

Developing Teacher Leadership for School Improvement in Pakistan: A Comparative Study

Fauzia Shamim & Stephen Anderson*

Introduction

The paper seeks to compare the development of teacher leadership in three partner schools of the Aga Khan University Institute for Educational Development (AKU-IED), Karachi, Pakistan. These case studies form part of a larger study undertaken to investigate the impact of AKU-IED's interventions for school improvement through teacher development in Pakistan. The comparative analysis was guided by a framework adapted from J. York-Barr, & K. Duke, 'What do we know about teacher leadership? Findings from two decades of scholarship,' Review of Educational Research, 74:3 (2004) pp. 255-316. Lessons learnt for teacher leadership development can help strengthen teacher leadership roles in schools and inform further research on teacher leadership in varied educational settings in Pakistan and elsewhere.

Introduction

Recently, the positions of heads of department and subject coordinators have been instituted in many schools in Pakistan.¹ This is in the wake of the current interest in the concept of teacher leadership and practices internationally as an important means of strengthening the quality of teaching and learning in schools.² Located within the theoretical concept

* Fauzia Shamim is Professor and Chair, Department of English, University of Karachi, and, Stephen Anderson, Professor, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto, Canada.

¹ A. Halai & Anderson, 'Case studies of school improvement', unpublished research report, (Karachi: Aga Khan University Institute for Educational Development, 2005).

² See for example, F. Crowther, & P. Olsen, 'Teachers as leaders – an exploratory framework', *International Journal of Educational Management*, 11:1 (1997), pp. 6-13; 'D. Frost & A. Harris, 'Teacher leadership: Towards a research agenda', *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 33:3 (2003), pp.479-98;' Brian I. Reid, K., & L.C. Boyes, 'Teachers or learning leaders: Where

of distributed leadership, the aims of teacher leadership vary from teacher empowerment and their increased participation in decision making to facilitating the head teacher in playing his/her role as an instructional leader for school improvement.

Case studies of teacher leadership in several contexts have found that it is possible to redistribute power, authority and responsibility for purposeful learning³ and the development of professional learning communities.⁴ However, research has also demonstrated that ‘teacher leadership cannot be allowed to happen by chance, but must be supported with changes in role, training and structure’.⁵

This paper will analyze the concept and practice of teacher leadership for school improvement in selected cases from a two-year impact study titled ‘Case Studies of School improvement’ (2003-2005).⁶ The study was undertaken to investigate the impact of the Aga Khan University Institute for Educational Development’s (henceforth AKU-IED) interventions in its partner or ‘cooperating’ schools. The AKU-IED’s approach to school improvement predicts that cadres of IED trained master teachers (referred to as Professional Development Teachers – PDTs) and subject specialists, supported by AKU-IED trained head teachers, will diffuse and support new methods of teaching and learning in their home schools.⁷ Seven cases were selected for the

have all the teachers gone? Gone to be leaders, everyone’, *Educational Studies*, 30:3 (2004), pp. 251-264, and J. York-Barr, & K. Duke, ‘What do we know about teacher leadership? Findings from two decades of scholarship’, *Review of Educational Research*, 74:3 (2004), pp.255-316.

³ S. Gonzales & L. Lambert, ‘Teacher leadership in professional development schools: Emerging conceptions, identities, and practices’, *Journal of School Leadership*, 11 (2001), pp.6-24.

⁴ A. Harris, ‘Teacher leadership as distributed leadership: Heresy, fantasy or possibility? *School Leadership and Management*, 23:3 (2003), pp.313-24.

⁵ J.A Patterson & C. Marshall, ‘Making sense of policy paradoxes: A case study of teacher leadership’, *Journal of School Leadership*, 11 (September 2001), pp.372-98.

⁶ See A. Halai & Anderson, *op.cit.*, The second author was one of the principal investigators of the study while the first author was a case researcher.

⁷ For Details about AKU-IED’s model of school improvement, see A. Khamis & P. Sammons, ‘Development of a cadre of teacher educators: Some lessons from Pakistan’, *International Journal of Educational Development*, 24 (2004), pp.255–68.

A. Khamis & P.Sammons, ‘Investigating educational change: The Aga Khan University Institute for Educational Development teacher education

study. Major criteria for selection of cases included: variety of school systems in education in Pakistan (private not-for-profit schools and government schools), a school's length of partnership with AKU-IED (minimum five years) and number of AKU-IED graduates from its various teacher education programs at certificate, diploma and degree level present in a school at the time of the study. Data collection was guided by four major themes representing AKU-IED's major areas of intervention for school improvement, i.e., teaching, learning and assessment, student learning outcomes, academic leadership and coordination and teacher-teacher interaction. Data was collected through classroom observation, semi-structured interviews and document analysis.⁸ This paper is based on case study data from three schools, selected for the varied experiences and insights they provide about teacher leadership in Pakistani schools: CBO Girls Secondary School (CBO), Great Minds School, Junior Secondary Girls section (GMS), both private community-based schools, and Government Secondary Girls Schools (GSSG) representing a 'good' school in the public sector.⁹ CBO is a case of sustained school improvement efforts on the part of the school and the school system of which it is a part. GMS represents a scenario of introducing radical changes in traditional leadership roles and relationships, including teacher leadership roles and positions, driven by a curriculum reforms initiative, both at school and system levels. In both cases, there was an institutional mandate for change with a shared vision for school improvement. In contrast, GSSG represents a case of school improvement efforts by one individual, the highly committed head teacher of this school, unsupported by the school system.

The paper begins with a critical examination of the story of teacher leadership development in the three selected cases. The comparative analysis and discussion of teacher leadership in the subsequent section is guided by a set of questions adapted from York-Barr & Duke and by prior research about the development and implementation of teacher leadership and school improvement.¹⁰ Finally,

for school improvement model', *International Journal of Educational Development*, 27 (2007), pp.572-80.

⁸ A. Halai, & Anderson, *op.cit.*

⁹ Case reports of these schools are available with the Aga Khan University Institute for Education Development and the case authors. The CBO case is also reported in Anderson & R. Kumari, 'Continuous improvement at Girls Secondary school, in A. Halai & Anderson, *op.cit.*

¹⁰ J. York-Barr, & K. Duke., *op.cit.*, Also see J. Murphy, 'Teacher leadership: Barriers and supports', in T. Townsend (ed.), *International handbook of school effectiveness and improvement*, Springer, 2007, pp.681-706.

the discussion is widened to derive some lessons for the development of teacher leadership for school improvement in the varied school systems in Pakistan and similar contexts elsewhere.

