

## Development Model of Teacher Leadership Competencies Based on a Thematic Analysis Approach

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### *Abstract*

**Introduction:** This research was conducted with the aim of presenting a model for the development of teacher leadership competencies based on a thematic analysis approach (Fall 2024).

**Methodology:** The present study employed a qualitative approach, utilizing semi-structured interviews and credible texts as data collection tools. The sample size reached theoretical saturation with 20 academic experts in the field of leadership, as well as managers and teachers in the education sector, who were purposefully selected as participants. The software used in this research was MAXQDA-2020. The approach utilized was based on thematic analysis as per the method of Attride-Stirling (2011).

**Findings:** The findings indicated that the model for developing teacher leadership competencies comprises six dimensions: self-efficacy, teaching-learning, self-leadership, empowerment, professional development, and interpersonal skills. These dimensions encompass 27 components: self-regulation, autonomy, self-empowerment, supervision, training, quality groups, delegation, team building, method improvement, innovation, theorizing, re-engineering, foresight, transparent communication, motivation, collaboration and participation, school climate, school health, self-regulation, succession planning, accountability, self-assessment, content analysis, content regulation, teaching methods, academic progress, and classroom management. The validity of the identified components was examined and confirmed using Guba and Lincoln's four-part criteria. The credibility of the model was also assessed and validated through a focus group.

**Discussion and Conclusion:** It seems that the attention of education stakeholders to the identified indicators in this research could be beneficial for improving teacher effectiveness.

**Key Words:** Leadership Competencies, Teacher, Thematic Analysis

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### *Introduction*

In the organizational world, leaders or managers are highly decisive and influential individuals. Management and leadership positions are among the most critical roles within organizations. The realization of organizational strategies largely depends on leadership competencies. It is these leaders who drive organizations forward or hold them back through the decisions they make, the choices they select, the appointments they carry out, the values they promote and advocate, the culture they build, and the significant legacy they leave behind. The impact of leaders in organizations is not limited to their time in office. These effects and consequences can be so profound and enduring that they are still observed and felt years and decades later. Leaders are important and pivotal, which is why leadership has become one of the most intriguing and sensitive topics, especially in recent decades, in the realm of "organization and management." We are all familiar with organizations where a change in leadership has led to fundamental changes in their operations and successes. We know organizations whose leaders have elevated them from the ground to great heights. We recognize leaders whose absence cannot be easily filled, and we have read and heard about leaders whose strategic thoughts, measures, and decisions have been responsible for all fundamental and decisive transformations within organizations (Aboulalaei, 2017).

Therefore, one of the serious challenges in effectively managing organizations, especially in the public sector, is ensuring the presence of competent managers at the top of the organizational hierarchy. The proper and effective execution of capable managers addresses the long-term need for committed and efficient leaders within the organization. To achieve this, public organizations must develop a management competency program tailored to their specific needs based on the requirements of the public sector and the organization in question. The inability to find suitable individuals for the competency and succession of managers is one of the serious issues and challenges faced by any organization (Chang & Bassel, 2020).

On the other hand, proper training and its implementation in the educational process is one of the most important goals of any educational system, as it creates the conditions for the growth and advancement of the educational system (Svejovich, 2016). Therefore, it is not surprising that many systems, emphasizing essential educational elements, strive to develop an advanced educational system and consequently an advanced nation (Kain Lou, 2000). Education plays a central role in the success of individuals and nations, and among educational resources, the teacher's ability to facilitate learners' learning is vital (Darling-Hammond, 2006). Thus, one of the most important indicators of applying appropriate and correct educational principles for

learners and improving and advancing learning skills and related principles is associated with the educator and the relevant model (Carolek and colleagues, 2017). Accordingly, the development of education and the reform of related conditions are fundamental and important, and given this significance, examining the leadership competencies of managers in this institution is a serious and essential issue.

