

# CHAPTER I

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

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### 1.0. Introduction

A school is meant for educating students with the aim of promoting holistic development. It demands a conducive environment at school. The government of India has taken policy initiatives to provide a conducive environment through reforming school culture. Successful implementation of school reforms depends on key individuals of schools who manage change. Reforms are also needed to improve the performance of the school. Many researches have shown that school leadership is fundamental for school improvement. Every school has the human resources and material resources for the purpose of achieving the desired goals.

School leadership plays a crucial role in enhancing school effectiveness. The quality of school leadership is positively linked with student achievement both directly and indirectly. School leadership helps to improve the school climate which improves the effectiveness of the school (Sebastian and Allensworth, 2012; Ten Bruggencate et al., 2012).

Generally, people think of school leadership as the leadership of the principals only. But now the scope of school leadership has expanded as one individual's leadership ability is not enough for the development of the school as well as the improvement of students. Successful school improvement is co-constructed which encourages coordination and cooperation among teachers and principals to solve day-to-day problems and achieve desired goals of the school. Lambert (1998) claimed that constructivist leadership is a type of leadership that is used to lead schools toward effective change. The constructivist leadership offers opportunities to discuss and mediate views, brainstorm ideas together, reflect on and try to make meaning of work in light of shared beliefs and new information, and then take actions that result from these new understandings (Lambert, 1998). This constructivist approach to leadership puts more emphasis on teacher leadership. It demands teachers to exercise leadership in school for the sake of improving school effectiveness. It necessitates support from the principal in schools. Without utilizing the skills and

experience of teachers in leadership roles, a principal will never be as effective as they may be. The capacity of the principal could be enhanced by teacher leadership (Teacher Leader Model Standards, 2011). Teacher leadership is needed for serving the needs of students, the teaching profession, and schools. It encourages collaboration where teachers learn together and construct knowledge collaboratively and collectively. The most successful teaching occurs when teachers collaborate and assist one another. Teacher leadership is a central component of sustainable school improvement as it plays an active role in decision-making and promoting professional growth. According to Hopkins et al. (1994), "successful schools foster collaborative settings that encourage participation, professional development, mutual support, and assistance in problem-solving.

As a unique leadership tag, teacher leadership will help to find solutions to the complex problems related to redefining school, leadership roles, and building teaching capacity. Hence, we believe that research towards teacher leadership will guide policy actions to eradicate the existing complex problems and enhance school effectiveness.

The recommendations of different committees, commissions, curriculum frameworks and policy initiatives have put a great emphasis on the importance of teacher leadership.

### **1.1.A Synthesis on the Recommendations of various Committees and Commissions on Teacher Leadership**

Education is a powerful weapon to shape society. Society is everchanging which demands transformation in education. Accordingly, policy have been formulated and initiatives have been taken by stakeholders. Teachers serve as a catalyst for bringing transformation in education by implementing policy initiatives. In the education system, the needs and challenges continue to evolve which necessitates to expand the functions of teachers beyond the classroom. The evolvement of leadership and management skills among teachers is of foremost important. The Indian government initiatives through commissions, committees, curriculum framework and national policies have recommended the continuous professional development of teachers and promotion to leadership positions of deserving teachers for the sake of enhancing the performance of schools.

The Secondary Education Commission (1952-53), Education Commission (1964-66), National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (2009), National Curriculum

Framework (2005), National Knowledge Commission (2007), Programme of Action (POA, 1992), and National Education Policy (2020) have made recommendations and an elaborate explanation of their respective recommendations can be traced from the following subsections.

### **National Curriculum Framework (2005)**

National Curriculum Framework (2005) has recommended systematic reform for quality concerns. It stressed on bringing reform in academic leadership in schools. It stated that principals are regarded as an administrative authority within the school, but they do not have the needed control to execute this authority or to guarantee normal school operations. In many cases, they lack both the authority and capacity to make decisions about the school curriculum. Therefore, this policy suggested that teachers and headmasters ought to be able to specify the particular supports and services that they need for their schools, and also collectively state what they anticipate from the cluster and block staff in terms of training and school visits, and take part in the monitoring and supervision process. In terms of their academic functions, teachers are now not sufficiently distinguished from principals. It recommended capacity building to make serious progress on this front.

### **National Education Policy (2020)**

National Education Policy (2020) laid down that teachers require continuous opportunities to upgrade their skills and learn about the newest developments in their fields. It emphasizes the significance of developing leadership skills in teachers and encourages their participation in decision-making processes at the school and policy levels. It highlighted on developing platforms (online platforms) to allow teachers to share ideas and best practices. It further recommended that outstanding teachers who exhibited management and leadership abilities would receive training over time to take positions of academic leadership in schools, school complexes, BRCs, CRCs, BITEs, DIETs, as well as pertinent government departments. In order to continually develop their own leadership and management skills and to allow them to exchange best practices with one another, it was also advised that school principals and complex leaders have access to similar modular leadership/management workshops, online development opportunities, and platforms.

For effective teacher leadership, capacity building of teachers needed to be enhanced. Various commissions, committees, and frameworks have given recommendations.

Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) stated that the Central Government ought to take on more responsibility in some areas of secondary education, such as teacher training. It also advocated to provide in-service training to teachers. Additionally, it was recommended that teacher education institutes should arrange refresher courses, short and intensive courses in specialty fields, hands-on training in workshops, seminars, and professional conferences. Education Commission (1964-66) strongly recommended for facilitating continuous professional education for teachers through various agencies. Firstly, the school itself must offer opportunities for the new teacher to learn from his experience and through consultation and discussion with veteran instructors at the school. The head and the senior teachers should play a specific role in guiding the new teacher by structuring his work and setting up appropriate events like staff study circles and group discussions. In this programme, education departments, training institutions, and teachers' associations can all contribute significantly. National Knowledge Commission (2007) stated the main issue that has to be addressed in order to reap the benefits of higher quality and expanded access through OER is faculty development and teacher training. Additionally, it also advocated that by utilizing contemporary educational technology, the training programme must enhance domain competence and teaching skills. National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (2009) highlighted the importance of professional education of secondary teachers. It stated IASEs should be strengthened so they can better support secondary teachers' professional growth as its primary responsibility have to facilitate in-service training. Programme of Action (POA, 1992) recommended for professional learning of secondary teachers. It assigned SCERTs with organizing, sponsoring, monitoring, and evaluating in-service education programs for all levels of teachers, instructors, and other educational workers.

