



Teacher Leadership: principles and practice

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2003

Teacher Leadership: A Review of Research

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1. INTRODUCTION

Effective leadership is widely accepted as being a key constituent in achieving school improvement. The evidence from the international literature demonstrates that effective leaders exercise an indirect but powerful influence on the effectiveness of the school and on the achievement of students (Leithwood et al, 1999). Whilst the quality of teaching strongly influences levels of pupil motivation and achievement, it has been consistently argued that the quality of leadership matters in determining the motivation of teachers and the quality of teaching in the classroom (Fullan, 2001; Segiovanni, 2001). A preliminary glance at the leadership research literature however reveals that it is largely premised upon individual impetus rather than collective action and offers a singular view of leadership predominantly bound up with headship.

As Murphy (2000) notes that the 'great man' theory of leadership prevails in spite of a groundswell towards leadership as empowerment, transformation and community building. Possibly, this is because schools as organisational structures remain largely unchanged equating leadership with status, authority and position. One of the most congruent findings from recent studies of effective leadership is that authority to lead need not be located in the person of the leader but can be dispersed within the school in between and among people (MacBeath,

1988; Day, Harris and Hadfield, 2000; Harris 2002). In this sense leadership is separated from person, role and status and is primarily concerned with the relationships and the connections among individuals within a school.

In the USA, Canada and Australia the notion of 'dispersed, 'distributed' or 'teacher leadership' is particularly well developed and grounded in research evidence. This model of leadership implies a redistribution of power and a re-alignment of authority within the organisation. It means creating the conditions in which people work together and learn together, where they construct and refine meaning leading to a shared purpose or set of goals. Evidence would suggest that where such conditions are in place, leadership is a much stronger internal driver for school improvement and change (Hopkins, 2001). In practice, this means giving authority to teachers and empowering them to lead. Taking this perspective, leadership is a fluid and emergent rather than as a fixed phenomenon. It implies a different power relationship within the school where the distinctions between followers and leaders tend to blur. It also opens up the possibility for all teachers to become leaders at various times and suggests that leadership is a shared and collective endeavour that can engage the many rather than the few.

In Britain and to some extent Europe, conventional notions of leadership tend to prevail with an emphasis upon the leadership of those at the apex of the organisation. Leadership tends to be associated with a role or responsibility and is generally viewed as a singular rather than a collective endeavour. This review of the research literature was undertaken therefore to:

- Interrogate the international research literature relating to teacher leadership
- Delineate different definitions and interpretations of the term 'teacher leadership'

- To explore the evidential base concerning teacher leadership and school/classroom improvement
- To investigate the barriers to teacher leadership
- To consider how teacher leadership can be enhanced or developed
- To identify areas for future research and development

To achieve these ends a literature search was undertaken of research into teacher leadership, using library and Internet searches, as well as published bibliographies. By nature of the strong development of the concept of teacher leadership in the USA, the majority of findings reported are from American sources. In undertaking this review we have attempted to look at the characteristics of teacher leadership, as well as what the research has to say about its advantages and the ways in which teacher leadership can be facilitated or impeded.

2. DEFINING TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Roles and Responsibilities

As the limitations of singular or individual leadership have become increasingly evident there have been a groundswell, particularly in the USA, Canada and Australia, towards various forms of teacher leadership. In the USA, the number of teacher leadership programmes and initiatives has grown strongly over the past decade and the notion of teacher leadership is now widely accepted by practitioners and researchers alike (Smylie, 1995). Here teacher leadership is primarily concerned with enhanced leadership roles and decision-making powers for teachers without taking them out of the classroom.

A number of authors have provided definitions of the teacher leadership that clearly delineate the differences with traditional leadership approaches. For example, Wasley (1991) defines teacher leadership, as 'the ability to encourage colleagues to change, to do things they wouldn't ordinarily consider without the influence of the leader'. Similarly, Katzenmeyer & Moller (2001) define teacher leaders as: "teachers who are leaders lead within and beyond the classroom, identify with and contribute to a community of teacher learners and leaders, and influence others towards improved educational practice". In contrast to traditional notions of leadership, teacher leadership is characterised by a form of collective leadership in which teachers develop expertise by working collaboratively (Boles, Katherine and Troen, 1994).