Bolden and Gosling (2006), in their comprehensive study of leadership, trace the origin of "management competency" to McClelland's work (1973) and subsequently to the McKee consulting group's identification of Boyatzis (1982) of 19 general behaviors. The use of competencies as one of the fundamental factors in organizations and the selection of leadership employed within the organization is a principle that is increasingly gaining popularity (Lena-Erks and Morley, 2015). Miwiti (2016) and Shoyl and colleagues (2011) also declare the importance of competency and emphasize that leadership is the fundamental duty of any institution. They also explain the importance of inspiring, motivating, and encouraging followers to achieve goals. Leaders focus on teaching improvement by providing feedback and linking observations to the development of job opportunities (Zepta, 2017).

Various studies indicate that effective school leadership has a significant impact on student attendance, student engagement with the school, academic self-efficacy of students, staff satisfaction, and collective teacher efficacy (Bafadal, Veyuno, and Sobri, 2015). Research findings show that leadership competence greatly influences performance improvement, and appropriate performance positively affects the enhancement of institutional accreditation outcomes (Raharja, Moieniz, and Lotfiani, 2018).

Establishing a competency framework is one of the major strategic policies in every country. In today's turbulent business world, schools are striving and competing to identify, attract, and retain the most qualified managers as a competitive advantage. In the complex and evolving society of today, the development programs for managers' capabilities at various management levels, aimed at enhancing their efficiency and effectiveness, are considered the most important and valuable goals and missions of organizations. In all schools, the selection, training, and professional development of effective and capable teachers is one of the fundamental challenges. Educational issues are typically complex, and their successful and effective implementation in schools requires a set of competencies, skills, abilities, and specific characteristics (Mousizadeh and Adli, 2009).

Experts in the field of management propose competency-based educational management, which serves as a powerful tool emphasizing student behavior and aiding their success. For a school to implement a competency-

based approach to human resources, competencies must be defined, and a model must be developed that describes these competencies (Cochran, 2009).

The term competency was introduced by White (1959). White became known for introducing the term competency to describe personality traits associated with superior performance and high motivation. Assuming a relationship between cognitive competence and motivational action tendencies, he defined competency as "the effective interaction of an individual with the environment" and discussed that a "competency motivation" exists in addition to competence, which he termed "realized capacity."

Classroom leadership has received serious attention in recent years (Harry-Michael, 2006). Educational leadership in the classroom emphasizes improving teaching and learning at the core of school functions. Educational leaders in the classroom strive to change school factors such as curriculum content, teaching methods, assessment strategies, and cultural norms to achieve academic progress. Leadership can emerge from a variety of sources, including administrators, teachers, parents, and the students themselves. Since the early 1980s, the primary focus has been on teachers as educational leaders in the classroom (Hallinger, 2003, 2005, 2011; Hoffman & Hoffman, 2011). Classroom educational leaders are consistently recognized as strong, purposeful managers and leaders who build a goal-oriented culture and combine expertise with charisma. Policymakers believe that the path to improving schools is made possible through educational leadership (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985, 2005). They emphasize three major roles of classroom educational leadership: defining the school's mission, managing the classroom educational program through encouraging and controlling teaching and learning, and promoting a positive teaching and learning environment in the classroom and school. Johanna Ellick, Milka, and Hoy (2005) presented a model of educational leadership that includes three leadership functions: defining goals, monitoring, and providing constructive feedback for teaching, as well as promoting and emphasizing professional development.

Social unrest crises, such as violence, drug use, ignorance, and the challenge of preparing citizens with social skills, personal values, and high responsibility, stem from inadequate leadership. Senge believes that when we face fundamental crises that shape our future, we find solutions through the coherent integration among participants and the relationships that bring us closer together. No entity in our society reinforces the concept of structured integration and cohesion better than leadership services. There is always the concern that excessive collaboration and coordination in our crisis management and problem-solving approaches may diminish independence and the perspective that defines us as a nation or as a creative force in the world;

however, this is not the intent or outcome of leadership (Senge, 2006). Leaders must have the ability to create positive patterns, develop the skills and capabilities of employees, motivate them, and foster a healthy organizational culture. The inability to establish constructive and impactful patterns, neglecting the needs and motivations of employees, and failing to create an appropriate organizational culture can lead to decreased motivation and performance among employees, increased turnover rates, and reduced quality of training.

