

Teaching should be such that what is offered is perceived as a valuable gift and not as a hard duty.

*- Albert Einstein*

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# **MODERN SKILLS FOR MODERN TEACHERS**

**Dr M. Maria Saroja  
Rev.Dr L. Vasanthi Medona  
C. Stella Rajakumari  
Dr V. Jani  
E. Michael Jeya Priya**



**St. Ignatius College of Education (Autonomous)**  
(Re-accredited with 'A' Grade by NAAC)  
Palayamkottai, Tirunelveli - 627002, Tamil Nadu, India.  
(Affiliated to TamilNadu Teachers Education University, Chennai)

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## **Authors**

**Dr. M. Maria Saroja**  
**Rev. Dr. L. Vasanthi Medona**  
**C. Stella Rajakumari**  
**Dr. V. Jani**  
**E. Michael Jeya Priya**

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***Authors: Dr. M. Maria Saroja, Rev. Dr. L. Vasanthi Medona,  
C.Stella Rajakumari, Dr. V. Jani and E. Michael Jeya Priya***

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## **From the Editors' Desk**

Modern teaching and learning make the most of new and immersive ways to explore the curriculum. It nurtures a growth mindset in students, emphasizing future-ready skills to help them thrive in jobs not yet invented. It's unafraid to use new technologies and new forms of assessment to gauge student progress. Inspiring and motivating experiences are the lifeblood of teaching and learning. They're also at the heart of systemic transformation in education. Proficient educators are the driving force in modern teaching and learning. By personalizing learning pathways, they empower every student to reach their potential. The most successful strategies for creating sustainable teaching practices are to knit together online professional development with local and global communities of practice. Modern skills are about new approaches and tools. Modern skills help educators to unlock a students' sense of purpose and inspire them to achieve more. At the same time, students develop essential 21st-century competencies. The key to a transformed learning system is understanding students' strengths and weaknesses. The implication of modern skills in the teaching-learning process helps the students vividly outside their own experience. The webinar focused on these thought-provoking thrust areas such as Digital Pedagogy in the Era of Industry 4.0, Emotional Intelligence in Teaching and Learning Process, Transforming Leadership Skills – A Challenge or A Change Required, and Communication Skills - An Essential Tool for Moulding Modern Teachers. The editorial board is glad to bring forth webinar proceedings to disseminate knowledge, values and skills to all ignited minds. We are grateful to **Gateway Software Solutions, Coimbatore**, for their collaboration. We are indebted to **Sr.Landrada Centre for Research, St.Ignatius College of Education(Autonomous), Palayamkottai**, for rendering the support to publish the proceedings of the National webinar on “Modern Skills for Modern Teachers”.

# **Editors**

**Dr M. Maria Saroja**

Principal i/c Research Director &  
Associate Professor of Biological Science

**Rev. Sr. Dr L. Vasanthi Medona**

Educational Councilor &  
Assistant Professor of Mathematics

# **Co-Editors**

**Ms C. Stella Rajakumari**

Assistant Professor of Mathematics

**Dr V. Jani**

Assistant Professor of Mathematics

**Ms. E. Michael Jeya Priya**

Assistant Professor of Biological Science

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**TEACHER LEADERSHIP: LEADING THE WAY TO  
EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING****\*Michael Jeya Priya E.***Assistant Professor of Biological Science,**St. Ignatius College of Education(Autonomous), Palayamkottai, Tirunelveli-2***ABSTRACT**

Teachers have a very significant, lifelong impact on all of their students. This impact involves not only the teaching of particular academic skills, but as importantly, the fostering of student self-esteem. Reinforcing self-esteem in the classroom is associated with increased motivation and learning. Despite an emphasis on teacher leadership in educational settings, teachers often lack skills and competencies to assume leadership roles and thus require enhancing their repertoire of leadership skills and contributing to organizational effectiveness. Therefore, it is essential to identify potential leaders in schools or seek the support of those who would accept the added responsibility of leadership roles. This paper deals with the skills required for teacher leadership, personal skills for teacher leader, and overarching leadership competencies in teachers and teacher leader roles in educational institutions.

