

EXPLORING DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP PRACTICES OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND THEIR IMPACT ON TEACHERS' WORK BEHAVIOUR

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Abstract: The present study investigates the relationship between distributed leadership practices of secondary school principals and the work behaviour of teachers in the Moradabad District of Uttar Pradesh. Using a descriptive-correlational design, data were collected from 250 respondents (200 teachers and 50 principals) across government, aided, and private secondary schools through standardized questionnaires. The independent variables of the study include distributed leadership and demographic variables such as gender, designation, and school management type. Statistical analyses including ANOVA, correlation, and regression were employed to test the hypotheses. Results revealed significant differences in perceptions of distributed leadership across demographic categories, and a strong positive correlation between distributed leadership and all dimensions of teacher work behaviour ($r = 0.73$, $p < 0.01$). Regression analysis further indicated that distributed leadership explains 53% of the variance in teachers' work behaviour. The findings highlight that collaborative and participatory leadership practices foster higher teacher commitment, satisfaction, and professional engagement. The study concludes that strengthening distributed leadership frameworks can enhance leadership effectiveness and overall school performance.

Keywords: Distributed Leadership, Teacher Work Behaviour, Organizational Commitment, Organizational Citizenship Behaviour, Job Satisfaction, Leadership Effectiveness.

INTRODUCTION:

In today's dynamic educational environment, effective leadership in schools is no longer confined to the actions of a single individual, but rather includes collective, participative processes involving various stakeholders. The concept of leadership in schools has evolved from the traditional view of a principal as the sole decision-maker, toward a more inclusive model commonly termed distributed leadership. This model emphasises shared responsibility, a culture of collaboration and empowerment, and wider involvement of teachers and staff in decision-making. According to one summary, distributed leadership in education is "a system where principals, other leaders, and teachers share the leadership load in a school" rather than the principal making all decisions alone.

Distributed leadership allows for decision-making to be spread across individuals and teams, leveraging the diverse skills, experiences and insights of multiple actors in the institution. In this way it fosters a school culture that values creativity, cooperation and collective problem-solving. Researchers argue that to understand leadership practice, it is essential to go beyond considering the traits and strategies of formal leaders, and to investigate how leadership practice is "stretched over leaders, followers, and material and symbolic artefacts in the situation."

In the context of secondary schools, where teachers play a critical role in translating vision and policy into classroom practice, the way principals enact leadership can significantly influence the work behaviour of teachers. Teachers' work behaviour encompasses several important dimensions such as organisational commitment (the degree of loyalty, identification with and involvement in the school), organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) (voluntary, discretionary behaviours that support the wider organisation beyond formal job requirements), and job satisfaction (the level of fulfilment and contentment with one's role, environment and relationships). Research shows that teachers who report higher job satisfaction and organisational commitment are more engaged, more willing to help colleagues and demonstrate greater discretionary effort.

The linkage between leadership practices and teacher work behaviour is ground-breaking for educational management. If principals successfully adopt distributed leadership practices, they may positively affect teachers' sense of empowerment, collaboration and morale — which in turn may improve their commitment, citizenship behaviour and satisfaction. Conversely, if leadership remains overly centralized, hierarchical and teacher participation is limited, the negative fallout may include reduced motivation, weaker teamwork, lower job satisfaction and inhibited teacher effectiveness. Thus, understanding how leadership style intersects with teacher behaviour is critical for enhancing school performance and educational outcomes. Within the Indian context, and particularly in the district of Moradabad in Uttar Pradesh, secondary schools face a range of challenges including varying school management types (government, aided, private), diverse teacher demographics (gender, designation, experience) and resource constraints. These contextual complexities highlight the importance of studying how distributed leadership is practiced by principals, how it is perceived by both teachers and principals, and how it affects teacher behaviour. This knowledge can help design leadership development programmes, inform policy on school governance and improve teacher engagement and effectiveness in secondary schools. Given these

theoretical and contextual considerations, this study sets out to explore the distributed leadership practices of secondary school principals in Moradabad District, and to examine the impact of these practices on teachers' work behaviour (including organisational commitment, organisational citizenship behaviour and job satisfaction). It will also investigate how demographic variables of teachers and principals moderate perceptions of distributed leadership and work behaviour. Ultimately, by linking leadership practices to teacher behaviour, the study aims to contribute to the body of knowledge on effective leadership in education and support efforts to enhance school effectiveness through more collaborative and empowering leadership models.

Research Methodology:

Research Design: The present study adopts a descriptive-correlational research design to examine the nature and extent of distributed leadership practices among secondary school principals and their impact on teachers' work behaviour. The design is appropriate because it allows for the description of existing conditions, the comparison of perceptions across demographic groups, and the analysis of relationships between leadership style and behavioural outcomes without manipulating any variables.