It may be argued that, ultimately, the justification for creating new teacher leadership roles centers on whether and how the enactment of those roles contributes to improvement in the quality of teaching and learning. In the original case studies upon which this cross case analysis of teacher leadership development is based, the emergence of teacher leadership roles in the case study schools and school systems functioned within the domain of academic coordination as a significant mediating variable between the AKU-IED pedagogical training inputs and evidence of changes in teaching methods and student learning. The analysis of impact on student learning was, however, confounded by a variety of factors, including incomplete records of student academic results, changes in curriculum and in examination systems during the decade of school partnerships with AKU-IED; also, the fact that the number of ‘trained’ teachers in each school increased incrementally over time and was subject to teacher turnover effects, thus making it difficult to link measures of student outcomes to a stable independent variable. Furthermore, the forms of teacher leadership that emerged in each building were different, which places further constraints on the potential for generalizing about the nature or consequences of teacher leadership. Hence, in this paper, we focus on factors associated with the creation and enactment of this key mediating variable, school and system teacher leaders.

This limitation on empirical evidence of the impact teacher leadership practices on the quality of teaching and learning is not unique to this study and analysis. In a comprehensive review of teacher leadership research, for example, Murphy asserts that the ‘evidence on the impact of teacher leadership remains thin’.¹¹ A recent investigation of the links between school leadership and learning, in approximately 180 schools across 43 school districts in the United States, however, found that principal’s instructional leadership behaviors had little influence on teaching practices or student learning unless they occurred together with shared leadership for decision making and a strong professional community of teachers. While the findings from that study offer positive support for the idea of teacher leadership, they were non-specific as to the forms that teacher leadership might take.¹² Nonetheless, there appears

¹¹ *Ibid.*,

¹² K.S Louis, Leithwood, K. Wahlstrom, Anderson, S. Michlin, M. et al, *Learning from districts’ efforts to improve student achievement: Final*

to be consensus within the education community that while principals and school system officials may be able to manage the administration of schools without significant involvement of teachers, they cannot provide effective leadership for ongoing improvement in the quality of teaching and learning on their own, hence, the arguments for developing and strengthening teacher leadership in schools. The specific aim of this analysis is to derive insights into the nature and conditions affecting efforts to strengthen teacher leadership for school improvement in diverse Pakistani schools.

Case 1- CBO Girls Secondary School (CBO)

CBO Girls Secondary School (GSS) is one of a set of primary and secondary schools on three campuses run by a non-profit charitable organization funded mainly through an endowment and donations from members of its guardian religious community. Overall the school building is well-maintained and the school has comparatively better resources than are generally available in private schools serving middle and lower middle classes in Pakistan.

At the time of the study, there were 20 teachers in the CBO Girls Secondary; the majority had received qualifications through AKU-IED teacher education programs.

Teacher leadership roles in Girls Secondary were situated within CBO's overall school improvement program over a period of nearly ten years. In CBO, teacher leadership roles evolved with the change in the nature and focus of on-site school improvement initiatives. The story of teacher leadership began soon after the first graduate of AKU-IED's M.Ed program returned to the school as Professional Development Teacher (PDT). At first she worked under the school head in the Boys section of the school, and initiated a strategy of coaching untrained teachers. Between 1995-97, the teachers who completed the AKU-IED four month subject area certificate programs¹³ were paired with untrained teachers in a formal program of 'peer-coaching' that replicated the strategy begun by the PDT. A number of structural arrangements were made to facilitate this such as timetabling for shared planning time, and

Report of Research to the Wallace Foundation (NY: Wallace Foundation, 2010).

¹³ In addition to the M.Ed. program AKU-IED delivers 12 months diploma and 4 months certificate programs for selected teachers from cooperating schools in different subject specialties (e.g., English, Mathematics, Social Studies & Science). For further details, see I. Farah and B. Jaworshi (eds.), *partnership in education development* (London: Symposium Press, 2006).

alternate teaching times (so they could observe one another). No formal role designation or compensation was attached to this PDT or peer coach leadership positions. However, this 'model' became logistically impossible and perhaps unnecessary to formally sustain after large numbers of teachers were trained. Additionally, the ongoing turnover of teachers indicated the need for another 'model'. Under the new model, the PDTs' role evolved from a Professional Development Teacher working part of her time with a group of teachers in her school to a system-level role of 'peer-coaching mentor'. In 1998, the PDT was joined by another M.Ed graduate from AKU-IED. Subsequently, the role of the two Professional Development Teachers was situated within an on-site 'School Improvement Centre'. The PDTs reported to the principal and were assigned to work for the professional development of all teachers in the various sections of the school. Individual school section heads were expected to facilitate their access to the classrooms of all teachers.

In the next phase of school improvement, a subject-focused pool system was created at the systems level (serving all campuses) for teachers' professional development with senior secondary subject teachers (often graduates of the AKU-IED subject specialist diploma program) being appointed as pool heads to mentor teachers in their subject areas. The pool heads, in turn, were mentored by the PDTs. Thus the role of the PDTs evolved from a teacher mentor to a 'leader of leaders'.

It is important to note that structural adjustments were made at each stage of development above to accommodate and/or support the change effort. This included a redefinition of the role and responsibilities of teacher leaders and school heads. Constant monitoring by the PDTs and the school management of the impact of various school improvement initiatives also helped in redefining the roles of teacher leaders and school heads as well as the knowledge and skills required of them. Appointment of teachers with higher level of qualifications from AKU-IED with associated knowledge, skills and attitudes for teacher leadership was facilitated by the number of human resources developed by AKU-IED through its long-term partnership with this school system. As more teachers obtained subject specialist qualifications through AKU-IED's one year field-based diploma programs, the teacher leaders' (pool heads) role expanded from mentoring the existing teachers to inducting new teachers through formal training mechanisms such as workshops and summer camps. The institutional arrangement that led to the establishment of the pool structure as the core activity for teachers' professional development allowed the teacher leaders to exercise their

leadership roles in ‘structured’ time and space. This, in turn, contributed to the on-the-job professional growth of the pool heads, both in terms of their subject expertise and leadership skills.

Phase	Teacher leadership positions	Scope of work/role(s)	Characteristic features/other contextual factors
I 1995-97	No formal positions	<u>School level only:</u> Trained teachers peer coaching untrained teachers led by the PDT	PDT recognized as teacher leader but no formal designation
II 1998-2001	Pool-heads (subject specialist teachers); PDTs as mentors	<u>System level only:</u> Pool heads coaching and leading professional development activities in all campuses; PDTs mentoring pool-heads	PDTs designated as ‘peer-coaching mentor’ within a newly established on-site ‘School Improvement Centre’- but reporting directly to the principal; section heads expected to support the PDTs
III 2002 - 2005 (i.e., time of the study)	PDT’s role merged with section head; ‘pool heads’(subject specialists)	Both system and school level: PDTs as section heads working on curriculum development, mentoring etc. at system level; Pool-heads engaged in subject-based mentoring at school level	Section heads dismissed; PDTs appointed as Section Heads

Table 1: Evolution of teacher leadership roles at CBO

In 2002, a change in school leadership occurred. The two PDTs were appointed as section heads of the Boys and Girls Secondary

Schools, replacing the previous heads who had continued to play a primarily administrative role. . On the one hand, this signaled a formal merger of the instructional leadership and management roles of head teachers. An immediate consequence of this merger, however, was a reduction of the amount of time that the former PDTs could devote to mentoring and training. To compensate in part, the CBO authorities decentralized the pool system to the school level, and appointed school level pool heads. This development, it seems, was timely as by this time a critical mass of trained senior teachers was available at each school. This shift, however, did produce some temporary personnel issues in the school, because the CBO authorities based the pool head appointments on a combination of demonstrated teacher expertise and training, which conflicted with traditional norms of seniority for appointment to leadership positions.

