how's your son? . . . things like that have also assisted me. Two, he invited me to this sports thing at night. So, I came and had a meal. He didn't come but everyone told him. He asked me to come to something else, I can't remember what it was, but I came.

LC2 said he's had to work hard with P2 to build credibility and respect. The above example of LC2 attending extracurricular events, even when P2 was not there, are examples of building this respect over time. A further example is evident in the following statement:

He acknowledges, shall we call it my knowledge, my ability to provide clear and sensible ideas, to provide critical thinking, to provide leading questions.

He acknowledges that. (LC2)

So, you're saying the faith he has in your knowledge and expertise is a good thing and it enhances the coaching relationship? Your background, your experience? (Researcher)

Yes, that and the fact that I got some things right. (LC2)

The ability of LC2 to gain the respect of P2 enhanced the coaching relationship, although in this case the coaching relationship appeared to be a tenuous connection that LC2 said was adversely affected, either temporarily or long term, by LC2 carrying out the mandated annual performance evaluation on P2. Further evidence of this is obvious in the following comment:

I believe that the evaluation killed it but I want to add to that as we've now come out the other side where I think he has rationalised—how much do I care. Well, he cares intensely. But how much do I care and let's just get on with it and several times he's said to me, for example, 'You can say whatever you like to me'. Right, but that's not quite true. I am careful about what I say and how I say it, but I do say it and he will say to me, 'Yeah, ok'. And the other thing he understands now is when I say, 'I'm asking you to think about this'. . . . So he understands that and sometimes in the following visit, he'll say, 'Oh yeah, that fits with what we talked about last visit and I'm thinking about . . .', and away he goes. (LC2)

Table 4.4 summarises the factors that enhanced or inhibited the coaching relationship in Case Study 2.

Table 4.4

Case Study 2: Summary of Factors that Enhanced or Inhibited the Coaching

Relationship

Major Factors	Specific Factors	Espoused and Observed Responses
<i>Section 4.3.4.1</i> The principal and the organisation	School, community, organisational influencers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School interruptions and power plays • School climate and culture; i.e., a reactive environment • Parental demands
	Professional expectations, standards and capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attention span and focus • Possible lack of organisational skills, including leadership, management skills
	Expectations and standards of ADEC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADEC not allowing P2 autonomy • Out-of-school requirements • P2 did not choose to be in this school • Lack of resourcing and support from ADEC

Major Factors	Specific Factors	Espoused and Observed Responses
<i>Section 4.3.4.2</i> Language	Translator Communication	T2 as a liability: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal opinions and summaries v. direct translation • Unprofessional • Conceptual language • Difficulty in obtaining depth and meaning in coaching conversations • Coaching documents and artefacts mainly in English
<i>Section 4.3.4.3</i> Role dichotomy	P2 perspective LC2 perspective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisor v. coach v. mentor (P2 simply wants the answers/problems solved) • The evaluation
<i>Section 4.3.4.4</i> Relationships	Credibility and respect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has taken P2 a long time to be personable with LC2 • Performance evaluation affected the coaching relationship

4.4 Case Study 3

4.4.1 Contextual Overview

Research Site 3 was a smaller co-educational KG school, in the emirate of Abu Dhabi, otherwise known as an ADEC school. The two research participants were an Emirati principal and a Western leadership coach, henceforth referred to as Principal 3 (P3) and Leadership Coach 3 (LC3). P3 had nine years' experience as a principal, although she was in her first year at this school. LC3 had six years' experience as a principal in her country of origin. P3 had an IELTS score that suggested language difficulties when communicating with a fluent English speaker. P3 had received no training in leadership coaching. LC3 said that to become a principal in her country of origin, a professional qualification had been required and this had included several coaching modules.

LC3 said she had worked with P3 for almost two-and-a-half years, in both this and a previous school. She had nine schools in her portfolio, which she said affected how often she could visit, but on average she visited the school fortnightly, for approximately two hours, as well as on an 'as-needs' basis. This was confirmed by P2, who said the visits ranged from 30 minutes to three hours fortnightly. LC3 described this principal as 'developing', compared to the other principals with whom she worked.

Two coaching observations and three interviews were conducted at Research Site 2 over a two-month period. Interview 2 with P2 was not completed because the translator used was the school secretary who had limited English and as this was the last interview based on Interview 1 responses, this researcher deemed that further interviewing of P3 would be unlikely add to the richness of the research data. Interview 2 with LC3 was in the form of emailed written question and answers because the researcher had departed the country permanently.

The topic of Observation 1, as selected by the research participants, was related to the professional development needs of the school. LC3 was guiding them through a process of identifying and prioritising their professional development needs that were to be signed off by LC3, as supervisor of the school. Observation 2 consisted of two separate topics, one related to an urgent bus issue and request from head office and one was a continuation of the professional development conversation from Observation 1. The school's VP was the translator for both observations (not the same translator who was used in the interview with P3). The Interview 1 questions, for both the P3 and LC3, were based on the semi-structured format described earlier, although heavily modified for the P3 interview. The Interview 2 questions for LC3 were based on the researcher presenting Interview 1 responses and

related questions, in written form, based on the semi-structured format described earlier.

4.4.2 Concepts of Coaching

LC3 began the conversation with quite definitive views on the concept of leadership coaching:

Ascertaining the person's needs based on where they're at, at their current point in time, and through questioning and explanation, getting them to understand where they need to be—not giving them the answer, but working through issues, exploring solutions, etc.

The above comment contrasted with the following:

I see my role as driving school improvement in all its forms—facilitative coaching, questioning, encouraging critical reflection, explaining, enabling and directive coaching—driving, delivering, get them where they need to be.

In the above comments, words such as 'driving' and 'where they need to be' have broad connotations. At this point, LC3 said she used a coaching approach she called 'SOAR'. The actual definition and use of SOAR is explained and examined in subsequent sections and in Chapter 5, but LC3 justified use of such theories and approaches with the following comment:

In this school, the Emirati principal and her VP are 'old school' principal and VPs, who require exposure to research theories and need to be supported to experience and lead effective leadership and change management processes. The scaffolding we provide enables them to learn about a process, implement it, and then a much more facilitative coaching style can be used to help them to reflect on the process and to consider how they would use the process in the future.

P3 was brief in her comments when asked about her concepts regarding coaching:

It is responsibility. To lead the team is too much responsibility for [me], so coaching is about helping [me]. (P3)

By this, PC3 meant that it is too much responsibility for her as the school principal to lead the school; therefore, LC3 is there to assist P3. She finished with the following comment:

The role of LC3 is to lead us, to solve problems, to help us. She is also a connector between us and ADEC.

As with LC3, this statement contains multiple meanings, which are examined in more detail in subsequent sections of this chapter.

4.4.3 Coaching Approaches

4.4.3.1 Coaching Tools

As mentioned earlier, LC3 stated that ‘they’ used an approach called SOAR as a preferred model within the coaching structure. As outlined in the literature review (within Section 2.5.3, on second-generation coaching), the acronym SOAR is situated within the broader framework of Appreciative Inquiry. In Interview 1, LC3 said that she and another leadership coach colleague used this approach extensively:

So, we use the SOAR model to identify the strengths, the opportunities, the aspirations and results of your next steps, where are you at, where are you going? So, we’ve given them those rubrics and they are using them. And that’s starting to feed into how they considered their PD [professional development] week. Some of them have said this is what we need to do with our PD because they’re starting to use some of those models with their teachers as well.

In Interview 2, LC3 added a comprehensive account of how SOAR and ‘tools’ are used in coaching P3. She concluded this account with the following comment:

The scaffolding we provide enables them to learn about a process, implement it, and then a much more facilitative coaching style can be used to help them to reflect on the process and to consider how they would use the process in the future.

She added:

What needs to happen in my opinion is people need to get on board with some of these good practices.

And:

My view is different from the majority, but I think we need a curriculum and we need certain tools that are mandated—‘You will do this because . . .’.

Unless you do that with people, they don’t really see the benefit. They don’t expose themselves to it, they just do what they’ve always done, so I would make some things mandatory. Because there are big deficits in how effective we are and that’s why you end up with principals saying different things about cluster managers.

Several non-coaching frameworks and tools were used by LC3 in coaching P3. The Irtiqaa inspection process, reports and documents appeared to be a dominant guiding framework sitting alongside the SOAR framework. To reiterate, Irtiqaa is the name given to the comprehensive and relatively new process whereby all public and private schools are audited across eight inspection categories. The system is based on the English independent inspection model and many of the inspectors in the ADEC schools were from England. LC3 believed the entire Irtiqaa process improved her

ability to build leadership capacity with P3. She believed the Irtiqaa framework and process provided an excellent reference for her coaching and mentoring sessions:

I think that tool has certainly helped me be much more effective because it's got some teeth. (LC3)

LC3 referred to multiple 'other' documents and artefacts as being used in her regular school visits and in working with P3.

4.4.3.2 Session Structure

When LC3 was asked whether she followed any specific session structure, she articulated a very detailed process that spanning pre-visit preparation to post-session follow-up including what she termed 'homework they have to do for the next session'. This structure had evolved over time and in consultation with a colleague.

LC3 explained that owing to the language issues with P3 she had to do a lot of checking for understanding during the coaching/mentoring sessions. On such occasions, she called upon the middle management team, who had better levels of English.

Previous comments from LC3 highlighted the large amount of scaffolding, often in the form of modelling, that was required for P3. The following comment is an example of LC3 taking P3 and the leadership team through such a process while developing their SIP:

I think when I first arrived as in many schools, the SIP's were 15–20 pages long and they were all over the place and there was no real understanding of what makes a difference. It was all activity and unnecessary things that didn't make a difference to the focus on teaching. So first, coaching her—and I sat in that school for hours writing a SIP. I had the pen and was asking why, etc... so it was difficult.

LC3 stated that over time, with lots of modelling, support and various ‘tools’ *‘they started working with it and seeing the success then you had buy-in’*.

She went on to state:

To be more effective in ensuring that the quality of leadership and management in these schools improves rapidly, two of us working with all 18 KGs in [name of city] have developed a common framework that guides the principals to implement, reflect, adapt processes designed to enable them to be more effective at leading change and driving up standards.

LC3 explained that this framework included a detailed weekly/fortnightly agenda, with expectations that P3 would continue with various activities within P3’s own school and with her own leadership team, before LC3 returned. When asked if P3 or any principal had input into this agenda LC3, admitted they did not.

4.4.3.3 Eclectic

As with the previous case studies, role dichotomy was evident in both P3 and LC3 responses and observations. P3 stated:

She is also a connector between us and ADEC.

This was also the view of LC3, who agreed that sometimes she acted in the capacity of an intermediary, escalating issues or concerns to ADEC on behalf of the school and P3:

So really, I’m just helping them unblock some of the challenges.

In addition, both observations and all interviews were populated with examples, phrases, opinions and documents that indicated the multi-modal nature of the role in which LC3 operated, whether by necessity or choice. Following are comments from LC3 that were indicative of this role duality:

Coaching for me is trying to ascertain the point . . . the person is at and through questioning and . . . explanation, get them to an understanding of where they need to be.

So, I would say our role is to drive school improvement in all its forms.

You're listening to concerns they have about different things and you're giving them potential solutions, you're giving them reassurance about why don't they do this, try this, try that.

The role of the cluster manager is to ensure that standards continue to rise in each school and across the schools we serve.

With this principal and the context of this school, I use a combination of facilitative coaching, questioning, encouraging critical reflection, explaining, enabling and directive coaching—driving and delivering—getting them where they need to be.

4.4.3.4 Language and Communication

Language barriers and the use of a translator were factors in determining how LC3 structured her school visits and various coaching sessions. She had the following to say about the use of translators in this school:

Yes, it is a factor. I always pull in a person in the school who has good English. I'm a bit like a play school . . . we have to act things out. I use a lot of gestures. We need trained translators in some schools, rather than using a school-based person. None of the documents we use are translated. Some are now getting translated and it has helped.

This was supported by P3 who stated:

Sometimes translation is a problem—translation of documents.

When asked what LC3 approach took with P3 in relation to coaching, she reiterated an earlier point about having to constantly check for understanding.

LC3 said:

The depth of conversation with a principal with good English, as opposed to using a translator, is much greater. This principal can't read education documents in English.

When P3 commented on language and communication, she said she thought the agenda sent out by LC3 needed to be in Arabic rather than English. However, she contradicted herself with the following comment:

I understand English, but not to talk. English is not a problem.

Table 4.5 summarises the coaching approaches used in Case Study 3.