A number of different roles have been suggested for teacher leaders that further explain the distinctive nature of the leadership activity. Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) see teacher leadership as having three main facets:

- leadership of students or other teachers: facilitator, coach, mentor, trainers, curriculum specialist, creating new approaches, leading study groups;
- leadership of operational tasks: keeping the school organised and moving towards its goals, through roles as Head of Department, action researcher, member of task forces;
- leadership through decision making or partnership: membership of school improvement teams, membership of committees, instigator of partnerships with business, higher education institutions, LEA's, and parent-teacher associations.

Gehrke (1991) identifies quite similar functions of teacher leaders:

- continuously improving their own classroom teaching;
- organising and leading reviews of school practice;

- providing curriculum development knowledge;
- participating in in-school decision making;
- giving in-service training to colleagues, and
- participating in the performance evaluation of teachers.

Harris (2002) suggests that there are four discernable and discrete dimensions of the teacher leadership role. The first dimension concerns the way in which teachers translate the principles of school improvement into the practices of individual classrooms. This **brokering** role remains a central responsibility for the teacher as leader. It ensures that links within schools are secure and that opportunities for meaningful development among teachers are maximised.

A second dimension of the teacher leader role focuses upon **participative** leadership where all teachers feel part of the change or development and have a sense of ownership. Teacher leaders may assist other teachers to cohere around a particular development and to foster a more collaborative way of working (Blase and Anderson, 1995). They work with colleagues to shape school improvement efforts and take some lead in guiding teachers towards a collective goal.

A third dimension of teacher leadership in school improvement is the **mediating** role. Teacher leaders are important sources of expertise and information. They are able to draw critically upon additional resource and expertise if required and to seek external assistance. Finally, a fourth and possibly the most important dimension of the teacher leadership role, is forging close **relationships** with individual teachers through which mutual learning takes place.

Other writers have identified further dimensions of the teacher leadership role such as undertaking action research (Ash, 2000), instigating peer classroom observation (Little, 2000), or contributing to the establishment of a collaborative culture in the school (Lieberman et al, 2000). Of these roles, the mentoring, induction and continual professional development of colleagues are considered crucial (Sherrill, 1999), as is developing collaborative relationships with colleagues that allow new ideas and leadership to spread and impact on the school as a whole (Little, 2000).

Teacher leadership roles have been identified as curriculum developers, bid writers, leaders of a school improvement team, mentors of new or less experienced staff and action researchers with always a strong link to the classroom. The important point emanating from the literature is that teacher leaders are, in the first place, expert teachers, who spend at the majority of their time in the classroom but take on different leadership roles at different times, following the principles of formative leadership (Ash and Persall 2000). The literature asserts that the principle reason for this is to transform schools into professional learning communities (Katzenmeyer and Moller 2001) and to empower teachers to become involved closely in decision making within the school, thus contributing to the democratisation of schools (Gehrke, 1991). Teacher leaders should be able to work collaboratively with peers, observing one another's lessons and discussing pedagogy (Seashore-Louis, Kruse et al. 1996).

(Barth 1999) views of teacher leadership extend beyond just collaborating or participating in decision making. He views teacher leadership as fulfilling some of the functions possibly undertaken by senior management. For example:

- Choosing textbooks and instructional materials;
- Shaping the curriculum;

- Setting standards for pupil behaviour;
- Deciding on tracking;
- Designing staff development programmes;
- Setting promotion and retention policies;
- Deciding school budgets;
- Evaluating teacher performance;
- Selecting new teachers, and
- Selecting new administrators

In this model, the teacher-leaders play a major role in running the school and in making the major decisions. Most other writers in the field however view of teacher leaders as collaborators with senior management in decision making on specific aspects of school policy rather than replacing them (Gehrke, 1991).