Subsequently in 2003/4, the teacher leaders working at school level were incorporated into the appraisal of teachers for seniority and rewards such as merit pay in collaboration with the section heads, pool heads, and the principal. Though, at the time of the study the impact of this decision on teacher leaders' relationship with their colleagues was not apparent, this conflation of the roles of teacher evaluation for development and teacher appraisal for performance and associated salary benefits posed a threat to the mutual trust and collegiality among the teacher leaders and their peers that had evolved in the school improvement process.

To summarize, two main trends were visible in the evolution of teacher leadership roles in CBO. First, there was a shift from system level to school level roles as evidenced in the career trajectories of the two PDTs. In addition, the pool head roles, which were initially system roles as well, were later decentralized to school level with growing human resources to undertake these teacher leadership positions and related activities. Second, a hierarchy of teacher leadership roles evolved with a change in school conditions, emerging needs and available human resources to meet these needs for school improvement. This began with a role split at the system level between mentoring/coaching the peer coaching teams and pool heads and planning and facilitating curriculum and professional development activities undertaken mainly by the two PDTs, and doing clinical supervision and coaching of teachers on a regularly scheduled basis entrusted to the pool heads: 'This evolution and redistribution of teacher leadership roles and responsibilities marked the start of a shift towards differentiated staffing model for academic

coordination'.¹⁴ However, as the PDTs reported directly to the principal with no line relationship with the school head, the ambiguity of their authority and leadership and that of the section heads became an issue ultimately leading to dismissal of heads and their replacement by the PDTs. This led to a convergence in their roles, as administrators and instructional leaders with uncertain consequences at the time of the study for sustainability of their significant instructional leadership functions. The longitudinal story of teacher leadership at CBO presents teacher leadership as a dynamic and evolving phenomenon with its organizational context, not as a fixed innovation in leadership roles and functions that can be simply defined and replicated.

As we will see below these kinds of tension did not develop at GMS as school level teacher leaders had a line relationship with the head teacher whose role was defined as an instructional leader only. The section head, in turn, had a direct reporting relationship with the school principal.

Case 2- Great Minds School (GMS)

GMS is part of a large network of schools managed by the Aga Khan Educational Services, an NGO, which in turn is part of an international development agency owned by a religious community. Junior Secondary Girls (JSG), one of the five sections of GMS, was the focus of this study.

GMS-JSG has a section head and a team of seven Learning Area Coordinators (LACs) to support her in her role as instructional leader. There is one principal heading all the five 'schools' in GMS with an overall responsibility for school leadership and management of the school. She is assisted in administrative matters by an administrative officer. The principal is responsible to the Chief Executive Officer of the south zone of the school system, who in turn reports to a central Board of Governors. System level support for GMS as for other network schools in the south zone is available from an Education Office comprising a Manager Academics, four Program Officers and seven Program Associates, one for each Learning Area Program identified in the local school system curriculum.¹⁵

The story of developing teacher leadership in GMS-JSG is situated within the context of a recent school improvement initiative of the school system of which it is a part. Prior history of school improvement initiatives in GMS indicates that teachers on return from

¹⁴ Anderson & R. Kumari, *op.cit.*

¹⁵ This was the organizational step up at the time of the study. We understand that some changes have taken place in this set up since then.

their training programs at AKU-IED, and elsewhere, worked in their individual capacity at the level of their own classrooms with no organized infrastructure for utilization back in schools and across the system. While there were formal positions of Heads of Department in each school, these were mainly for administrative purposes and not focused on improving instructional practices or student learning outcomes in their respective subject areas.

In 2001, a new phase of school improvement started with a team of 'experts', mainly comprising AKU-IED graduates working in the network schools, working under the aegis of the Education Office, South,¹⁶ to support the schools in curriculum development and its effective implementation at the classroom level. Seven Learning Area Programs (LAPs) were developed for all grade levels (grade I to X) in the school. The new curriculum was launched in April 2003, i.e., at the beginning of the academic year 2003-2004, in all classes from early years to grade X in the three schools in Karachi. An important aim of curricular change was to enable a shift from rote learning to inquiry-based learning, which was consistent with the approach to teaching emphasized in AKU-IED teacher training programs.

Changes were introduced in the institutional structure to support curriculum change at both the school system and school levels. At the system level, this included the designation of the seven Program Associates, one for each curriculum learning area. In addition, the roles and responsibilities of various school level leadership positions were restructured. For example, the role of the Section Head was redefined as mainly a pedagogical leader. Similarly, Heads of Department (HODs) were replaced by Learning Area Coordinators (LAC), one for each Learning Area program, to support the teachers in implementing the new curriculum at the classroom level. The policies for the appointment and appraisal of teachers and other positions in the school were also revised to accommodate and support the curriculum change.

The section head along with the seven teacher leaders or LACs formed the core academic leadership group in GMS-JSG.¹⁷ The LACs were supposed to teach in the classroom for 50% of their time. During the rest of their time they were expected to mentor the teachers in their learning area, help in identifying resources and areas for improvement in their Learning Area Program, and support the section head in her job of academic leadership. Some teachers felt, particularly in cases where the earlier HODs had assumed the new role of LAC, that the change was

¹⁶ This was formally established in 2002.

¹⁷ This teacher leadership system was followed in all GMS schools.

evident only in the substantial increase in the paper work of LACs in comparison with earlier heads of department. This highlights the issues surrounding creating new teacher leadership roles where those assigned to the posts are previously accustomed to serving in traditional leadership roles that might not genuinely fit the new expectations. Though LACs had a lighter teaching load, they were often assigned to cover classes for absent teachers in their 'free' periods. Also lack of coordination, evident in timetabling and organizing field trips, affected LAC's planned schedule for classroom observation and pre and post conferencing with teachers.

Phase	Teacher leadership position	Scope of work/role(s)	Characteristic features/contextual factors
Before 2001	Heads of Department	<u>School level:</u> Mainly administrative role	Dissatisfaction with this system
2001-2005 (i.e. time of the study)	Section head and 7 Learning Area Coordinators (LACs); Program Associates (PAs)	<u>School level:</u> LACs supporting teachers in curriculum implementation efforts at classroom level <u>System level:</u> PAs responsible for curriculum development, in-service training; supporting LACs in schools	Curriculum renewal; formal teacher leadership positions introduced at both school and system level; redefinition of roles of section heads and other changes in organizational structure at school and system level, e.g., establishment of a central education office

Table 2: Evolution of teacher leadership roles at GMS

As pointed out by various stake holders, the roles of LAC and Program Associate, at the school and system level respectively, were non-hierarchical and put in place to support quality teaching and learning only. For example, the LACs had no supervisory line authority over classroom teachers, though their advanced curriculum and teaching expertise was acknowledged as a feature of their role. Similarly, there was no reporting relationship between LACs, i.e., teacher leaders at the

school level and Program Associates at the system level. The LACs reported to the section heads who, in turn, were responsible to the principal. As a result, collegiality and a feeling of collaborative team work characterized the interaction between the teacher leaders at the school and system level. The same mutual trust and respect was also observed in interactions amongst LACs and the teachers in the school. However, issues of limited time and opportunity for meetings and other joint activities were raised by both LACs and the teachers.