National Curriculum Framework (2005) and National Education Policy (2020) have strongly recommended about teacher leadership. The policy guidelines make it clear that schools should assist deserving teachers in taking leadership positions in accordance with their areas of expertise and assist them in finding chances for capacity building to carry out their new duties successfully. It was also highlighted that school administrators should provide platforms for teachers to consistently improve their leadership and management abilities and share best practices. Therefore, they recommended professional learning for teachers to carry out their roles effectively in schools . Various commissions, committees, and frameworks have given recommendations for professional development of teachers. The

Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) and Education Commission (1964-66), the National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (2009), Programme of Action (POA, 1992) and National Knowledge Commission (2007) have focused on in-service training, professional development initiatives, teaching effectiveness and capacity building programs. Begin from 1952 to 2007, it has been noted that the recommendations of most of the policies, frameworks, and commission recommendations have consistently placed an emphasis on teacher capacity building. Every policy document has underlined the importance of offering continuous professional development opportunities to teachers that enable them to stay updated with new development in their fields. For this, they suggested professional development initiatives i.e., workshops, and training programs.

It is crucial to have a thorough understanding of the theoretical underpinnings of teacher leadership in order to comprehend it better. Understanding leadership theories associated with teacher leadership would aid in understanding the concept of teacher leadership.

## **1.2. Theoretical Underpinning: Insight into the Foundation of Teacher Leadership**

There are several difficulties to identify the theoretical foundation of teacher leadership of its own. The theories on teacher leadership are drawn from other leadership theories in the absence of specific theories. Further, theories of leadership emerge and evolve depending upon the style, behavior, and situation of leaders (Henman, 2017). However, the origin of teacher leadership theories owed to the 'new' leadership theory, also known as distributed leadership theory that identified the dissemination of leadership (Wills, 2015).

In the presence of several theories of leadership, teacher leadership has close connections with the following theories of leadership.

### **1.2.1. Distributed Leadership Theory**

Distributed leadership was initially mentioned in the early 1950s in the field of social psychology. The work of James Gronn and Peter Spillane presents two widely acknowledged viewpoints about distributed leadership theory (Gronn, 2002; Spillane, 2006). This theory is based on the premise that leadership is not embodied by a small number of people but rather is a dynamic interaction among various shareholders in an organization (Spillane, 2006). The foundation of distributed leadership theory is based on the idea that

many people inside an organization have the potential to contribute to leadership, but the key to success is how people are arranged to best facilitate and coordinate their contributions (Harris, 2008). In the field of education, there is a growing consensus that group leadership can enhance the organization's overall performance.

According to Spillane, 2005 “distributed leadership is a system of practice made up of a number of interdependent components, including leaders, followers, and situation. The system is more than the sum of its pieces, or practices, thus it requires understanding all of these interrelated elements together”. This theory suggests that organizational influence and decision-making should be shared through the interactions of the individuals of an organization. Gronn's viewpoint is based on action theory. He contends that in order to strengthen the organization's performance, the organization's new division of labor needs to be redesigned to take a pluralistic approach. Thus, Interdependence among the many participants is vital to enhance the organization's success. The central idea of distributed leadership is that leadership capacity is not fixed, but can be enhanced when individuals within the school system seek leadership opportunities and are provided opportunities to contribute to the organization.

### **1.2.2. Constructivist Leadership Theory**

Constructivist leadership Theory was given by Lambert in 1995. Lambert introduced the concept of Constructivist Leadership, based on learning among adults with shared goals and visions. This theory signifies “a reciprocal learning process that permits all members to give and take from one another when all participants have a shared vision and purpose” (Lambert, 1998, p. 17). It promotes the idea of avoiding top-down decision-making and creating a structure where all members (i.e., teacher leader, principal, subordinates, and other members) of the school learn together and solve problems collectively and collaboratively. It is obvious that when employees feel valued as professionals, they have a vested interest in the welfare of the organization's constituents. In turn, it provides job satisfaction to all members.

### **1.2.3. Social Identity Theory**

The Social Identity Theory was introduced by British psychologists Henri Tajfel and John Turner in 1979. As applied to teacher leadership, this theory states a teacher is identified by others as a leader if they possess leadership qualities. Teachers become more willing and

responsible to take the lead and make change as a result of this peer factor. Most teachers who assume leadership responsibilities do not consider themselves to be leaders; rather, they reserve the title "leader" for people who assume formal duties like administrators or district supervisors. Rather, they believe that most of their work is informal and collaborative. They don't feel like leaders as their activities are based on collaboration (Moller et al., 2001). This theory stresses on teamwork for the upliftment of the school. These teacher leaders still serve as role models for their colleagues. Through the lens of social identity theory, teacher leadership is developed, and this leads to teacher empowerment (Angelle and Schmid, 2007). This is not to argue that support is not required for this empowerment, but when teacher empowerment is promoted in a school, it is the teacher's duty to make a difference.

#### **1.2.4. Formative Leadership Theory**

The formative leadership theory was created by Ash and Persall (2000). This theory is premised on the idea that there are numerous leadership responsibilities within a school and that these roles are not only reserved for persons who have been given specific "roles," but rather can be played by anyone within the collective leadership of the school. It specifies, teachers as leaders and the principal as leading leaders.