- **Collaboration and Collegiality**

The literature emphasises that teacher leadership is not just concerned with teachers developing individually but a central role of teacher leaders is one of helping colleagues to try out new ideas and to encourage them to adopt leadership roles (Lieberman, et al, 2000). Research has consistently underlined the contribution of strong collegial relationships to school improvement and change. Little (1990) suggests that collegial interaction at least lays the groundwork for developing shared ideas and for generating forms of leadership. Rosenholtz (1989) argues even more forcibly for teacher collegiality and collaboration as means of generating positive change in schools. Collaboration is at the heart of teacher leadership, as it is premised upon change that is enacted collectively. Teacher leadership is premised upon a

power re-distribution within the school, moving from hierarchical control to peer control. In this leadership model the power base is diffuse and the authority dispersed within the teaching community. An important dimension of this leadership approach is the emphasis upon collegial ways of working. For teacher leadership to be most effective it has to encompass mutual trust and support. As West et al (2000:39) point out:

If this leadership potential is to be realised, then it will have to be grounded in a commitment to learn and develop that inhabits the structures of schools as well as the classroom – it is likely that the school will conceive and act differently from the traditional explanations of leadership and structure.

This view of leadership therefore is not hierarchical, but federal. It is a view that is both tight and loose; tight on values, but loose on the freedom to act, opportunity to experiment and authority to question historical assumptions.

Recent research by Silns and Mulford (2002) has explored the relationship between leadership, organisational learning and student outcomes. They highlight the importance of teachers working together in collaboration for successful school re-structuring and school improvement to occur. They argue that teachers cannot create and sustain the conditions for the productive development of children if those conditions do not exist for teachers (Silns and Mulford, 2002). Another study (Leithwood and Jantzi, 1990) provides some descriptions of how school leaders provide opportunities for teachers to participate in decision and lead in school development. This work highlights the following structuring behaviours:

- distributing the responsibility and power for leadership widely throughout the school;

- sharing decision making power with staff;
- allowing staff to manage their own decision making committees;
- taking staff opinion into account;
- ensuring effective group problem solving during meetings of staff;
- providing autonomy for teachers;
- altering working conditions so that staff have collaborative planning time;
- ensuring adequate involvement in decision making related to new initiatives in the school;
- creating opportunities for staff development. (Leithwood et al, 1999p 811-812).

Empowering teachers in this way and providing them with opportunities to lead is based on the simple but profound idea that if schools are to become better at providing learning for students then they must also become better at providing opportunities for teachers to innovate, develop and learn together.

Louis and Marks (1998) found that in schools where the teachers work was organised in ways that promoted professional community there was a positive relationship with the academic performance of students. Research by Crowther et al (2000) reveals that teacher leadership is an important factors in improving the life chances of students in disadvantaged high schools. Silns and Mulford (2002) similarly conclude that student outcomes are more likely to improve where leadership sources are distributed throughout the school community and where teachers are empowered in areas of importance to them.

3. BENEFITS OF TEACHER LEADERSHIP

- **Improving School Effectiveness**

Collaboration between teachers has been found to be a necessary concomitant of school improvement and change as well a contributory factor to school effectiveness (Hargreaves, 1991; Little, 1990; Rosenholz, 1989). The shared goals and values at the core of teacher leadership is also an important influential factor in generating effective schools (Teddle and Reynolds, 2000). Ovando (1996) suggests that where teachers are placed in leadership positions they are able to contribute more directly to organisational effectiveness and improvement. Some authors suggest that schools need to move from a hierarchical, top-down structure towards a more democratic model, in which teachers can directly influence development and change (Katzenmeyer and Moller 2001). A study of over 600 teachers found that teacher participation in decision making was positively related to school effectiveness (Taylor and Bogotch, 1994). Similarly, a longitudinal qualitative study of teachers who had taken on teacher leadership roles in restructuring schools found that teachers responded positively to their increased participation in decision making and that this directly contributed to school effectiveness.

In a study of British secondary schools, teachers generally felt that leadership was more effective where subject leaders and department heads were more strongly involved in decision making (Glover et al, 1999). Pellicer et al (1990) similarly found that in the most effective schools, leadership was a shared responsibility of teachers and heads. Other studies have also reported positive effects of teacher participation in decision making. For example, Rosenholz, (1985) and Sickler, (1988) found that teacher involvement in decision making led to a decrease in teacher absenteeism and an increase in school effectiveness. Wong (1996) found that in

schools with strong collaborative teacher-principal leadership there was evidence of significant gains in pupil learning and achievement. Not all studies however have found such positive effects. For example, Jones (1997) and Peterson et al (1999) found no relationship between shared decision making in schools and enhanced teacher effectiveness.