To summarize, at GMS, the new role of LAC was created to replace the earlier head of department position mainly to support curriculum change at the classroom level. At the same time, an infrastructure of support was created for these school-based teacher leadership positions through a redefinition of the role of school section head as instructional leader and the appointment of Program Associates in the newly established central Education Office. The teacher leadership roles were defined as non-hierarchical both at the school and system level. This lack of any direct reporting relationship amongst teacher leaders at various levels contributed to feelings of mutual trust and improved collegiality amongst them. However, the underlying issues of communication, coordination, and appropriation of the LAC time for substitute teaching are issues that could militate against the effective implementation of these teacher leadership roles.

Case 3: Government Secondary School for Girls (GSSG)

Despite the mushroom growth of private schools in Pakistan, particularly during the last decade,¹⁸ the government remains the largest school system in Pakistan. However, teacher agency for initiating change does not figure prominently in the current organizational structure of the public-sector school system in Pakistan. In this scenario, the GSSG, reputed to be a ‘good school’ was selected as an example of ‘good practice’.

GSSG has the reputation of being a ‘strict’ school ‘focused on teaching and teacher discipline’.¹⁹ The head teacher was the founding administrator for this school and had remained with the school for thirty

¹⁸ Harlech-Jones et al report a proliferation of private schools even in rural and remote areas of Pakistan. See B. Harlech-Jones, M. Baig, S. Sajid, S. ur-Rahman, ‘Private schooling in the Northern Areas of Pakistan: A decade of rapid expansion,’ *International Journal of Educational Development*, 25, pp.557-68.

¹⁹ I. Farah, ‘Improving a government secondary school for girls: A case report’, in A. Halai & Anderson, *op.cit.*, p.4.

years. The high level of commitment displayed by the head teacher along with her continuity of leadership makes this school rather unique amongst the public-sector schools in Pakistan.²⁰

At the time of the study, 8 teachers were present in the school out of a total of 12 teachers (and the recently retired head teacher) trained by AKU-IED.

As indicated above, there is little room, within the organizational structure of the public school system in Pakistan, for a school head to independently take decisions or make significant changes in the school. However, the head of GSSG seems to have been able to push the system and introduce the concept of teacher leadership in her school: 'A significant change observed in the school over the last few years has been the distribution of authority to teachers and inviting their participation in decision making'.²¹ Initially, the head teacher mentored the teachers by observing classes, and leading planning and reflection in meetings. She also monitored teachers' work and syllabus completion through checking their daily diaries. This was a lot of work along with her administrative duties at the school. Hence, she appointed subject coordinators known as 'in charge' teachers to facilitate her in her role as an instructional leader. The head required these and other teachers when sent for external professional development, to do presentations for their peers upon their return. This was not common practice before. The head teacher also insisted that teachers show up for work in accordance with district policy, even during exam time, (once again not a common practice in government schools) and then engaged them in curriculum or professional development work led by their peers. In this way, she leveraged existing policy to create an organizational context for teacher leadership (albeit informal) to emerge as an expectation and norm. Teachers who did not like it left the school.

As these teacher leadership positions remained informal, there were no associated incentives and rewards for these teacher leaders or even recognition of their work except at the school level. However, the head teacher, through her leadership skills and role modeling, was able to create a receptive climate for teacher leadership in her school particularly

²⁰ R.F. Mohammad, 'A study of issues and opportunities of implementation change in a government school', in A. Halai & Anderson, *op.cit.*; T. Simkins, C. Sisum, & M. Memon, 'School leadership in Pakistan: Exploring the head teachers' role,' *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 14:4 (2003), pp.275-91.

²¹ I. Farah, *op.cit.*, p.14.

in regard to curriculum and lesson planning, setting exam papers, and decision making about co-curricular events.

Phase	Teacher leadership position	Scope of work	Characteristic features
I	Informal only- Head teacher	<u>School level only:</u> Head teacher working as instructional leader	At system level, head teacher's role as teacher leader is not formally recognized in the context of government schools in Pakistan; hence, no incentives and rewards at systems level
II	Informal only- Head teacher and subject coordinators tilted 'teacher in-charge'	<u>School level only:</u> Head teacher overall instructional leader; subject coordinators guiding teachers in syllabus/lesson planning and developing exam papers	Same as above for teachers also

Table 3: Evolution of teacher leadership roles at GSSG

Teacher leadership in GSSG was seen to work mainly within the existing system to improve it rather than reform the system for enhancing the quality of teaching and learning outcomes. For example, the teachers reported working with a teacher 'in charge' on division of syllabus in their respective subject areas, an activity referred to as 'forecasting', and preparing lesson plans during the period when the classes were called off due to the school serving as an exam centre. 'However, a look at the forecasting documents shows that planning involves the distribution of lessons mainly from the textbooks over the months to ensure that the syllabus will be completed before the end of the academic year'.²² Furthermore, while the subject teachers worked with the designated teacher leaders in their subject areas for developing exam papers, there was no evidence of attempts to change the exam questions or the kind of knowledge to be acquired. Similarly, while the head assigned senior

²² *Ibid.*, p.12.

teachers or teachers trained at AKU-IED to guide the junior or non-AKU-IED trained teachers, the following report from a young junior teacher indicates that her interaction with a teacher leader was not very challenging and thus may not support her to develop professionally except in a very limited way, 'I will make lesson plans with Miss S, if in any lesson she says to have translation done then we will put this in, otherwise whatever method they will use I will also use'.²³

To summarize, the emergence of teacher leadership in GSSG, a school level reform, was the result of the head teachers' individual efforts, done without changing the status quo at the system level. As a result, it may not be sustainable for long without support from the school system. Additionally, teacher leaders' efforts were limited to working within the traditional frameworks for teaching-learning rather than challenging and/or reworking them for improved student learning outcomes. Interestingly, despite several years of teacher participation in AKU-IED teacher development programs, the faculty at the school did not report a common narrative of a planned and coordinated program of school improvement in GSSG.

Comparative analysis and discussion: The story of teacher leadership in the three schools above is located within the context of various school improvement initiatives undertaken in these schools at the system or school level, during the ten years of their partnership with AKU-IED (1994-2003). The similarities and differences in the development of teacher leadership roles, and contexts for their enactment in the three cases will be discussed in this section. The comparative analysis and discussion will be guided by the following framework adapted from York-Barr and Duke²⁴ and other prior research.²⁵

- Who are teacher leaders? What are their skills and competencies?
- How are they developed and/or supported for continuous improvement?
- What are their roles and responsibilities?
- What conditions influence their role enactment?