As applied to teacher leadership, here the foremost function of teachers is to create an environment for continuous improvement of student learning as well as enhancing adult learning within the school community. The theory describes the principal as chief learning officer (CLO). Here the CLO should be focused on providing opportunities for learning and practicing leadership for highly capable teachers. The formative leadership theory stressed interaction among principals, teachers, and students as the primary goal of the school is student improvement. (Ash and Persall, 2000). Additionally, the theory of formative leadership offers a framework for what qualities and skills formative leaders ought to have in order to guide the organization. These skills have based on 10 leadership principles (Ash & Persall, 2000) i.e., 1) Learning in teams, creative thinking, and cooperative problem-solving; 2) Teachers should be seen as leaders and principals as leaders of leaders; 3) Working connections ought to be based on trust; 4) Leaders should keep supporting and encouraging innovation and creativity rather than requiring conformity and compliance; 5) The priorities of leaders should be people and processes; 6) Leaders should have a servant mentality and be customer-focused; 7) Networks that facilitate two-way communication should be established by leaders; 8) Formative leadership demands proximity, visibility, and

being near to the customer; 9) Formative leadership should provide freedom to staff members to carry out their duties; 10) Formative leadership necessitates the capacity to function in an uncertain environment.

### **1.2.5. Servant Leadership Theory**

In 1970, Robert K. Greenleaf proposed servant leadership theory. This theory advocates that a leader's primary concern should be serving to others. Greenleaf (1970) defined servant leadership as a style of leadership that places a greater emphasis on the growth of followers than on achieving more overarching self-serving objectives. It highlights a leader who is eager to help others so that they can grow personally and subsequently grow others (PSU WC, 2013, L.11, p. 3). It emphasizes on follower growth and services (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022). According to Larry Spears, Executive Director of the Robert K. Greenleaf Center for Servant-Leadership, servant-leadership is a new type of leadership model that places serving others as the top priority. Increased service to others, a holistic approach to work, cultivating a feeling of community, and sharing power in decision-making are all key components of servant leadership.

### **1.2.6. Transformational Leadership Theory**

Dowton first coined the term "transformational leadership" in 1973, but James MacGregor Burns publicized it in his book leadership in 1978. This Theory stressed on constant interaction of leaders and followers to attain particular goals. Transformational leadership aims to preserve the stability within the organization through regular interaction of leaders and followers. It serves to alter the status quo of an organization. Transformational leaders convince their followers to change their priority from self-interest to collective interest. Building trust is a key component of transformational leadership because it helps people feel strongly committed to achieving their goals. Effective transformational leaders inspire and motivate others to believe in them and follow them accordingly. This theory stresses on taking initiative, sharing the vision and collective activity, taking risks, and encouraging others for the same.

### **1.2.7. Skill Theory**

Skill theory was provided by David Burkus (Burkus, 2010b). Leadership is a skill that can be developed with the proper practical training. Leaders need to have the skills necessary to

guide their followers. Different skill theorists like Katz (1955) placed an emphasis on people's learnable and developable skills and capacities. Katz (1955) proposed three skills that, in his view, were necessary for a successful administrator: technical, interpersonal, and conceptual skills. Katz (1955) put forward three skills that he argued were essential to being an effective administrator—technical, human, and conceptual skills. The skill approach provides a broader perspective on leadership. This theory shifts its focus away from the idea that leadership is just for a chosen few. It promotes the idea that everyone can be a leader if they have the motivation and are willing to develop the necessary skills. The five important skills highlighted by this theory are competencies, personal traits, leadership outcomes, professional experiences, and environmental influences. In accordance with this perspective, anyone may learn and adapt to the particular set of skills required to become a leader.

### **1.2.8. Transactional Leadership Theory**

The concept of transactional leadership was proposed by German sociologist Max Weber in the middle of the 20th century. Transactional leadership theory stated that “transactional leader work within an organization’s existing structure” (Riaz and Haider, 2010). It focuses on supervision, administrative superiority, organizational goals, and group performance. Fundamentally, this leadership refers to "a connection in which the leader initiates an exchange of valued goods that motivates and connects the leader with their followers" (Goethals, 2005). This type of leadership focuses on specific tasks and uses incentives or punishments to motivate followers to accomplish their goals.

To summarize, these theories emphasized collaboration, flexibility, adaptability, and sharing the expertise of teachers to achieve desired goals. They highlight that the shared goals and values of teachers are important influential factors for generating effective schools that improve student learning and teacher effectiveness. They stress on the interdependency of the various roles and responsibilities of principals and teachers to build internal capacity for development, which leads to the success of the organization.

Teacher leadership sharply emerged from the distributed leadership theory. It stressed on the idea that leadership is a collective activity where leaders de-center power to achieve the desirable goals of an organization. It in turn energized and motivated individuals to actively participate in decision-making and build internal capacity for improvement. It is a collaborative effort to tackle challenges in an effective manner. As applied to teacher

leadership, the teacher leader helps other teachers to embrace goals, initiate reforms to strengthen teaching and learning and work towards development (Leithwood and Reil ,2003). The engagement of a group of people in leadership activity is the center of distributed leadership. Thus, the concept of teacher leadership emerged from the theories of leadership.

### **1.3. Teacher Leadership: Meaning and Concept**

Neither the concept nor the phenomenon of teacher leadership is novel. The discussion on teacher leadership is centuries old, although, a greater emphasis is seen in recent days. Indeed, John Dewey is the antecedent of the current idea of teacher leadership, who specifically quoted it as “every teacher had some regular and representative way to register judgment upon matters of educational importance, with the assurance that this judgment would somehow affect the school system” (Dewey, 1903, p. 195). A plethora of definitions of teacher leadership provided by researchers have contributed to understanding the meaning and concept of teacher leadership.

### **1.4. Teacher Leadership: Definitions**

Many researchers and institutions have defined teacher leadership in many ways.

Lieberman et al. (1988) defined teacher leadership as “not only making learning possible for others but, in important ways, are learning a great deal themselves. Stepping out of the confines of the classroom forces these teacher-leaders to forge a new identity in the school, think differently about their colleagues, change their style of work in a school, and find new ways to organize staff participation”. Wasley (1991) defined Teacher leadership as influencing and engaging colleagues toward improved practice. Fullan (1994) defined Teacher leadership encompasses the inter-related domains of commitment and knowledge. Thus, there is a commitment to moral purpose, continuous learning, and knowledge of learning processes, as well as an understanding of the educational context and change processes. Heller & Firestone (1995) stated teacher leadership encompasses a wide range of formal and informal functions in schools that aim to support student learning outcomes. Pellicer and Anderson (1995) defined Teacher leadership as concerned with teachers helping teachers so that teachers can, in turn, better help students. Teacher leadership is helping teachers work together to establish and achieve the goals and

objectives of the school. Darling-Hammond et al. (1995) defined teacher leadership as “inextricably connected to teacher learning... in the course of restructuring opportunities to collaborate and take initiative are available at every turn. The specific teacher leadership responsibilities that evolve are not predetermined priori idiosyncratic but are varied, flexible, and to individual school teams and their distinctive situations” (p.89).