An element of schooling that is attracting increasing interest is that of democratic learning. If schools are to support democratic values, and encourage pupils to function as critical and active citizens, they themselves should model democracy through collaborative and democratic leadership (Hackney and Henderson, 1999). Too often, pupils are expected to obtain democratic values through lessons on citizenship, while the example they are given within the school is that of strict hierarchy and autocratic leadership, in which neither they or their teachers participate (Beane 1998; Barth 1999). If, as Blegen and Kennedy (1999) point out, what we do is likely to more powerfully affect pupils than what we say, this is a highly unsatisfactory situation. This means that for schools to foster democratic learning requires moving away from traditional top-down management and getting teachers to take responsibility (and accountability).

- **Improving Teacher Effectiveness**

Research has shown that effective schools place an emphasis upon the teaching and learning processes and invest in teacher development time. Of all the school level characteristics, it is those that relate to teaching that have the most empirical support (Scheerens, 1992:17). It is those factors that are most immediately proximal to, and therefore most immediately experienced by students (i.e. teacher behaviors in the classroom) that will most immediately affect student achievement (Muijs & Reynolds, 2001a). As Smylie (1995) points out, teacher

leadership can improve teacher effectiveness in a number of ways. The emphasis on continuous learning and excellence in teaching can improve the quality of teachers, while the emphasis on spreading good practice to colleagues can lead to increasing the expertise of teachers throughout the school. The increased expertise and confidence of teachers, coupled with the greater responsibilities vested in them, will make teachers more willing to take risks and introduce innovative teaching methods, which should have a direct positive effect on teacher effectiveness.

Recent research has explored the effects of school and teacher leadership on students' engagement with school. (Leithwood and Jantzi, 2000). The study considered principal and teacher leadership separately, as well as the relative effects of these two sources of leadership. The findings suggest that teacher leadership explained more variation in student learning and had an important influence on teacher effectiveness. The research study concluded that *teacher leadership far outweighs principal leadership effects before taking into account the moderating effects of family educational culture* (Leithwood and Jantzi, 2000:60). Evidence from this study suggests that principal leadership does not stand out as a critical part of the change process but that teacher leadership demonstrates a significant effect on student engagement. The study concluded that distributing a larger proportion of current leadership activity to teachers would have a positive influence on teacher effectiveness and student engagement. (Leithwood and Jantzi, 2000:61).

Research by (Katzenmeyer and Moller 2001) suggests that empowering teachers through teacher leadership improves their self efficacy in relation to pupil learning. Teacher expectations directly relate to pupil achievement hence strengthening self-efficacy is an important contributory factor of teacher leadership (Muijs and Reynolds, 2001b). A study by

Ovando (1996) found that when teachers took on leadership roles it positively influenced their ability to innovate in the classroom and had a positive effect on student learning outcomes. Some studies have found that taking on leadership roles can improve teacher motivation. For example, in their study of teacher leadership, Lieberman et al (2000) report that teachers felt that the experience had improved their confidence in their own abilities and had taught them to motivate, lead and encourage other adults. Similarly, in their survey of 42 teacher leaders, O'Connor and Boles (1992) reported improved self-confidence, increased knowledge, and an improved attitude to teaching among teachers.

- **Contributing to School Improvement**

There is a body of evidence that demonstrates that teachers work most effectively when they are supported by other teachers and work collegially (Hargreaves, 1994). Collegial relations and collective practice are at the core of building the capacity for school improvement (Hopkins, 2001). It has been shown that the nature of communication between those working together on a daily basis offers the best indicator of organisational health. Hopkins et al (1996: 177) note that

successful schools encourage co-ordination by creating collaborative environments which encourages involvement, professional development, mutual support and assistance in problem solving.

This implies a form of professional development and learning that is premised upon collaboration, co-operation and networking. It implies a view of the school as a learning community where teachers and students learn together.