In this context, Mahdi and colleagues (2023) conducted a study aimed at designing a paradigmatic model for the development of educational leadership among managers of higher education institutions in Fars Province. The study showed that the core concept (educational leadership development) is a function of causal conditions (educational system structure, organizational vision, leadership skills, leadership style), contextual conditions (leader's personality traits, organizational culture, and technology), and intervening conditions (leadership capabilities, leadership attitudes, organizational financial resources, and organizational factors). These factors create the conditions for actions and interactions (strategies) (teamwork and collaboration, meritocracy, training for leaders, resource management, leadership development, improving organizational structure, and knowledge management) that result in outcomes (empowering employees, improving organizational performance, enhancing training quality, developing research capabilities, enhancing leadership skills, improving employee participation, organizational decisions, and optimal resource allocation).

Biranvand and colleagues (2023) conducted a study aimed at identifying the antecedents and outcomes of self-development in leadership within organizations. They identified antecedents for self-development in leadership, which were categorized into three groups: 1) individual factors (including 19 categories), 2) organizational factors (including 5 categories), and 3) environmental factors (including 2 categories). Additionally, the identified outcomes and consequences of self-development in leadership included two categories: 1) individual outcomes (including 8 categories) and 2) organizational outcomes (including 7 categories).

Fazlali and Moazami (2022) conducted a study aimed at the impact of organizational leadership style on human resource management. They emphasized the mediating role of a competitive work environment, showing that organizational leadership style does not have a significant impact on human resource management and has been rejected. However, it was confirmed that organizational leadership style affects the competitive work environment, the competitive work environment affects human resource management, and

organizational leadership style impacts human resource management with the mediating role of the competitive work environment.

Sonmez and Gokmenglu (2023) conducted a study aimed at examining the impact of distributed leadership behaviors of managers on teachers' attitudes towards multiculturalism. The results partially confirmed that social justice leadership behaviors of teachers mediate the relationship between the distributed leadership behaviors of managers and their attitudes towards multiculturalism. In a structure where leadership roles are shared in the school, teachers can exhibit more social justice leadership behaviors. Their attitudes towards multiculturalism become more positive. Distributed leadership enhances teachers' support, critical awareness, and inclusive behavior. Concepts for practice, theory, and policy are also discussed in this article.

Lijgenberg and Vertander (2023) conducted a study titled "Leadership for School Improvement - Linking Learning to Leadership Over Time." The findings indicated that novice school leaders initially found learning activities to be challenging, but gradually these activities became an intermediary and boundary goal within their practices. Key elements for this included the design and duration of the activities, a systematic approach, supportive tools, and "mandatory moments." We argue that linking educational practice with school leadership performance may have positive effects on the professional development of novice school leaders.

Gomez and colleagues (2022) conducted a review study aimed at examining the relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership in school leaders. The results showed that emotional intelligence is key to effective leadership, with the most common skills and competencies being self-awareness, self-management, and empathy. Furthermore, the literature clearly indicates that the extent to which a leader builds trusting relationships significantly contributes to teacher satisfaction and performance. These findings can assist in designing successful pre-service programs for aspiring leaders and in-service programs for school administrators. Limitations and future research directions are discussed.

In light of the aforementioned points, today, the competencies of leaders are considered one of the most important tools for achieving goals in organizations, and paying attention to their competencies can be a significant source of effectiveness in organizations. Therefore, this research seeks to answer the question of what components constitute the model for developing leadership competencies among teachers in education?

### *Research Methodology*

This research falls under the category of fundamental research in terms of its objectives, and it is classified as qualitative research, specifically a thematic analysis emphasizing the method of Attride-Stirling (2011). To collect data, semi-structured interviews were utilized to obtain in-depth information. The participants in the study included academic experts in the field of leadership, as well as managers and educators in the education sector. The criteria for their inclusion were familiarity with the teaching profession and a minimum of 15 years of experience in this field. The sampling method for this section was theoretical, and a total of 20 interviews were conducted until theoretical saturation was reached. To ensure the credibility of the findings, both the concepts and the coding process were reviewed, and all stages of coding were shared with some participants of the study (5 individuals) and several external professors (6 professors) in the area of teacher leadership competencies. The suggestions and critiques from them were taken into account.