Crowther and Olsen (1996) defined teacher leadership as “an ethical stance that is based upon the views of a better world and the power of teaching to shape meaningful systems. It manifests itself in actions that involve the wider school community and leads to the creation of ideas that will enhance the quality of life of the community in the long term” (p. 32).

Crowther (1997) defined teacher leadership as “manifests in actions that involve the wider community and leads to the creation of new forms of understanding that will enhance the quality of life of the community in the long term. It reaches its potential in contexts where system and school structures are facilitative and supportive” (p. 15). Fullan and Hargreaves (1996) defined teacher leadership as “the capacity and commitment to contribute beyond one’s classroom” (p. 13). Forster (1997) Teacher leadership may be broadly defined as a professional commitment and a process which influences people to take joint actions toward changes and improved practices that enable achievement of shared educational goals and benefit the common good.

LeBlanc & Shelton (1997) stated teacher leadership includes: (a) modeling positive attitudes and enthusiasm; (b) devoting time to doing whatever it takes to make the school work better; (c) enhancing student learning through working with other teachers on improving pedagogy; and (d) being recognized, appreciated, respected, and/or valued for such efforts. Institute for Educational Leadership (2001) stated “Teacher leadership is a mobilization of the available attributes of teachers to strengthen student performance at the ground level. Teacher leaders work toward collaboration and shared leadership in the daily activities in the school “.

Childs-Bowen et al. (2000) defined teacher leadership as the “function in professional learning communities to affect student learning; contribute to school improvement; inspire excellence in practice, and empower stakeholders to participate in educational improvement” (p. 28). Clemson-Ingram and Fessler (1997) defined teacher leadership as “refers to a variety of roles for classroom teachers in staff development, management, and

school improvement” (p. 95). Miller et al. (2000) defined teacher leadership as “refers to actions by teachers outside their classrooms which involve an explicit or implicit responsibility to provide professional development to their colleagues, to influence their communities’ or districts’ policies, or to act as adjunct district staff to support changes in classroom practices among teachers”.

Fullan (2001) asserts that as teacher leadership has become more of an essential element in school improvement, teachers are the key to school change. Katzenmeyer and Mollar (2001) defined “Teacher leadership as “teachers who are leaders within and beyond the classroom, identify with and contribute to a community of teacher leaders and leaders and influence each other towards improved practice”. Crowther et al. (2002) conceptualized teacher leadership as parallel leadership: “parallel leadership encourages a relatedness between teacher leaders and administrator leaders that activates and sustains the knowledge-generating capacity of schools. Parallel leadership is a process whereby teacher leaders and their principals engage in collective action to build school capacity. It embodies mutual respect, shared purpose, and allowance for the individual expression”. (p. 38)

Harris (2003) defined “Teacher leadership essentially refers to the exercise of leadership by teachers, regardless of position or designation”. According to Portin et al. (2003) teacher leadership is operationally defined as when teachers help “sustain changes that enhance student learning, improve instruction, maximize participation in decision making and align resources to the school’s vision and purpose”. York-Barr and Duke (2004) defined teacher leadership as “the process by which teachers, individually or collectively, influence their colleagues, principals, and other members of school communities to improve teaching and learning practices with the aim of increased student learning and achievement” (p. 287-288).

Danielson (2006) defined Teacher Leadership is “the set of skills demonstrated by teachers who continue to teach students, but also have an influence that extends beyond their own classrooms to others within their own school and elsewhere. It entails mobilizing and energizing others with the goal of improving the school’s performance of its critical responsibilities related to teaching and learning”.

Youitt (2007) defines teacher leadership as teachers who “lead learning by embracing new methods of teaching and learning. They understand the importance of the relationship between teachers and students (and their families). These teachers also frequently engage

the use of new technologies in their teaching, and understand the need for resourcing flexibility to support educational innovation” (p. 1). Mangin and Stoelinga (2008) conceptualized teacher leadership as a “non-supervisory, school-based, instructional leadership role”. Riel and Becker's (2008) defined "teacher leadership is more precisely behavior reflecting a high level of engagement with the profession of teaching and with other teachers".

Murphy (2005) defined “Teacher leadership as a teacher with responsibility, a sense of vision and working towards it”. Sintz (2006) defined “Teacher leadership as a teacher who assume leadership role and works outside classroom, while either still working in the classroom or the role can take over their regular job”. Muijs & Harris (2007) identified five dimensions of teacher leadership: shared decision-making, collaboration, active participation, professional learning, and activism. Can (2009) defines teacher leadership as taking over voluntary responsibilities during the educational processes and activities, establishing independent projects, inspiring colleagues, and having the competence to develop professional learning communities to effectively carry out the requirements of the school system.

Frost's (2010) stated teacher leadership refers to “taking the initiative to improve practice, acting strategically with colleagues to embed change, gathering and using evidence in collaborative processes, contributing to the creation and dissemination of professional knowledge”. Swanson et al. (2011) stated that teacher leadership is the combination of “knowledge, skills, and dispositions demonstrated by teachers” to further the efficacy of school operations. Diffey & Aragon (2018) stated that teacher leadership is “The process by which teachers extend their impact - influencing colleagues, principals, members of school communities and beyond to improve teaching practices and support student learning”.

