
TITLE OF THE PAPER :THE NEW SCHOOL LEADERS

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The concept of Leadership has undergone through a paradigm shift from unicellular to multi cellular outlook. The need of change in Leadership perspective in a gadget friendly atmosphere in school with GENXT students & staff, has come out from the fact that there is nothing new or much information-wise, that a school leader knows where students and staff do not have access through internet and global media.

ABSTRACT:

The new concept of school leadership is a lead from heart, with a passionate vision to empower others by nurturing innovativeness of others. It is a lead from inner believe in positivity with a solution oriented , proactive approach.

The New Leadership Mindset is more aligned to accept a growth in surrounding and hence, a growth in self as parallel to the changing scenario and future perspective of the society and future government policies.

Leadership in school is a key provider of effective professional setup within educational system. School leaders are always challenged with diversified factors of the changing societal norms. The 21st century Covid affected society school leaders need to embark on a journey of leadership with fluency of digital world , flexible outlook and intercultural-intergenerational savviness.

This study will basically address the contribution that leadership can make by creating effective learning network and productive collaboration in the institution by bringing change in self-mindset at par digital world by application of concept of Distributive Leadership with an aim to build teacher leadership capacity and reaching out to community. Consequently, this

will widen the leadership paradigm and develop capacity within the organisation aiming at recognising the collective responsibility and accountability for the pupils and school. Then, creating a Core Team as Instructional Leaders to focus on coaching relationship, supervision and feedback protocols. The Core team will work as LEAD EDUCATION MANAGERS (LEMs) who will act as key point contact with students and rest of the staff, taking into account few salient elements of the school such as Prioritisation, action research, data collection & analytical processes, outcome & evidence of Distributive Leadership learning networks and development of culture of continuous learning.

Eventually, this will involve mobilisation of leadership expertise at all levels of the Vidyalaya in order to generate more opportunities for change and to build the capacity for improvement, compatible to the demands of the era.

The new School Leadership concept aims at developing staff knowledge, aspirations, interests, skills as an asset to the organisation and enhancing the culture of mentoring and trust.

As Roland Barth- a Harvard University Educationist, truly said "A true mark of a leader is not how many followers one begets but how many leaders."

KEY WORDS:

Lead Education Managers, Distributive Leadership, Prioritisation

INTRODUCTION:

‘Leadership’ concept is always a topic of analysis while discussing challenges faced by Education in a growing accountability-oriented society. Leadership is a generic concept that projects vision of strengths, authority, competence, critical thinking, decision, action and power. This paper examines leadership practices in an Govt school in Indian context. It scrutinises the effectiveness of a Distributive approach to Leadership. It inquires what part of Distributive Leadership may play in Educational Institutions today and how effectively it may

bring a holistic change. Being a Distributive Leader is not always easy, particularly when people are accustomed to line and control leadership, particularly in school environment. It requires 'letting go'. The Leader (Principal) has to trust all the teachers and office staff who work in the institution to make a wise management decision. They have to be insightful enough to correct mistakes on their own, without input from the Leader.

This paper first theorizes the concept of Distributive Leadership and associated concepts such as accountability, activity, systems and power. Then, it presents a case study of Distributive Leadership in practice to assess its effectiveness in maintaining & enhancing quality in an Educational Institution.

Biesta advocated an accountability culture that acts as a system of governance which Biesta terms as 'audit society'. This has led to the reconceptualization of the relationship between government and citizens. This technical, audit-focused meaning of accountability is mirrored in Education institutions. In education scenario, at one level, Government is the provider and educational institutions are consumers; at another level, schools are providers and the staff and students are consumers. The Government creates and manages this complex, multi layered concept by prescribing procedures, regulations and obligations to ensure compliance (Olssen). Internal systems are established to ensure that obligations set by Government are met efficiently and are auditable.

In the audit culture, leadership has certain functions. It must be focused on efficiently managing the various contracts and relationship between Government and school, between authorities and staff, and between teachers and students. It safeguards the institution by ensuring compliance with externally-set audit requirements (Biesta) and, consequently, creating internal system of accountability which encompasses various factors such as financial, organizational, logistic and interpersonal aspects of school.