As mentioned, to conduct the research, semi-structured interviews were used, and the guiding research question was framed as "What factors can enhance leadership competencies in teachers and contribute to their development?"

The interviews were conducted in person and individually. Initially, the purpose of the research was explained to the participants, and in line with ethical considerations, they were asked to indicate their consent if they wished for their interview recordings to be made. The interviewer listened attentively to the participants' statements and experiences, noting important points and other details at that moment. Whenever there was an unclear point, a sincere request was made (such as "Excuse me, could you please elaborate more?", "I would appreciate it if you could provide an example of your opinion," or "If possible, could you explain further?"). Each interview lasted approximately between 30 to 45 minutes. After each interview, the texts were analyzed and reviewed.

Data analysis was conducted at three levels: basic themes, organizing themes, and overarching themes. In the basic themes, all words or sentences were considered. This stage concluded with the elimination of similar themes, resulting in 76 categories (Table 1). In the stage of developing organizing themes, all basic themes were organized into 27 core categories, and the final stage, which involved constructing overarching themes, was shaped based on the core theme of the main research, namely "the development of teacher competencies," which has a more abstract aspect. The stages of the coding process are mentioned in Table 2, and the final model is illustrated and described in Figure 1. The software used in this research was the qualitative software MAXQDA-2020.

## Findings

An examination of the demographic characteristics of the participants in the study revealed that the participants were aged between 37 and 56, with a mean age of  $43.60 \pm 4.91$ . Sixteen participants were married, and four were single. In terms of educational level, 12 participants had a bachelor's degree, 5 had a master's degree, and 3 had a doctoral degree.

**Table 1. Identified basic themes**

Identified Codes		
Commitment to work Commitment to goals Self-assessment Mutual trust Accountability Trust Acceptance of responsibility Participation in processes Acceptance of results Designing self-assessment Interpretation based on results Commitment to results	Decision-making regarding content Maintaining content continuity Content revision and improvement Choosing appropriate teaching methods Using a collaborative model Attention to teaching effectiveness Performance standards Stating expectations Continuous evaluation Interactive management Transactional management - Servant leadership	Individual responsibility Prioritizing collective interests over individual interests Setting goals Maintaining autonomy Professional independence Preserving individual well-being Developing personal competence Psychological empowerment Mutual trust Monitoring Classroom Activities Clinical Supervision Teaching Supervision
In-Service Training Virtual Training Peer Learning Formation of Quality Circles Problem-Centered Problem Solving Role Playing Accountability Group Decision Making Troubleshooting Utilizing Expertise Synergy	Adopting New Methods Risk Taking Reengineering Idea Generation Process Interpretation Creative Thinking Respect for New Ideas Transforming Ideas into Theory Supporting New Ideas Designing a New Classroom Structure Expanding Teaching Experiences Ergonomics Breaking Judgment Against Change Foresight and Embracing Transformations	Meaningfulness of Communication Existence Multilateral Communication Attention to Feedback Accountability Achieving Success Challenging Goals Collaborative Learning Classroom Cooperation Supporting Each Other Creating a Friendly Environment Fostering Intimacy Among Colleagues Enjoying Being Together Attention to Collaborative Spirit Expanding Commitment in the Classroom Goal Orientation