In a nutshell, teacher leadership is an umbrella term that includes a wide range of work of teacher leaders to achieve desired goals of the school. Teacher leadership can be defined as a process where a teacher leader plays a variety of roles i.e., helping other teachers to work collaboratively, promoting change to meet the diverse need of students, taking the right decision confidently and cooperatively, helping the professional development of teachers, guiding subordinates for helping student skillfully, creating a structure in school that supports the continuous improvement of educators as well as students. Teacher leadership is a potent weapon that may be used to support the success of school reform initiatives and

enhance educational opportunities for all students. Teacher leadership refers to a set of abilities displayed by teachers who not only continue to instruct pupils but also exert influence on individuals both inside and outside of their own institution. Teacher leadership fosters professionalism. Thus, teacher leadership is needed for making teachers reflective, adaptive, and flexible which in turn better helps students by motivating, guiding, energizing students, and creating learning zeal among them.

## **1.5. Characteristics of Teacher Leadership**

Teacher leaders must have certain skills and competencies to work collaboratively with teachers and other school personnel to respond to the diverse needs of students. However, we can see the characteristics of teacher's leadership in the following ways:

### **Confidence**

Confidence is an important quality of teacher leaders. Teacher leaders must be confident to express their opinions, comfortable sharing differences of opinions, and not afraid of approaching administrators with issues or concerns (Conley and Muncey, 1999).

### **Risk Taker**

Initiatives are inevitable in school to meet the demands of the present day. Teacher leaders take the initiative to improve the practices of schools which in turn make teachers and students ready to compete the world around. As risk-taker, teacher leaders should be comfortable in trying new things and willing to place their opinions, contributions, and involvement in the school community (Augustine and Shaw, 2015). They embrace innovation at the same time encourage others to explore creative approaches to teaching.

### **Team Spirit**

Teacher leaders should be reflective, collaborative, and flexible. They should be possessed good listening skills and should enjoy their collaborative work (Augustine and Shaw, 2015). They are skilled collaborators who work well with colleagues, administrators, parents, and other stakeholders. They need to have open communications with their team members, sharing information and asking for guidance (Conley and Muncey, 1999). They foster a sense of community and teamwork, promoting the sharing of ideas and resources. To

enhance productivity as a team member, they should believe in the value of teamwork, practice confidentiality, and flexibility of high professionals (Printy and Marks, 2004).

### **Instructional proficiency**

Teacher leaders are experts in their subjects, who possess a deep understanding of their subject contents as well as pedagogical practices. They demonstrate excellence in their own teaching practices, serving as a role model for other teachers. Teacher leadership also includes instructional proficiency that helps to enhance professional knowledge and skill to deliver the most productive learning sessions for students (Wan et al.,2018)

### **Interpersonal Skills and Effective Communication**

The teacher leaders need to possess greater communication skills for effective listening, operative effectiveness, sound presentations, and dramatic effect. They can convey complex ideas clearly and concisely in both written and oral forms. Besides, other qualities include good interpersonal relationship skills and powerful communication with administrators, teachers, and students (Henderson et al., 1995; Nappi, 2014). Teacher leaders demonstrate empathy and provide support to their colleagues that help to promote a positive and inclusive school culture. They are always approachable and ready to help others in need.

### **Self-reflection and Intrapersonal Skill**

The teacher leader with a strong sense of self will be able to interpret others' actions and make sense of situations. To become an effective leader, a teacher should possess the necessary skills like curiosity, creativity, empathy, persistence, commitment, motivation, passion, agility, courage, and optimism. Effective teacher leaders exhibit strong leadership skills (Killion & Harrison, 2006).

### **Diverse and Adaptability**

Teacher leaders need to be diverse in their field and show respect to different people including their students and colleagues. Besides, they should respond differently to different situations more productively and compellingly. As the education landscape is constantly evolving, teacher leaders are to be adaptable to changes. They are always ready to adjust their teaching strategies to meet the evolving need of students as well as the education system.

### **Organized and continuous improvement**

To achieve the desired results, teacher leaders need to be organized by enacting a course of action and executing the plan in order. Further, they need to show a higher level of commitment to improving individual performance and students' performance as well (Wan et al., 2018).

### **Lifelong learner**

Teacher leaders are lifelong learners who stay updated on the latest research, trends, and developments in education. They actively seek opportunities to further enhance their knowledge and skills. As a lifelong learner, teacher leaders are resourceful and engage in higher-level thinking with clarity and precision, and applying past knowledge to solve problems. Further, they need to engage with creation, innovation and establish a unique relationship with all the people in the society.

### **Visionary Thinking**

Teacher leaders have a clear vision for educational excellence. They are forward thinkers who set goals and work strategically to bring meaningful improvements in the learning environment.

Hence it is clear that the above qualities of a teacher leader are inevitable for the attainment of goals of students as well as the school. To achieve the desired goal, the teacher leader must be reflective in teaching practice, adaptive, flexible, making decisions jointly, and organizing curricular and co-curricular activities actively. It can only be possible if the support structure of the school allows them to practice leadership skills. Thus, teacher leadership practices are highly essential to develop the required skills and competencies among teacher leaders. Therefore, a school can never deny the need and importance of teacher leadership in either improving the school's effectiveness or dampening the burden of the workload at the school.

## **1.6. Teacher Leadership: Importance**

Teacher leadership helps transform schools that enable teachers and students to meet the needs of the 21st century. A key justification for supporting teacher leadership, according to the Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium (2011), is the development and maintenance of a workforce of capable teachers for the twenty-first century. Teacher leadership is fruitful in building an efficient work environment, supervising and guiding subordinates for performing their work effectively and efficiently. They acquire knowledge and understanding of different backgrounds, cultures, and languages to foster effective interaction among subordinates. Teachers are benefited in a number of ways through teacher leadership. According to Smylie (1997), teacher leadership helps individual teachers in expanding and diversifying their areas of expertise. It also helps to increase the job satisfaction of teachers and promotes professional development and learning (Slater, 2008). The sense of ownership over decisions may enhance if teachers participate in leadership (Weiss, Cambone, & Wyeth, 1992). These elements lead to rise in teachers' professionalism (Hart, 1995; Smylie & Denny, 1990). As a result, teachers could feel happier about their profession (Katzenmoyer & Moller, 2001). Furthermore, teacher leadership may create the workplace environment more democratic (Hart, 1995). Another advantage is that exceptional and dedicated educators may be attracted to the field and stay in the profession to improve student performance (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Smylie, 1994). The fulfillment of goals (such as the development of broad thinking, problems solving scientifically, reading, and writing critically among the students), demands a change in teaching and learning processes as well as staff collaboration and experimentation with practice. Hence, teacher leadership is highly important to meet these challenges and, in the urge, to manage the workload burden by utilizing the resources effectively.