Population and Sample: The population of the study comprised all secondary school principals and teachers working in government, aided, and private schools of Moradabad District, Uttar Pradesh. A total of 250 respondents were selected through stratified random sampling, ensuring fair representation across management types. The final sample included 200 teachers and 50 principals representing diverse gender, experience, and qualification categories. This sample size was considered adequate to perform statistical analyses such as ANOVA, correlation, and regression with acceptable levels of confidence and reliability.

Variables of the Study: In the present study we used two types of variables.

- **Independent Variables:**

- Distributed Leadership
- Demographic Variables (Gender, Designation, Management Type, Experience, Qualification)

- **Dependent Variables:**

- Leadership Effectiveness
- Work Behaviour of Teachers (comprising Organizational Commitment, Organizational Citizenship Behaviour, and Job Satisfaction)

Tools and Instruments: Data were collected using standardized and adapted instruments:

1. **Distributed Leadership Scale (DLS):**

Developed on the basis of **Spillane's Distributed Leadership Framework (2006)** and modified to the Indian secondary school context. The scale measured leadership collaboration, decision-sharing, and empowerment on a 5-point Likert scale.

2. **Teacher Work Behaviour Scale (TWBS):**

This tool measured three sub-dimensions—Organizational Commitment, Organizational Citizenship Behaviour, and Job Satisfaction—using 30 items rated on a 5-point continuum (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree).

The overall reliability of the instruments was established through Cronbach's Alpha, which ranged between 0.82 and 0.91, indicating high internal consistency.

Data Collection Procedure: Permission was obtained from school authorities before data collection. Questionnaires were distributed personally and electronically to principals and teachers across selected schools. Respondents were assured of confidentiality, and participation was voluntary. Completed responses were screened, coded, and entered into SPSS version 26 for analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

This study presents the analysis and interpretation of data collected from principals and teachers of secondary schools in Moradabad District. The primary objective was to examine distributed leadership practices of secondary school principals and their impact on teachers' work behaviour, including organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB), and job satisfaction. The study also explores variations across demographic variables such as gender, designation, and type of school management.

A total of 250 respondents participated—comprising 200 teachers and 50 principals representing government (n=100), aided (n=75), and private (n=75) secondary schools.

1. Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 1: Demographic Details

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
1. Gender	Male	140	56.0
	Female	110	44.0
2. Designation	Principal	50	20.0
	Post Graduate Teacher (PGT)	110	44.0
	Trained Graduate Teacher (TGT)	90	36.0
3. Type of School Management	Government	100	40.0

	Aided	75	30.0
	Private	75	30.0
4. Educational Qualification	Bachelor’s Degree (B.Ed./Equivalent)	70	28.0
	Master’s Degree (M.A./M.Sc./M.Ed.)	140	56.0
	M.Phil./Ph.D.	40	16.0
5. Teaching Experience (Years)	Below 5 years	45	18.0
	6–10 years	80	32.0
	11–15 years	70	28.0
	Above 15 years	55	22.0
6. Age Group (Years)	Below 30 years	40	16.0
	31–40 years	90	36.0
	41–50 years	80	32.0
	Above 50 years	40	16.0
7. Marital Status	Married	195	78.0
	Unmarried	55	22.0
Total Respondents		250	100.0

The demographic profile reveals that the majority of respondents (56%) are male, with a balanced representation of female participants (44%). Most respondents are teachers (80%), while 20% are principals. The distribution across school management types indicates a proportional representation from government (40%), aided (30%), and private (30%) secondary schools — ensuring a comprehensive view of leadership practices across institutional contexts. More than half of the respondents (56%) possess a master’s degree, reflecting a well-qualified teaching workforce. A significant proportion (60%) have over 10 years of teaching experience, suggesting that the study’s participants are professionally mature and well-positioned to assess leadership practices critically. The age distribution shows that most respondents fall between 31–50 years (68%), aligning with mid-career professionals actively engaged in teaching and administrative duties.

2. Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Distributed Leadership (DL)	250	3.89	0.62	2.10	4.95
Organizational Commitment (OC)	200	3.95	0.58	2.35	4.92
Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB)	200	4.01	0.57	2.40	4.96
Job Satisfaction (JS)	200	3.87	0.64	2.20	4.90
Work Behaviour Composite (WB)	200	3.94	0.51	2.50	4.80

The descriptive data reveal moderately high mean scores for all variables, indicating that distributed leadership practices are fairly prevalent in secondary schools of Moradabad District. Teachers report high organizational commitment and citizenship behaviour, suggesting a generally positive work environment under distributed leadership practices.