**Table 1. Identified Core, Organizing, and Comprehensive Themes**

Core	Comprehensive Themes	Organizing Themes	Core Themes
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Development of Teacher Leadership Competencies	Self-efficacy	Self-regulation, Succession Planning, Accountability, Self-assessment	Commitment to goals, commitment to work, self-assessment, mutual trust, accountability, trust, acceptance of responsibility, participation in processes, acceptance of results, self-assessment design, interpretation based on results, commitment to outcomes
	Teaching-Learning	Content Analysis, Content Organization, Teaching Methods, Academic Progress, Classroom Management	Decision-making regarding content, maintaining content continuity, content revision and improvement, selecting appropriate teaching methods, using a collaborative model, focusing on teaching effectiveness, performance standards, expressing expectations, continuous assessment, interactive management, transactional management - servant leadership
	Self-direction	Self-direction, Autonomy, Empowerment, Supervision	Individual responsibility, prioritizing collective interests over individual interests, setting goals, maintaining autonomy, professional independence, preserving individual well-being, developing personal competence, psychological empowerment, mutual trust, monitoring classroom activities, clinical supervision, teaching oversight
	Empowerment	Educational, Quality Groups, Delegation, Team Building	In-service training, virtual training, peer learning, forming quality circles, problem-centered approach, problem-solving, role-playing, accountability, group decision-making, troubleshooting, utilizing expertise, synergy
	Professional Development	Improvement of Methods, Innovation, Theorizing, Reengineering, Foresight	Adopting new methods, risk-taking, re-engineering, brainstorming, interpreting processes, creative thinking, respecting new ideas, transforming ideas into theories, supporting new ideas, designing new classroom structures, expanding teaching experiences, ergonomics, breaking judgment against change, future studies, and embracing transformations
	Interpersonal Skills	Clear Communication, Motivation, Collaboration and Participation, School Climate, School Health	Meaningfulness? Communication, multi-faceted communication, attention to feedback, accountability, achieving success, challenging goals, collaborative learning, classroom cooperation, supporting one another, creating a friendly environment, fostering intimacy among colleagues, enjoying being together, focusing on a collaborative spirit, expanding commitment in the classroom, goal orientation

## Self-Efficacy

Considering the organizing themes identified for this concept, self-efficacy can be interpreted as a key factor in individual and organizational success. Self-efficacy, which refers to an individual's belief in their ability to perform tasks and achieve goals, plays an important role in realizing these themes:

- Self-Regulation: High self-efficacy helps individuals regulate their behaviors more effectively. A person who believes in their abilities can better set their goals, plan for them, and overcome obstacles along the way.

- Succession Planning: High self-efficacy enables individuals to take on new roles and responsibilities and perform more effectively in them. A person with self-belief is not afraid to accept new challenges and is more motivated to learn and develop themselves.

- Accountability: Individuals with high self-efficacy are more likely to take responsibility for their actions and outcomes. They understand that they have the ability to control their lives and seek solutions when problems arise, learning from their mistakes.

- Self-Assessment: Self-efficacy also influences how individuals assess themselves. Those with high self-efficacy tend to have a greater inclination to evaluate their performance accurately and fairly. They are well aware of their strengths and weaknesses and strive for self-improvement.

- Commitment to Goals, Commitment to Work, Mutual Trust, Accountability, Trust, Acceptance of Responsibility, Participation in Processes, Acceptance of Outcomes: High self-efficacy enables individuals to act more effectively in these areas and achieve desirable results. For example, a person with high self-efficacy is more likely to remain committed to their goals, take their work seriously, trust their colleagues, and accept responsibility for their work outcomes.

As a result, self-efficacy can be viewed as a driving force that enables individuals to take more effective steps on their path to growth and development, leading to greater successes.

### **Teaching-Learning**

Based on the organizing themes that emerged, "teaching-learning" can be defined as a dynamic and interactive process aimed at facilitating the learning and growth of students. This process includes a set of activities and interactions carried out collaboratively by the teacher and students, leading to the acquisition of new knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

- Decision-making regarding content and maintaining its coherence: In the teaching-learning process, decision-making about content and ensuring its coherence plays a crucial role. The teacher must carefully select educational content and organize it in a way that aligns with the needs and characteristics of the students. This involves making decisions about content selection, maintaining the continuity of materials, revising and improving content, and presenting it in an engaging and comprehensible manner.

- Revising and improving content: The teacher should always strive to revise and improve educational content. This may include updating

information, adding new materials, and removing outdated content. Additionally, the teacher should pay attention to student feedback and make necessary changes to the content when needed.

