

A Review of Instructional Coaching Model

-- The Support for Novice Teachers

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Abstract: Supporting novice teachers is crucial as they face numerous challenges during their transition from pre-service learning to professional teaching. Insufficient support increases their burnout and decrease their retention in their vocation at school. Instructional coaching has shown potential in supporting teacher professional and practice, but it also has limitations. This paper explores the integration of mentorship programs with instructional coaching models to address the multifaceted needs of novice teachers. Mentorship provides essential emotional and vocational support, complementing the technical focus of instructional coaching. This integration has the potential to renew teacher education programs, offering a comprehensive support system for novice teachers. It also shows promise in reducing novice teacher burnout by addressing both instructional proficiency and emotional resilience. Recommendations include evaluating and rewarding mentors, and providing flexibility and support for mentoring and coaching programs. The integration of instructional coaching model and mentorship aims to empower novice teachers to navigate the challenges of their early careers with confidence and competence, ultimately contributing to the vitality and effectiveness of the education profession. Further research is needed to confirm the anticipated substantive ramifications of this reform.

Keywords: Coaching Model; Novice Teacher; Teacher Burnout; Mentorship.

1. Introduction

The significance of supporting novice teachers cannot be overstated. They face a myriad of challenges, from classroom management to student motivation, compounded by limited administrative support and the demands of curriculum design, as they transition from pre-service learning to professional teaching (1). These educators are entrusted with the task of assimilating academic knowledge and classroom practice experience while catering to the diverse needs of students spanning different races, regions, socioeconomic backgrounds, learning levels, and interests (2). Besides, the contemporary accountability institution further intensifies the pressure on teachers, particularly those in their early stages. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and the Education Improvement Act for Persons with Disabilities of 2004 have amplified the urgency of novice teachers' involvement in students' educational outcomes (3). Yet, many early educators report inadequate access to resource support, which also becomes a leading cause for their departure from the field (4).

In this crucial phase, insufficient support led the novice teachers to a concerning prevalence of teacher burnout and attrition. This burnout in the context of educators pertains to the recurring physical and psychological exhaustion they experience in relation to their work (5). Educators rank among the professions characterized by the highest levels of job-related stress and burnout (6, 7, 8). It is proven that over 50 percent of preschool to secondary school teachers experience varying degrees of stress and burnout, ranging from mild to extremely severe (9, 10). Studies conducted in various countries have demonstrated that burnout could have detrimental effects on teachers' physical and mental well-being, diminish their job performance, and ultimately result in them leaving the profession (11). To promote novice teacher career success and longevity, it is imperative to provide appropriate, well-designed support systems and

professional development for beginner teachers.

Coaching has been demonstrated to lower the risk of burnout (12). It has been presented that regular, consistent instructional coaching can increase teacher capacity, teacher effectiveness, and student achievement (4, 13). Governments at various levels have endorsed instructional coaching as a means to enhance faculty practice (14). This approach is increasingly popular for professional development (15) and is seen as beneficial for novice teachers (16). Based on the above considerations, this paper investigates the efficacy of the instructional coaching model in assisting novice teachers, while also scrutinizing potential drawbacks. This study aims to furnish valuable insights for both novice and experienced educators alike, providing new angles to reform teacher education improve novice teacher burnout, and contribute to teacher development and well-being.

2. Instructional Coaching Model

2.1. Definition

The instructional coaching model serves as a powerful method that combines work-integrated learning with teachers' daily realities (17), with a direct link to student achievement (18) and teachers' professional development (19). The coaching cycle for novice teachers comprises three steps (13, 15):

Identify: Identify goals through realistic pictures and a teaching strategy that can help coaches and teachers achieve their goals

Learn: Through checklists and modeling to help teachers understand how to use identified strategies

Improve: coaches and teachers working together to monitor progress towards targets and modify the strategy until they are achieved)

Coaches interact with faculty through meetings, consisting of three phases, namely pre-observation meetings, classroom meetings, and post-observation meetings (19). The fact that

instructional coaching approaches and procedures connect closely with teachers' working practices, makes the coaching process and results more realistic. To make the picture of the instructional coaching model clearer, the following sections will provide further analysis of its strengths and drawbacks.