**Keywords:** Teacher Leadership, Competencies, Organizational Effectiveness, Personal Skills

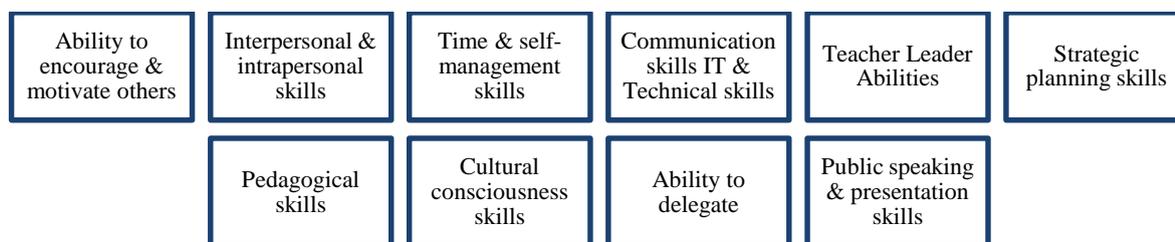
**Introduction**

Leadership has been described as “a process of social influence in which one person can enlist the aid and support of others in the accomplishment of a common task”. Leadership is an activity of influencing people to strive willingly for group objectives and influence people to follow in the achievement of a common goal. Leadership in school is the process of enlisting and guiding the talents and energies of teachers, pupils and parents towards achieving common educational aims (Dalal,S.,& Sarla Rani,S.2013). Skilled teachers have the power to make a real difference in the lives of students. But educators who exemplify leadership skills within the field are able to make an even greater impact. Teachers who learn to translate their successful classroom practices into a shared vision that can help drive the school, the district or even the industry forward can benefit students far beyond their classrooms (Fook,C.Y.,& Sidhu,G.K.2009). Teacher is a valuable resource to communities worldwide, nationwide, and community-wide. Teaching has great potential for many individuals to leave a mark on society and benefit their lives and self-worth. Teachers have excellent resources, skills and tools to achieve their goals and to reach out to numerous students in their careers. Teachers are not only workers but are also members of the profession. Teaching is a very professional career where an individual is held accountable through a series of tests, assessments and tools to gauge the achievement of students and their learning. Teaching is such a rewarding and challenging career and a partnership between schools, community, and parents to help children succeed in their academic careers by overcoming personal, academic, social and emotional challenges to ensure success.

**Skills Required for Teacher Leadership**

Teacher leadership can have a wide range of roles, it is important to discern what types of skills they need to possess in order to be effective in leadership positions. First and foremost, pedagogical excellence of teachers is considered a key to effective teacher leadership as “one cannot be an effective teacher leader if one is not first an accomplished teacher” (Odell.1997). Lack of knowledge about classroom practices or lack of credibility as a teacher might negatively influence teacher leader roles. According to Snell and Swanson (2000) expertise as a classroom teacher is a critical aspect of teacher leadership, which gives a teacher credibility among peers and colleagues. Hence, teacher leadership is a means by which credible teachers exercise influence over supervisors, colleagues and members of the school community through shared or collaborative relationships that advance pedagogical practices (Poekert, 2012). The following skills are required for the teacher.

**Fig.1.Showing the Skills required for teacher leadership**



Moreover, teacher leaders are honest, competent, forward-looking, and inspiring individuals who derive strength from character and competence; rather than from their middle-level leadership positions (Chapman, 2008). It can be inferred that leadership knowledge and skills are interdependent concepts that complement each other to facilitate teacher leaders in educational leadership roles. Knowledge may only provide an understanding of a leadership role or a task; however, to practically perform it one needs to have leadership skills(Shah,S.R.2017).

**Personal Skills for Teacher Leader**

Teacher leaders can help to create a culture of collaboration is through the facilitation of learning teams. As the term implies, a learning team is a group of teachers working together to focus on important issues within the school, such as addressing the meeting of student needs. The following skills may be necessary to fulfill the role of a teacher leader. These skills are briefly described below:

**Fig.2. Showing the personal skills for teacher leader**

<b>WORK ETHIC</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Teacher leaders have been described as perseverant, resourceful, actionoriented committed, and passionate.</b></li> </ul>
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- **The passion they have for their mission allows teacher leaders to find the courage to persist in the face of adversity and obstacles**

**TEAMWORK**

- Teacher must possess the ability to build solid relationships with colleagues, parents, students, administration, and the community.

**LEADERSHIP**

- Teacher leaders can lead by engaging, inspiring, and motivating others to improve and become better through their actions
- Teacher leaders are adaptable, open-minded, and creative. They are open to exploring options to gather the necessary resources to improve the state of education

**OPENNESS**

- Teacher leaders are able to adapt and adjust to situations through their creativity and flexibility.