Table 4.5

Case Study 3: Summary of Espoused and Observable Coaching Approaches

Coaching Component	Coaching Element	Coaching Characteristics Evident in Conversations
<i>Section 4.4.3.1</i> Coaching tools	SOAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple coaching model used to analyse information • SOAR also used in-school by leadership teams • Perceived as a positive approach to implementing change and driving school improvement
	Irtiqaa Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspection system and the data and evidence contained, used to inform LC3's direction • Strategic direction informed by inspection process
	Mandated Organisational documents and processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SIP • Tamkeen (professional development needs) • Policy framework • Performance management system (principal appraisal document)

Coaching Component	Coaching Element	Coaching Characteristics Evident in Conversations
<i>Section 4.4.3.2</i> Session structure	Needs based (differentiated)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variation of coaching structure based on where P3 is at • In each session picking up on weaknesses for future sessions (e.g., special needs) • Dealing with current and real needs, not just strategic • Modelling
	Step by step	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-meeting (agenda known in advance, emails, homework, timetabling) • During meeting (flow, structure, modelling, checking, using input from SLT) • Post-meeting (homework, producing documents)
<i>Section 4.4.3.3</i> Eclectic	Intermediary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduit for the schools to Head Office
	Coaching/mentoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major focus on teaching and learning • LC3 and P3 coaching sessions based on classroom observation and learning walks • Data-driven approach • Broad spectrum of coaching roles, from facilitative to directive and instructional
	Supervisory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At some point I have been assigned to 'lead and guide' • Driving up standards, to drive school improvement • To evaluate • Get them to where they need to be • The role of the cluster manager is to ensure that standards continue to rise in each school/across the schools we serve • We will approve your plan. We will agree your plan and
<i>Section 4.4.3.4</i> Language and	Translator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses a 'school-based' person as a translator

Coaching Component	Coaching Element	Coaching Characteristics Evident in Conversations
communication		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Untrained translators • Many documents are not bilingual (Arabic/English)
	Conversation type: Questioning and statements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Body language exaggerated to substitute for English barrier • Slowing down speed of delivery • Frequent checking, using rhetorical and actual questioning • Questions that are used to check understanding and meaning • Repetitive questioning to gain meaning and establish a point

4.4.4 Factors Enhancing and/or Inhibiting the Coaching Relationship

4.4.4.1 Language

Three major factors affected the coaching relationship in Case Study 3. The first of these, language, has already been described as a variable that needs to be considered in coaching principals in this context. LC3 said that having a good translator could certainly enhance the ability to build leadership capacity in P3.

4.4.4.2 Ways of Working

The second major factor has been termed ‘ways of working’. How LC3 operated in her role as a leadership coach potentially affected the success or otherwise of the coaching outcomes. The earlier sections of this case study have reported on the various frameworks and tools that LC3 relied on in her work with P3 and all the other principals she supported. There appeared to be an intense focus on the inspection framework that she refers to below as ‘the tool’:

Modelling was an important component of LC3’s coaching approach. She aimed to gain small successes, as measured by the Irtiqaa inspection system that evaluated the school, which would, in turn, reflect positively on her:

Gaining some small successes and that gets the buy-in. Seeing improvement as measured by Irtiqaa, they relate that back to what the coach is doing with them at school.

She believed that operating as an intermediary (i.e., as a link between the school and head office) would enhance her credibility and increase the respect they had for her as their leadership coach:

I also support them by helping their cause—I'll go speak with this person and that person in ADEC, etc. So, I'm helping them unblock the challenges.

The final contributing factor in this case study was the extent to which LC3, along with a fellow leadership coach, focused on developing a common language and approach with P3 and all the principals they supported in KG/Cycle 1 schools:

We have a common language and a consistent approach. We also have networks, a head of faculty network, and a VP network and a principal network. All plans are differentiated as well. We planned whole trimesters—they like things being planned. Cluster meeting are used to further discussions at school, people share at these meetings. They get reinforcement at these meetings.

This researcher was cognisant of many of the documents, frameworks and agenda to which LC3 referred and utilised in her coaching of P3.

4.4.4.3 The Organisation

LC3 said that supporting nine schools was an inhibiting factor, for the following reasons:

Because you must prioritise where you are going to spend your time and you end up giving a lighter touch to schools where everything is running smoothly. (LC3)

So, do you think you could do more in the school if you had a bit more time?

(Researcher)

Yeah, well you would go every week. You would make sure you were there every single week for a period of time. So, I would be able to get into classrooms more and give them feedback about that and look at student data a bit more. When you've got nine schools you tend to be a bit more superficial. (LC3)

Table 4.6 summarises the factors that enhanced or inhibited the coaching relationship in Case Study 3.

Table 4.6

Case Study 3: Summary of Factors that Enhanced or Inhibited the Coaching Relationship

Major Factors	Specific Factors	Espoused and Observed Responses
<i>Section 4.4.4.3</i> Language	Translator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LC3 saw having a translator as a positive
	Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure and content of coaching sessions/visits needed careful consideration owing to P3's level of English
<i>Section 4.4.4.3</i> Ways of working	Frameworks and inspection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major focus on using mandated and coach-selected artefacts to enhance the coaching relationship
	Developing a common language and approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LC3 proud of the development of a common but differentiated approach across all schools and setting up leadership networks at different levels
	Modelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity building by modelling, hoping for small gains and wins = improved credibility and respect in coaching relationship
	Acting as an intermediary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active in supporting school concerns to head office = improved credibility and respect in coaching relationship
<i>Section 4.4.4.3</i> The organisation	Number of schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being attached to nine schools inhibited the ability of LC3 to 'make a difference'

4.5 Case Study 4

4.5.1 Contextual Overview

Research Site 4 was a large Cycle 2 and 3, boys-only government school in the emirate of Abu Dhabi, otherwise known as an ADEC school. The two research participants were a non-Emirati but Arabic ‘first-language’ principal and a Western leadership coach, henceforth referred to as Principal 4 (P4) and Leadership Coach 4 (LC4). P4 had seven years’ experience as a principal and had been Principal at Research Site 4 school for three years. LC4 had many years’ experience in various leadership positions, including 13 years as a principal in his country of origin. P4 had an IELTS score of 7, which meant he was relatively fluent in communicating in English. LC4 said he had not received any training in coaching, neither in the UAE nor in his country of origin. P4 had received some training from a previous company while in the UAE, as well as attending a four- to five-day workshop in another country, but nothing from ADEC. LC4 had worked with P4 for 18 months and both he and P4 said that school visits were weekly for approximately two to four hours. LC4 worked with seven other schools in a similar capacity. In the interviews, he described P4 as being quite advanced in his knowledge of modern practices.

Two coaching observations and four interviews were conducted at Research Site 4 over a three-month period. The topic of Observation 1, as selected by the research participants, was an impending evaluation for P4. LC4 used levels of questioning to explore where P4 believed he was situated in relation to the performance evaluation tool produced by ADEC. The topic of Observation 2 was related to determining the school’s professional development needs. Because of the English capability of P4, a translator was not present for any observations or interviews. The Interview 1 questions, for both P4 and LC4, were based on the semi-

structured format described earlier and the Interview 2 questions were based on the researcher re-reading the Interview 1 responses, based on the semi-structured format described earlier.

4.5.2 Concepts of Coaching

When LC4 was asked for his definition or perspective on coaching in respect to P4, he commented:

I think of coaching sort of like in athletics, where you're using your expertise to guide people specifically through steps. I think coaching's a more hands-on approach and specifically guiding principals through the skills and techniques they would be using. In my experience, you would use coaching with the less adept or experienced principals and for those who move up the ladder a little, it moves more into leadership style – just guiding and mentoring. With coaching, it is more directly saying, 'You need to do this'.

He added that P4 was the most advanced of those with whom he worked:

I've been more an encourager and I do more of the facilitating than coaching. I think he's beyond coaching, so when I see opportunities to consider different angles, I approach those with him.

This contrasted with the views of P4:

My understanding is both idea and implementation of a training that can give freedom and more flexibility to both the coach and trainee. It's less rigid, more flexible. It has two-way communication. It gives even more role to the trainees, or you just give guidelines and the trainees will do the job. (P4)

So, it's not directive? (Researcher)

No, it's not and that's one thing I like about coaching. It's like, as we say, putting the ball in the trainee's court. It's just improvising, getting the things out of the trainee and simple questions that you put, and I like this. (P4)

4.5.3 Coaching Approaches

4.5.3.1 Socratic Questioning

In listening to and speaking with P4, it was clear that he was the most advanced English speaker of the six principals interviewed in this research. This possibly necessitated a coaching approach by LC4 more akin to coaching a native English speaker. Though LC4 was the direct line supervisor of P4, the following comment hints at an effort by LC4 to have a more altruistic and collaborative relationship and approach:

I told him he's my adviser, as I have so much faith in him being on the right track as a principal, to help me understand the cultural differences that might come in the way at getting interaction or best practice, so I'm able to ask him things I can't ask other people. So, by making him my adviser in that way, I think that's encouraged him to think that we're working together and that he is as valuable to me as I can possibly be to him.

LC4 went on to explain that because P4 was so capable he acted in capacity of an encourager rather than a coach:

So, I have to be clear to him that I'm not trying to give him direction, but just possibilities. At his level, you really need to let him go and make sure he has control and he makes the decisions. If anything, I've encouraged him to use more of his staff, a shared leadership style, which he's pretty good at to begin with.

And:

I use an amalgamation of techniques that work for me, or what I've found effective. I think with this principal, because he's so advanced, I use a more Socratic approach with him. You know I ask him critical questions that one would be asking them if they were very advanced in leadership. I act as his devil's advocate and ask him things like, 'What would happen if you went the opposite way, why did you consider going in the route that you did?'

LC4 referred to these sorts of questions as the 'Socratic style of questioning'.

He said the focus of his coaching sessions was on teaching and learning, as this was the focus of the Irtiqaa inspection and at the heart of international best practice.

4.5.3.2 Coaching Tools

In terms of structuring coaching sessions, LC4 said he sent out a monthly agenda to all his schools, mainly focusing on management aspects in the school. From that agenda, LC4 picked out leadership components per the existing needs of the principals he supported. He said most of his coaching sessions used the Irtiqaa inspection tool and structure as a frame of reference or as a coaching/mentoring tool.

Table 4.7 summarises the coaching approaches used in Case Study 4.

Table 4.7

Case Study 4: Summary of Espoused and Observable Coaching Approaches

Coaching Component	Coaching Element	Coaching Characteristics Evident in Conversations
<i>Section 4.5.3.2</i> Socratic questioning	Inquiring and levels of questioning Critical thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coach mainly facilitates and guides discussion using these two coaching elements
<i>Section 4.5.3.2</i> Coaching tools	Irtiqaa framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irtiqaa framework used as main reference point in coaching • Focus on teaching and learning components of Irtiqaa framework

4.5.4 Factors Enhancing and/or Inhibiting the Coaching Relationship

4.5.4.1 The Organisation

Only three factors were mentioned by LC4 as enhancing or inhibiting the coaching relationship. All three came under the broad category of the organisation and all were considered by LC4 to be factors that made coaching or mentoring P4 difficult. Both P4 and LC4 labelled the first factor as interference, referring to the plethora of disruptions to the working week:

We have an agenda and schedule already set up to work with people. So, a little more understanding of the need to plan ahead by ADEC would be appreciated. (LC4)

LC4 noted P4's lack of autonomy to make decisions on behalf of the school as another inhibitor in the coaching relationship. Though he felt the organisation was heading in the right direction, he stated that the limited ability of both himself and P4 to make decisions limited the extent and depth of the coaching/mentoring that took place.

The last inhibiting factor noted was the evaluation of P4:

I don't think that the principal evaluation, as it is right now, is particularly helpful with our relationships because it's really more of a judgement of where the school is. You really have to evaluate the principal on where the school sits right at that point and it's kind of unfair, because this principal has only been here two years and in the first year he came in to the school . . . there were a lot of problems. (LC4)

Table 4.8 summarises the factors that enhanced or inhibited the coaching relationship in Case Study 4.

Table 4.8

Case Study 4: Summary of Factors that Enhanced or Inhibited the Coaching Relationship

Major Factors	Specific Factors	Espoused and Observed Responses
<i>Section 4.5.4.1</i> The organisation	Interference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular and consistent interference from predominantly external school sources inhibiting coaching sessions
	Lack of principal autonomy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Centralised, external control undermining and limiting the effectiveness of the coaching relationship
	Principal evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual principal evaluation by LC4 having a negative effect on the coaching relationship

4.6 Case Study 5

4.6.1 Contextual Overview

Research Site 5 was a large, new, co-educational KG and Cycle 1 government school in the emirate of Abu Dhabi, otherwise known as an ADEC school. The K-2 students were mixed gender and located together, while Grades 3 to 5 students were separated by gender. All students were located within the one school site. The two research participants were an Emirati principal and a Western leadership coach, henceforth referred to as Principal 5 (P5) and Leadership Coach 5 (LC5). LC5 had many years' experience in leadership positions, as both a school principal and seven years as a leadership principal adviser in his country of origin. P5 had been a principal for eight years, but only one semester at this newly created school. P5 had an IELTS score of 4.5, which suggested limited communication ability in English.

LC5 had received substantial training and professional development as a leadership coach, within a university setting in his country of origin. In addition, he

was involved in some action research in coaching and facilitation. Upon arrival in the Middle Eastern context, he had received what he called '*inadequate and superficial training, based on a very narrow philosophy from one person*'. When P5 was asked the same question, she was non-specific but said she had received a small amount of training in coaching.

LC5 had worked with P5 for two years and said he visited the school once a fortnight, for most of the school day, and as needed for any problem-solving issues. He worked with another seven schools in a similar capacity. LC5 said he had '*treaded lightly*' with P5 lately as she had '*a lot on her plate*' and she was '*doing very well*'. He said he worked more often with the SLT and faculty heads. It was partly for this reason that a return observation and interview sequence was not arranged because the focus of this research study was leadership coaching of the *principal*, not entire leadership teams. Additional reasons for not completing a second round of observation and interviews were that it was unlikely to gather new data that would add value to this study, as well as the five months it had taken to complete the first round of observation and interviews for this case study.

One coaching observations and two interviews were conducted at Research Site 1 over a five-month period. The structure of Observation 1, as selected by the research participants, involved LC5 carrying out a performance review and setting goals in the form of a professional development plan. Specifically, this session goal was to try to help P5 become more involved in leading the reform of reading that had been started at the school. Because of P5's low English capability, a translator was used for the observation and for the interview of P5. The Interview 1 questions, for both the P5 and LC5, were based on the semi-structured format described earlier.