2.2. Advantages of Instructional Coaching

2.2.1. Observation and Reflection

The instructional coaching model stands out for its emphasis on observing and reflecting on teaching practices. This approach is pivotal in updating teachers' knowledge and beliefs while integrating professional theory into practice. Coaches play a crucial role by providing regular and continuous feedback based on these observations, and suggesting actionable steps and goals for improvement (18). This stands in contrast to some goal-directed models like the GROW (Goal, Realistic, Options, Will) (20) and ACHIEVE models (Assess current situation; Creative brainstorming of alternatives to current situation; Hone goals; Initiate options; Evaluate options; Valid action program design; Encourage momentum) (21), which may not delve as deeply into operational observation, potentially leading to fewer substantial changes in teaching practices (22). Rowley (23) emphasizes the importance of observation in instructional coaching and highlights that inadequate observation is a primary cause of coaching failures. For novice teachers, the instructional coaching model provides specific, practical strategies, making it particularly effective and supportive during the early stages of their teaching careers. This continuous observation offers valuable insights for coaches and allows them to better understand teachers' practices so that they can provide practical options to meet students' needs (15).

Additionally, instructional coaching offers novice teachers a direct and practice-related way to engage in reflection and progress. Reviewing classes allows teachers to reflect on their professional practice and student performance, although this reflection may not always be entirely accurate (13). Coaches facilitate a deeper inquiry process by providing separate observations and feedback on classroom videos, encouraging teachers to expand their thinking (16). This directness in observation can lead to more straightforward evidence and a more profound coaching process (24). While there is a potential risk of teachers unquestioningly following coaches' directives, post-observation meetings have the capacity to foster deeper reflection and promote more reflective behaviors (16). Ultimately, the observation component provides objective evidence, thereby enhancing the transparency and enthusiasm of teachers' reflection for professional growth (15).

2.3. Limitations of Instructional Coaching Model

2.3.1. Complexity

Despite its strengths, the instructional coaching model has its complexities (25). Implementing instructional coaching may demand a significant investment of time and effort from novice teachers (26). Jacobs et al. (26) demonstrated that it requires embracing fundamental changes in professional routines, including accepting teaching change, restructuring time for regular communication with coaches, and adjusting teaching practices based on feedback and new teaching requirements. However, limited time and conflicting schedules can hinder the success of coaching. Ensuring an

accurate picture of teaching practice in coaching (such as observation and feedback) also means that coaches and teachers need to spend more time reviewing and analyzing it. Besides, coaches often have multiple identities (19), with busy missions, making many of them hard to release time for the coaching plan and classroom observation (27).

2.3.2. High-qualified Requirements for the Coaches

Additionally, the complexity and high professional competence requirements of the Instructional Coaching model make it challenging to find well-qualified coaches. These coaches must possess strong professional and practical skills (28). Otherwise, they might not be able to persuade others to build professional respect and establish and maintain relationships (29). Moreover, few studies explain how to become an instructional coach (17). This provides difficulties for being an effective instructional coach and sets more barriers to the coaching process.

2.3.3. Authority and Relationship Threats

Despite the instructional coaching model's emphasis on collaboration, all workplace learning environments are influenced by authority and relationships (28). Authority in relationships can lead to a wall between teachers and coaches (19), becoming one of the most significant barriers. Particularly, the role of instructional coaches emerged as a popular means for schools to share leadership experiences in the early times (13), resulting in coaches being essentially teachers' leaders in this period (30). Research indicates that teachers hold negative views of coaches who focus more on management tasks than instruction (2). This coaching approach with managerial trends may hinder novice teachers from feeling safe to make mistakes, creating a sense of threat (4, 13). Nevertheless, because of differences in their rights and abilities, teachers must follow coaches' recommendations to a certain extent (19). This submissive-driven interaction is a dilemma that overlooks the purpose of faithful instruction, which is to ensure the success of teaching (4).

Anyway, it is important to note, however, that threats continue in all mentoring and coaching relationships (28). If instructional coaches are competent to know their role is to support rather than to supervise and evaluate (18), they may have access to reduce barriers between them. Notably, relationships need to be established on trust (31). Hence, qualified supervisors should be aware of boundaries, allowing teachers to believe that their failures and successes can be safely shared (29) and giving recommendations from a useful rather than a critical perspective.