²³ *Ibid.*, p.13

²⁴ J. York-Barr, & K. Duke, 'What do we know about teacher leadership? Findings from two decades of scholarship', *Review of Educational Research*, 74:3 (2004), pp.255-316.

²⁵ J. Murphy, 'Teacher leadership: Barriers and supports', in T. Townsend (ed.), *International handbook of school effectiveness and improvement*, Springer, 2007, pp.681-706.

Murphy,²⁶ in a recent review of conditions that hinder and facilitate efforts to strengthen teacher leadership in schools, noted that teacher leadership practice and research tends to focus on two main pathways. One centers on the creation and implementation of non-traditional formal leadership roles and functions for teachers, such as master teachers, mentor teachers and program coordinators. The second places greater emphasis on strategies to develop teachers' collective leadership influence, through the formation of communities of practice, teaching teams, or professional learning communities. As noted later, we see in the case studies that these are not mutually exclusive options. Murphy also draws attention to two fundamental school conditions that can act as barriers or as supports to the emergence and effectiveness of teacher leadership, depending in large measure on what school and school system authorities do to address the barriers and to create conditions more conducive to the work of teacher leaders. These are organizational structures (e.g, bureaucratic and hierarchical forms of organization, job descriptions, work schedules and time) and the organizational and professional culture in the school (e.g., norms of teacher privacy and autonomy; traditional norms of authority and decision-making; status norms among teachers (e.g., professional egalitarianism, seniority); the separation of management and teaching functions. We highlight, in our analysis, particular organizational structures and organizational culture factors that came into play in the school case studies of teacher leadership, some of which may be more particular to the Pakistani school context.

Who are teacher leaders? How are they developed?

Teacher leaders in all the schools under study were mainly AKU-IED graduates from its various programs. Personal capacity has been identified as an important factor for teacher leadership.²⁷ Teacher leaders are described as people with various qualities and behaviors; as people of action who, 'marshal their qualities and behaviors to bring about change

²⁶ *Ibid.*,

²⁷ F. Crowther, & P. Olsen, 'Teachers as leaders - an exploratory framework', *International Journal of Educational Management*, 11:1 (1997), pp.6-13; D. Frost & A. Harris, 'Teacher leadership: Towards a research agenda', *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 33:3 (2003), pp.479-98, and S. Gonzales, & L. Lambert, 'Teacher leadership in professional development schools: Emerging conceptions, identities, and practices', *Journal of School Leadership*, 11, (2001), pp.6-24.

in others and in schools'.²⁸ In the context of all the three case studies, a number of teachers obtained various levels of formal qualification from the AKU-IED. However, the link between credentials and positions within particular education systems in the study was found to be both problematic and idiosyncratic. In CBO, the link between AKU-IED training at different levels and the formal teacher leader roles was recognized by the governing board as an issue. Therefore, early on when the pool head roles were being created, it was decided not to make an automatic link between qualifications and roles and salary incentives. Thus teacher leadership roles were defined, but teachers with higher qualifications were not guaranteed entry to those positions (since more people were trained than positions available). Initially, the pool heads were mostly just senior teachers, informally recognized for their instructional expertise. As more teachers got their advanced subject specialist diplomas and/or M.Ed. credentials, there were many teachers with certificates and diplomas who did not have leadership appointments. Only two of the PDTs (the first two) at CBO were later appointed as section heads. Another thing that happened at CBO was that AKU-IED training made instructional expertise the primary criterion for appointment to formal teacher leadership positions. This upset the tradition of seniority being the basis for appointment to traditional leadership positions (e.g., in charges, deputy heads, HODs, council heads). This ruffled some feathers as some of the senior teachers found themselves under the pool head guidance of less senior but more trained junior teachers.

In GMS, the link between qualifications and formal teacher leadership positions seemed to be more direct and corresponded to the level of training received through AKU-IED teacher education programs. For example, graduates of AKU-IED's M.Ed program were appointed in the Education office at the system level as Professional Development Teachers, called Program Associates, to support the newly created position of teacher leaders or Learning Area Coordinators (LACs) at the school level. The LACs, who replaced the former roles of heads of department, were graduates of AKU-IED's 12 month diploma program in various subjects. Where these graduates were not available the school selected teachers for the LAC position on the basis of merit and leadership potential with a commitment to provide them the requisite training as appropriate.²⁹

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p.6.

²⁹ For detail see Shamim, *Emerging roles and relationships of teacher leaders for school improvement in Pakistan: A case study*, 2005, Proceedings of the

While qualifications from AKU-IED seemed to be a key consideration in formal appointments and promotions, all the three schools developed their own systems of internal mentoring of the teacher leaders that occurred in different ways in each setting. It seems that the schools recognized the need for further professional development, particularly for the graduates of the certificate and advanced specialist diploma courses, as unlike the M.Ed program, little time was spent in these courses on training them as change agents, e.g., in how to coach and mentor others, plan staff development, and so on. For example, at CBO the PDTs actively coached the peer coaching teams, and later the pool heads in how to carry out these kinds of functions. At GMS, the PDTs (Program Associates) actively coached the LACs in the implementation of their leadership function in addition to improving their curriculum knowledge. This indicates the need for further professional development for teacher leaders in skills and competencies required for their professional development work with colleagues such as mentoring, and teacher observation etc.

As mentioned earlier, there were no formal teacher leadership positions in GSSG. However, 'in charge' senior and AKU-IED- trained teachers were supposed to guide the junior and non AKU-IED trained teachers. They were guided, in turn, by the head teacher who had obtained her Advanced Diploma in School Management from AKU-IED. At the time of the study no system level support from the municipal school district was available to improve further or more important, sustain the teacher leadership roles developed at GSSG mainly at the behest of the head teacher.

Two issues can be identified in the development of teacher leadership roles: one is the kind of professional development teachers need to support their formal roles as teacher leaders; another is the recognition or incentives that are provided to people who seek and acquire that training. As evident in both CBO and GMS, the development of internal capacity for working collaboratively with colleagues in addition to higher level qualifications and training was or became an important feature of what was happening over time to develop and sustain their teacher leaders. In both cases, formal recognition with associated material benefits such as salary increase and opportunities for further training at AKU-IED accompanied by increased participation in decision making, for example, in teacher appraisal, provided both formal and informal incentives and rewards for the teacher leaders. In contrast,

no systematic structures and/or space were available or created in the government school system to utilize the higher levels of knowledge and skills gained by some teachers through obtaining additional qualifications. Moreover, there was no recognition of the teacher leaders' work at systems level, let alone any incentives or tangible rewards for their teacher leadership work in their school. This leads many highly motivated teachers in the public sector, particularly after they obtain higher level qualifications, to leave the system for more lucrative and professionally satisfying positions in the fast growing private sector education system in Pakistan, or to seek promotions to higher paying non-teaching roles within the government system.³⁰

What are the roles and responsibilities of teacher leaders?