Building the capacity for school improvement necessitates paying careful attention to how

collaborative processes in schools are fostered and developed. Research suggests that where teachers feel confident in their own capacity, in the capacity of their colleagues and in the capacity of the school to promote professional development (Mitchell and Sackney 2000:78) school improvement is more likely to occur. Building the capacity for school improvement means extending the potential and capabilities of teachers to lead and to work collaboratively. Two studies (Leithwood and Jantzi, 1990; Helm, 1989) that provide descriptions of how school leaders provide opportunities for teachers to participate in decision and lead in school development highlight the following structuring behaviours:

- distributing the responsibility and power for leadership widely throughout the school;
- sharing decision making power with staff;
- allowing staff to manage their own decision making committees;
- taking staff opinion into account;
- ensuring effective group problem solving during meetings of staff;
- providing autonomy for teachers;
- altering working conditions so that staff have collaborative planning time;
- ensuring adequate involvement in decision making related to new initiatives in the school;
- creating opportunities for staff development. (Leithwood, Tomlinson, Genge, 1999p 811-812).

As Barth (2001) points out, the main goal of the school is to foster student learning and this can be best aided by teachers modeling this activity themselves.

It is posited that teacher leadership necessitates moving away from traditional top-down management and getting teachers to take responsibility and to accept levels of accountability.

Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) assert that teacher leadership needs to be made available to all, otherwise some teachers will end up as leaders, while others are merely technicians, creating a two-tier system. The clear message from the literature is that school improvement is more likely to occur when leadership is distributed and when teachers have a vested interest in the development of the school (Gronn, 2000; Jackson, 2002).

3. BARRIERS TO TEACHER LEADERSHIP

- **Organisational Barriers**

The research evidence would suggest that teacher leadership is advantageous to the individual teacher and the school. However, it also indicates there are a number of barriers that need to be overcome for genuine teacher leadership activity to occur in schools. One of the main barriers to teacher leadership identified in the literature is structural and concerns the 'top-down' leadership model that still dominates in many schools (Katzenmeyer and Moller 2001). Boles (1992) found that teachers' perceived lack of status within the school and the absence of formal authority hindered their ability to lead. Little (2002) found that the possibility of teacher leadership in any school is dependent upon whether the senior management team within the school relinquishes real power to teachers and the extent to which teachers accept the influence of colleagues who have been designated as leaders in a particular area.

Teacher leadership requires a more devolved approach to management and necessitates shared decision making processes (Pellicer and Anderson, 1995). Little's (1995) study found that for teacher leadership to be successful required some structural change within the school and did not necessarily mean relinquishing full control. Indeed, heads in the study claimed that

by introducing shared leadership their influence on teaching in the school had increased. Magee (1999) identified support from SMT as a crucial component in the success of teacher leadership. The research found that where such support is not forthcoming the possibilities of teacher leadership are dramatically reduced.

Ash (2000) argues that heads will need to become leaders of leaders, striving to develop a relationship of trust with staff, and encouraging leadership and autonomy throughout the school. For teacher leadership to develop, heads must also be willing to allow leadership from those who are not part of their 'inner circle', and might not necessarily agree with them (Barth 1999). Weiss and Cambone (2000) found that in a number of schools heads started to impose more autocratic forms of leadership after about 2 years, following strong resistance from teachers to the reforms they were trying to implement. Stone et al (1990) found that teachers are also more likely to take on leadership roles if there is already a culture of shared decision making in the school. Wasley (1991) found that teachers need to be involved in the process of deciding on what roles, if any they wish to take on, and must then feel supported by the school's administration in doing so.

- **Professional Barriers**

Katzenmeyer and Moller, (2000) suggest that teachers taking on leadership roles can sometimes be ostracised by their colleagues (Magee, 1999). A number of studies have identified this as a significant barrier to teacher leadership. In their study of 17 teacher leaders, Lieberman et al (2000) found that one of the main barriers to teacher leadership was often a the feeling of being isolated from colleagues. Troen and Boles (1992) found that sometimes teachers felt less connected to peers when engaging in teacher leadership activities. Little

(2002) found that while teachers were happy to acknowledge a hypothetical 'master teacher' or highly effective teacher they were less inclined to accept their colleagues in leadership positions. However, in the school in which collaborative practices were well established, responses to teacher leaders proved to be more positive. The evidence shows that strong peer networks are a key source of support for teacher leadership (Zinn, 1996). Little's (2000) study, found a strong correlation between degrees of collaboration among staff and effective teacher leadership in action.