- Choosing appropriate teaching methods and using a collaborative model: Selecting suitable teaching methods is another key factor in the teaching-learning process. The teacher should choose the appropriate teaching method based on the type of content, the characteristics of the students, and the available resources. Utilizing a collaborative model, where students actively participate in the learning process, can enhance the effectiveness of teaching.

- Attention to teaching effectiveness: The teacher should always be mindful of the effectiveness of their teaching and use various methods to assess the level of student learning. This may include asking students questions, conducting written and oral tests, and observing student behavior in the classroom.

- Performance Standards and Expectations: Establishing performance standards and clearly articulating expectations are among the key elements that help students stay on the right path and achieve their goals. Teachers should clearly communicate their expectations to students and familiarize them with performance standards.

- Continuous Assessment: Continuous assessment helps teachers identify the strengths and weaknesses of their teaching and make necessary adjustments to their instructional methods when needed. This may include evaluating student performance throughout the academic year as well as gathering feedback from them regarding teaching methods.

- Teacher's Role: Interactive Management, Transactional Management, Servant Leadership: Teachers can utilize various classroom management styles, such as interactive management, transactional management, or servant leadership, to establish order and discipline in the classroom. In interactive management, teachers and students jointly participate in decision-making. In transactional management, teachers and students reach agreements on their goals and responsibilities. In servant leadership, the teacher acts as a servant to the students, assisting them in their learning and growth.

Overall, the teaching-learning process is complex and multidimensional, requiring the joint effort and collaboration of both teachers and students. Considering the organizing themes presented, it can be said that an effective teacher must master decision-making regarding content, teaching methods, classroom management, and assessment to create an appropriate environment for student learning and guide them on their path of growth and development.

### **Self-Leadership**

Based on the organizing themes that emerged, "self-leadership" can be defined as a set of skills and attitudes that enable an individual to take responsibility for their life, set their own goals, and take steps toward achieving them. Self-leadership helps individuals act more effectively in their personal and professional lives through self-awareness, self-motivation, and self-control.

- Self-Governance and Autonomy: Self-leadership is closely related to self-governance and autonomy. A self-leader is capable of making independent decisions, planning, and taking the necessary actions to achieve their goals. They do not require constant supervision and can determine the course of their life by relying on their abilities.

- Self-Empowerment: Self-leadership aids in the self-empowerment of the individual. A self-leader believes in their abilities and utilizes them to reach their goals. By developing their personal competencies, they gain greater self-confidence and can more effectively confront life's challenges.

- Monitoring: Monitoring is an important aspect of self-leadership. A self-leader keeps track of their performance and makes necessary changes to their behavior and plans when needed. This monitoring can include oversight of class activities, clinical supervision, and teaching supervision.

- Personal Responsibility: Self-leadership is also related to personal responsibility. A self-leader accepts responsibility for their actions and outcomes. They understand that they are accountable for their choices and decisions and seek solutions when problems arise.

- Prioritizing Collective Interests: Self-leadership also considers the prioritization of collective interests. A self-leader, while valuing their personal goals, also pays attention to the interests of the community and takes steps to improve it.

- Goal Setting: Self-leadership helps individuals clearly define their goals and strive to achieve them. These goals can include personal, professional, educational, and other objectives.

- Preservation of autonomy: Self-leadership gives individuals the freedom to independently choose their life path. A self-leader can select their life direction based on their interests and talents, while also protecting their professional independence.

- Maintenance of personal health: Self-leadership also contributes to maintaining personal health. A self-leader values their physical and mental well-being and strives to improve them.

- Development of personal competencies: Self-leadership aids in the development of personal competencies. A self-leader is continuously learning and enhancing their skills to achieve greater success in both personal and professional life.

- Psychological empowerment: Self-leadership supports the psychological empowerment of individuals. A self-leader is psychologically strong and can effectively cope with life's challenges and problems.

- Mutual trust: Self-leadership fosters mutual trust. A self-leader establishes effective communication with others and can earn their trust.