York-Barr (2004) provides the importance of teacher leadership to achieve organizational goals which are described in the following sections:

Teacher leadership boost teacher caliber. The key to improving teacher quality and advancing teaching and learning is teacher competence. When competent teachers "model instructional techniques, facilitate the exchange of best practices, mentor novice teachers, and interact with teaching colleagues," this expertise becomes more widely attainable. Teacher leaders' expertise is the cornerstone to improve instruction as well as the quality of teachers. Teacher leadership enhance student learning. A community of learners can be

developed by teachers who serve as role models for learning. Teacher leadership promotes teacher development and learning, and when teachers learn, students grow. Teacher leadership ensure education reform effective.

Teacher leadership promote professional development. Teacher leaders extend the capacity of the principal. Teacher leaders are reliable and competent enough to provide professional help to the principal. "Principals increase their capacity when teachers take the lead" (Barth, 2001, p. 445). Some of the principal's duties can be handled by teacher leaders. Teacher leadership make the school environment more democratic. Teacher leaders are better able to turn their school into a democracy when they assume significant roles in school governance and play a key role in decision-making. Experiencing democratic, participatory modes of governance in educational institutions is beneficial for students.

For building sustainable school capacity for achieving organizational goals, nurturing school employees into reflective and skillful leaders, improving school effectiveness, and promoting leader capacity, teacher leadership is an inseparable body part of the school system (Lambert, 2003). Also, as a unique part of the system, teacher leadership improves professional learning and decision-making qualitatively and makes serious progress for the school's effectiveness at the front. It facilitates research to improve teaching practice and Student Learning. Thus, teacher leadership is needed to create a culture that supports collaboration for the continuous improvement of educators as well as students.

In order to understand the functions of teacher leaders comprehensively, we cannot ignore the significance of the model of teacher leadership.

## **1.7. Teacher Leadership: Model**

In 2011, the Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium developed a model that describes teacher leadership.

### **1.7.1. Teacher Leader Model Standards (2011)**

The teacher leader model standards developed by a group of educators in U.S.A in 2011. This model emphasizes new organizational structures and roles in the school for meeting the needs of 21st-century learners successfully. The model consists of seven domains, each domain has some specific activities for a teacher leader which are given below:

Domain I: Fostering a Collaborative Culture to Support Educator Development and Student Learning,

Domain II: Accessing and Using Research to Improve Practice and Student Learning,

Domain III: Promoting Professional Learning for Continuous Improvement,

Domain IV: Facilitating Improvements in Instruction and Student Learning,

Domain V: Promoting the Use of Assessments and Data for School and District Improvement,

Domain VI: Improving Outreach and Collaboration with Families and Community, and

Domain VII: Advocating for Student Learning and the Profession. (p. 82)

This model specified the necessity of more knowledge, skills, and competencies and a global understanding of school among teacher leaders. Hence, the teacher leader must be aware of the principles of adult learning and knowledge about emerging technology and have the capacity to develop a collaborative culture in the school. It will be helpful to promote an environment of collegiality, trust, and respect, and facilitate professional learning that supports continuous improvement in instruction and student learning. However, this model of teacher leadership provides an in-depth understanding of the functions of teacher leaders. In order to execute these functions, different practices are required to be carried out by teacher leaders.

The Teacher Leader Model Standards highlighted the different roles and functions that teacher leaders can perform.

## **1.8. Roles and Responsibilities of Teachers**

Teachers play a variety of roles to improve the school's effectiveness. Teacher leaders have traditionally been given specific, formal titles such as department head, team leader, mentor, coach, staff developer, and master teacher (Harris, 2005; Harris and Muijs, 2003; Zimpher and Sherrill, 1996). However, the other roles are surrounded by classroom-related functions like planning, communicating goals, and regulating activities. As leaders, they may participate in school and district committees, engage in staff development, attend graduate school, or participate in school and community activities. Additionally, they have classroom

related responsibilities such as planning, organizing the learning environment, motivating other staff, and supervising activities. Teacher leaders play a variety of roles as instructional specialists, curriculum specialists, resource providers, mentors, etc. to maintain their focus on student learning and attainment of organizational goals (Harrison and Killion, 2007). As team leaders, teachers tie up the skills, expertise, and knowledge of colleagues to address curricular expectations and the needs of students learning. They also utilize technology to guide subordinates to help students skillfully and appropriately navigate the universe of knowledge. Teachers are also given greater responsibility to enhance and mould the leadership qualities among teachers and students. Promoting professional learning opportunities for colleagues and community service has always been the important role of teacher leaders. The additional roles of teacher leaders also include a focus on school management and observation, demonstration, and feedback to colleagues, attending conferences to redeliver the knowledge to peers, and developing a curriculum (Feiler et al., 2000). Apart from the above-highlighted roles that the teachers need to play, they need to be adoptable to the situation in order to improve school management and effectiveness.

In order to carry out their roles effectively as leaders, a conducive school support structure is required.

### **1.9. School Support Structure for Teacher Leadership**

School administrators should provide the required support to teacher leaders to lead in the schools. Principals should create a supporting culture in schools that supports collaboration among teachers, provides time for teachers' professional development, and recognizes, rewards, and celebrates the accomplishments of teacher leaders. The provision of training for teachers is also required to update them with the latest innovations in the field of education. By giving teachers structured and predictable opportunities to interact and collaborate with one another, collective learning is improved and teacher leaders are better able to contribute to the professional development of their colleagues (Symlie& Perry, 1998).