In this paper, the focus is on what role Distributive Leadership may play in school and its effectiveness. Here, Distributive Leadership and associated concepts are theorised at nutshell. Then, by using a case study approach, the scale of improvement will be analysed which has been resulted due to Distributive Leadership in practice. The aspects are drawn from the experience collected from a Govt. school in India.

Distributive leadership and working system:

Distributive leadership is a complex, multi-faceted concept which was first focused in social psychology literature in the 1950s. Bennett identified three elements in Distributive Leadership theory that distinguish it from others. Most importantly, Distributive Leadership is termed 'as an emergent property of a group or network of interacting individuals'. Another element is that since the scope of leadership are undefined, therefore, this means that the leadership can be distributed wide or may be controlled. Thirdly, as expertise tends to be widely distributed in a group, advantages of having more leadership opportunities.

Gronn (2002) identified distinctive meanings of Distributive Leadership. In one, leadership is additive, spread among multiple members of a group, having different skills & attributes, in a spontaneous collaboration to complete a common target by recognising the qualities of one another. Each member of the group can and often does, in turn, take a leadership role in order to contribute to the group's function. Therefore, leadership is exercised more holistically.

It is true that Distributive Leadership can be defined in many ways. To address the issues addressed this paper, one coherent meaning of Distributive Leadership needs to be undertaken. Leadership is viewed as distributed among a group of people working in formal school setting. They work with mutual understanding to achieve outcomes of common goals. A Core Committee emerges with micro committees as a result of planned agenda. Leadership

is distributed in the committee members as it is presumed that members have skills, traits and attributes which will be exercised to achieve the desired outcomes.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK:

A case study

The issues taken to resolve through this case study is from a school in India which resulted from the need to improve the quality of the school. Here I am explaining how effectively improvement in a school is brought through practices of Distributive Leadership. The Inspection scores of our School KV No-3, Jorhat was significantly low for past few years despite the good academic results.

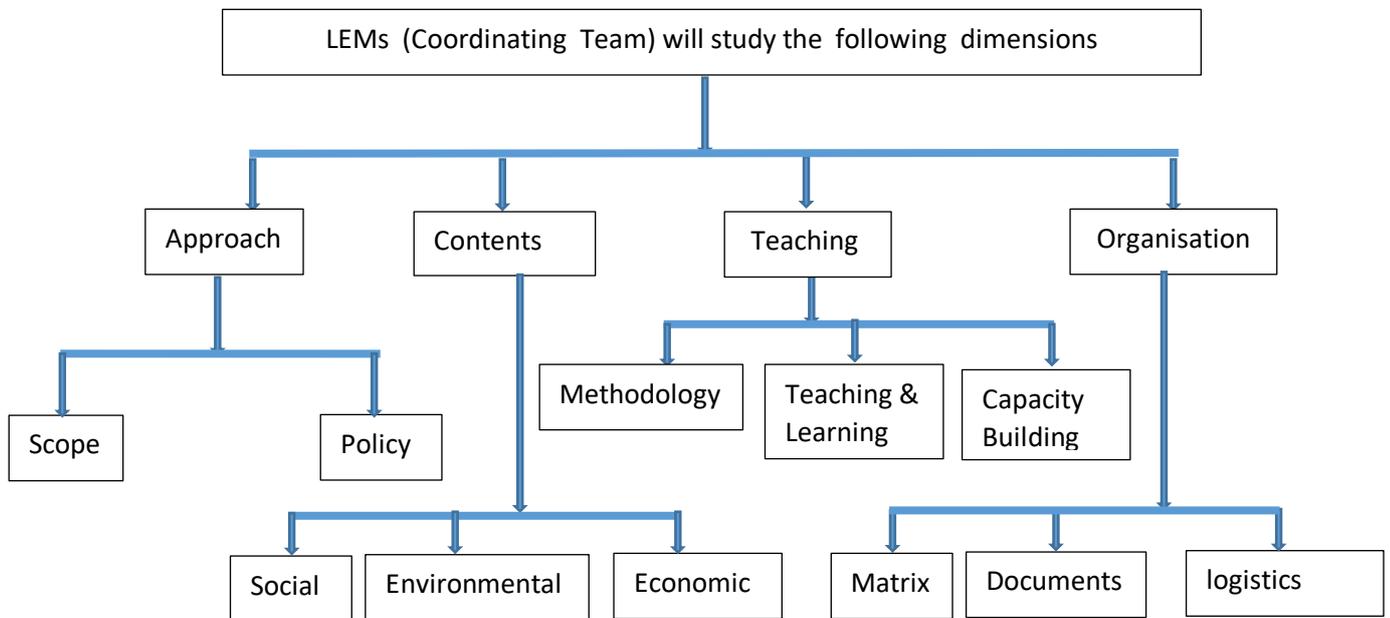
School infrastructure is considered to be one of the major issue which influenced the workings of the teachers & students of the school and hence, reflected in Annual School Inspection scores.