Black (1998) and Harris (2001) suggest that teacher leadership will not occur unless it is underpinned by shared values (Nemerowicz and Rosi, 1997). They argue that these shared values are developed first and foremost through shared (pedagogical) discussion, observation and team teaching. Hence, it is crucial that teacher leaders work in collaborative teams in order for them to make a difference to the school. Little (2000) points out that teacher leadership programmes too often end up as individual grant-chasing by teachers, resulting in individual curriculum writing, for example. Research confirms that teacher leadership not only flourishes most in collaborative settings, but one of the tasks of the teacher leader should be to encourage the creation of collaborative cultures in school, and to develop common learning in schools (Caine and Caine, 1999, Little, 2000; Griffin, 1995).

4. GENERATING AND SUPPORTING TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Principals or headteachers have been found to play a key role in developing teacher leadership. Buckner et al (2000) found that to identify develop and support teacher leaders in their schools, principals needed to encourage teachers to become leaders, help teachers develop leadership skills and provide positive and limited constructive feedback. Similarly,

research by Childs-Bowen et al (2000) indicated that headteachers needed to create the infrastructure to support teacher leadership. This work highlights the importance of headteachers creating opportunities for teachers to lead, to build professional learning communities and to celebrate innovation and teacher expertise.

Supporting teacher leadership in schools therefore has a number of important dimensions (Barth 1999). Firstly, time needs to be set aside for professional development and collaborative work. Making time for planning together, building teacher networks, and visiting classrooms is important. Ovando (1994) found that teachers reported decreased time for lesson planning and preparation once they had undertaken leadership roles and that this was considered to be detrimental. Seashore Louis et al (1996) and Ovando (1996) similarly found that having time 'freed up' for teacher leadership tasks is a crucial element of success. Boles (1992) found that the factors for successful teacher leadership included principal support, strong communicative and administrative skills, an understanding of organisational culture and a reexamination of traditional patterns of power and authority in school systems.

Secondly, teacher leaders need opportunities for continuous professional development in order to develop their role. The research shows that in order to be most effective, teacher leaders need to continuously improve their teaching skills, be involved in school decision making and be involved in the professional development of others (Katzenmeyer and Moller 2001). Boles (1992) found that the factors for successful teacher leadership included principal support, strong communicative and administrative skills, an understanding of organisational culture and a reexamination of traditional patterns of power and authority in school systems. Professional development for teacher leadership needs to focus not just on development of teachers' skills and knowledge but also on aspects specific to their leadership role. Skills such as leading

groups and workshops, collaborative work, mentoring, teaching adults and action research need to be incorporated into professional development programmes to help teachers adapt to their new leadership roles (Katzenmeyer and Moller 2001). Furthermore, preparation for teacher leadership tasks can be impeded through lack of follow-up (Ovando 1996). For teacher leadership to be most effective requires appropriate forms of professional development (Gehrke 1991; Clemson-Ingram and Fessler 1997).

In the USA, formal training programmes for teacher leaders are widely available (Saxe et al 1988). These programmes include leadership skills such as rapport building, organisational diagnosis, dealing with change processes, finding and using resources, managing teacher workload and building skills and confidence in other teachers. Hackney and Henderson (1999) advocate that heads and teachers should be educated together, breaking down the boundaries between the two forms of leadership to prepare all school staff for participation in truly democratic school structures. Sherrill (1999) has argued for the implementation of nationwide standards to provide clear guidelines for teacher leadership.

The success or otherwise of teacher leadership within a school is heavily influenced by interpersonal factors and relationships with other teachers and the school management team. (Katzenmeyer and Moller, 2001). The ability of teacher leaders to influence colleagues and to develop productive relations with school management, who may in some cases feel threatened by teachers taking on leadership is therefore important (Lieberman 1988; Clemson-Ingram and Fessler 1997). Hostility to teacher leaders can arise through factors such as inertia, over-cautiousness and insecurity (Barth 1999). LeBlanc and Skelton (1997) reported that teacher leaders often experienced conflict between their leadership responsibilities and their need for affiliation and belonging to their peer group. Overcoming these difficulties will require a

combination of strong interpersonal skills on the part of the teacher leader and changes to the school culture that encourage change and leadership from teachers.

