

**DEVELOPING TEACHER LEADERSHIP: ISSUES AND STRATEGIES****Mahavir Singh Chhonkar, Ph. D.***Principal, K.R.T.T.College, Mathura***Abstract**

Encouraging teacher leadership requires cautious approach and a set of strategies are required for enhancement of effective teacher leadership. Recognize the Importance of Teacher Leaders, Identify and Create Opportunities for Leaders, Establish Professional Development Programs, Identify Barriers, Improve Development Programs, Build Professional Learning Communities, Build Professional Learning Communities, Support Teacher Leaders, Promote Principal Support, Encourage the Development of Teacher Leaders, Encourage Positive Faculty Relationships, Recognize Teacher Leaders, Utilize External Professional Teacher Networks, Recruit Qualified and Effective Teacher Leaders, Include Information About Teacher Leaders, Distribute Leadership Tasks, Enhance the Professionalism of Teaching and Teachers and, Promote Union Support of Teachers as Leaders are recommended strategies for enhancing teacher leadership. Present paper briefs the benefits of enhancing teacher leadership, examines relevant issues involved in development of leadership in higher education,



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Leadership in Teacher education

Traditionally effective leadership in higher education especially teacher education has been associated with personal academic achievement for example journal and other scholarly publications, conference presentations, and research supervision of students (Rowley, 1997). More recently effective leadership in a higher education context has evolved to be more explicitly associated with specific indicators and practices (Bryman, 2009; Gibbs et al, 2009; Scott et al, 2008).The premise that effective leadership in higher education involves the leader motivating, inspiring and enabling individuals to achieve an explicit strategic vision is well supported (Gibbs et al, 2009; Hesburgh, 1988; Pounder, 2001; Ramsden, 1998; Rantz, 2002). Transformational and distributed leadership styles are predominant styles of leadership that have applicability in a higher education context. Middlehurst, Goreham and Woodfield (2009) identify the relevance and need for transformational leadership in higher education. Transformational leadership is a style of leadership whereby the leader inspires followers through a shared vision for the future. Transformational leaders tend to delegate

responsibilities, regularly monitoring and communicating with their followers in regard to the tasks for which they have responsibility. Martin et al (2003) attest that transformational leadership in a higher education context is linked to high quality student learning processes and outcomes. While Pounder (2001) suggests that transformational leadership is not only the key to effective leadership in higher education but that there is in fact a strong presence of the transformational style of leadership currently transpiring in higher education.

Recently the focus of leadership in higher education has moved away from one of the super leader and the premise of developing the individual as a leader to one of realizing the potential for effective leadership that exists broadly within an organisation. This concept of leadership has been referred to as collective, shared, dispersed or distributed leadership and in the higher education context it is not intended so much as a successor to traditional leadership but rather a means of complementing and enhancing the hierarchical structures that exist in higher education (Bolden, Petrov & Gosling, 2008). This distributed perspective of leadership has been acknowledged as being highly appropriate for the higher education sector (Anderson & Johnson, 2006; Bolden et al, 2008; Rowley, 1997) and focuses on the dispersion of leadership among individuals who collectively have the skills to competently manage the range of leadership responsibilities required in various circumstances. Gibbs et al., (2006 & 2009) in their investigation of eleven world-class universities across eight countries found that some form of distributed leadership was prevalent in every case investigated with the formal allocation of roles common practice. Rowley (1997) also supports this distributed notion of leadership and stresses the need for academic leadership to involve more of a focus on empowering others rather than an individual assuming sole responsibility for leading.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction has a significant impact upon the productivity, absenteeism, retention and turnover of employees. Herzberg, Maunser, and Snyderman (1959) make a connection between job satisfaction and leadership, suggesting that dissatisfaction can have a negative impact on the crucial interpersonal relationship and supervision dimensions of leadership. The other aspect of the relationship between job satisfaction and leadership is whether job satisfaction can be heightened as a consequence of leadership practice. Atchison (2003) suggests that factors that contribute to job satisfaction include career development and growth, exciting and challenging work, meaningful tasks that seem to be making a difference, being part of a team, and having a good relationship with team members. These factors are all synonymous with leadership practice and as such support a premise that job satisfaction could be heightened as a result of being engaged in aspects of leadership.

Enhancing Teacher Leadership: Strategies

National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality (2007) recommended following strategies to enhance teacher leadership:

Strategy 1: Recognize the Importance of Teacher Leaders

Teacher leadership has several benefits and its importance must be recognized.

Strategy 2: Identify and create opportunities for teachers to assume leadership roles in schools

Teacher leadership is practiced in a variety of formal and informal ways, and teacher has several roles to help support school and student success. Traditional teacher leadership roles include team leaders, department chairs, association leaders, and curriculum developers. Today, there is a movement to increase teacher professional development to expand teacher leadership roles. Three new approaches to teacher leadership that appear to be more effective than formal leadership roles in promoting school improvement are (Smylie, Conley & Marks, 2002):

- Teacher research as leadership: teacher inquiry in collaborative contexts can create new opportunities for teachers to learn and to lead efforts to improve their schools.
- New models of distributive leadership: these models indicate that teachers can and do perform important leadership tasks inside and outside formal positions of authority.
- Leadership of teams: self-managed teams promote teacher collaboration; improve teaching and learning, and address problems of school organization.