For improving the school overall Annual School Inspection score, a CORE COMMITTEE with four Instructional Leaders (called as Lead Education Manager) was formed (under which various small committee were set up consisting of two to three teachers) with one Lead Education Manager(LEM) of the team.

One LEM with the micro team studied the KVS Inspection tool and marking procedure and accordingly identify the grey areas where improvement can be made without much financial burden to School Fund. Basically it will study the approach, its scope, policy matters of KVS etc. and how are they successfully met. While another LEM was assigned to bring fresh non-judgemental insights of work culture of the school at present, to study the logistics available in the school which are not in use to the fullest or not used at all, the documents and about the school which is in a temporary building. Next LEM focussed on the interpersonal relationship among teacher to teacher, teacher to office staff, teacher to students,

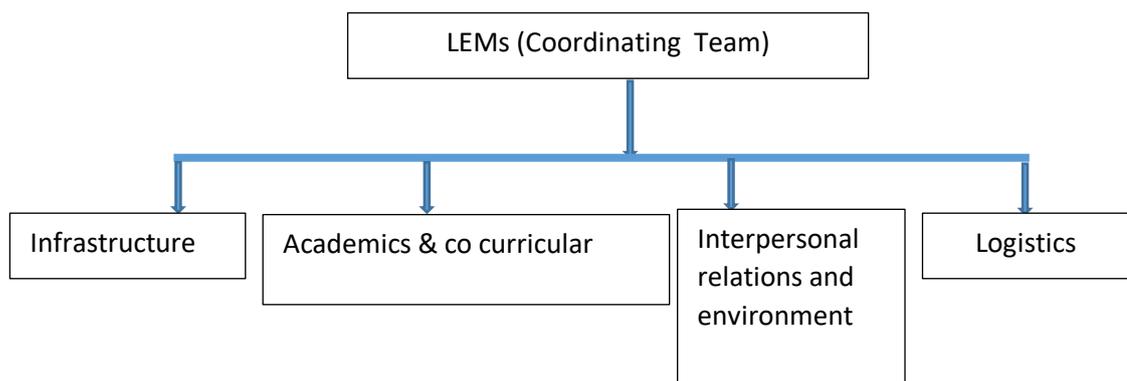
parents and community at large along with environmental issues to deal up in terms of SDGs.

While one LEM studied the teaching learning environment.