4.6.2 Concepts of Coaching

LC5 expressed his surprise at not receiving quality professional development regarding the role of the leadership coach in the ADEC context:

I'm frustrated that we haven't received better training and a research base around our work. It's very different being a principal and being a coach of a principal. It's very different. It's actually the same at school, we often get a really good [sports] coach who's never been a sportsman.

When asked about his concepts of coaching, LC5 said he was influenced by the work of several theorists:

I guess I think of it more as facilitation and getting things happening and managing several circumstances. I'm influenced by Blanchard—you know, Blanchard and the four quadrants. So, coaching is something where you have to tell them what to do. With some, you ask them what they're working on and let them get on with it. With others, you support them along the way, so in terms of leadership, coaching is very much based on the needs and it varies.

LC5 said he was influenced heavily by the work of Michael Fullan and David Hopkins and their philosophy on authentic principles of school improvement. In relation to his coaching philosophy, LC5 had said:

It depends on their level of expertise. When I first started to coach, I tended to coach like I wanted to be coached, but you know, I learned with experience that everyone's different. I guess I was a bit surprised in this country about the idea that you just coach the principal to run the school but I guess that idea was influenced by Thomas Guskey's work, because Thomas Guskey said you can't really try and persuade a person to change their beliefs or the way they do things and then try and get them to change. He said you really try and

get them to try something and they have some success or they learn from that experience and then they change their beliefs. That's a fundamental for me, a fundamental concept. I don't spend a whole lot of time trying to persuade them but sometimes it's quite often a case of managing the circumstances, managing the experience.

In comparison, P5 made the following comments about her perspective on the role of LC5:

Give more information, support the principal, . . . contact with ADEC, more specifically and push the principal, when they have a problem. (P5)

OK, so when you say push the principal, what do you mean by push?

(Researcher)

Like now when he gives me points to improve myself. (P5)

OK, so having high expectations, he expects you to do well so he will keep on (Researcher)

Yes, yes. (P5)

P5 said she felt the most important role of LC5 was to assist herself and the leadership team with development of the strategic plan.

4.6.3 Coaching Approaches

In this case study, five specific coaching elements were observed and articulated within one broad coaching component termed 'session structure'. These are summarised later in Table 4.9.

4.6.3.1 Session Structure

As opposed to the previous case studies, in Case Study 5, P5 was the dominant speaker in the coaching conversation, not LC5. LC5 mentioned seeing himself as a facilitator with principals and this was very evident during the

observation, with LC5 speaking for less than one-third of the time. This may have been partly due to the context of the observation. The structure of the entire coaching session was based on the following type of open-ended questioning:

Ms [P5's name], I want to talk about what you have done since you came here . . . , what have been your jobs, your focus?

And:

What . . . are your goals for the professional development plan?

LC5's coaching style was positive and affirmative, as evident from the following types of comment:

Ms (P5) is very much in favour of the New School Model. She sees the benefits, she had a very good HoF at her last school and she saw the benefits to her students and she wants her students (it was girls then) . . . to get out and broaden their horizons and . . . their aspirations and lift their expectations She's right, as it wasn't strong organisation, there was no unity and there was some dissatisfaction and she's brought strong leadership and the other thing she's very, very correct about is the whole team has worked very, very well together. It's a pleasure to be with this team. She is fortunate, she has a VP who is on the aspiring principal's programme, so that's good and she's got Ms (LC5 talking to researcher in the presence of P5 during the observation)

LC5 theorised how he preferred to build leadership capacity by having the coaching subject work on 'something' and then learn from the experience. This type of constructivist, experiential approach was evident in the observed coaching session. The following two conversations were an attempt to encourage P5 to become more involved in leading the change in the reading program:

Ms [P5], what I'm suggesting is next semester . . . I talked to [name of HoF] about the idea that you develop a reading programme for [name of school] and together, like you've done everything else. That's why I'm asking you to learn a bit more about reading, so that you can be part of that programme.

The following comment was made by LC5 to the HoF, in the presence of P5: *So, I'm suggesting to her that in some of the goals she's got she understands a little more about reading. So, as you do your development you keep her in the loop and sharing with her, [so] she can learn all about guided reading, phonics programmes, these things. She's a quick learner. So, the next step will be to develop this reading programme and trial it with some teachers to get it going. OK [name of HoF], well thank you very much.*

LC5 said much of his time in the school was spent visiting classes, with the VP and faculty heads. These class visits formed the basis of his coaching conversations with the principal and the management team.

Table 4.9

Case Study 5: Summary of Espoused and Observable Coaching Approaches

Coaching Component	Coaching Element	Coaching Characteristics Evident in Conversations
<i>Section 4.6.3.1</i> Session structure	Facilitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open-ended questioning • Prompting
	Experiential approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn by doing • Capacity building through leading and participating
	Positive/supportive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular affirmation and positive feedback • Non-threatening environment wherever possible
	Capacity building of entire leadership team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seldom ever works with just P5 • Often multiple members of SLT in the room

 Evidence-/data-based

- Regular classroom visits with various members of leadership team
 - Data and observations used as basis for coaching conversations
-

4.6.4 Factors Enhancing and/or Inhibiting the Coaching Relationship

LC5 said although language was an inhibitor with one of his principals, it was not an inhibitor to the coaching relationship with P5 and did not affect his coaching conversations, structures and approaches. He said having an Arabic deputy principal with a good level of English was an asset. These comments by LC5 were supported by research observations, whereby the Arabic VP appeared to translate verbatim conversations between LC5 and P5. This contrasts with the somewhat unprofessional role the Arabic translator played in coaching conversations between P2 and LC2, resulting in unnecessary ‘tension’ being placed on the coaching relationship.

4.6.4.1 The School

LC5 felt that having a good leadership team in the school was an enhancing factor in the coaching relationship. As already stated, LC5 spent significant time with the leadership team, rather than with P5. Because of the inhibiting factor of the number of schools he supported, he said having a good senior and middle management structure in place was important as *‘that can keep my influence going’*.

When asked if culture was a factor in the coaching relationship, LC5 said while it was something to be mindful of, it was not a barrier. What were bigger factors or barriers were the capability, knowledge and experience of the principal. He did not elaborate on this point.

4.6.4.2 The Organisation

In addition to the number of schools LC5 was supporting, needing to undertake the annual performance evaluation of P5 was viewed by LC5 as a major inhibitor:

Evaluations have most definitely had an effect on relationships. It's a bit of a can of worms. Some don't understand. They think only in terms of effort, some of them. They think, 'Well I've worked really hard on that, how come I'm not exemplary?', and I hated those days a few years ago, when we were really being pressured to press them down and I'm pleased that we're now a little bit more lenient. You know, Guskey really stresses [that] for school improvement, you don't want high individual accountability, you know, it's not the leader that really brings change.

4.6.4.3 Relational

The use of humour was both espoused by LC5 and observed to be an enhancing factor in this coaching relationship, as he used humour and jokes to lighten the coaching situations. Lastly, LC5 felt that it was important to gain the respect and trust of the principal and leadership team from the outset, by being supportive:

I think with this culture—well it's probably with any culture, you know—once you've proven yourself to be supportive, . . . you know I'm finding now I can say to someone, 'No, no, I don't want you to do that, I want you to do this', and they will say, 'OK [LC5's name]'. A couple of years ago, I didn't have the confidence to do that, they didn't have the trust. Now I like my job more because I can say, 'No, no, do this'. It's OK, you know.

Table 4.10 summarises the factors that enhanced or inhibited the coaching relationship in Case Study 5.

Table 4.10

Case Study 5: Summary of Factors that Enhanced or Inhibited the Coaching Relationship

Major Factors	Specific Factors	Espoused and Observed Responses
<i>Section 4.6.2.1</i> The school	Middle and senior leadership teams The principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having a capable and supportive middle and senior management team in place to support LC5 • Knowledge, experience and capacity of the principal
<i>Section 4.6.2.2</i> The organisation	Expectations and standards of ADEC performance evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too many schools = lack of support for P5 • The evaluation process
<i>Section 4.6.2.3</i> Relational	Humour Respect and credibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive climate • Small wins lead to respect and trust

4.7 Case Study 6

4.7.1 Contextual Overview

Research Site 6 was a new, co-educational government KG, in the emirate of Abu Dhabi, otherwise known as an ADEC school. The two research participants were an Emirati principal and a Western leadership coach, henceforth referred to as Principal 6 (P6) and Leadership Coach 6 (LC6). LC6 had many years' experience in leadership positions, including 10 years as principal in his country of origin and just over one year's experience in an Islamic school in Dubai. He had also worked in the advisory field for seven years or more and had previous experience as a leadership coach in another Islamic country in the Middle East. P6 had an IELTS score of 6.5, which suggested she was relatively fluent in communicating in English. In addition

to LC6 having operated in similar coaching roles in a similar context, he said he had received specific training in leadership and coaching, as well as being a member of a national college of school leadership in his country of origin. P6 had a Masters in Educational Leadership and as a deputy principal, he had received a modicum of professional development in coaching. LC6 had not received any induction or professional development on leadership coaching upon arrival in the UAE, before being placed with this school. He said he visited the school at least once a week for between two and three hours. He acted in a similar capacity in another six or seven schools. In the interview, LC6 described P6 as being extremely competent.

One coaching observation and two interviews were conducted at Research Site 6 over a five-week period. A return visit did not eventuate as this researcher departed the UAE before a return visit could be arranged. The structure of Observation 1, as selected by the research participants, involved P6 and two other members of her leadership team receiving feedback from LC6, in preparation for an impending external audit (Irtiqaa). LC6's feedback was based on observations after six months of working with P6 and the school, in addition to feedback related to the school completing a self-evaluation, as mandated by the impending inspection visit. Because of the English capability of P6, LC6 did not use a translator during his school visits. The Interview 1 questions, for both the P6 and LC6, were based on the semi-structured format described earlier.

4.7.2 Concepts of Coaching

When asked about his concepts of coaching, LC6 stated that he tried to do several things with his principals though he only outlined one thing:

I try and make that person question their approaches . . . their own practice.

He went on to state:

You're coaching at a principal level to extend their knowledge and understanding of a particular concept, or concern, or issue within the school. And, in a way you're coaching at a practice level, how does that principal improve practice in the school, by giving feedback in this way.

He elaborated by stating that as a coach, he needed to listen intently to try to understand their philosophy and to analyse their actions and comments. When asked if he followed a model he said:

I wouldn't say I follow a model but I would say I do dip into—if necessary—specific references that I've found useful. For example, and some of these are quite dated so I apologise, but things like the Ambrose model of change. I will talk principals through that and try and get them to see, because they're trying to create a school in a cloud of change, if certain things are missing we get certain results and we have to tick all the boxes to get the results. And when you delve deep into that . . . you see that without clear vision, something's missing and you get frustration and get false starts. All those things that Ambrose very simply talks about. I do use that. I do use the Hay McBear styles of leadership. I do get the principals to examine themselves against those criteria because they often haven't seen it . . . this is something that I would look to do with this particular principal at the end of the first year. I would like to have her review her practice against that model.

P6 had very definite views about the role of LC6 (referred to below as the cluster manager in her paragraphs):

I would say coaching is a part of leading. It is not the whole leading process. So I think [in] coaching you need some specific skills, . . . like the knowledge. Sometimes . . . how to deliver the knowledge. . . . It's a combination of many

things. To be a coach, you . . . know how to do it, implement it. And you need to reflect on it and I believe that part of your personality play[s] an effective role with communication. Because sometimes communication is an issue because it's very good in some people and it's very bad in some people. The problem is flexibility sometimes.

P6 outlined her perspective on the role dichotomy and role confusion, which was similar to the perspectives of the other principals in most of these case studies:

I believe that the cluster manager's role sometimes is not clear because some people think that their role is as a decision maker, whereas their role is more as an ambassador. They are ambassadors for ADEC messages. I believe some people work their role as they'd been told and I'd say some clusters aren't leaders, . . . because some clusters don't solve for you the problems because they don't have any power, ok. But I believe that they support you in a different way; that's why I consider them as leaders by helping you by solving the problem without changing the real fact. (P6)

At this point P6 gave an example of the above point followed by the researcher asking the following clarifying question:

I just want to go back and you talked about the cluster manager being an ambassador. What do you mean by ambassador? Do you mean delivering messages?

Yes. I believe they are an ambassador because this is how we are in the education field—we have the big picture from the Sheikhs in education, it's go down to ADEC, put their plans and the implementation come to school. The way of the implementation is the role of the cluster. How to help the

principal to implement it by creating those personalities who start to think and seek for a solution. (P6)

4.7.3 Coaching Approaches

Many of the factors that were prevalent in the previous case studies, such as language and communication, role dichotomy and confusion, the evaluation of the principal, and so on, were either not present or as significant in Case Study 6. This was likely linked to P6's English ability as well as her competency levels, as evident in the observation and in the following comments:

I think also she is particularly astute. She listens so well, she really does and she picks up on points. I think the other thing with her is she recognises what needs to happen and I think that's key. I think some principals I work with, and I dare say we all work with, you can coach and mentor them until your heart's content but they don't actually recognise, themselves, some of the key issues in the school. I think that's why some schools aren't moving forward.

And:

She allows me . . . to expand the boundaries of our role in the school. She allows that because she is so wanting success and she wants to be seen as someone who can do this job very well and without a shadow of a doubt, she has all the qualities to make an excellent principal.