3. Discussion

3.1. Integration of Mentorship and Instructional Coaching Model

3.1.1. A Case for Integration of Coaching and Mentoring

Dewi (32) explores the implementation of Mentoring and Coaching (MC) techniques to enhance teacher pedagogic competence. The study focuses on the integration of developmental and clinical supervision methods, utilizing a structured 5-stage approach. Through pre-conferences, classroom observations, analysis, and post-conferences, teachers' positions were assessed based on their development levels. The findings revealed that the MC technique significantly enhanced teachers' instructional abilities, particularly in improving teaching quality and student motivation. The integration of developmental approaches

empowered teachers to identify and address classroom challenges, fostering trust and interaction with leaders. However, the study emphasizes the need for more extensive research with a larger pool of participants to validate these promising results and suggests further investigation into cultivating intrinsic motivation for self-regulation. Moreover, Dewi's study exemplifies the importance of a well-structured MC program can positively impact teachers' instructional abilities, providing valuable insights for similar professional development initiatives.

As mentioned in this study, the retention and support of novice teachers is a tricky problem. The exploration for the advantages and disadvantages of the Instructional Coaching model, inspired by Dewi's study, this paper tries to investigate the integration of the mentorship program with the instructional coaching model for novice teachers, from which may produce better results to the process of supporting novice teachers. As Rowley (23) emphasized, a mentor needs to have both mentoring and coaching competence. The integration of instructional coaching and mentorship has the potential to better address novice teachers' dilemma.

The mentorship programs that education departments and school administrators provide (1), indeed improve novice teachers' teaching skills, self-confidence of teaching, and flexibility (29). However, few studies pay attention to the integration of the instructional coaching model and mentorship for the support of novice teachers. In addition to professional competence, personal and vocational development is also critical for novice teachers. They require clear and technical mentoring to bolster their personal lives (psychological) and work (vocational) (33). All of them need to experience a sense of belonging and engage in socialization in the new environment (4). The mentorship program model shows the potential effect that may supplement the instructional coaching model and perfect the supporting system in schools. They can be "independent" but also complement each other (4). By providing modeling and feedback loops, the instructional coaching model extends mentoring concepts (13). As previously mentioned, the instructional coaching model enhances teachers' professional practices, but due to its emphasis on professional development, it may ignore teachers' emotional affiliation and lead to negative impacts on the instruction results. As much research emphasized, it is important for an instructional coach to pay attention to the coaches' emotional development (34; 35). As a supplementary part, the mentorship program addresses factors beyond professional development, such as emotional support for novice teachers (2, 23). Thus, the integration of instructional coaching model and mentorship positively affect novice teacher not only for their professional competence but also for mental resilience (36), facilitating their adaptations in the face of rapid change in organizations (29). By complementing each other, the Instructional Coaching Model and Mentorship make novice teachers' education programs richer and more comprehensive. Relevantly, combining supplementary factors in teacher support systems warrants future research. The following sections will provide insights into the benefits of integrating the instructional coaching model and mentorship.

3.2. The revolution of Teacher Education Programs

The integration of mentorship and the instructional coaching model within teacher education programs signifies

a seminal advancement towards augmenting the professional acumen and pedagogical aptitude of beginner educators. According to the National Centre for Education Statistics (NCES), schools with superior career adaption support had better staff retention (1). This amalgamation affords novice teachers a structured milieu wherein they garner invaluable insights and receive bespoke guidance from seasoned educational practitioners. Beyond mere theoretical improvement, this approach engenders a nurturing learning milieu that substantively bridges the theoretical-practical schism (37). This integrated approach of teacher support can promote the reform of education programs for preservice and novice teachers in a novel structural way, helping them to develop their career and professional competence successfully.

3.3. Reduce Novice Teacher Burnout

The integration of mentorship and the instructional coaching model may emerge as a compelling strategy for ameliorating the pervasive issue of burnout among novice teachers. Empirical evidence substantiates the efficacy of this integrated approach. Dewi's (32) comprehensive examination of Mentoring and Coaching techniques exemplifies how a structured and systematic framework empowers educators to adeptly navigate professional challenges, fostering a profound surge in their confidence and competence. This may show the possibility of reducing their burnout at the beginning period of their career. Moreover, mentorship demonstrates an active trend in improving the mentee's mental health (38), which highlights the potential of emotional support through mentorship initiatives as instrumental in reducing the latent psychological problems exacted upon early-career teachers. As a result, this comprehensive approach aims at augmenting novice teachers' instructional proficiency and emotional resilience they need within the broader educational milieu.