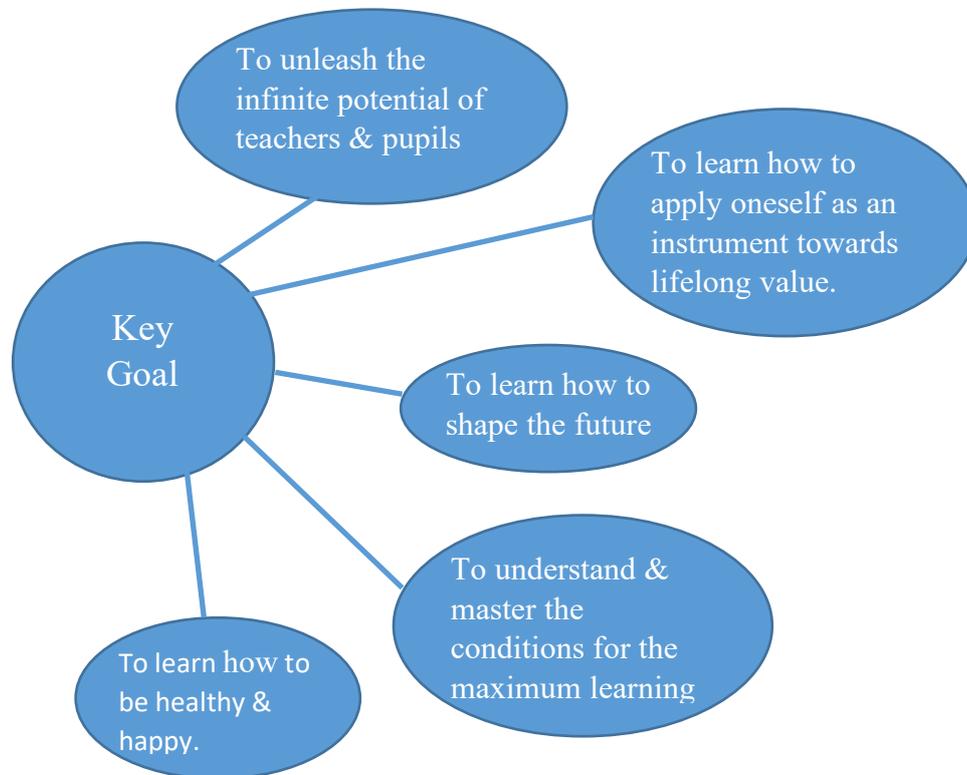


Every LEM was empowered to prepare the report without any influences from others.

Based on findings of each LEM, few areas were agreed where improvement can be brought. Once areas are identified, following multi-layered teams were formed among the teachers with senior most teacher in the team as leaders. Before assigning the tasks, detail deliberations were made with all teams and brief them the scope of the task, goal and time frame ,then agreed upon a few areas where improvement can be brought as per requirement of Inspection tools and also attaining SDG4.



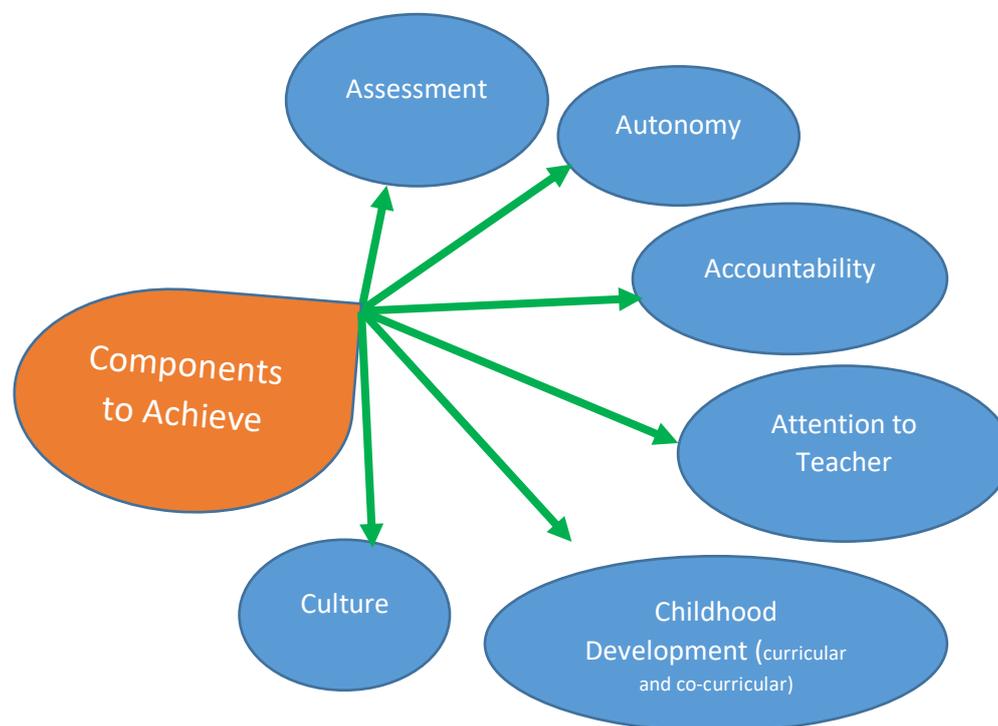
Once areas were identified, following teams were formed, among the teachers with senior most teacher in the team as leaders, to attain the 5 key goals in line with the proposed key goals of World Economic Forum for SDGs, which will ‘ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all’.