Consequently, a third dimension of preparing teacher leaders is the need to equip them with good interpersonal skills. Lieberman et al (2000) identified 6 main clusters of skills in their study of teacher leaders:

- building trust and rapport with colleagues
- being able to undertake organizational diagnosis through data collection
- understanding and managing change processes
- being able to utilize resources (people, equipment) in the pursuit of common goals, managing their work
- building skills and confidence in others.

In addition, Pellicer and Anderson (1995) identified helping other teachers plan instruction, helping other teachers make curriculum decisions, helping other teachers improve their teaching and peer coaching as being the key skills of teacher leaders. Snell and Swanson (2000) found that teachers emerged as leaders if they developed high-level skills in the areas of expertise (strong pedagogical and subject knowledge), collaboration (working with other teachers, reflection on their own practice and empowerment of themselves and others).

A final dimension concerns teachers' motivation to undertake a leadership role. As Wagstaff & Reyes (1993) have pointed out, teacher leadership has the potential to expand work-load and without adequate compensation, may lead to possible resentment. While the research has shown that teachers do obtain intrinsic rewards through teacher leadership (increased effectiveness, increased influence, collegiality) these also come with strongly increased

responsibilities. Hence, a consideration of some form of remuneration or reward for teacher leaders within the school is essential.

In summary, the literature review identifies six activities of teacher leaders. These are:

- continuing to teach and to improve individual teaching proficiency and skill;
- organising and leading peer review of teaching practices;
- providing curriculum development knowledge;
- participating in school level decision making;
- leading in service training and staff development activities;
- engaging other teachers in collaborative action planning, reflection and research.

The literature review also suggests that teacher leaders not only make learning possible for others but in important ways are learning a great deal themselves. Through stepping out of the confines of the classroom, teacher leaders forge a new identity in the school and create ways of engaging others in development work. This new role embraces a belief that there are different ways to structure schools and a different way of working with teachers. Consequently, the teacher leader is essentially a professional 'guide' who:

- models collegiality as a mode of work;
- enhances teachers' self esteem
- build networks of human expertise and resource;
- create support groups for school members;
- makes provisions for continuous learning;
- encourages others to take on leadership roles.

5. Implications

This literature review suggests that teacher leadership is inextricably linked to teacher learning and offers a powerful mode of professional development. The findings illustrate that teacher leadership provides opportunities for collaboration, professional learning and positively affects school and classroom change. It also highlights the potential of this form of leadership to contribute to lasting school improvement when teachers become more involved in professional decision-making in school. Consequently, there are important implications for policy makers, practitioners and researchers emerging from this review of the literature.

- **Implications for Policy Makers**

It is evident from this review that teacher leadership has the potential to directly positively impact upon school improvement and school effectiveness. There is also evidence to show that where teachers work collaboratively and where leadership responsibilities are devolved, teachers' expectations, morale and confidence are significantly enhanced. In addition, where teachers work collaboratively and share responsibilities there is a higher degree of satisfaction expressed among teachers for their work

The implications for policy makers therefore, concern issues of teacher professionalism, recruitment, retention and performance. While there are no immediate answers to the current problems facing the teaching profession in the UK, there are certain conditions that have served to exacerbate the present situation. For example, a lack of time for collaboration and shared teaching, a focus on attainment rather than learning, an emphasis on teacher as artisan rather than artist and limited opportunities for research and reflection. In stark contrast, the

teacher leadership literature highlights collaboration, learning, artistry and reflection as being at the core of teachers' professionalism and professional learning.

Implicit within teacher leadership is the notion of *empowerment* as teachers are given the responsibility and authority to act. Also, inherent in teacher leadership is the establishment of professional *community* and an agreement about professional *accountability*. The evidence from the international community suggests that where teachers are prepared for and engaged in leadership activities, there are opportunities for professional *development* and *growth* that reinforce teachers' *self-esteem* and sense of *self-efficacy*. From a policy makers' perspective teacher leadership offers one way of engaging the profession in forms activities that are most likely to signal recognition, lead to reward and demonstrate trust in teachers to build their own professional learning communities within schools.