LC6 said he did not follow a particular coaching model but rather, used an eclectic approach. As observed and articulated, LC6's coaching approach appeared to cover multiple areas under the broad categories of 'session structure' and 'coaching tools'.

4.7.3.1 Session Structure

The structure of the coaching session and indeed, the coaching approach of LC6, was characterised by analysis and reflection, modelling and data gathering, as well as evidence that focused on teaching and learning data. This was delivered in an informal, unstructured manner but was framed by various coaching tools referred to later in this section.

LC6 modelled and encouraged the use of self-reflection and critical data analysis in his regular coaching sessions. He said:

Getting principals to self-reflect is very important and they don't allow themselves enough time to do that.

He said P6 had a very good skill set but because she was a new principal, he felt part of his role was getting her to identify and define what good practices and procedures would lead to this new school being successful:

We had a review meeting and I got them to write down everything that was put in place and it amazed them to see just how much they did. The questions then led to, 'What do we still need to do? What areas are still under-developed? What are the areas where you are having further problems in the school?' Again, it was using a kind of reflection model.

LC6 said critical thinking and analysis were part of this reflection process and his approach was to model these behaviours and actions:

I think as cluster managers, we have to be able to show them through different coaching techniques and methods.

He elaborated:

Helping them write strategies is vital because I believe that's something that's a high-level skill and sometimes they need support.

As with the previous case studies, LC6 tried to ensure coaching discussions had teaching and learning as the core focus. He said he spent much of his time with P6 in classes and walking around the school observing teaching and learning, and because P6 was such an astute and motivated principal, it was easy to ‘*extend her boundaries*’.

LC6 said he kept his sessions unstructured and informal:

Part of the understanding I have with quite a few of the principals is that . . . I could drop in at any time. And it’s not to catch them out; it’s to actually see how that school is running on that day. And of course, the good ones will say, ‘Hi, let’s go for a walk and I’ll talk to you’. They’re ready for that . . . , so rarely do I get put into an office . . . , so part of our role is to make sure they shouldn’t be worried about the cluster manager visiting. There should be this openness between the cluster manager and the principal. There should be this opportunity for us to just visit and what we observe from that type of visit can be really good substance for a future visit, for a future discussion, because you do sometimes see things and think, I know if they knew I wasn’t coming, that wouldn’t happen.

P6’s interview responses supported the above comments by LC6. She preferred the informal arrangement and enjoyed the open, flexible nature of LC6’s school visits. She felt that LC6 was a big part of the school and she had much to learn from him.

4.7.3.2 Coaching Tools

LC6 used various theoretical models with which he was familiar and which he felt were relevant to his work with P6 and her school. He said there were, unfortunately, too many distractors and external influencers, which short-circuited

strategic thinking, although he referred to a newly created organisational document that he felt was assisting in his work with P6 and other principals:

I will say that since the advent of our own work as cluster managers on the SLIP (School Leadership Improvement Plan), I think that has helped enormously.

Additionally, LC6 referred to other mandated documents and processes that informed and guided his work as a leadership coach—the school’s annual strategic planning process and the annual principal performance review.

Table 4.11 summarises the coaching approaches used in Case Study 6.

Table 4.11

Case Study 6: Summary of Espoused and Observable Coaching Approaches

Coaching Component	Coaching Element	Coaching Characteristics Evident in Conversations
<i>Section 4.7.3.1</i> Session structure	Self-reflection and analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using teaching and learning data to carry out these skills • Carrying out mock school reviews in preparation for external audits • Critical review of existing practices
	Modelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Showing’ them how to think strategically (school improvement cycle, strategic planning)
	Evidence-/data-based	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heavy focus on data and evidence obtained from teaching and learning in classrooms (walk-throughs, learning walks, observations)

Coaching Component	Coaching Element	Coaching Characteristics Evident in Conversations
<i>Section 4.7.3.2</i> Coaching tools	Utilisation of multiple theoretical frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaching approach informed by various theoretical models; e.g., Ambrose model of change, Hay McBear
	Irtiqaa framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandated self-review document in preparation for audit • Inspection framework, processes and expectations guide LC6's coaching approach
	Mandated organisational documents and processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SIP • SLIP • Performance management system (principal appraisal document)

4.7.4 Factors Enhancing and/or Inhibiting the Coaching Relationship

4.7.4.1 Language

While language was not an inhibiting factor with P6, owing to her fluency with the English language, LC6 said it was an issue with the other principals with whom he worked. LC6 had previously worked in a similar context with a trained translator and had this to say about the advantages of having a trained translator, as opposed to a translator who is simply an English teacher in the school and is more fluent in English than is the principal:

Before coming to ADEC, I worked in a very similar role in [name of another Middle Eastern country] as a cluster facilitator, again going through a very rigid reform program. The difference being all cluster managers had a trained translator attached to them. The results were huge. When you left a meeting, it was very clear because you could check with a translator. I think as a result of that, the principals understood far more clearly a) the purpose of the meeting and b) the outcomes of the meeting and what the meeting was about. (LC6)

Could you go into as much detail with [P6] as you could with a principal in [name of similar Middle Eastern context role] with say, an IELTS score of 3.5 and a trained translator? (Researcher)

No, definitely not. When I try and go deep into something you can see the shutters come down. We don't have a translator—we can't even get there. I can't expand the principal's understanding, as we've got no language to go through. And we know the Arabic language is complex and they tell things through stories, and five words for us is 50 or 60 for them. If we don't have a translator . . . , we're limiting our capabilities to improve the system.

4.7.4.2 The Principal

LC6 said that in addition to competency or fluency in the English language, the principal's motivation, experience, potential and existing capability were all factors that could enhance or inhibit the coaching relationship. He said:

One of the key inhibitors is that principals have a lack of cycle knowledge; they're also inhibited by their lack of curriculum knowledge. These are really key, I think. They often lack experience of systemic processes and if they were to put something in place, it would make their life a lot easier.

By cycle knowledge, LC6 meant the way students learn relative to their age or current cycle of schooling. In a Cycle 2 school, for example, students were generally between the age of 10 and 15 years. He said frequently, principals were placed in schools with an age group of students with whom they had no prior experience. This simply added another layer of complexity to the coaching relationship.

4.7.4.3 *The Organisation*

There were three specific factors noted about the way the organisation of ADEC, through its various actions and behaviours, appeared to influence the coaching relationship. The first factor was that of role confusion:

If we had clarification of role, to be more focused, then we would have greater impact. (LC6)

Linked to this factor, LC6 said that a lack of consistency among fellow leadership coaches/cluster managers had an adverse effect on the principals with whom he worked:

I think what would enhance the coaching relationship is consistency of approach by cluster managers. This is vital. Common understandings around major themes, so that the principals are getting the same message. It may be delivered by an American or English [person], or whatever, but they need to get the same consistency and I don't think they are at the moment.

LC6 felt that constantly changing principals from school to school and across cycles was a factor in inhibiting the effectiveness of the coaching relationship:

An inhibitor would be the constant changing of principals and staff. If you do that . . . I think you're condemning the schools to slow development. You know, what's the point of moving a C2 principal to a KG principalship? You're not going to get what you need.

In addition, LC6 said that the number of schools he supported and the number of times principals were out of schools were all factors affecting his ability to support P6 and all his other principals.

Table 4.12 summarises the factors that enhanced or inhibited the coaching relationship in Case Study 6.

Table 4.12

*Case Study 6: Summary of Factors that Enhanced or Inhibited the Coaching**Relationship*

Major Factors	Specific Factors	Espoused and Observed Responses
<i>Section 4.7.4.1</i> Language	Trained translators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Though not an issue with P6, LC6 said that with all his other principals, having a trained translator would be beneficial
<i>Section 4.7.4.2</i> The principal	Level of English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-level English of principals considered by LC6 better than having a trained translator and low-level English in principals
	Principal capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge, experience and capacity of the principal to learn
<i>Section 4.7.4.3</i> The organisation	Role confusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership coaches unclear of their role
	Common approach by all leadership coaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership coaches having the same common approach with all principals, regardless of nationality
	General external distractors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too many schools = lack of support for P5 • General distractors affecting how often the principal was in the school • Changing principals often

4.8 Cross-case Analysis of the Six Case Studies

4.8.1 Concepts of Coaching Summary

Across the six case studies, 12 perspectives were gathered on the concepts of coaching. These perspectives were as diverse as the six research sites within which this research study took place. Chapter 5 considers and compares these 12 perspectives in relation to the literature on coaching. There were some commonalities, but possibly more differences, across the 12 perspectives. The range of perspectives fitted into five categories, as summarised in Table 4.13.

Table 4.13

Cross-case Analysis: Summary of Concepts of Coaching from the Six Case Studies

Section 4.8.1.1 Perspective 1	The sport coaching perspective
Section 4.8.1.2 Perspective 2	The mentoring v. coaching perspective
Section 4.8.1.3 Perspective 3	The leadership coach v. principal perspective
Section 4.8.1.4 Perspective 4	The coaching components perspective
Section 4.8.1.5 Perspective 5	The best-practice coaching perspective

4.8.1.1 Sports-coaching Perspective

Although it was not a unanimous view, two leadership coaches referred to the sports-coaching analogy and other leadership coaches referred to it briefly. In this analogy, LCs 1 and 4 talked about being ‘hands-on’ and following sequenced approaches and repetition of skills and techniques, including feedback about what went wrong or well.

4.8.1.2 Mentoring v. Coaching Perspective

Many of the leadership coaches used the terms mentoring and coaching interchangeably, some admitting that they were not certain of the differences between the two. LC1 and LC2 felt they were more mentors to the principals than coaches. Both described coaching as being more explicit and direct, with one of them saying that mentoring created more sustainability, while coaching meant the coachee had to follow what the coach said.

4.8.1.3 Leadership Coach v. Principal Perspective

At least half of the principals had significantly differing views to those of the leadership coaches. Most principals viewed the coach’s role as one of imparting

knowledge, directing, supervising, and delivering messages and mandates as ambassadors of ADEC. P4 and P6 had views more aligned to those of their leadership coaches and in fact, more closely aligned to the concepts of coaching as outlined in the literature review.

4.8.1.4 Coaching Components Perspective

Many of the leadership coaches were aware of ensuring the coaching was needs based and framing their coaching around the existing capabilities and experience, knowledge and skills of the principals. However, often that was where the commonalities ended and the contradictions surfaced. The disparity in the range of perspectives and understanding was highlighted using words such as facilitation, questioning, enabling and reflection in the same sentences as directive, driving, need to be, assessing and giving more information, when compared with the best-practice coaching approaches in the literature. However, it is worth noting that the disparity in views could have also been attributable to the multiple, and possibly conflicting, roles in which the various leadership coaches appeared to operate. Some principals believed the role of the leadership coach was unclear and the confusing.

4.8.1.5 Best-practice Coaching Perspective

While the literature review presented a range of views on coaching, highlighting the lack of a recognised definition among academics and practitioners, there were enough commonalities and consistencies in these views to consider that best-practice approaches exist. The final category in this section has therefore been termed ‘best-practice coaching’, to reflect the minority of leadership coaches and principals in this research study whose opinions and perspectives were more closely aligned to the theorists presented in the literature review.

LC3, LC5, LC6 and P4 mentioned shared preferences such as:

- *needs-based coaching* to assess the circumstances, context and existing practices of the individual, with coaching based on these needs and existing capacity
- *scaffolding coaching processes*, such as critical reflection, levels of questioning, modelling, facilitation and giving feedback
- *solutions-based coaching* to work alongside the coachee by using the above processes to work through problems, exploring options and identifying possible solutions.

4.8.2 Coaching Approaches Summary

In relation to Research Question 1: What coaching approaches are Western leadership coaches using in their work to develop the leadership capability of the (predominantly) national principals, seven broad approaches were identified, containing numerous coaching elements. Table 4.14 provides a collation of the various coaching approaches used by the six leadership coaches in their work with the six principals and the various leadership teams, across the six research sites.

Table 4.14

Cross-case Analysis: Summary of Coaching Approaches from the Six Case Studies

Coaching Component	Evident in Case Study	Coaching Element	Evident in Case Study
<i>Section 4.8.2.1</i> Context-specific coaching tools	Case Study 3	SOAR	Case Study 3
	Case Study 4	Irtiqaa framework	Case Study 3
	Case Study 6		Case Study 4
			Case Study 6
		Mandated organisational documents and processes	Case Study 3 Case Study 6
		Theoretical frameworks	Case Study 6
<i>Section 4.8.2.2</i> Communication and language	Case Study 1	Translator	Case Study 1
	Case Study 2		Case Study 2
	Case Study 3		Case Study 3

		Conversation type: Questioning and statements	Case Study 1 Case Study 2 Case Study 3
<i>Section 4.8.2.3</i> Eclectic modes	Case Study 1 Case Study 2 Case Study 3	Supervisory	Case Study 1 Case Study 2 Case Study 3
		Forms of coaching/mentoring	Case Study 1 Case Study 2 Case Study 3
<i>Section 4.8.2.4</i> Session structure	Case Study 1 Case Study 3 Case Study 5 Case Study 6	Facilitative Experiential Climate Needs based	Almost all case studies
<i>Section 4.8.2.5</i> Socratic questioning	Case Study 4	Inquiring and levels of questioning Critical thinking	Case Study 4 Case Study 4
<i>Section 4.8.2.5</i> Good practice	Case Study 1	Needs-based coaching	Case Study 1
<i>Section 4.8.2.5</i> Relational	Case Study 1	Establishing and maintaining relationships Establishing and maintaining trust and credibility Establishing and maintaining coaching climate	Case Study 1 Case Study 1 Case Study 1

4.8.2.1 Context-specific Coaching Tools

The term ‘context-specific coaching tools’ was chosen to refer to the various mandated and non-mandated documents: processes and frameworks to which the leadership coaches either had access or made a conscious decision to utilise in their coaching sessions. Only LC3 could both articulate and show evidence of adherence and alignment to a specific coaching approach. The approach, known as SOAR, comes from the AI model and was presented as a second-generation coaching model

earlier in the literature review. Additionally, LC3 supported this approach with several predominantly mandated documents, processes and frameworks, amounting to a consistent, identifiable coaching approach. Two other leadership coaches articulated that they relied on specific supporting documents and frameworks, with LC6 able to articulate recognisable coaching theories that he utilised in his coaching sessions with P6.