Based on this, the focus is directed to –

- i) Improving conditions for teaching & learning
- ii) Redesigning of the time table
- iii) Restructuring of organisation (Redesigning Roles and Responsibility)
- iv) In house teachers’ workshop/training session
- v) Building relationship outside the school community
- vi) Enhancing teaching and learning process
- vi) Building relationship inside the school community.

Therefore, in line with the World Bank's Proposal, following components were formulated to achieve the planned reforms to reach our goal as well as for attaining SDGs in Education.



The Major Target Fixed –

1. Since nothing more can be added to the land size and school building which is small and temporary in nature (the deliberations for permanent building is under process), therefore, strategy to maximise the utility of fixed assets.
2. 100% pass percentage in 10th and 12th Grade External Examination & Improving inter personal relationships with society and stakeholders, parents.
3. Maximum participation and in-house training /Practice before participation in co-curricular with set targets for Sports, Cultural, Literary and Scientific field.
4. Best use of the logistics, all equipment which are not in use or barely used.

TIME FRAME:

One Academic Year 2018-2019

METHOD:

The each LEMs decided on work programmes and actions at weekly meetings which all members of micro committees attended. Agenda for meetings were set collaboratively by each micro team and decisions were by consensus. Delegations for leadership came from these meetings. The work of the LEMs did not always progress smoothly, as par planning of the LEMs, as strategies were frequently questioned, debated and changed. Some members of micro team expressed periodic discontentment and were clueless about decision-making process.

At the same time, it is important to outline my role within the organisation. I was head (Principal)of the school joining the institution in Nov'2017 with a mission to bring significant overall improvement.

LEM for Infrastructure Development focussed improvement in infrastructure with best use of limited spaces as follows:

- Improvement in sports infrastructure such as to develop mini volley ball courts, mini Basket Ball court, outdoor handball court, provisions of Badminton, Kho Kho and Cricket Practice Pitch, sand pit
- To incorporate the concept of BALA
- **Beautification:** development of school garden and mini vegetable garden for hands-on experience and love for surrounding and also healthy eating. Vegan days with vegetables from vegetable garden have been observed.

LEM for Academic and Co-curricular activities focussed on Improvement as follows:

- Rather, teacher controller assessment of students, according to a predetermined distribution curve as the only method, Committee members, sought an approach to assessment that focused more on formative, self-directed, group and participative practices that empowered students to have a part in assessing their work through peer groups. Assessment of learning was to be balanced by assessment for leaning.

This also involved keeping in touch with all teachers and hundreds of students, arranging in-house programs, being accountable for keeping academic records. Where disagreements did arise, they were addressed with amicable solutions. The teachers were keen to meet accountability requirements, because teachers felt responsible for their students, their own work and to each other. This commitment to a common cause, grounded in feelings of mutual responsibility and trust, enabled the teachers and students to work in relatively democratic outlook.

- In-house teachers subjective training, micro teaching sessions and sessions on improvement of communication skills.
- Fixed target of Achievement for KVS Regional level, Cluster Level and National Level participation in Sports, Cultural, Science Exhibitions, Literary exhibitions
- Maximum participation at school level conduct of programmes and practice under guidance.

LEM for interpersonal relations & environmental management focussed on improvement as follows:

- As for development of interpersonal relationship, focus was in maintaining good relations with school Sponsoring Agency, teachers and students -parents such as accurate information on time, imparting clear instruction beforehand, conduct of meetings advocating doubt clearing sessions and interactive deliberations.
- Partnership with local neighbouring school named Dhapkata Govt. Primary School, Jorhat in reaching out to the community.