Teacher leadership roles were formally established at GMS to support a major curriculum reform initiative. LACs were defined as 'catalysts' in the school to strengthen the process of learning in their relevant learning areas. Program Associates at the system level provided support to the LACs in their role implementation. At CBO, however, the specific roles evolved and were not 'institutionalized' as such- though the concept of non-traditional differentiated teacher instructional leaders at the system and school levels did continue. In both cases, the roles and responsibilities of teacher leaders were defined mainly in terms of supporting the implementation of their school improvement programs at the school and systems level. Moreover, the school management and the teacher leaders defined their role in terms of clinical instructors. This was probably due to their induction into AKU-IED's model of clinical teaching during their training programs at AKU-IED (see Farah and Jaworski, 2006). In both schools, the teacher leaders working at the system level had stepped out of their own classrooms to work with teachers across the schools in the system. However, the teacher leaders at the school level, continued to work for a percentage of their time in their own classes, while supporting teachers during the rest of their time through structured meetings, scheduled classroom observations with pre- and post-conferencing and formal training sessions conducted at the system level.³¹ Hence, their 'clinical' practice was grounded into an

³⁰ Cf., R.F. Mohammad, 'A study of issues and opportunities of implementation change in a government school', in A. Halai & Anderson, *op.cit.*

³¹ Cited in I. Reid, Brian, K., & L.C. Boyes, 'Teachers or learning leaders: Where have all the teachers gone? Gone to be leaders, everyone', *Educational Studies*, 30:3 (2003), pp.251-64.

inquiry of their own practice as well as the observation and inquiry of their colleagues' classroom practices. Thus a key characteristic of the teacher leaders in these two cases is that the 'authority for leadership' was based on their acknowledged and accepted advanced expertise in curriculum and instruction which was expressed in a non-hierarchical collegial way, as support, and not as 'evaluation' with negative consequences.

In both cases there was a formal separation of school management responsibilities from the instructional leadership roles of teacher leaders at various levels. This seemed to be in agreement with Crowther, Kaagen, Ferguson & Hann's suggestion that principals should 'assume primary responsibility for strategic leadership, such as visioning, aligning resources, and networking' while the teacher should be mainly responsible for 'pedagogical (instructional) leadership focused on implementation at the instructional level of practice'.³² In CBO, however, the original school heads reportedly did not fully support the PDTs to carry out their work with teachers in the CBO schools, and their role; even when they did it was more to facilitate scheduling etc., not to lend 'expertise'. This eventually became an issue; the heads were dismissed and the management decided to combine the section head administrative and instructional leadership roles with the appointment of the two PDTs as section heads. The PDTs transferred a major component of their ongoing coaching role to the newly appointed school-based pool heads. At GMS, however, the section heads' role was defined as an instructional leader only while other support systems were created at the system level to facilitate the section head and her team of LACs in the effective implementation of the new curriculum at the classroom level.

Teacher leadership roles evolved at both CBO and GMS (see tables 1 & 2 above). However, an important difference between the evolution of teacher leadership at CBO and the GMS is the grass roots curriculum reform initiative at GMS. That helped legitimize the new teacher leader roles and expertise. At CBO the focus of teacher

S.L. Wetig, 'Step up' or 'Step out?': Perspectives on teacher leadership. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA, 1-5 April 2002.

³² This concept of parallel leadership is one of the four conceptions of teacher leadership identified by Crowther et al and the other three being: Participative leadership, distributed leadership, and leadership as an organizational quality. See J. York-Barr & K. Duke, 'What do we know about teacher leadership? Findings from two decades of scholarship', *Review of Educational Research*, 74:3 (2004), pp.255-316.

leadership work over time was primarily on instructional and assessment practices, less on curriculum per se, though over a period of several years the PDTs did lead a curriculum revision to support English language development across the curriculum; but it was not a curriculum reform of the magnitude as at GMS. Also, it was conducted within the structure of the existing required subject areas.

Secondly, at GMS, LACs and Program Associates were appointed as teacher leaders at the school and system level respectively, mainly to develop and support the implementation of the new curriculum. In contrast, CBO started with system level positions with PDTs and pool heads in the 'School Improvement Centre' and with the PDTs performing a system level leadership role, similar to that of program Associates at GMS. Later following the development of a large pool of human resources through AKU-IED programs, this system level support was intentionally devolved to a school-based organization with the former support structure essentially disappearing over time. In the end CBO was operating similar to GMS in some sense with the pool heads working with a section head who was supposed to act as an instructional leader. However, there was no longer any central support on the pattern of Program Associates that characterized the School Improvement Center days of earlier phases. Thirdly, at GMS, the newly created teacher leadership roles at school level had a line relationship with the section head while the Program Associates at the system level reported directly to the CEO. This facilitated the development of mutual trust and collegiality amongst the teachers and LACs, and the LACs and the Program Associates. In contrast, at CBO, the PDTs initially reported to the principal with no line authority with the section heads, and the pool heads reported to the PDTs as their role was essentially a system level role. This mode of operation was partly the reason for creating tension between the PDTs and section heads which finally led to a convergence of these roles in CBO.

As mentioned earlier, at GSSG, the teacher leadership roles were largely developed and sustained through the role-modeling of instructional leadership skills and other kinds of support provided by the school's long-standing principal- a continuity of school leadership rarely found in public sector schools in Pakistan. 'In charge teachers' were entrusted with the task of supervising and supporting teachers in curriculum and lesson planning as also in setting exam papers. Junior and untrained teachers were also encouraged to share and discuss other teaching-learning issues with them. However, the lack of formal teacher leadership roles in GSSG as in other public sector schools, recognized at the system level and linked to tangible incentives and reward for their

professional development work with colleagues for which they had been trained at AKU-IED, may be detrimental to the sustainability and further development of these roles, particularly after departure of the founding head teacher.

A comparison of the teacher leadership development in the three cases indicates that it helps to have a long term vision and a distinct initiative or project within which the teacher leadership roles can be defined and legitimized in the eyes and practices of teachers. However, the advanced training and credentialing of ‘teacher leaders’ may lead to a quick turnover of teachers with advanced skills with their training providing them a leverage to seek more lucrative positions in other private schools or promotions into traditional administrative roles within their original school systems. Hence, at least at CBO, as the school was losing teachers to other schools, once enough internal expertise was available, in-house professional development programs aligned to the IED pedagogy model were developed to induct new teachers to the school into the newly institutionalized expectations for teacher beliefs and practices (i.e., new teachers got trained, but did not get formally ‘certified’). It seems that a recognition and creation of teacher leader support roles at school system level linked to the new roles at the school level is significant for the sustainability and continuous improvement of these roles.

What conditions influence teacher leadership?

Teacher leadership is constructed differently in different contexts. Teacher leadership roles are constructed within the organizational environment.³³ However, they are also influenced by the wider context such as government policies, for example, the national reform movement in the UK.³⁴ As mentioned earlier, in CBO there was evidence of evolution of leadership differentiation and distribution coupled with restructuring of support for school improvement. Thus teacher leadership roles were defined and redefined within the school’s changing focus and priorities for school improvement. Similarly, in GMS, new teacher leadership roles were established within the broad framework of a school improvement initiative undertaken at the system level. However, this initiative was preceded by years of school improvement activity in which other kinds of teacher leadership roles such as heads of department existed but perhaps less effectively. More important, these were not

³³ A. Harris, ‘Teacher leadership as distributed leadership: Heresy, fantasy or possibility? *School Leadership and Management*, 23:3 (2003), pp.313-24.