4.8.2.2 Communication and Language

In three of the case studies, communication and language determined the coaching approach used by the leadership coaches. As both language and the use of a translator were factors in the coaching relationships at these three research sites, this necessitated the approach chosen by each of the leadership coaches. Although some advantages were apparent, having untrained translators appeared to be a limiting or inhibiting factor in the coaching relationship because of their actions such as filtering what needed to be passed on to the principal or leadership coach inappropriately, personal input and opinion, and low-level English.

In four case studies, it was evident, even if not articulated by the leadership coach, that the coaching structure during weekly or fortnightly visits was framed by communication and language considerations. This included the following coaching characteristics that were common across these research sites:

- simplifying English and use of contextual language
- repeated checking for understanding
- slowing down speed of delivery
- exaggerated body language as a substitute for oral language
- short questions, explanations and surface-level discussions.

4.8.2.3 Eclectic Modes

‘Eclectic modes’ was the term chosen to describe the multiple modes in which the leadership coaches operated, as articulated by LC1, LC2 and LC3 and observed to some degree at every research site. This reality is perhaps unsurprising, considering the role expectations as outlined in the literature review, with the leadership coaches formally appraising the principals, meaning that virtually all the principals saw the leadership coaches as their supervisors.

Adding to this eclecticism in observed and articulated approaches were the following factors:

- uncertainty expressed by some leadership coaches regarding whether they were mentors or coaches
- lack of autonomy in principals in the decision-making processes within their schools
- significant external distractors
- an articulated climate of uncertainty, insecurity and constant change
- wide variations in principal capacity, as observed and articulated across most research sites.

These variables indicated that each research site had unique and complex considerations and circumstances that resulted in leadership coaches operating in multiple roles and utilising multiple approaches when working in their role of developing leadership capacity.

4.8.2.4 Session Structure

Very few of the leadership coaches and principals could articulate or show evidence of definitive, documented session structures, yet there were commonalities and consistencies both within and across research sites. Often, the leadership coaches

were oblivious to their characteristics or the idiosyncratic mode of structuring a session inherent in their coaching approach. Indeed, only LC3 followed a definitive session structure within an overall consistent, systematic coaching approach. Even within such a structure, LC3 had to ensure flexibility and a needs-based approach because of factors outside her control.

The original elements, from all six case studies, have been condensed below into four key foci that were observed (prior and post-coaching session contacts were omitted, as there was a lack of consistency in recognisable approaches):

4.8.2.4.1 Facilitative Focus

Communication and language issues, as well as eclectic operating modes, possibly necessitated certain facilitative session characteristics. Common characteristics were:

- simple levels of questioning, often asked repeatedly or restructured if not fully understood the first time
- open, rather than closed questioning
- considerable time spent checking for understanding, compromising and negotiating with principals and leadership teams
- considerable time spent giving principals real examples and exploring options and solutions to issues and discussions
- coaching conversations being directed.

4.8.2.4.2 Experiential Focus

There were many observed and articulated examples of leadership coaches either modelling for the principal or requesting direct involvement in an action or process, followed by constructive coaching feedback.

4.8.2.4.3 Climate Focus

In all six case studies, it was evident that the six leadership coaches went to considerable lengths to create a positive, supportive climate for the various research sites, which were culturally and politically complex and challenging. The desire for all leadership coaches and most principals to work together in a positive, beneficial way was obvious in the non-threatening structure of every session.

4.8.2.4.4 Needs-based Focus

Every leadership coach structured coaching sessions per the needs of the principal and the needs of the school. Some leadership coaches were strategic in how they went about this, but it was evident that all coaches were aware of the part that prior learning and experience, as well as existing capacity and capability, played in shaping the structure of the coaching sessions.

4.8.2.5 The Remaining Coaching Approaches

Coaching components - Socratic questioning, good practice and relational, (*Section 4.8.2.5*), in Table 4.14 were only observed and articulated in one case study each. Although they were the dominant coaching components in each of the three case studies, elements and characteristics of each could be observed across all six case studies and have been captured the component called session structure, in the table.

4.8.3 Factors Enhancing and/or Inhibiting the Coaching Relationship

Table 4.15 provides a collation of the factors that enhanced and/or inhibited the principal/leadership coach relationship across the six research sites. The table and explanation following is linked to Research Questions 2 and 3. During the earlier data presentation in this chapter, the factors that enhanced and/or inhibited the

coaching relationship were differentiated in each of the six table summaries and explanations.

Table 4.15

Cross-case Analysis: Summary of Factors that Enhanced or Inhibited the Coaching Relationship from the Six Case Studies

Major Factors	Evident in Case Study	Specific Factors	Evident in Case Study
<i>Section 4.8.3.1</i> Language	Case Study 1	Use of translators	Case Study 1
	Case Study 2		Case Study 2
	Case Study 3		Case Study 3
	Case Study 6		Case Study 6
		Communication	Case Study 1 Case Study 3 Case Study 5 Case Study 6
<i>Section 4.8.3.2</i> The organisation	Case Study 1	Role dichotomy • By leadership • By principal • Coach v. mentor v. supervisor • Lack of induction and training in coaching • Appraising the principal	Most case studies
	Case Study 2		
	Case Study 3		
	Case Study 4		
	Case Study 5		
	Case Study 6		
		Lack of a common approach	Case Study 3 Case Study 6
		External distractors and influencers • Leadership coach caseload • Constant changing of principals • Time off school site	Most case studies
		Lack of principal autonomy	Most case studies
<i>Section 4.8.3.3</i> The principal	Case Study 1	Principal capability (knowledge and understanding, expectations and motivation, ability and potential)	Case Study 1
	Case Study 2		Case Study 2
	Case Study 6		Case Study 6

Major Factors	Evident in Case Study	Specific Factors	Evident in Case Study
<i>Section 4.8.3.4</i> Relational	Case Study 2 Case Study 5	Humour	Case Study 2
	Case Study 6	Respect and credibility	Case Study 2 Case Study 5
<i>Section 4.8.3.5</i> Ways of working	Case Study 3	Frameworks and inspection	Case Study 3
		Developing a common language and approach	Case Study 3
		Modelling	Case Study 3
<i>Section 4.8.3.6</i> Cultural difference	Case Study 6	Context	Case Study 6

In most instances, the various factors could be perceived as being both enhancers and inhibitors. The continual requirement for the principal to attend off-site professional development, for example, could be viewed as either inhibiting or enhancing the coaching relationship, depending on perspectives and the adjudications surrounding this variable. Therefore, the need to differentiate, by ticking either an enhancing or an inhibiting column, was removed from the questions. The next sections provide a ‘best-fit’ summary explanation for each of the six major factors that were identified from the six case studies as either inhibiting or enhancing the coaching relationship. Four of these were mentioned in more than one case study and while ‘Ways of working’ and ‘Cultural difference’ were mentioned only once in separate case studies, they were evident to a lesser degree in many of the case studies.

4.8.3.1 Language

Language was considered a factor in four of the six case studies, with two specific language factors emerging.

4.8.3.1.1 Use of Translators

In Case Studies 1 and 2, translators were considered inhibiting factors in the coaching relationship for the following reasons:

- In all schools in which a translator was used, the translator was simply a staff member, often an English teacher, with a higher level of English than that of the principal.
- These school-based translators often added their own personal opinions or had their own agendas.
- Translation was not always word for word, but a summary to the leadership coach or to the principal.
- At times, the principal and leadership coach spoke directly without using the translator, leading to the translator being confused about when they would be required to translate.
- Side conversations often took place between the principal and the translator. The leadership coaches found such conversations off-putting.

In Case Study 6, while the leadership coach did not require a translator, he said that in all his other schools, having a properly trained translator would be beneficial to the coaching relationship.

In Case Study 3 the leadership coach said that using a school-based translator enhanced the coaching relationship, although she commented that having a properly trained translator would be even more beneficial.

4.8.3.1.2 Communication

In Case Studies 1, 2 and 3, communication was generally considered a major inhibitor (due to language barriers) in the coaching relationship for the following reasons:

- Most documents that were referred to or required during coaching sessions were written in English. Principals and leadership coaches did not have the capacity, even with a translator, to understand and utilise such documents effectively.
- Because of the participants' limited English, coaching conversations were often limited in both depth and breadth. Language inhibited the quality and quantity of conversations that took place.
- Generally, principals did not understand conceptual or technical language. Such language often supports or consolidates the understanding of a discussion point.
- Due to the above three factors, leadership coaches had to tailor their coaching conversations more carefully than they would if they had been working with a native English speaker.

4.8.3.2 The Organisation

Four specific factors were evident from observations and interviews as contributing to enhancing and/or inhibiting the coaching relationship within this major area.

4.8.3.2.1 Role Dichotomy

This term was used to capture the general confusion in which principals and leadership coaches operated when working together at their schools and which was an inhibiting factor in the coaching relationship. Some leadership coaches and principals said they had not received induction or training that covered:

- a clear outline of their role in the school
- operating in a coaching or mentoring capacity in schools.

There appeared to be a clear division between the way the principals perceived the role of the leadership coach and the way the leadership coaches themselves perceived their role. Many principals viewed the leadership coach as:

- a conduit between the organisation and the school
- the face of the organisation to monitor and check on their progress and performance.

The leadership coach/mentor also being the supervisor/appraiser was an inhibiting factor for many leadership coaches and some principals. The central issue was one of role conflict, whereby the leadership coach was there to support and build leadership capacity yet at the same time, carried out the formal evaluation of the principal and made judgements about their performance.

4.8.3.2.2 Lack of a Common Approach

In two case studies, the leadership coaches expressed a concern that consistent and systematic approaches to working in schools were lacking. Since they came from diverse backgrounds, cultures and countries, and were working with principals with a diverse range of experiences, abilities and knowledge, a consistent and systematic approach to working in schools was crucial.

4.8.3.2.3 External Distractors and Influencers

The following three specific factors were common to most case studies:

- *Leadership coach caseload*: Most of the leadership coaches and principals remarked that the number of schools a leadership coach was required to support was an inhibiting factor. The ratio of schools to leadership coaches in this research study was determined by ADEC. All leadership coaches covered between seven and nine schools. The general feeling was that with fewer schools, they could be more effective in their role.

- *Constant changing of principals:* Last-minute, constant changing of principals was believed to be an inhibiting factor by most leadership coaches and principals. A change of school invariably resulted in a change of leadership coach, potentially inhibiting the ability for the principal and coach to develop and maintain the long-term working relationship that could result in improved leadership outcomes for the principal.
- *Time off school site:* The principals were required, often weekly, to attend an array of professional development activities, meetings and other commitments. The leadership coaches believed this had an inhibiting effect on the coaching relationship.

4.8.3.2.4 Lack of Principal Autonomy

A lack of autonomy for the principals was considered an inhibiting factor. The argument here was that the central educational authority of ADEC, not the principal or their direct line manager, the leadership coach, determined most of the important school-based decisions. Both the principals and the leadership coaches believed this undermined the ability to have in-depth, school-based discussions that could explore all options and solutions and arrive at an outcome.

4.8.3.3 *The Principal*

Multiple factors were captured within the label of 'Principal capability'. In three of the case studies, the leadership coaches specifically mentioned several principal characteristics that had a direct impact on both the coaching relationship and the extent to which they could develop principal capability successfully. The argument was that varying degrees of the following characteristics were desirable in working with a principal and could be potential enhancers or inhibitors. The three

characteristics often overlapped and in some studies, the leadership coaches felt that all three characteristics were lacking in their principals:

- *Knowledge and Understanding:* This encompasses the existing knowledge and understanding a principal has about managing and leading in their school, such as curriculum knowledge and understanding, financial management, and understanding of pedagogical practice.
- *Standards and Motivation:* Some of the leadership coaches believed that, for whatever reasons, their principals lacked personal motivation in their roles and had low standards and expectations. They felt this had an adverse effect on their ability to coach and develop the principals in their roles.
- *Skills and Ability:* In some case studies, the leadership coaches said the principals lacked experience in their roles. For some principals, experience was limited by some of the organisational factors as presented earlier, while a lack of a willingness to learn and progress limited some principals. Either way, this had a direct bearing on the ability of the coach to work with the principal effectively.

4.8.3.4 Relational

Invariably, the word ‘relationships’ came up at some point in every principal and leadership coach interview. Developing a positive working relationship was a natural objective for all research participants in the study, although some leadership coaches specified this to a greater degree. The use of humour and gaining respect and credibility from their principals were the two specific factors within the relational area that were considered inhibiting or enhancing factors in the coaching relationship.