In summary, self-leadership can be considered a key skill in both personal and social life. A self-leader is capable of managing their life more effectively, achieving their goals, and playing a significant role in society.

### *Empowerment*

Based on the organizing themes that were extracted, "empowerment" can be defined as a multifaceted process aimed at increasing the abilities, capacities, and capabilities of individuals and groups to perform tasks more effectively, solve problems, and achieve goals. This process includes a set of actions and activities that help individuals and groups feel a greater sense of control over their lives and enable them to act independently and autonomously.

- Training and Learning: Training is one of the main pillars of empowerment. Through in-service training, online education, and peer learning, individuals can acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to perform their tasks more effectively. Training helps individuals face new challenges and find appropriate solutions to them.

- Quality Groups: Forming quality groups provides a space for individuals to collaborate, share their knowledge and experiences, and collectively address problems. Quality groups help individuals feel a greater sense of belonging to the organization and participate in decision-making.

- Delegation of Authority: Delegation of authority is an important aspect of empowerment. By delegating authority to individuals, they are given the opportunity to take on greater responsibility and participate in decision-making. Delegation helps individuals gain more confidence and feel that they play an important role in the organization.

- Team Building: Team building helps individuals coordinate with one another, effectively divide tasks, and collectively achieve their goals. Team building aids individuals in developing their communication and collaboration skills, allowing them to work together more effectively.

- Responsibility: Empowerment is also related to responsibility. Empowered individuals take responsibility for their actions and outcomes and actively participate in group decision-making. They know how to collaborate with one another, respect each other's opinions, and make decisions collectively.

- Group Decision-Making and Problem Solving: Empowerment helps individuals develop their group decision-making and problem-solving skills. They understand how to identify problems, explore various solutions, and choose the best one. Additionally, they know how to leverage each other's expertise in solving problems.

- Utilizing Expertise and Synergy: Empowerment enables individuals to benefit from each other's expertise and achieve synergy. Synergy means that a group of individuals working together can achieve results that are greater than the sum of their individual outcomes.

Overall, empowerment can be considered a key process in personal and organizational growth and development. By empowering individuals and groups, improvements in performance, increased productivity, enhanced job satisfaction, and better quality of life can be achieved.

### **Professional Development**

Considering the organizing themes that have been identified, "professional development" can be defined as a continuous and dynamic process aimed at enhancing individuals' knowledge, skills, and abilities in their work field. This process includes a set of activities and experiences that help individuals advance in their careers, face new challenges, and generally improve their performance.

- Improvement of Methods: Professional development is related to the improvement of methods. Individuals who are continuously developing their profession seek new and more effective ways to accomplish tasks. They welcome new ideas and strive to enhance existing methods.

- Innovation: Professional development is also connected to innovation. Individuals engaged in professional development seek to create positive changes in their work environment. They embrace innovative ideas and work to turn them into action.

- Theorizing: Professional development can lead to theorizing in the work field. Individuals who are developing professionally can propose new theories or completely redesign existing processes through creative thinking and ideation.

- Reengineering: Professional development can result in reengineering work processes. Individuals who are developing professionally can improve existing processes and create greater efficiency by examining and analyzing them.

- Future Orientation: Professional development is also related to future orientation. Individuals who are developing professionally pay attention to the future of their careers and potential changes. They strive to adapt to these changes and take advantage of new opportunities.

- Adoption of new methods: Professional development encourages individuals to adopt new methods. Those who are developing their careers are not afraid to try new approaches and are ready to accept the associated risks.

- Risk-taking: Professional development is also related to risk-taking. Individuals who are advancing their careers are prepared to embrace the risks associated with new ideas and innovative methods. They understand that sometimes, taking risks is necessary for progress.

- Ideation: Professional development helps individuals enhance their ideation skills. By utilizing these skills, they can find innovative solutions to problems and generally improve their performance.

- Process interpretation: Professional development assists individuals in accurately interpreting work processes and identifying their strengths and weaknesses. This enables them to propose improved methods for accomplishing tasks.