**POSITIVE AFFECT**

- Positive emotions have been demonstrated to have a number of beneficial outcomes.
- The successful teacher leaders often succeed with the help of positive affect.
- Their tendency to display optimism, enthusiasm, and confidence leads others to think creatively and work together to solve problems

**VISION**

- They actively seek out such opportunities rather than simply waiting for them to appear

**RISK TAKING**

- They are willing to take the chance to attempt new and innovative initiatives despite the fact that what they are doing may end up failing and expose them to external criticisms

Teaching related skills. Teacher leaders are also good teachers. They display outstanding teaching skills, hold a comprehensive philosophy of education, and are relatively altruistic (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001). Furthermore, they have a deep understanding of various theories and practices of teaching (Killion & Harrison, 2006). Teacher leaders are willing to expand their role as teacher to develop their career, and have the time, energy, and patience required to assume such a role (York-Barr & Duke, 2004).

## Overarching Leadership Competencies in Teachers

Knowledge and Skills Needed by Effective Teacher Leaders. The skills teacher leaders need to be effective in a variety of roles can be broken into five main categories. These skills sets are further defined on subsequent pages.

1. Working with adult learners 2. Communication 3. Collaboration 4. Knowledge of content and pedagogy 5. Systems thinking

The following are some of the overarching competencies educational leaders often exhibit.

- **Reflective practice:** Helping systems to function with a culture of mindful and meaningful reflection by creating conditions that encourage thoughtful consideration among peers, administrators and other staff members.
- **Personal effectiveness:** Understanding your own personal strengths, leadership style and passions, and capitalizing on those attributes to support lifelong learning in others and yourself.
- **Interpersonal effectiveness:** Seeking opportunities to better support your colleagues and building critical relationships to promote action that's based on a shared vision and is deeply rooted in serving the needs of students.
- **Communication:** Defining, differentiating and sharing carefully crafted messaging that can spur others to pursue positive change at all levels of the education system.
- **Continuing learning and education:** Creating meaningful professional development goals and seeking learning opportunities to help you achieve them.
- **Group processes:** Open-mindedly engaging in working with others, skillfully managing group dynamics and guiding groups through challenges.
- **Adult learning:** Building an awareness of adult learning to better understand how to impact colleagues and collaborate to enhance instructional growth and student success.
- **Technological facility:** Incorporating emerging technology as a tool to communicate with diverse audiences, facilitate collaboration and offer learning activities that would otherwise be inaccessible.

## Teacher Leader Roles

Teachers as leaders can take various roles in different domains which may be categorized into formal or informal roles. In formal roles, teachers undertake managerial and pedagogical responsibilities (Muijs et al., 2013) Such roles include department chairs, mentors, coaches, curriculum reformers, instructional leaders and subject coordinators who aim to implement decisions taken at a strategic level and find ways of encouraging staff to conform (Margolis & Doring, 2012). On the other hand, informal leadership roles, which involve teacher leaders in collegial tasks not only contributing to organisational improvement, but also to the professional learning of their colleagues. These roles include peer

coaching, leading a new team, setting up action research groups and assisting in the development of school curricula (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001). Since leadership is considered a context-specific phenomenon, teacher leaders' roles might be perceived and applied differently in different contexts. The following are the ten key factors which influence the emergence and maintenance of teacher leadership: (1) supportive culture, (2) supportive structures, (3) strong leadership (4) commitment to action enquiry and data richness, (5) innovative forms of professional development, (6) coordinated improvement efforts, (7) high levels of teacher participation and involvement, (8) collective creativity, (9) shared professional practice, (10) recognition and reward. (Muijs & Harris, 2006).

### **Conclusion**

In a rapidly changing and more technologically oriented society, students will need to acquire the knowledge and skills that will help them achieve success in school and in life. The evolving nature of school environments has placed high demands on educational leaders. Where knowledge of school management, finance, legal issues and state mandates was once the primary focus for the preparation of school leaders, education reform has created an urgent need for a strong emphasis on development. Teachers often emerge as teacher leaders after they achieve success in the classroom through their experiences and expertise. The success of a school needs the full participation and smart partnerships from all parties concerned. Besides that, strong support, clear vision and appropriate empowerment are also seen as critical and crucial factors that should go hand-in-hand with good leadership. It reflected a learning leader that practiced a form of leadership that is collaborative, cooperative, participative, democratic and centrally concerned with giving others the responsibility to lead.

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