- Humour was evident in almost all coaching conversations to some degree, with some leadership coaches using it effectively to reduce tension and lighten the mood, even during formal coaching conversations.
- Credibility and respect was mentioned specifically by three leadership coaches, who believed it was vital to the success of their working relationships. One leadership coach said that relationships were at ‘the heart of everything’. The leadership coaches outlined various ways they developed this respect and credibility, although one coach said he had lost the credibility and respect of the principal because of the formal principal appraisal process.

4.9 Data Synthesis of the Three Research Questions

Using an open-coding, emergent, constant comparative derivative of grounded theory, a within-case analysis was first carried out for all six research sites for each of the research questions. The initial codes and categories were determined after personal transcription of all observations and interviews at each research site. Section 4.8 of this chapter consisted of a cross-case analysis of all six research sites, whereby further coding and categorising took place to condense and make further sense of the emerging data. Summaries of this data were provided for each of the three research questions, as well as an additional area titled ‘Concepts of coaching’, which informed Research Question 1. A final synthesis of the within-case and cross-case analysis pertaining to the three research questions is presented in the following sections.

4.9.1 Research Question 1

All six within-case analyses and the cross-case analysis considered Research Question 1: What coaching approaches are Western leadership coaches using in their

work to develop the leadership capability of the (predominantly) national principals?

The following five different coaching perspectives emerged from the data:

- Sport coaching perspective
- Mentoring v. coaching perspective
- Leadership coach v. principal perspective
- Coaching components perspective
- Best-practice coaching perspective

These five perspectives reflected the diverse array of opinions and perspectives held by the 12 research participants. Commonality would have been perhaps a pre-emptor or prerequisite for the overall aim of this research question, which was to determine the extent to which definitive, coaching approaches could be identified. The following conclusions could be drawn:

- Only one leadership coach appeared to follow an identifiable coaching approach. Identifiable, in this context is about the approaches and models presented in the literature review section of this thesis. The coaching approach of this leadership coach aligned with the AI model, within the second-generation coaching model.
- Although no other approaches emerged that aligned to the models outlined in the literature review, the data concluded that within this complex intercultural coaching environment in the UAE, four coaching approaches were found that were possibly unique to this coaching context. Either one, or combinations of, the four approaches below, were evident in the six research sites:

4.9.1.1 Context-specific Coaching Tools

This involves the utilisation and application of specific mandated and non-obligatory uses of theoretical frameworks, inspections frameworks and various

documents and processes that often formed the basis of the session structure and approach in the various schools. Some of the theories used by leadership coaches were identifiable in literature, though were applied on a seemingly ad hoc basis. However, in the absence of a mandated organisational coaching approach, these theories, along with the various documents and frameworks constituted a needs-based approach.

4.9.1.2 Communication and Language

The intercultural context provided a significant challenge to leadership coaching in the UAE. As noted earlier, because of the communication and language issues, the following five coaching characteristics were common across most research sites, as a means of addressing and operating within the UAE educational context:

1. simplifying English and use of contextual language
2. repeated checking for understanding
3. slowing down the speed of delivery
4. exaggerated body language as a substitute for oral language
5. short questions, explanations and superficial discussions.

4.9.1.3 Eclectic Modes

At virtually all research sites, there was an eclectic approach to developing principal leadership capacity. The ability of the leadership coach to function and interchange between multiple leadership modes was a necessity at all research sites. Whether mandated or by design, this eclectic approach appeared to be a core approach to developing principal leadership capacity.

4.9.1.4 Session Structure

Although only one leadership coach articulated and evidenced a research-based approach to working in the schools, as noted earlier, the following four elements were observed at most research sites, constituting a consistent and reasonably systematic approach to developing leadership capacity:

1. facilitative focus
2. experiential focus
3. climate or relational focus
4. needs-based focus.

4.9.2 Research Questions 2 and 3

As explained earlier, analysing the other two research questions—In the context described in Question 1, what factors enhance the coaching relationship? and in the context described in Question 1, what factors inhibit the coaching relationship?—in isolation was problematic, because various factors could have interpreted as either an inhibiting or enhancing factor, depending on the person's perspective. The four broad areas identified earlier as inhibiting or enhancing factors in the coaching relationship, as well as the specific factors within them were:

1. Language:
 - Translators: both enhanced and inhibited the coaching relationship.
 - Communication and language: mainly inhibited the coaching relationship.
2. The organisation (the four factors listed predominantly inhibited the coaching relationship):
 - Role dichotomy
 - Lack of a common approach
 - External distractors and influencers

- Lack of principal autonomy.
3. Principal capability (the three factors listed predominantly inhibited the coaching relationship):
 - Knowledge and understanding
 - Personal standards and motivation
 - Leadership skills and ability.
 4. Relational factors (both factors enhanced and inhibited the coaching relationship):
 - Humour
 - Credibility and respect

4.10 Chapter Summary

The presentation of data chapter was underpinned by a series of recorded and transcribed observations and interviews at each of the six research sites. Substantial data were gathered and analysed using the data analysis methodology outlined in Chapter 3.

Section 4.1 introduced the chapter outlining how each of the six case studies (Sections 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6 4.7) would consist of four sub-sections. These four sub-sections were:

1. Contextual Overview (Sections 4.2.1, 4.3.1, 4.4.1, 4.5.1, 4.6.1, 4.7.1)
2. Concepts of Coaching (Sections 4.2.2, 4.3.2, 4.4.2, 4.5.2, 4.6.2, 4.7.2)
3. Coaching Approaches (Sections 4.2.3, 4.3.3, 4.4.3, 4.5.3, 4.6.3, 4.7.3)
4. Factors Enhancing and/or Inhibiting the Coaching Relationship (Sections 4.2.4, 4.3.4, 4.4.4, 4.5.4, 4.6.4, 4.7.4)

The above four sub-sections were directly related to the three research questions. Sections 4.2 to 4.7 presented conversations from the transcribed interviews and observations. Sometimes lengthy but relevant narrative pertaining to each of the four sub-sections, provided examples of the evidence gathered from each of the six case studies. After the sections: Coaching Approaches (Sections 4.2.3, 4.3.3, 4.4.3, 4.5.3, 4.6.3, 4.7.3) and Factors Enhancing and/or Inhibiting the Coaching Relationship (Sections 4.2.4, 4.3.4, 4.4.4, 4.5.4, 4.6.4, 4.7.4) summary tables were presented.

Section 4.8 focused on a cross-case analysis of all six case studies. Omitting sub-section one – Contextual Overview - the remaining three sub-sections were synthesized using the process outlined in Table 3.5 and Table 3.6, in Chapter 3. Five coaching perspectives were identified in sub-section two – Concepts of Coaching. Four major coaching approaches were identified in sub-section three – Coaching Approaches. Specific factors were also identified and presented within these major approaches. Four major factors were identified in sub-section four – Factors that Enhanced and/or Inhibited the Coaching Relationship. Specific factors were also identified within these major factors.

Section 4.9 was a final synthesis with the objective of providing a clearer link between the results outlined in the sub-sections of each case study to the three research questions.

Chapter 5: Discussion

5.1 Introduction

This chapter connects the empirical findings from the data presentation in Chapter 4 with the theoretical framework described in the literature review chapter. The priority in this chapter was to reflect on the three research questions considering the empirical findings and in connection with the theoretical framework.

5.2 Reflections on Perspectives of Coaching

Research Question 1: What coaching approaches are Western leadership coaches using in their work to develop the leadership capability of the national principals, required an exploration of the participants' perceptions and understanding of leadership coaching in the context of this research study. Responses were mainly obtained through the asking of interview questions, as detailed earlier. Initial data indicated the need for the 'Perspectives on Coaching' section presented in all six case studies (Sections 4.2.2, 4.3.2, 4.4.2, 4.5.2, 4.6.2, 4.7.2). Five perspectives on coaching were presented in Chapter 4 and these are examined here.

5.2.1 Reflection 1: The Sports-coaching Perspective

Some of the leadership coaches drew a link between sport and coaching, reflecting the traditional definitions and understandings of coaching (noted in the literature review) as an instructor or trainer, helping a person to maximise his/her performance. Contemporary definitions of coaching presented in the literature review indicated that there are numerous forms of coaching and links to a wide array of disciplines or 'influencers'. Aspects of instructional coaching, performance-based coaching and first-generation-type models, such as the GROW model, all have links with the more traditional sports-coaching viewpoints.

5.2.2 Reflection 2: The Mentoring v. Coaching Perspective

This perspective mirrored some of the confusion contained in the literature on this subject, with several of the leadership coaches talking about how they were more mentors than coaches, or vice versa, supporting their claims with explanations and justifications. While a leadership coach could talk about how they were *mentoring* their principal, some of their responses were more akin to describing *coaching*, or vice versa. The lines were blurred with the explanations and justifications jumping between the two terms. While there are many commonalities between the two terms, the literature review highlighted this confusion and disagreement among academics, noting that the two terms are used interchangeably.

In many respects, whether the leadership coaches were coaching or mentoring may be considered a moot point. As stated in the literature review, the needs of the organisation or context should determine the definition. A further consideration was that the functional role of the leadership coach was to supervise, mentor, coach and evaluate the principals with whom they worked. As the leadership coaches were expected to operate in multiple roles in schools, they had multiple perspectives on their roles.

5.2.3 Reflection 3: The Leadership Coach v. Principal Perspective

The variation in views on the role of the leadership coach in schools may be attributable to several including historical and cultural factors. The predominant view of the school principals was that the leadership coaches were in their schools to impart knowledge, direct and supervise, as well as deliver messages and mandates as ambassadors of the ADEC, whereas the predominant view of the leadership coaches was that they were coaches and mentors to the principals, to build their leadership

capacity. The job description itself, which notes that the leadership coach is also the supervisor of the principal, would support the principals' view.

In relation to cross-cultural power/distance orientations, the literature review noted that many Arab countries such as in the Middle East are hierarchical in structure and high on the power-distance index, compared to their Western counterparts. The principals, at least on paper, were subordinate to the supervising Western leadership coaches in this education context and were unlikely to challenge or question their authority. The education system in Abu Dhabi has a centralised structure, with the major decision making taking place outside the local school environment. In addition, principals have operated under a superintendent-type model for many years. These factors all add support to the principals' perspective on the role of the leadership coach.

5.2.4 Reflection 4: The Coaching Components and Best-practice Perspectives

These two perspectives appeared to have grown out of the challenging educational context in which the leadership coaches operated. Both were based on the leadership coaches interpreting the needs of the school, the leadership teams and the principals with whom they worked, and balancing this with the mandate they had been given. The complexity of the environment could not be underestimated, along with ADEC being less than 10 years old and still developing the robust policies and procedures of more mature organisations and systems. In such situations, the leadership coaches sometimes felt that they operated in a vacuum and reverted to trialling and implementing components of what they knew already, or best-practice approaches from their country of origin.

5.3 Responses to Research Question 1

5.3.1 Observation 1: Lack of ‘Identifiable’ Coaching Approaches

In Chapter 4, the summary of the data from the six case studies reported the absence of common, identifiable coaching approaches or models across most of the research sites. The term ‘identifiable’ is key here, as it references the coaching approaches presented in Parts 1 and 2 of the literature review: ‘Coaching and learning theory’, and ‘Coaching approaches and practices’. Only one leadership coach followed a model that was identified in the literature review: the SOAR model, which is aligned with the AI model within the second-generation coaching model. SOAR is a relatively new derivative of AI that is finding favour in some organisations as a strengths-based, constructivist approach that is used as a strategic planning or coaching tool. This leadership coach supported use of the SOAR framework with what was termed ‘Content-specific coaching tools’, as outlined in Chapter 4.

5.3.2 Observation 2: Training and Induction in Coaching

One author of the boundary-breaking leadership model presented in the literature review, Jan Robertson (2008), made the following comment about coaching:

Both the person doing the coaching and the person being coached must be taught the skills of coaching and should discuss the principles behind these.

When two people know how to play the game coaching is easy. (p. 10)

However, at all of the research sites, the leadership coaches reported that upon arrival in the emirate of Abu Dhabi they had received very little or no training or induction that pertained to coaching/mentoring principals in the schools. The principals were asked the same research question and their feedback was identical.

The lack of training provision in this area is an interesting omission and this study can only speculate about the reasons. Possibly ADEC has assumed that because the leadership coaches had educational leadership experience, including as a principal, in their country of origin, this would transfer across to them being successful leadership coaches. This is perhaps further borne out by the fact that most of the leadership coaches improvised, trialled and developed their own coaching/mentoring/supervisory approaches.

5.3.3 Observation 3: Context-specific Coaching Approaches

The empirical findings indicated that context-specific capacity building approaches were evident across all six research sites. Whether these are called coaching or mentoring approaches is perhaps not important considering the multiple roles in which the leadership coaches operated, the literature review on this topic, and the fact that most leadership coaches were not aware of the differences between the two terms.

Four definite approaches were evident across either some or all the six schools. As the leadership coaches, each worked in seven to nine schools, it could reasonably be extrapolated that these approaches would be evident in the 40 or 50 schools in which they worked. To take this a step further, these six leadership coaches were possibly representative of all leadership coaches in the ADEC context, meaning that the four approaches summarised in Chapter 4 would be evident across most of the 250 schools in the ADEC government schools. The next sections link these four areas with the literature review.

5.3.3.1 Context-specific Coaching Tools

As mentioned in Chapter 4, the utilisation and application of specific mandated documents determined the approaches used in schools. Of note were the

newly introduced inspection system and the strategic improvement planning framework. The leadership coaches structured their coaching sessions around these two seemingly important frameworks and systems, which required regular, ongoing dialogue, activity and professional development on the part of various stakeholders, including the leadership coaches and principals.