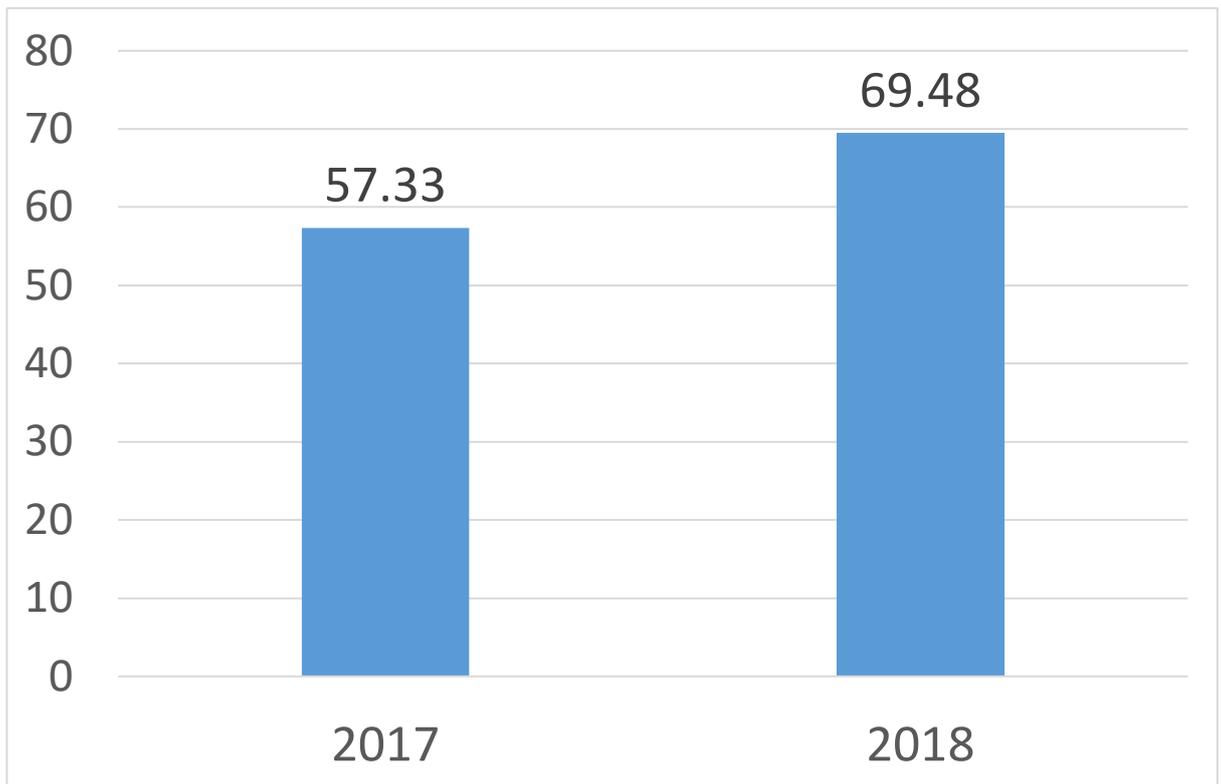
LEM for Logistic management focussed on improvement as follows:

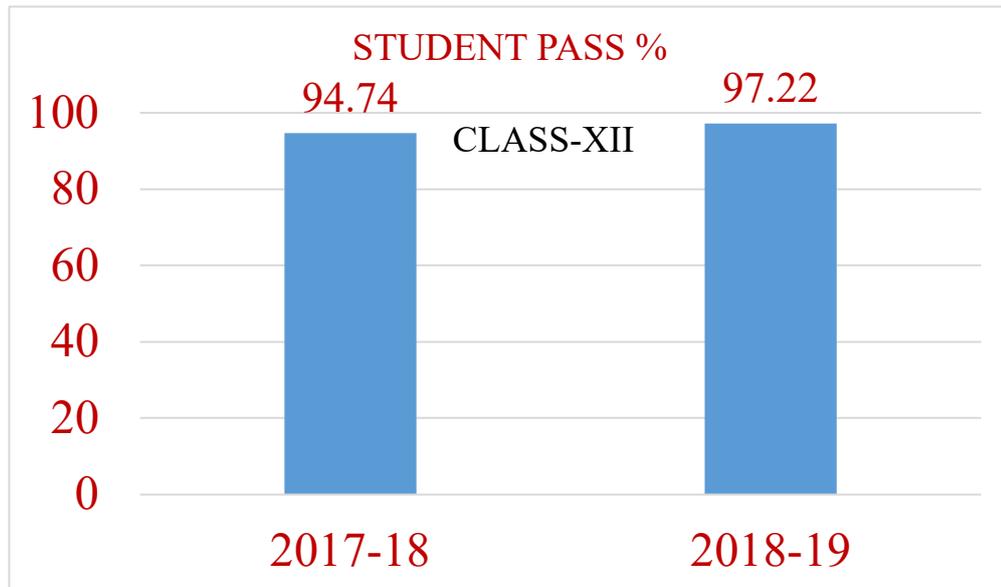
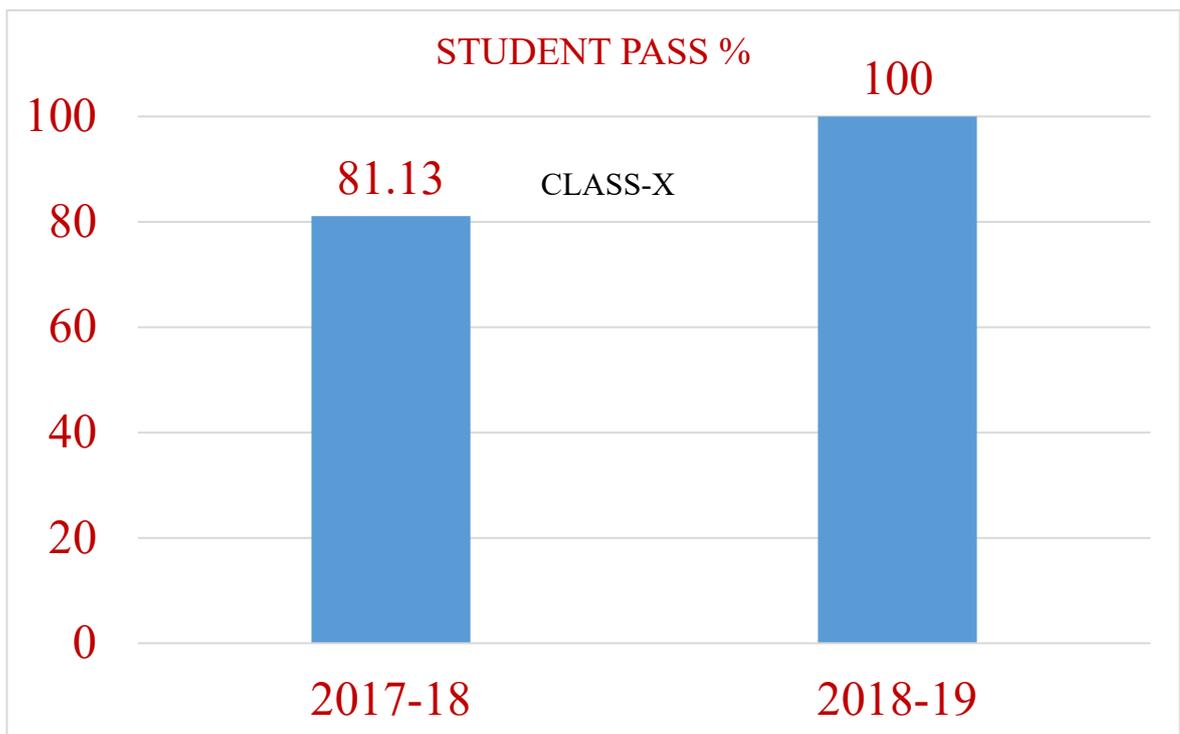
1. Listing of equipment available in the school used, not used and barely used.
2. Initiatives and strategy for maximum use of equipment to the best.
3. Stock verification and Condemnation of old items which are beyond use.

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4. Listing of needful purchase of equipment as per need within the budgetary provision.