Strategy 3: Establish professional development programs involving faculty members as leaders.

Findings of various research projects have presented significant roles of teacher-led professional development programs in education reforms (Beasley & Butler 2002; Center for Development of Teaching 2006 & 2008).

Strategy 4: Identify barriers to the development of teacher leaders and find ways to remove them.

Teacher leaders need support to overcome stubborn barriers created by the norms of school culture—autonomy, egalitarianism, and deference to seniority (Johnson & Donaldson, 2007). Impediments standing in the way of teacher leadership include the following (Barth, 2001):

- Full plate: With so many additional responsibilities, the opportunity for school leadership can be seen as an add-on.

- Time: Teachers sometimes do not have time for leadership activities and if they do have time they expect to be paid for it.
- Colleagues: Teacher leaders may receive disapproval from fellow teachers and administrators in the form of passive and active resistance that thwart teacher initiatives toward school leadership.
- Standardized tests. Teachers are focused on tests and raising student scores rather than taking on leadership responsibilities.

Strategy 5: To improve teacher leadership, improve teacher leadership development programs.

5.1: Enhance Qualifications and Development of Teacher Leaders through Relevant Training

5.2: Provide Teachers with Quality Professional Development Opportunities

Strategy 6: Build Professional Learning Communities

Learning-centered leaders of effective schools “actively promote the formation of a learning organization, the development of staff cohesion and support, and the growth of communities of professional practice” (Murphy, Elliott, Goldring, & Porter, 2007).

Strategy 7: Support teacher leaders

- Provide access to human and financial resources.
- Promote better understanding of teacher leadership roles.
- Help teacher leaders maintain balance and avoid overload.

Strategy 8: Promote Principal Support

To enhance instructional teacher leadership, principal support is promoted by building principals’ knowledge of teacher leadership and fostering principal-teacher leader interaction (Mangin, 2007, Pankake & Moller, 2007).

Strategy 9: Encourage the Development of Teacher Leaders

York-Barr & Duke (2004) found that the following school cultural conditions facilitate teacher leadership:

- Schoolwide focus on learning, inquiry, and reflective practice.
- Encouragement for taking initiative.
- Expectation for teamwork and for sharing responsibility, decision making, and leadership.
- Teacher leaders viewed and valued as positive examples for teaching profession.
- Strong teacher communities that foster professionalism.

Strategy 10: Encourage Positive Faculty Relationships

Research suggests that the following roles and relationships support teacher leadership (York-Barr & Duke, 2004):

- Colleagues recognize and respect teacher leaders as teachers with subject area expertise.
- High trust and positive working conditions prevail among peers and administrators.
- Assignment of teacher leadership work is central to the teaching and learning process, as opposed to administrative or management tasks.
- Recognition of ambiguity and difficulty in teacher leadership roles.
- Principal support for teacher leadership through formal structures, informal behaviors, coaching, and feedback.
- Clarity about teacher leader and administrator leadership domains, including common ground.
- Attention to interpersonal aspects of the relationship between teacher leader and principal.

Strategy 11: Recognize teacher leaders for their contributions and accomplishments.

Birky (2006) found that “more than any other factor, appreciation for their work was the main motivating force behind the encouragement teacher leaders received.”

Strategy 12: Utilize External Professional Teacher Networks

Pairing talented teachers who have the skills and opportunities to lead with other teachers in similar situations offers limitless capacity for success.

Strategy 13: Recruit Qualified and Effective Teacher Leaders

It is achieved by establishing high-quality teacher preparation and accreditation, teacher advancement program: professional growth and career advancement.

Strategy 14: Include Information about Teacher Leadership in principal preparation programs

High levels of teacher leadership knowledge and interaction with teacher-leaders promote principals’ support for teacher leadership (Mangin, 2007).

Strategy 15: Distribute Leadership Tasks

Distributing leadership as more generally (team leadership) help a school organization to reach new heights (Murphy, Elliott, Goldring & Porter, 2007).

Strategy 16: Enhance the Professionalism of Teaching and Teachers

Professionalizing teaching by creating strong learning communities, assuring quality teacher preparation, supporting professionally rewarding careers and professional recognition plays vital roles in enhancing leadership.

Strategy 17: Promote Union Support of Teachers as Leaders

It is achieved by nurturing teacher leadership, National Board Certification, changing roles of leaders of local teachers unions in working with school administrators, representing the needs of new and retiring teachers, negotiating contracts.

Conclusion

To conclude, leadership plays a pivotal role in the success of education institutions by sustaining and improving the quality and performance due to several inherent benefits. Transformational and distributed leadership styles are predominant styles of leadership that have applicability in a higher education context. Effective leadership involves emotional intelligence, job satisfaction and leadership practices due to their relevance and interrelationships. Emotionally intelligent leaders are more satisfied in their role and job, and more likely to engage in effective leadership practices. Encouraging teacher leadership requires cautious approach and a set of strategies are required for enhancement of effective teacher leadership.

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