³⁴ I. Reid, Brian, K., & L.C. Boyes, *op.cit.*

institutionalized as part of an overall reform effort. It is important to note that, at the time of the study, the newly created teacher leadership roles at GMS were still being negotiated and further clarified in the light of ongoing experience and identification of related issues.³⁵ This indicates that the forms and functions of teacher leadership are also subject to evolution within schools' changing focus and priorities for improvement. Moreover, these roles as they are created may need to be rethought and restructured over time.³⁶ More important, the evolving nature of teacher leadership roles implies that the school system needs to be open to ongoing reflection and have the flexibility to engage in continuous improvement. School and school systems need to realize that what works today might not be the best system tomorrow; as goals change, and teacher expertise in innovations gets scaled up across the school, there may be a need to 'adjust' teacher leadership to the changed context and conditions of school improvement in the school.

If we examine the school contexts of CBO and GMS, we realize that CBO Girls Secondary, as compared to GMS Junior Secondary, is part of a smaller school system with decision-making powers vested mainly in a principal who was supported by AKU-IED trained Professional Development Teachers (now section heads) located in an earlier on-site 'School Improvement Centre'. Thus it seems that the evolution of teacher leadership roles and related structural adjustments were mainly possible in CBO due to two reasons: a) the independence of CBO school system; and b) the progressive vision and commitment of its senior administrators.³⁷ However, GMS did not have the same 'enabling structures' for this kind of evolution of roles and school improvement programs. The principal of GMS shared that she was deeply involved in planning the current changes in curriculum and related institutional development focusing on the reorganization of roles and responsibilities of the management at the school and system level. However, these changes were initiated at the system level, and required a more complex structural reorganization for the changes to be implemented in the network schools. Thus the school principal in GMS had limited authority to initiate changes, particularly organizational adjustments on a continuous basis as evidenced in CBO; any changes to support continuous improvement in the school needed to be discussed and agreed upon first at the system level.

³⁵ For detail see Shamim, 'Great Minds School: A learning community in action', in A. Halai & Anderson, *op.cit.*

³⁶ CBO is the best case exemplifying this, see Anderson & R. Kumari, *op.cit.*

³⁷ *Ibid.*,

CBO and GMS differed widely in terms of the size of their operations and the organizational structures to support teacher leaders in playing their role effectively. However, the two schools were similar in terms of the progressive vision and commitment of the senior management at the school and system level to school improvement. Additionally, due to the increased parental choice and competition within the private schools, there was a 'political' will to improve the quality of teaching and learning through development of teachers, curriculum, classroom methodology and innovative assessment procedures. The governing Boards' support for the changes was evident in the schools' continuing relationship with AKU-IED as cooperating schools leading to ongoing development of human resource through AKU-IED's teacher education and leadership programs. At the time of the study, all school heads and the majority of teacher leaders in these schools had received formal training from AKU-IED. Thus an understanding of the dynamics of the change process as also a shared vision and language for school improvement amongst various levels of their leadership provided an additional advantage. Organizational environment was therefore an important influence on the construction of teacher leadership roles in these schools.³⁸

As noted above, differences between the organizational complexity of the two school systems had implications for teacher leadership development in the CBO and GMS. This indicates that teacher leadership at the school level needs to be developed with sensitivity to the need for some sort of parallel changes in policy, structure, roles etc. at different levels of the systems in which they are a part. This may mean that we cannot predict or prescribe generally the authority and relationships between people in different roles at different levels of the system. However, as pointed out by Anderson,³⁹ change in one part needs to be reflected in and complemented by changes in other parts of the system. Thus it can be argued that teacher leadership roles have to be considered as part of a system and not just as an add-on with no implications for the other roles.

Formally mandated structures and systems were not present in the government school system for the development of instructional

³⁸ D. Frost & A. Harris, 'Teacher leadership: Towards a research agenda', *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 33:3 (2003), pp.479-498.

³⁹ Anderson, 'The double mirrors of school improvement: The Aga Khan Foundation in East Africa', in *Improving schools through teacher development: Case studies of the Aga Khan Foundation projects in East Africa* (Lisse: Swetz and Zeitlinger, 2002).

leadership. Despite the decentralization of education in Pakistan and some recent initiatives for Whole School Improvement in public sector schools,⁴⁰ there is no acknowledgment in the public sector, particularly at the system level, of the potential role of teacher leadership in school improvement. Therefore, in GSSG, teacher leadership roles, as mentioned earlier, were both informal and without any tangible rewards and benefits. In fact, the head teacher, through her exceptional commitment and leadership skills, was the main motivating force in the emergence of teacher leadership in the school. By holding on to high expectations of teacher professionalism and role modeling, she was able to create conditions for teacher leadership for improving teaching-learning and sharing for professional development. A question that arises at this stage is: Is teacher leadership development/effectiveness in the three cases mainly a function of personal skills and competencies of teacher leaders or the teacher leadership systems that were created at the system level? The above discussion implies that well-identified and agreed upon support and enabling systems may be necessary for teacher leaders to function more effectively at the school and system level. As mentioned earlier, such enabling systems were not available in GSSG except only informally through the personal commitment and efforts of the school head. A change in government policy may therefore be required to encourage the development of teacher leadership in public sector schools. However, we need to be aware of the danger of over-formalization and undue bureaucratization of teacher leadership roles in a large school system.⁴¹

Lessons learnt and conclusion

Several lessons can be learnt from the comparative analysis and discussion of the three cases about teacher leadership as a pathway to development in schools in Pakistan and in similar contexts elsewhere.

⁴⁰ Shamim, Capacity building for school improvement and sustainable change in schools in Northern Areas of Pakistan: Lessons learnt for policy and practice, in R. Qureshi & Shamim (eds.), *Schools and schooling practices in Pakistan: Lessons for policy and practice* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp.211-34.

⁴¹ J. York-Barr, & K. Duke, 'What do we know about teacher leadership? Findings from two decades of scholarship', *Review of Educational Research*, 74:3 (2004), pp.255-316.

Teacher leadership requires a set of skills and competencies.⁴² One lesson learnt was that while the initial development of teacher leaders can be done through formal teacher preparation programs and credentialing at graduate, diploma and certificate level, further professional development is likely required to play this role effectively in specific school and school system contexts. More important, the continuing development and sustainability of these roles is mainly achieved through developing the required on-site support and in-house preparation and development of teacher leaders.

In addition, enhanced teacher qualifications and credentialing attached to new teacher leadership roles and functions appear less likely to contribute to school improvement unless teacher leadership fits into the school systems' agenda and vision for school reforms. In the three case studies observed, the two private schools were implementing well developed and supported long term improvement goals and plans that not only included teacher leadership innovations as a component, but also legitimized the creation and activities of people taking on those roles. In the government school, there was no school system reform underway, and the head teacher's emphasis was more on sustaining the school's reputation as a good school than on change in curriculum and teaching. It is perhaps not surprising then, that the informal forms of teacher leadership that she was able to introduce within the parameters of existing school system policies tended to strengthen rather than challenge the status quo of curriculum, teaching, and school culture norms for teacher professionalism (e.g., attendance, teamwork in curriculum planning, seniority).