Referring to the literature review's discussion of the four adult learning theories, shaping the coaching sessions around the use of such frameworks and documents is conducive to capacity building. As one example, David Kolb's experiential learning cycle is based on coaching participants engaging in hands-on learning experiences, followed by reflecting on their current and prior actions, then conceptualising possibilities and future solutions before applying solutions, trialling and experimenting. This was the hallmark of many of the observed coaching sessions in schools. There was significant evidence of experiential learning underlying many coaching practices, whether the leadership coaches were cognisant of this. Similarly, the other three adult learning theories—*andragogy*, theories of action, and single-, double- and perhaps triple-loop learning—were evident to varying degrees in most of the coaching sessions.

One potential risk of focusing on using 'coaching tools' to drive coaching is that it ignores the modes of delivery, perhaps the important partner in an effective coaching relationship. The modes of delivery could be akin to a pedagogical leadership style or teaching practice in a school and it is here that LC3 appeared to couple the use of the mandated frameworks and documents successfully within one dimension of AI that framed her entire coaching approach. However, the literature review presented several authors who cautioned against a framework, tool or model driving the learning conversation, suggesting that it is best for the learning

conversation and dialogue to drive the selection of approaches or tools. David Clutterbuck (2010) terms this approach ‘managed eclecticism’, with an individual using a combination of approaches, techniques, processes and models in their coaching journey. This was certainly evident in the practices of some leadership coaches, particularly LC5 and LC6, but it was not always disciplined, intentional and formalised.

5.3.3.2 Communication and Language

Perhaps the greatest determinant influencing coaching approaches in the context of this study was language. Peterson (2007) said that language acts as a formidable barrier when coaching in an executive capacity in a cross-cultural context. Indeed, while the empirical evidence supported this idea, this barrier is not insurmountable. Language and communication barriers may be a reason for leadership coaches not implementing ‘purist’ versions of the coaching approaches presented in the literature review, which are possibly aligned to a context in which both research participants are more linguistically and culturally compatible.

The literature review addressed various cross-cultural models and showed that this research’s leadership coaches were from what Edward T. Hall categorised as anglophonic, low-context cultures, while the principals were all from polychronic, high-context cultures. Communication difficulties or ambiguities between the research participants were possibly inevitable in the context of the study. Further, when participants from high- and low-context cultures are required to communicate and interact, the literature review cited Al-Omari (2008), who stated that individuals must employ strategies such as reviewing and repeating to reduce or mitigate such ambiguity. This was very much the situation at most of the research sites in this study, as explained earlier.

5.3.3.3 Eclectic Modes

Continuing from the theme of delivery modes, a significant finding of this study was the necessity and ability of the leadership coaches to function in dual or multiple working roles across their schools. Although many coaches and principals expressed concerns regarding the confusion and challenges this created, this was the 'norm' in this educational context. The degree to which the leadership coaches, all of whom had lived and worked in the UAE for two or more years, managed this successfully was not an objective of this study. The leadership coaches were accustomed to operating in an environment that required considerable flexibility. Diversity of job function required diversity of character and leadership acumen. Functioning as a mentor or coach, although often an ambiguous role in any context (Forde et al., 2013) appeared inconsequential in the context of this study when placed alongside the supervisor/evaluator role. As a delivery mode, this latter role appeared to be anti-capacity building. This idea is explored further in the next section on Research Questions 2 and 3, but from an adult learning theory perspective, acting as both a coach/mentor and a supervisor/appraiser is possibly not constructive.

Reflection 3 (The leadership v. principal perspective) touched on Hofstede's power/distance orientations as outlined in the introduction, noting that in this Middle Eastern context, the principal subordinate is unlikely to express disagreement with his leadership coach manager/supervisor. This very fact is diametrically in opposition to the construction and co-construction models presented earlier in Table 2.1, as well as to the advice from researchers about a coach being involved in the appraisal process. That table is repeated below as Table 5.1. The co-construction model of learning talks about collaboration, learning together, respect and trust. Robertson (2009), in her boundary-breaking leadership model, talks about shared construction

of meaning and client-centred, authentic coaching. However, many of the leadership coaches and principals in this study spoke of the principal's appraisal and the supervisory nature of the leadership coach's role as undermining the relationship and damaging trust and respect.

Table 5.1

Theories of Learning

Learning Theory: Model 1^a		Learning Theory: Model 2^b	
Model name	Conception of learning	Model name	Conception of learning
1. The instructional model	Learning by teaching	1. Knowledge <i>for</i> practice	Knowledge is disseminated
2. The construction model	Learning by understanding	2. Knowledge <i>in</i> practice	Knowledge gained by doing
3. The co-construction model	Learning by dialogue	3. Knowledge <i>of</i> practice	Knowledge gained in learning communities

a) From Watkins, as cited in Carnell et al., 2012, p. 5; b) From Cochran-Smith, as cited in Robertson, 2008, p. 35).

5.3.3.4 Session Structure

Although on an individual basis, the various leadership coaches were not conscious of specific actions, sequences or processes evident in their session structures, four consistent and definitive practices did exist, as presented in Chapter 4. Facilitative, experiential, needs-based coaching with a focus on developing a positive, supportive working environment was unquestionably evident at all research sites.

5.4 Responses to Key Research Questions 2 and 3

For the reasons outlined in Chapter 4, the way the findings relate to Research Questions 2 and 3 needs to be discussed simultaneously. To reiterate, Chapter 4

presented empirical evidence indicating four major factors and a multitude of specific factors that enhanced and/or inhibited the coaching relationship, as follows:

- *Language factors*: Translators and general communication
- *The organisation*: Role dichotomy, lack of a common approach, external distractors and influencers, lack of principal autonomy
- *The Principal*: Principal capability
- *Relational*: Humour, credibility and respect.

5.4.1 Observation 1: Language Factors

Although the term ‘intercultural’ is used in the title of this research study, the literature review did not explore the topic of language in any depth, as it was not assumed that it would be a factor in this research. However, the study found that language barriers were significant enough for them to be considered inhibiting factors in the coaching relationship. Even if the literature review had addressed the use of translators as a consideration in an intercultural coaching environment, technically, none of the translators in this research study could be considered translators. Their role in affecting the coaching relationship was diverse. At some research sites, they were detrimental to the coaching relationship, although for most leadership coaches, the benefits outweighed the negatives. However, the ambiguity because of language factors that was evident and articulated by most research participants placed considerable pressure on the principal–coach relationship.

5.4.2 Observation 2: The Organisation

Multiple issues within this factor had an inhibiting effect on the coaching relationship. Perhaps the most significant was role dichotomy, specifically, the leadership coach having to act in a coach/mentor role as well as in a supervisor/appraisal role. On this topic, Reiss (as cited in Wise & Jacobo, 2010) said:

There is immense value in spending time with a skilful coach who has no link whatsoever to the principal's evaluation; who has made a pact of confidentiality on the specifics of the coaching sessions; and who is a critical friend who will not only ask open-ended questions to clarify issues, but will also challenge mistaken assumptions and inspire one to believe in and commit to new possibilities (Reiss, as cited in Wise & Jacobo, 2010, p. 162).

In many respects, the issue of role dichotomy applied to the principals as well as to the leadership coaches. The external distractions, external influence by ADEC central office and the principals' lack of autonomy meant many principals were uncertain about their role, which further complicated the relationship they had with their leadership coach/cluster manager.

There was little evidence in the case studies of the coaching approaches that were presented in the literature review; however, context-specific approaches were being used. Across all the research sites, both the leadership coaches and principals believed that the lack of a common conceptual approach, the caseload of the leadership coaches, the constant changing of principals, the amount of time principals spent away from their schools, and the lack of principal autonomy were very real factors inhibiting the development of positive, effective coaching relationships in which focused learning could take place.

5.4.3 Observation 3: The Principal

From the outset of this research study, the stated role of the leadership coach was to develop principal leadership capacity across all 250 or so schools. Reeve (as cited in Wise & Jacobo, 2010) suggested that capacity building is a necessary element of coaching for sustainability but as already suggested in the literature review, various authors believe that motivation and the responsibility to change and

develop ultimately lies in the hands of the coachee, not the coach. The empirical evidence presented in Chapter 4 highlighted the issues surrounding principal capability and suggested the following three areas as being problematic and ultimately affecting the coaching relationship:

- principal's knowledge and understanding
- principal's standards and motivation
- principal's skills and ability.

The consensus among the leadership coaches was that many of these three ingredients were lacking or absent in many principals. This undermined the coaching relationship and even limited aspiring to the more desirable coaching approaches that were outlined in the literature review.

According to adult learning theories and the three-generation coaching model, the most successful coaching partnerships have the following characteristics:

- Adults have a desire to know, are self-directed, have an abundance of previous work experience and are ready to learn (Cox, 2015).
- There is an asymmetry between the coach and the coachee (Stelter, 2012).
- There is a positive culture and climate between the coaching participants, which creates a fertile environment for tackling future challenges and scenarios (Cooperrider et al., 2008).
- Non-evaluative judgements are replaced by collaborative inquiry and discussion (Huff et al., 2013).
- Meaningful or authentic learning is co-constructed by both coaching participants and all knowledge is valued (Robertson, 2008, 2009).

5.4.4 Observation 4: Relational

Effective coaching, ‘even in a single culture, requires a high degree of interpersonal perceptiveness and sensitivity’ (Peterson, 2007, p. 264). In the research article ‘Consulting competently in multicultural contexts’, Cooper, O’Roark, Peterson and Wilson-Stark (2008) agreed with the findings of this study and the previously cited Peterson (2007), stating that language is a significant challenge in an intercultural context. The additional time and patience that is required in such international settings is significant and this was certainly a major factor at most research sites in this research study. All the leadership coaches and some principals talked about the need to work constantly at the relationship. Indeed, all leadership coaches viewed relationship building as being ‘at the heart of everything’.

Interestingly, while some previous research has suggested that culture and cultural differences can be a significant factor in international settings, culture did not feature as an inhibiting or enhancing factor in this research study. Only one leadership coach commented that culture was something to be ‘aware of’, stating that Westerners would never truly understand the cultural nuances of the Emirati culture. The fact that culture was not a factor in the coaching relationship may be linked to the fact that all the leadership coaches had chosen to live and work in the UAE, suggesting they likely had a certain amount of ‘cultural intelligence’ (Lovvorn & Jiun-Shiu, 2011); that is, the ability to adapt to a new cultural context.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

6.1 Introduction

This study acknowledges the reality and scale of international work assignments in education, whereby individuals from often-diverse cultures and lacking fluency in a common language work alongside each other with the aim of improving personal or organisation performance, or increasing capability in the role. More specifically, some literature has suggested that transitioning a successful leader into a multi- or intercultural context often ‘fails’ because of lack of preparation, training and understanding of the complexity of the new environment (Black & Mendenhall, as cited in Story, 2011; Lovvorn & Jiun-Shiu, 2011).

The main research objective was to examine the extent to which the Western leadership coaches involved in this study were identifying and applying specific coaching approaches in developing the leadership capacity of the Arabic principals in several ADEC government schools. An additional objective was to identify the factors inherent in the approaches that influenced the coaching relationship. The research utilised three broad learning theories and the three-generation coaching model as the theoretical base from which to consider the coaching approaches that were identified and the factors that inhibited or enhanced the coaching relationship.

6.2 Research Question 1

Several authors (Clutterbuck, 2010; Forde et al., 2013; Griffiths, 2005; Huff et al., 2013; Peterson, 2007; Robertson, 2008, 2009) have advocated that future educational coaching models should not have a ‘one size fits all’ approach. They have recommended that learning conversations and dialogue should drive the selection of the coaching tools or approaches used, not the other way around. These

approaches need to be cognisant of the context in which they operate, embedded among the people within this context and based on sound educational platforms.

Critical to the research question was the word ‘coaching’. The findings suggested significant confusion about both the definition of this word and its application in the context of this study. This confusion related to individuals being unaware of the differences between ‘mentoring’ and ‘coaching’, using the words interchangeably. These misperceptions echoed similar findings held by both researchers and practitioners in the literature review. Five perspectives on coaching were identified by the leadership coaches and principals in this research study. Whether these perspectives had a direct bearing on the actual coaching/mentoring approaches used at the six research sites was not examined in this study.

‘Intercultural’, as in the title of this study, was the second critical word determining the context of Research Question 1. The term recognises the uniqueness of this research study’s context, with Western educators being placed in a complex cultural environment to build Arabic principals’ leadership capacity through coaching and mentoring. The study’s findings echoed those of previous research, with the leadership coaches perceiving a lack of appropriate induction and initial training related to both their role and the working environment in which they found themselves. The leadership coaches believed that ADEC had not thought about the implications of the expectation that in addition, the leadership coaches would supervise and appraise the principals. They believed they had not received adequate induction and training for this double role, which had a direct impact on the coaching relationship, as discussed later in this section.

The findings related to Research Question 1 indicated that only one leadership coach followed a specific coaching approach that was identified in the

literature, supplemented and supported with context-specific approaches. Some leadership coaches informally used components of, or reflected upon, theories from various recognisable models to inform their coaching sessions. Although no common coaching or mentoring approaches, as identified in the literature review, were evident across all research sites, the findings indicated context-specific approaches that were perhaps unique to this educational environment.