Principals should share leadership responsibilities with teachers and create opportunities for them to lead different activities of schools. The school culture should provide empowerment and autonomy are two contributing factors to the success of teacher leadership. They should have autonomy (i.e., curriculum autonomy, professional development autonomy, assessment

autonomy, classroom management autonomy, collaboration autonomy). Teachers should be empowered to take initiative and the required support and resources should be made readily available. The principle of “no blame innovation” is required to be followed when teachers take initiative. In addition to that they should be encouraged to take risks. Taking decisions on important matters should be based on a collective approach. Principals should involve teachers in framing the code of conduct and policies of the school. Building partnerships with experienced leaders (i.e., businessmen, parents, neighbor teachers) from stakeholders and community members are also required. This is because teacher leadership practices are highly essential to develop the required skills and competencies among teacher leaders to accomplish their roles effectively.

### **1.10. Teacher Leadership: The Present Scenario**

To enhance the effectiveness of the education system and improve the quality of education, a special focus on teacher leadership is needed. It is required to prepare the teachers to deal with existing problems like lack of transparency, inadaptability, and incompetency. From the organizational point of view, the number of organizations that help to bring development and empowerment in teachers for leadership is less. The National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA) in partnership with the UK (UKIERI) and the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) with the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) have proposed to develop school standards for leadership. They have played a crucial role by organizing workshops for capacity building and effective practices for teacher as leaders, but this initiative is not sufficient enough for achieving the continuous development of teacher leaders.

India being a developing country, requires a greater responsibility from the teacher leaders to maximize institutional effectiveness and achieve organizational goals. Also, there is a need for a systematic approach to developing teacher leaders as it plays an effective role in children’s training and success (Right to Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009). Though the government has taken different initiatives to improve the quality of secondary education, however, the status of secondary education in Odisha is not satisfactory in terms of basic facilities, teachers’ qualifications, and teachers’ competencies. Many schools lack electricity, separate restrooms for boys and girls, drinking water facilities, and playgrounds (Dash, 2015). Most secondary schools in Odisha lack e-Pathshala accessibility. 52% of schools did not have science laboratory and 82% schools did not have

computer laboratory (Behera, 2023). 56.7% teachers used effective teaching-learning strategies and 56.6% of teachers sometimes use TLMs ( Mallick , 2023).

In addition to that, many teachers generally lack formal training for developing their knowledge, which acts as an obstacle to learning skills to exercise leadership. It is also seen that the trained secondary school teachers 21 have higher educational leadership than the untrained teachers, private/unaided secondary school teachers have higher educational leadership than the government school teachers, male teachers have slightly higher educational leadership than female teachers, and rural teachers had slightly higher leadership than urban teachers (Marak,2013). It was also observed that teachers have differences in leadership qualities below 30 years of age and above 30 years of age (Rani,2011).

In this case, future challenges will revolve around how teachers practice leadership in schools, what should be the structure of the school that supports teacher leadership, finding solutions to obstacles that they will face, and how teacher leadership is considered as a role from the perception of the head of the institutions and teachers.

### **1.11. Dimensions of Teacher Leadership undertaken in the Present Study**

The dimensions of teacher leadership i.e., collaboration, mentoring, promoting professional development activities, facilitating improvement in classroom practices, improving school culture, networking, and improving curriculum have been undertaken in the study. Elaborative explanations of all the dimensions of teacher leadership are as follows:

#### **Collaboration**

Teacher leaders collaborate with colleagues to promote systematic collaboration with families, community members, business and community leaders, and other stakeholders to improve the educational system and increase learning opportunities for students. Teacher leader collaborate with colleagues, families and community to develop comprehensive strategies to address the diverse educational needs of families and the community Teacher Leader Model Standards,2011).

Teacher leaders utilize group processes to help work in a collaborative manner in solving problems, decision-making, managing conflict, and promoting positive and meaningful

change. Teamwork, collective initiative, and good communication among teacher colleagues are highlighted. A collaborative culture is foremost important for the effective practice of teacher leadership. According to research on high-performing schools, student learning is improved at those institutions that foster cultures of collaboration and professional inquiry (Waters, Marzano & McNulty, 2008).

### **Mentoring**

Mentoring is assisting people to learn and develop both professionally and personally. Here teacher leader is a mentor, who is more experienced and knowledgeable and helps less knowledgeable or less experienced teachers to develop the needed skills to be effective in the classroom. Mentoring helps novice teachers to be active members of the school community. Teacher leaders provide supports to colleagues for individual reflection and professional growth as a mentor or coach (Teacher Leader Model Standards,2011).

### **Promoting Professional Development Activities**

Teacher leaders promote professional learning for continuous improvement of colleagues. The teacher leader understands the evolving nature of teacher and learning, established and emerging technologies, and the school community (Teacher Leader Model Standards,2011). The teacher leader uses this knowledge to promote, design, and facilitate job-embedded professional learning aligned with school improvement goals (TLEC, 2010, p. 41).

### **Facilitating Improvement in Classroom Practices**

Teacher Leaders take initiatives for improving practice and student learning. They are also required to help colleagues in selecting appropriate strategies for improving students learning. Some functions of teacher leaders for improving practice are helping colleagues in adopting innovative pedagogy, classroom management, managing diversity, and resource management.

### **Improving School Culture**

Teacher leaders should foster a good academic culture in school. They should foster a collaborative culture to support educator development and student learning (Teacher Leader Model Standards,2011). For this teacher leaders need to take the initiative to improve

discipline, build a good rapport with colleagues and students, and foster a culture of safety that enhances the job satisfaction of teachers.

### **Networking**

Networking is said to be a means to facilitate collaboration among teachers, principals, families, and the community. Teacher leaders should develop local, state, and national level networks for teachers to share practices and support each other in need (Teacher Leader Model Standards,2011). It refers to networking with colleagues from their own school as well as neighborhood schools for professional discussion, involving parents in their children's learning, and reforming school culture, taking initiatives to make students ideal citizens, facilitating networking with neighbor colleagues, and raising funds for school.

### **Improving Curriculum**

Teacher leaders should always search for opportunities and take initiatives to improve curriculum, instruction, and examination. They facilitate improvements in instruction and student learning (Teacher Leader Model Standards,2011).Teacher leaders have to support colleagues to adopt inclusive pedagogy, help students to attain mastery of each concept, and improve curricular activities. They are required to supervise the implementation of the curriculum and take initiatives to enhance the quality of teaching.