York-Barr & Duke⁴³ identified, based on their comprehensive review of literature, three conditions that influence teacher leadership. These are: school culture and context, roles and relationships and structures. Murphy⁴⁴ and Frost & Harris⁴⁵ also assert that an 'enabling'

⁴² F. Crowther, S. S. Kaagen, M. Ferguson, & L. Hann. *Developing teacher leaders: How teacher leadership enhances school success* (CA: Corwin Press, 2002).

S. Gonzales & L. Lambert, 'Teacher leadership in professional development schools: Emerging conceptions, identities, and practices', *Journal of School Leadership*, 11, (2001), pp.6-24.

J. York-Barr, & K. Duke, *op.cit.*

⁴³ *Ibid.*,

⁴⁴ J. Murphy, 'Teacher leadership: Barriers and supports', in T. Townsend (ed.), *International handbook of school effectiveness and improvement*, Springer, 2007, pp.681-706.

organizational culture and support structures are required in addition to personal capacity, to facilitate teacher leaders in their role enactment. In the two private schools in the study, formal teacher leadership positions were created both at the school and system level with associated incentives and rewards. In addition, steps were taken by school system and school authorities to create organizational culture and required structures for teacher leadership within an overall school improvement program. These included a role split between the school principal and section heads/teacher leaders, the development of formally designated part/full time instructional leadership positions for teachers, on-site opportunities for teacher leaders' continuous personal/professional development, formal structures for teacher leadership such as mentoring and peer-coaching, and 'structured' time for teachers during the school day to work with teacher leaders. As seen in one of the private schools, however, the structuring of time for collaboration is also vulnerable to competing priorities and expectations regarding the uses of teacher and teacher leader time (e.g., using teacher leaders to cover for absent teachers rather than engaging in instruction leadership activities; allowing regular teachers schedule classroom activities that conflict with time set aside for working with teacher leaders).

Although no school system level policies or structures were created to enable teacher leadership to flourish in the public sector school, the head teacher was able to leverage system policies regarding teacher attendance, work time, and teamwork to create an organizational culture and some time for teacher teamwork on curriculum, and for sharing of professional knowledge with help from selected subject in-charges. Over time, her insistence on high standards of teacher professionalism led to the establishment of a 'strict' school culture where these modest forms of teacher leadership were accepted and practiced, and where teachers who disliked the norms left.

The differentiation of instructional leadership and management functions of positional leaders in schools was evident and important in all three cases, although in different ways. In the two private schools, new instructional leadership positions were created to support teacher implementation of curriculum and teaching reforms (and the induction of new teachers), distinct from the traditional management roles of head teachers, subject department heads, discipline heads, etc. This seems most workable in contexts where there is no ambiguity in regard to the line relationships and authority of the head teachers and teacher leaders

⁴⁵ D. Frost & A. Harris, 'Teacher leadership: Towards a research agenda', *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 33:3 (2003), pp.479-98.

working either at the school or system level. Problems of role ambiguity arose when instructional leadership responsibilities were combined with traditional administrative responsibilities. In the public school, it could be argued that the role of the subject in-charges was more in line with taking on conventional curriculum management functions of traditional department heads than providing leadership for change in curriculum and teaching. The main source of instructional leadership in that school remained the head teacher, who by all accounts was unusual in that regard in Pakistani secondary schools.⁴⁶

Teacher leadership roles were not static and continued to evolve in the private schools in the light of changing priorities, progress with school improvement plans, and the schools' enhanced human resource capacity for leadership; no such development was evident in the public sector school. This seems a key finding, because it suggests that teacher leadership need not be approached as a fixed object to be adopted, implemented and institutionalized, rather as a resource to be developed and refined in accordance with current and changing needs for school improvement. Indeed, teacher leadership roles, functions, and organizational supports should be subject to periodic reflection and revision if needed. This insight into the dynamic and evolving character of teacher leadership in at least two of the case study schools, has not been commonly reported in the teacher leadership literature. This may be because research is not longitudinal and fails to capture this evolution, and perhaps because most research is carried out in the more rigid policy context of public schools. The potential for ongoing revision of teacher leader roles and supports may be greater in private school settings such as those encountered in large number throughout Pakistan where bureaucracy and policy are less entrenched.

We need to remember that while formal teacher leadership positions with well-defined roles and responsibilities may be a necessary stage in the construction of teacher leadership identities and practices in certain contexts,⁴⁷ formal role definitions can create hierarchies and distance and conflict with peers.⁴⁸ In the long run, teacher leadership should therefore be developed to reflect 'teacher agency through establishing relationships, breaking down barriers, and marshalling resources throughout the organization in an effort to improve students'

⁴⁶ T. Simkins, C. Sisum, & M. Memon, 'School leadership in Pakistan: Exploring the head teachers' role, *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 14:4 (2003), pp.275-91.

⁴⁷ S. Gonzales & L. Lambert, *op.cit.*

⁴⁸ J. York-Barr, & K. Duke, *op.cit.*

educational experiences'.⁴⁹ In this regard, we return to Murphy's argument that teacher leadership can be approached in terms of the formalization of new instructional leader roles and functions for designated teachers, or in terms of the development of teachers' collective activity, influence and leadership for improvement in schools. Our case examples, particularly the CBO Girls Secondary School suggest that these two versions of teacher leadership are not incompatible, and can work together well.

To conclude, teacher leadership can be an effective pathway for school improvement if developed within an overall framework of a holistic school-based improvement program and not as an isolated 'reform' activity. Secondly, it seems that a 'political will' and shared vision for school improvement amongst the stakeholders at both the school and system level is essential for teacher leaders to play a key role in achieving school improvement goals. This supports earlier findings that teachers' efforts have limited power to influence changes at systemic level unless supported by a 'unified vision' and unambiguous policies at the systems level.⁵⁰ Third, for teacher leaders to affect systemic level changes, ongoing development of their personal capacity and organizational culture, and continuous improvement of support structures for teacher leadership are required both at school and system level.

Finally, the study also points out some directions for future research. First, along with strengthening the role of teacher leaders in schools, it is important to investigate the impact of teacher leadership on teaching and learning, particularly in varied educational settings in Pakistan and similar contexts elsewhere. Secondly, research on teacher leadership should include not just the school as an organization⁵¹ but the school as situated within and governed by the policies and reform agenda of a school system which, in turn, is located within the wider context of policy and practices both locally and at the global level.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p.263

⁵⁰ J.A Patterson & C. Marshall, 'Making sense of policy paradoxes: A case study of teacher leadership', *Journal of School Leadership*, 11 (September 2001), pp.372-98.

⁵¹ I. Reid, Brian, K., & L.C. Boyes, *op.cit.*