4. Recommendations

4.1. Supervise Supervisors

Incorporating the process and results of teacher support programs such as evaluation and professional assessment of mentors, into their performance reward, may stand to benefit its overall system. Based on Eisenberger et al. (39), the performance-reward could foster employee's interest and motivation to work. Schools could revise the supervision system's reward structure by integrating guidance performance and evaluation into the performance-based bonuses for supervisors. Practical implementation of this recommendation involves creating a framework for mentor and coach evaluation that encompasses their effectiveness in guiding novices and fostering a positive learning environment for all of them. This may also involve gathering feedback from novice teachers, assessing their progress, and observing mentor interactions. By aligning their professional development and salary with the support and mentorship of novice teachers may present a powerful incentive for experienced educators to engage in lifelong learning and the effectiveness of novice teacher education.

4.2. Government and School Support

Except for the strict supervision, the government and schools may also need to release more flexibility for mentoring and coaching programs (1). Research has demonstrated that teacher-centered support programs are

indeed effective in successfully improving student learning outcomes (18). As Wang (40) argues that teachers have a voice in their professional growth. Their individual learning needs should be addressed rather than confined to the demands or agendas of school boards or government departments (17). Unreasonable or imposed coaching tasks may become an additional stress for them (2), increasing teachers' burnout. Hence, the school's responsibility in effectively utilizing teacher-centered support and aiding coaches and teachers in the rational scheduling of mentoring programs is crucial (27). Termly meetings for novice teachers and listening to their voices, as well as setting up an anonymous letter box may be useful for their flexibility. These supervisory arrangements should make them feel helpful and beneficial. As mentioned earlier, it is important to provide them with a sense of support, rather than viewing it solely as a task to be completed. To summarize, the success of novice teachers' support in this endeavor necessitates collaborative efforts from schools, coaches, and teachers. To promote regularity and enhance mentor and coach capacity, schools and government departments should recognize deficiencies in mentor and coach norms, creating training and assessment standards.

From this perspective, schools and the governments' appropriate liberalization for management and a flexibility appeal, as well as allowing supervisors and teachers some room for self-expression may be more effective in helping individuals solve specific problems and reducing support projects' impediments.

5. Conclusion

The support and development of novice teachers is of paramount importance in the realm of education. Novice educators encounter a myriad of challenges as they transition from pre-service learning to professional teaching, necessitating robust support systems. The prevalence of teacher burnout and attrition underscores the urgency for effective support mechanisms. Instructional coaching, with its focus on observation, reflection, and goal-oriented strategies, has demonstrated significant potential in reducing burnout and enhancing teacher effectiveness. However, it is not without its shortage, including complexity, the need for highly qualified coaches, and the threat of authority.

The integration of mentorship programs with instructional coaching models presents a promising approach to addressing the multifaceted needs of novice teachers. Mentorship provides essential emotional and vocational support, complementing the more technical focus of instructional coaching. This integrated approach holds the potential to revolutionize teacher education programs, offering a structured and comprehensive support system for preservice and novice teachers. This integrated model shows promise in reducing novice teacher burnout by addressing both their instructional proficiency and emotional resilience. By providing a nurturing learning environment, this approach aims to empower novice teachers to navigate the challenges of their early careers with confidence and competence.

Recommendations for the implementation of this integrated approach include the evaluation and salary rewards of mentors, associating their working benefits with their support of novice teachers. Additionally, schools and government should provide flexibility and support for mentoring and coaching programs, allowing for individualized learning and problem-solving.

In conclusion, the integration of mentorship and instructional coaching models represents a forward-looking and comprehensive strategy to support and develop novice teachers, ultimately aiming at contributing to the vitality and effectiveness of the education profession. However, the anticipated substantive ramifications of this reform need more evidence to confirm. This will be yield in our further research.

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