Four major characteristics were prevalent in the coaching or mentoring approaches at most research sites. The first of these, 'Context-specific coaching tools', could reasonably be expected in any large organisational context in which the employee/coach is answerable to a ministerial body such as ADEC, with accountabilities and mandated requirements. In the second identified coaching approach, 'Communication and language', the research found several characteristics that partly duplicated the findings by Al-Omari (2008). These characteristics could also be reasonably expected to occur in an intercultural context such as this research study. Unfortunately, such studies are sparse and the absence of induction and training for the participants in this study perhaps indicated that ADEC underestimated the importance of such knowledge and training in improving the performance outcomes of the individuals involved, both principals and coaches/mentors.

Perhaps the least desirable coaching/mentoring approach, from the perspective of the leadership coaches as well as from theory, was the eclecticism of the approaches evident in the six schools. Though some leadership coaches appeared to manage the multiple roles effectively, the expectation that the capacity builder (the leadership coach) should also pass a summative performance judgement on a coachee is potentially anti-constructivist and limiting. The last of the four context-

based coaching approaches, 'Session structure', was perhaps the most significant.

The study found that although the four elements of coaching that are considered best practice (facilitative, needs-based, focus on experiential learning and developing the coaching relationship) were present, most of the leadership coaches were not aware that such consistency and structure existed in both their own approaches and among the leadership-coaching group.

6.3 Research Questions 2 and 3

As with the findings related to Research Question 1, the intercultural component of this research study was a defining factor influencing the topic of these research questions—the coaching relationship. Multiple factors in this intercultural context meant that the leadership coaches needed to adapt and evolve their strategies and directions, which had a direct influence on the coaching relationship. The absence of a common language or *lingua franca* was a significant factor in this study. Although it was not a topic of discussion in the theoretical framework, the use of school-based teachers to act as translators was both an inhibiting and an enhancing factor. While cultural factors were not significant, language barriers required considerable time, improvisation and energy by both the first-language English and the Arabic speakers, to develop and maintain a respectful and successful working relationship. Although language factors undoubtedly limited the quantity and quality of the coaching conversations, most of the leadership coaches believed they could build leadership capability to some degree.

As stated in the introduction section, the organisation of ADEC, in striving to create a world-class education system in a short time frame, has channelled substantial human and capital resourcing into the development of leadership in principals. In addition to being coached/mentored on a weekly/fortnightly basis, the

principals were influenced by, and accountable to, professional development companies. The principals reported to a raft of ever-changing external participants and stakeholders and felt considerable pressure to perform within the new external auditing system. In many cases, these organisational distractors had a detrimental effect on the coaching relationship, with leadership coaches reporting that principals were often away from their schools, making it difficult to develop consistent, supportive approaches. Additionally, major decision making was centralised; constant, unapplied-for transfers of principals was one example of the lack of autonomy and insecurity felt by many principals.

Principal capability was viewed and observed as placing additional stress on the coaching relationships. Specifically, many of the leadership coaches believed that some principals were lacking in knowledge, understanding, skill and ability, as well as having low levels of motivation and professional standards. The leadership coaches knew they were employed to develop capacity in most of these areas. However, these factors combined with others factors—lack of training in coaching/mentoring; reporting to multiple stakeholders; the leadership coaches' caseloads; large-scale ADEC-imposed interference; language barriers; role confusion; and the coach/mentor also being the appraiser/evaluator—amount to an accumulation of too many inhibitors in developing the principals' leadership capability to the extent to which both the participants and ADEC aspired.

6.4 Opportunities for Further Research

There are several opportunities for further research using the same (or similar) interpretive, naturalistic methodology of this project. These opportunities could include:

- narrowing the research and focusing on only one aspect of the research findings, such as measuring the performance effect of coaching on the principal, addressing the use of untrained translators v. trained translators, the language nuances in the coaching conversations, and so on
- repeating a similar study in a completely different geographical location in which there is an intercultural context and the research participants do not speak a common language
- focusing solely on the perspectives and actions of the Arabic principals, particularly capturing the data regarding their well-being and personal thoughts among the constantly changing educational environment in which they operate. Such a study would benefit from having a researcher who is fluent in Arabic
- conduct similar research where participants *do* speak a common first language
- focusing on gender issues in relation to same gender leadership coaching v. opposite gender leadership coaching
- measuring the effect of using trained, independent translators during coaching/mentoring sessions.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Curtin University Permission for Research



Memorandum

To	Gregor Cameron
From	Stephanie Cook, Form C Coordinator
Subject	Protocol Approval EDU-139-13
Date	28 November 2013
Copy	Prof Graham Dellar, School of Education Prof Rob Cavanagh, School of Education

Office of Research and Development
Human Research Ethics Committee
Telephone 9266 2784
Facsimile 9266 3793
Email hrec@curtin.edu.au

Thank you for your "Form C Application for Approval of Research with Low Risk (Ethical Requirements)" for the project titled "*Inter-cultural Coaching: Developing Educational Leadership in the United Arab Emirates*". On behalf of the Human Research Ethics Committee, I am authorised to inform you that the project is approved.

Approval of this project is for a period of 4 years **23/11/2013 to 22/11/2017**.

Your approval has the following conditions:

- (i) Annual progress reports on the project must be submitted to the Ethics Office.
- (ii) **It is your responsibility, as the researcher, to meet the conditions outlined above and to retain the necessary records demonstrating that these have been completed.**

The approval number for your project is **EDU-139-13**. Please quote this number in any future correspondence. If at any time during the approval term changes/amendments occur, or if a serious or unexpected adverse event occurs, please advise me immediately.

Kind regards

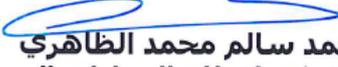
Stephanie Cook
Form C Coordinator

Please Note: The following standard statement must be included in the information sheet to participants:
This study has been approved under Curtin University's process for lower-risk Studies (Approval Number EDU-139-13). This process complies with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (Chapter 5.1.7 and Chapters 5.1.18-5.1.21).
For further information on this study contact the researchers named above or the Curtin University Human Research Ethics Committee. c/- Office of Research and Development, Curtin University, GPO Box U1987, Perth 6845 or by telephoning 9266 9223 or by emailing hrec@curtin.edu.au.

Appendix 2: ADEC Research Permission



مجلس أبوظبي للتعليم
Abu Dhabi Education Council
التعليم أولاً Education First

Date: 30 September 2013	التاريخ: 30 سبتمبر 2013
Ref:	الرقم:
To: Public Schools Principals,	السادة / مديري المدارس الحكومية
Subject: Letter of Permission	الموضوع: تسهيل مهمة باحثين
Dear Principals,	تحية طيبة وبعد،،،
The Abu Dhabi Education Council would like to express its gratitude for your generous efforts & sincere cooperation in serving our dear students.	يطيبُ لمجلس أبوظبي للتعليم أن يتوجه لكم بخالص الشكر والتقدير لجهودكم الكريمة والتعاون الصادق لخدمة أبنائنا الطلبة.
You are kindly requested to allow the researcher/ Gregor Ewen Cameron , to complete his research on:	ونود إعلامكم بموافقة مجلس أبوظبي للتعليم على موضوع الدراسة التي سيجريها الباحث/ جروجر ايوان كامرون
Inter-cultural Coaching: Developing Educational Leadership in the United Arab Emirates	Inter-cultural Coaching: Developing Educational Leadership in the United Arab Emirates
Please indicate your approval of this permission by facilitating his meetings with the sample groups at your respected schools.	لذا، يرجى التكرم بتسهيل مهمة الباحث ومساعدته على إجراء الدراسة المشار إليها.
For further information: please contact Mr Helmy Seada on 02/6150140	للاستفسار: يرجى الاتصال بالسيد/ حلمي سيده على الهاتف 02/6150140
Thank you for your cooperation.	شاكرين لكم حسن تعاونكم
Sincerely yours,	وتفضلوا بقبول فائق الاحترام والتقدير،،،
 محمد سالم محمد الظاهري المدير التنفيذي لقطاع العمليات المدرسية	

Appendix 3: Information Sheet



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Faculty of Humanities, School of Education
GPO BOX U1987 Perth, WA 6845

Information sheet for potential research participants

Inter-cultural Coaching: Developing Educational Leadership in the United Arab Emirates.

To: Potential Research Participant (Principal or Leadership Coach)

From: Gregor Cameron - Doctoral Research Student, Curtin University, School of Humanities

Date: October 2013

Thank you for considering participation in this research. Following is important information outlining the nature of this research study.

Research title

Inter-cultural Coaching: Developing Educational Leadership in the United Arab Emirates.

Introductory comments

The size and scale of the educational reform-taking place here in Abu Dhabi is substantial, challenging and exciting. As a leadership coach or Principal working for the Abu Dhabi Education Council you are no doubt aware of the unique position you are in. Having 'western' leadership coaches, work alongside a 'local' Emirati Principal, in an effort to improve leadership capability has been identified as a key component in this educational reform.

Aims of the research

The above context where a 'western' coach works alongside an Emirati principal is what I have termed in my research outline 'inter-cultural' coaching. Essentially inter-cultural coaching is taking place in a cross-cultural context. With this in mind the aims of my research are:

- To examine the extent to which leadership coaches identify with and apply a coaching approach in their work with Emirati Principals.
- To consider the factors that enhance, or inhibit the coaching relationship.
- To generate an inter-cultural coaching approach or framework which can be applied and tested by others, at a future date.

What will be required by you - the research participant?

For the purposes of this research I will only be focusing on the specific times where coaching conversations and interactions take place between the leadership coach and principal. Additionally, it is only one Principal per leadership coach as the focus of this study.

Intended approach and timeframe with each participant.

Research Site 1

Visit 1: Observation of both the Principal and leadership coach. Depending on the context, I envisage this observation lasting between 30 minutes and two hours. Data gathering will consist of note-taking and taped audio recording.

Visit 2: Separate follow-up interviews with the Principal and leadership coach. The leadership Principal interview will take place at the school site. The leadership coach interview can take place at a site mutually agreeable. The follow-up interview will take place either on the same

day, or within one working week of the observation. This will be in form of a semi-structured interview using note-taking and taped audio recording.

Visit 3 and 4: I will repeat this exact process as outlined above in subsequent weeks. Therefore, I expect the two observations at your school site and the two follow-up interviews of each research participant to take place over a maximum period of 3 weeks.

As the above process will be repeated at a minimum of six research sites or schools, this stage of the process will likely take two school semesters to complete. Additional research sites and additional visits may be required depending on research data obtained from the six site visits. If this is required the same processes as outlined above will apply. Access and consent will be sought for additional visits.

Note: As a researcher I will be interacting at a superficial level and not interfering with the coaching direction.

Confidentiality and security of information

- The name or address of the school and any person(s) at the school, including the Principal or leadership coach, **will not** be disclosed at any time.
- Data related to names of research participants, at the various research sites, will be coded to protect participant identities.
- The only people who will have access to professional information about the research participants will be both my supervisors and myself. The names of these people are listed below.
- All research information related to this study will be stored at Curtin University in Perth, Australia for a period of seven (7) years after publication of the thesis, in compliance with the Western Australian Sector Disposal Authority regulations. Access to this data can only be obtained through confidential security passwords.
- I will transcribe all audio recordings, and erase tapes after transcription.

Publishing of research material

The findings of the study are likely to be published in the form of a doctoral thesis. This thesis will be submitted to an academic panel at Curtin University in Australia, as one of the requirements for obtaining a Doctorate in Education.

Research participant checks

- Participant checks will be used throughout this study. This means that as a participant in this study, you can request and obtain access to draft materials, specific to this research observation and interview, before any publishing of material takes place.

Participation & risks of participating

Participation in this research study is voluntary. If you decide to withdraw your participation in this research study at any stage this is acceptable. Additionally, I maintain that as a researcher the safeguards outlined in this information sheet will minimize the risk to you personally, or your school (Principal participation) from participating in this study.

My contact details

Gregor Cameron – Cluster Manager School Operations

gregor.cameron@adec.ac.ae

Mobile: 050 1253727

Student Email: gregor.cameron@student.curtin.edu.au

My supervisors contact details at Curtin University, AustraliaSupervisor 1: Professor Graham Dellar (G.Dellar@curtin.edu.au)Supervisor 2: Professor Rob Cavanagh (R.Cavanagh@curtin.edu.au)**Contact details of Human Research Ethics Committee (Secretary)**

Should you wish to make a complaint on ethical grounds, the following address should be used:

Email: hrec@curtin.edu.au**Phone:** 0061 8 9266 2784**In writing:** C/- Office of Research and Development, Curtin University, GPO Box U1987, Perth WA 6845

The Curtin University Human Research Ethics Committee has approved this doctoral research study.

The approval number is EDU-139-13

Once again, thank you for considering participation. If your decision is to participate, please read and sign the attached consent form.

Kind regards

Gregor Cameron

Appendix 4: Letter of Consent



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CRICOS Provider Code 00301J (WA), 02837B (NSW)

Faculty of Humanities, School of Education
GPO BOX U1987 Perth, WA 6845

Letter of Consent

Inter-cultural Coaching: Developing Educational Leadership in the United Arab Emirates.

I hereby give my consent to Gregor Cameron, a researcher/student in the Faculty of Humanities, School of Education at Curtin University to record and document my participation activities.

I therefore give permission for the use of this data, and other information which I have agreed may be obtained or requested, in the writing up of this study, subject to the following conditions:

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I have been informed of and understand the purposes of this study.

I have been given an opportunity to ask questions.

My participation in this study is voluntary, and I understand that I may withdraw from the study at any time.

Any information that might potentially identify me will not be used in published material.

Name of Research Participant (Your Name)		
Research Participant Position (Your Job)	If Principal Name of School:	If Leadership Coach Name of Company: Actual Job Title:

SIGNATURES

Participant Date

Researcher Date