FINDINGS:

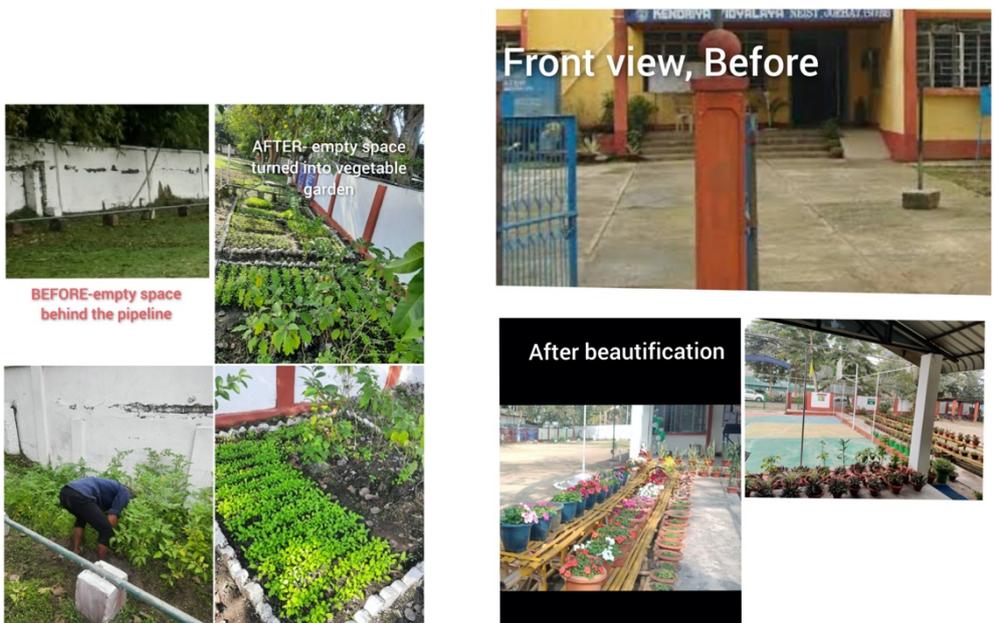
The annual Inspection report in 2018 shown a significant improvement with respect to previous year with a remarkable appreciation, on record, for Team Spirit and tremendous Interpersonal relationship, apart from increase in Annual Inspection overall score by more than 10% (Table-1) and improved academic result in CBSE board result for Class XII (Table-2) by about 2.48% and Class X (Table-3) by 18.87%.

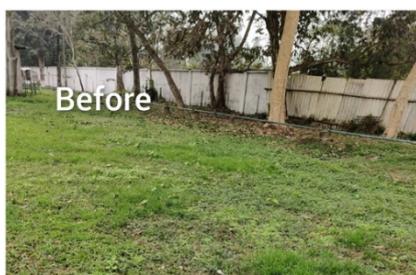
School Annual Inspection Score:**Table-1**

Student Pass % in CBSE Board Examination in Class-XII**Table-2****Student Pass % in CBSE Board Examination in Class-X****Table-3**

The case study done here suggests that Distributive Leadership can work wonders in optimising interpersonal relationship with the stakeholders in schools. In this case, though the education institution was in a temporary building, the interpersonal relationship between Sponsoring Agency and the school administration was maintained to be cordial, trustful and collaborative.

SOME ILLUSTRATIONS IN PHOTOS:





CONCLUSION:

This practice of Leadership has brought more development in the school in subsequent years. **During COVID-19 pandemic, the Distributive Leadership model has been extended to parents** to ensure that their children were attending the online classes. Although parents are always being a stake holder of school but for the first time they became stake holder in classroom learning environment. Online sessions were conducted among the parents to make them aware of various nitty-gritty of online learning environment and also taught them how to keep their children away from dark side on online contents. Parents have also been empowered about the digital world, E- Learning through various sessions while teachers have also undergone training for E learning and AI training as conducted by the organisation.

END NOTE:

This paper is based on effective use of Distributive Leadership in Schools rather than stereotyped single School leader as Principal addressing issues. It is illustrated through a case study and addressed successfully, by highlighting positive attitudes resulting in improved interpersonal relationships, positive mind set, prioritisation of goals within timeframe with a lead from heart and passion to empower others by entrusting leadership.

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