## **1.12 Rationale of the Study**

Nowadays, several policies and frameworks have been formulated worldwide to enhance school effectiveness. It is generally believed that school principals are mostly responsible for school effectiveness. Consequently, it has been seen that largely leadership of school principals has been studied. However, teachers are also involved in a lot of leadership practices outside the classroom and in the schools. School teachers have led various activities and taken initiatives to improve school functions. It has been seen that teachers contribute a lot beyond their assigned roles. So it is imperative to study the roles and responsibilities of secondary teachers to know whether teachers are overburdened by their additional responsibilities, are their roles blurred or ambiguous. Therefore, it needs to be examined whether teachers of government, GIA, and private schools have time to practice leadership, and whether are they involved in some leadership practices beyond their defined roles.

Teacher leadership is a powerful catalyst for enhancing collaboration among school staff. By modeling collaborative practices, and fostering open communication, teacher leaders help to build a school environment where teachers are more willing and able to work together. This collaboration ultimately leads to improved teaching practices, enhanced professional development, and better student outcomes. Collaboration among teachers was necessary for improvement (Doyle, 2000). Collaboration may be different in government, GIA, and private schools, which needs to be studied.

Teacher leadership itself serves as a professional development pathway that offers teachers opportunities to develop leadership skills. Teacher leaders may identify what are the different needs of colleagues and take the initiative to provide continuous professional development opportunities accordingly. The professional development initiatives taken by secondary teachers in different management types needs to be examined. Mentoring is an important leadership skill, teacher leaders may mentor teacher colleagues to exercise their leadership skills. Thus, it is imperative to study whether these mentoring practices are being exercised by the teachers in different management types.

Job satisfaction of teachers depends on the culture of the schools. In all three kinds of schools i.e., government, GIA, private schools the culture of the school is different. The culture may be democratic, authoritative, inclusive, or open culture. School culture greatly influence teacher performance. Teacher leaders may take initiatives to improve the school culture which required investigation.

Teacher leadership plays a vital role in improving curriculum. Teacher leaders may support colleagues to improve curricular activities and adopt inclusive pedagogy in various ways. They may supervise the curriculum implementation and take initiatives to improve the quality of teaching.

Networking is essential to improve schools. It plays a vital role in fostering connections, collaboration, and resource-sharing among educators, administrators, students, and the wider community. Networking provides educators with a support system where they can share experiences, seek advice, and gain emotional and professional encouragement. Thus, the feelings of isolation among teachers can be reduced and contribute to a positive school culture. Teacher leaders may initiate networking with outside school teachers. Therefore, the networking practices by government, GIA, and private teachers need to be examined.

Teacher leadership practices are also needed for school improvement. The structural support in terms of communication patterns, and school customs, that exist in the school hierarchy should allow teachers to practice leadership at schools. Apparently, in the light of developing leadership capacity among teacher leaders, the scope for practicing leadership and adequate facilities provided at the school, cannot be ignored. Therefore, it becomes important to study the school structure and opportunities that are being provided by principals of secondary schools to promote teacher leadership. At the time of practicing leadership in the school, the problems confronted by the teachers are also important to know. Hence, it helps in designing appropriate educational strategies and setting goals for educational organizations to eradicate the barriers to leadership skill development which in turn is helpful for developing students' achievement and promoting school effectiveness.

Out of the literature reviewed, it was seen that research on teacher leadership is limited in the Indian context. Most studies focused on the leadership among principals of secondary schools. However, a large strand of literature on teacher leadership is conducted abroad. Out of the literature reviewed the researcher did not come across any study on teacher leadership practices of secondary school teachers of Bargarh district in Odisha. Therefore, the study has been undertaken.

### **1.13 Research Questions**

1. How do teachers of secondary schools demonstrate leadership practices in their schools?
2. What is the support structure that facilitates the practice of teacher leadership?
3. What are the barriers for practicing teacher leadership?

### **1.14 Statement of the problem**

A Study on Teacher Leadership Practices of Secondary School Teachers of Bargarh District in Odisha

### **1.15 Objectives of the study**

1. To examine the roles and responsibilities of secondary school teachers.
2. To find out the school support structure for teacher leadership at the secondary level.
3. To examine teacher leadership practices in secondary schools.

4. To identify the problems which come in the way of practicing teacher leadership at the secondary level.
5. To measure the perception of teachers and principals towards teacher leadership at the secondary level.

## **1.16 Explanation of the Terms**

### **1.Roles and responsibilities of teachers**

The roles and responsibilities of secondary school teachers include curricular activities, co-curricular activities, administrative duties, and outside-school duties.

### **2.School Support Structure**

In this study, the school support structure includes school culture i.e., communication pattern, teacher autonomy, school customs, rules, and regulations, and administrative support of the secondary schools which supports teacher leadership.

### **3.Teacher Leadership Practices**

Teacher leadership practice includes the opportunities that teachers have in school to practice leadership. In this study, teacher leadership practices include collaboration with teachers, principals, and the community, mentoring, promoting professional development activities, facilitating classroom practices improvement, improving curriculum, networking, and improving school culture.

### **4.Secondary School**

It is an institution that provides secondary education as imparted to students of 9th and 10th standards.

## **1.17 Operational definition of the Term**

### **1.Perception**

For the present study, perception means the score obtained from the perception scale for secondary school teachers and the perception scale for secondary school principals developed by the investigator.

### **1.18 Delimitation of the study**

1. The present study will be delimited to teachers and principals of government secondary schools, new GIA (Grant in Aid) secondary schools, private secondary schools of Bargarh district in Odisha, India.
2. The present study will be delimited to government secondary schools, new GIA (Grant in Aid) secondary schools, private secondary schools that are affiliated to the Board of Secondary education, Odisha (BSE Board, Odisha).
3. The present study will be delimited to seven dimensions of teacher leadership including collaboration with teachers, principals, and the community, mentoring, promoting professional development activities, facilitating classroom practices improvement, improving curriculum, networking, and improving school culture.