In short, teacher leadership offers policy makers a way of engaging teachers in a meaningful and timely debate about professionalism and issues of professional conduct. Essentially, the concept of teacher leadership endorses the principle that all teachers have the skills, abilities and aptitude to lead and should be trusted to do so. There is evidence from the literature of ways in which teacher leadership can be enhanced and developed. Furthermore, it reiterates how teacher leadership contributes to raising pupil performance, is pivotal in generating collaboration between teachers and in securing professional learning communities both within and between schools.

The next steps for policy makers would appear to be threefold. Firstly, to investigate models of effective teacher leadership within the UK context and to identify exemplars of good practice. Secondly, to share and disseminate the principles and practice of good practice with schools

and teachers. Thirdly, to evaluate the impact of introducing models of teacher leadership into different school contexts with a view to judging the effect upon teachers' professionalism and morale.

- **Implications for Practitioners**

The research evidence endorses teacher collaboration and mutual learning as centrally important to teacher leadership. It is clear that many schools are successful at promoting teacher collaboration and have set up ways of allowing teachers to work together. However, there are a large number of schools where this has been more difficult to achieve because of structural or professional barriers. The implication of teacher leadership for schools therefore resides around generating the possibilities and expectation of collaboration. Where this occurs teachers are more likely to engage in high level collaborative activities in order to improve their teaching capability and performance. In this sense, teaching becomes a highly reflective process that is reliant upon peer interaction, support and feedback.

The implications for schools of generating teacher leadership concern the provision of time plus support for research and enquiry. If teachers are to collaborate and reflect they must be given time and support in order to achieve this most effectively. Similarly, there needs to be the removal of structural barriers to ensure that there are opportunities for teachers to work together outside their subject areas. Finally, if teachers are to be encouraged to take risks and to innovate there has to be a real distribution of power and the agreement to uphold 'no blame' innovation.

- **Implications for Research**

Although the literature points towards the highly beneficial effects of teacher leadership upon schools and students, there is a relative absence of research that has explored the nature and impact of teacher leadership within the UK context. Research has focused upon teacher professionalism, collegiality, reflection and continuing professional development but has taken little account of the models of leadership required to generate and sustain teacher learning and growth. Consequently, research is required that collects empirical evidence about teacher leadership in action, generates different models of teacher leadership, provides evidence of impact and effectiveness, illuminates good practice and offers schools and teachers a clear insight into the possibilities and practicalities of promoting this form of leadership in schools.

The implications for research reside in the need for the collection of empirical evidence that:

- examines how far the concept of 'teacher leadership' is meaningful, useful and applicable to a wide variety of school contexts and circumstances;
- elucidates different models, approaches and forms of teacher leadership in practice;
- identifies how teacher leadership can best be facilitated and developed;
- investigates the relationship between teacher leadership and school improvement;
- provides case study exemplars of best practice and guidance for schools about creating the conditions in which teacher leadership can flourish and grow.

Reflection

The implication of teacher leadership for schools therefore resides around generating the possibilities and expectation of collaboration. Where this occurs teachers are more likely to engage in high level collaborative activities in order to improve their teaching capability and performance. In this sense, teaching becomes a highly reflective process that is reliant upon peer interaction, support and feedback.

The implications for schools of generating teacher leadership concern the provision of time plus support for research and enquiry. If teachers are to collaborate and reflect they must be given time and support in order to achieve this most effectively. Similarly, there needs to be the removal of structural barriers to ensure that there are opportunities for teachers to work together outside their subject areas. Finally, if teachers are to be encouraged to take risks and to innovate there has to be a real distribution of power and the agreement to uphold 'no blame' innovation.

The concept of teacher leadership is powerful because it is premised upon the creation of the collegial norms in schools that contribute directly to school effectiveness, improvement and development. It is also powerful because it recognises that all teachers can be leaders and that their ability to lead has a significant influence upon the quality of relationships and teaching within the school. At its most profound, teacher leadership offers a 'new professionalism' based upon mutual trust, recognition, empowerment and support. At its most practical it provides a way of teachers working together in order to improve the learning experiences of young people. It reclaims leadership as a human, collective endeavor in which all teachers play an essential role.

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