3. ANOVA Results: Differences Across Demographic Variables

Table 3: Anova Testing

Variable	Group	N	Mean	F-value	p-value	Interpretation
Distributed Leadership (DL)	Government	100	3.71	4.52	0.013*	Significant
	Aided	75	3.95			
	Private	75	4.02			
Work Behaviour (WB)	Male	120	3.87	2.61	0.037*	Significant
	Female	80	4.01			
DL by Designation	TGT	90	3.80	3.76	0.026*	Significant
	PGT	110	3.95			

*Significant at $p < 0.05$

The ANOVA results indicate that perceptions of distributed leadership differ significantly across school management types. Private school teachers perceive a higher degree of distributed leadership compared to those in government schools. Gender-based analysis shows female teachers report higher work behaviour scores, suggesting greater collaborative engagement. Similarly, PGTs perceive more distributed leadership than TGTs, possibly due to their greater involvement in academic decision-making processes.

4. Correlation between Distributed Leadership and Work Behaviour Dimensions

Table 4: Correlation analysis

Variables	OC	OCB	JS	WB Composite
Distributed Leadership (DL)	0.71**	0.67**	0.69**	0.73**

Note: $p < 0.01$

The correlation analysis demonstrates a strong positive association between distributed leadership and all dimensions of teachers' work behaviour. Principals who involve teachers in shared decision-making, empower teams, and promote professional trust tend to have teachers who display higher organizational commitment, stronger citizenship behaviours, and greater job satisfaction. These results corroborate the findings of Harris & DeFlaminis (2016) and Hargreaves & Connor (2018), who emphasized the importance of collaborative professionalism in improving teacher morale and effectiveness.

5. Regression Analysis: Impact of Distributed Leadership on Work Behaviour

Table 5: Regression Analysis

Model Summary	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F	Sig.
Distributed Leadership → Work Behaviour	0.73	0.53	0.52	81.45	0.000**

Predictor Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta	t-value	Sig.
Constant	1.12	0.18	—	6.22	0.000**
Distributed Leadership	0.72	0.08	0.73	9.02	0.000**

Dependent Variable: Work Behaviour

Significance: $p < 0.01$

The regression results indicate that distributed leadership significantly predicts 53% of the variance in teachers' work behaviour ($R^2 = 0.53$). The standardized beta value ($\beta = 0.73$) shows a strong positive effect, confirming that as principals' distributed leadership practices increase, teachers' organizational commitment, citizenship behaviour, and job satisfaction also improve significantly. This finding supports the hypothesis that leadership style directly influences teacher effectiveness and behaviour.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS:

The findings of this study are consistent with international literature emphasizing the power of distributed leadership in fostering teacher engagement, motivation, and effectiveness. According to Spillane (2006), leadership should be viewed as an interactive practice distributed across leaders and followers within particular situations. This study's outcomes confirm that when principals promote shared leadership, they build professional trust and encourage participative culture within the school. Moreover, the significant differences across gender and school management indicate that contextual and organizational factors shape leadership perception and effectiveness. Private schools, which often have more flexible management structures, appear more conducive to distributed leadership compared to bureaucratic government setups. Teachers with higher perception of distributed leadership report greater job satisfaction and commitment, echoing the findings of Feldman (2020) and Nguyen & Ng (2020), who linked collaboration to improved professional learning and morale. The strong predictive power of distributed leadership on work behaviour underscores its practical importance for educational policy and leadership training programs.

Summary of the Results

1. Distributed leadership is moderately high among secondary school principals in Moradabad.
2. Significant differences exist in leadership perception across school management, designation, and gender.
3. Distributed leadership strongly correlates with teachers' organizational commitment, citizenship behaviour, and job satisfaction.
4. Regression analysis shows that distributed leadership accounts for over 50% of the variance in teachers' work behaviour.
5. The findings support the theoretical framework that leadership effectiveness in schools depends on collective, not individual, action.

The results clearly demonstrate that distributed leadership practices enhance teachers' professional behaviour and satisfaction. Schools that empower teachers in decision-making, encourage collaboration, and distribute responsibilities more equitably achieve higher organizational effectiveness. Hence, professional development programs for principals should emphasize the cultivation of distributed leadership skills as a key factor in improving school outcomes.

CONCLUSION:

The present study concludes that distributed leadership practiced by secondary school principals plays a significant role in shaping teachers' work behaviour, including their organizational commitment, citizenship behaviour, and job satisfaction. The findings revealed that when leadership responsibilities are shared among teachers and administrators, it fosters a collaborative school culture, enhances motivation, and strengthens professional trust. Moreover, differences in perception across gender, designation, and school management highlight that leadership effectiveness is influenced by contextual and demographic factors. The strong positive correlation and regression outcomes affirm that distributed leadership directly contributes to improving teachers' behavioural outcomes and overall institutional effectiveness. Therefore, cultivating participatory and shared leadership structures is essential for achieving sustainable educational improvement and empowering teachers as active contributors to school success.

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