- Creative thinking: Professional development aids individuals in developing their creative thinking. By using this skill, they can discover innovative solutions to problems and overall enhance their performance.

- Respect for new ideas: Professional development emphasizes the importance of respecting new ideas. Individuals who are developing their careers value the new ideas of others and, when possible, support them.

- Turning ideas into theories: Professional development can lead to the transformation of ideas into new theories. Individuals who are advancing their careers can use their creative thinking and research skills to convert their ideas into coherent and actionable theories.

- Supporting new ideas: Professional development highlights the importance of supporting new ideas. Individuals who are developing their careers back the new ideas of others and, when possible, provide the necessary resources for their implementation.

- Designing a new classroom structure: Professional development helps teachers improve their classroom structure. By participating in training courses and workshops, teachers can become familiar with new teaching methods and implement them in their classrooms.

- Expanding teaching experiences: Professional development assists teachers in broadening their teaching experiences. By engaging in various activities, teachers can gain new experiences and apply them in their classrooms.

- Ergonomics: Professional development emphasizes the importance of ergonomics in the workplace. Individuals who are developing professionally

care about their own and others' physical and mental health and strive to enhance their work environment.

- Breaking judgment against change: Professional development helps individuals not to resist changes and to view them as opportunities for growth and advancement.

- Future studies: Professional development aids individuals in contemplating the future of their profession and its potential changes, preparing themselves for these changes.

- Acceptance of transformations: Professional development prepares individuals to embrace transformations. Those who are developing professionally understand that changes in the work world are inevitable and strive to adapt to these changes.

### *Interpersonal Skills*

Based on the identified organizing themes, "interpersonal skills" can be defined as a set of abilities and communication behaviors that enable an individual to interact effectively and constructively with others. These skills include abilities such as active listening, empathy, clear expression, conflict resolution, and collaboration, which play a significant role in various environments, including family, school, and workplace.

- Clear Communication: Interpersonal skills are related to clear communication. An individual with high interpersonal skills can communicate clearly and effectively with others. They listen to others' conversations, understand their perspectives, and can express their own intentions accurately.

- Multilateral Communication: Interpersonal skills also encompass multilateral communication. An individual possessing these skills can not only speak with others but also actively listen to their conversations and provide appropriate feedback.

- Attention to Feedback: Interpersonal skills include paying attention to others' feedback. An individual with these skills considers others' feedback and uses it to improve their performance.

- Accountability: Interpersonal skills involve accountability as well. An individual with these skills takes responsibility for their actions and words and apologizes when necessary.

- Motivation: Interpersonal skills are also related to motivation. An individual with these skills can encourage and inspire others, providing them with the motivation to achieve their goals.

- Achieving Success: Interpersonal skills help individuals achieve greater success in their personal and professional lives. By utilizing these skills, they

can establish positive and constructive relationships with others and benefit from their support in reaching their goals.

- Challenging Goals: Interpersonal skills assist individuals in setting challenging goals and striving to achieve them. By collaborating and participating with others, they can more effectively reach their objectives.

- Collaborative Learning: Interpersonal skills enable individuals to benefit from each other's experiences and knowledge, working together to achieve their goals. Collaborative learning helps individuals develop their communication and teamwork skills.

- Cooperation and Participation: Interpersonal skills play a crucial role in cooperation and participation in group activities. A person equipped with these skills can effectively collaborate with others, appropriately divide tasks, and collectively address problems.

- School Environment: Interpersonal skills significantly contribute to creating a healthy and friendly school atmosphere. By fostering intimacy among colleagues and students, a safe environment for learning and growth can be established.

- School Well-being: Interpersonal skills help improve the mental and social well-being of students and teachers. By creating a friendly and warm environment in schools, it is possible to prevent the emergence of psychological and social issues.

- Creating a Friendly Environment: Interpersonal skills aid in establishing a friendly and warm atmosphere in the classroom and school. Students and teachers can enjoy being together and build positive and constructive relationships with one another by utilizing these skills.

- Fostering intimacy among colleagues: Interpersonal skills help to foster intimacy among colleagues. By utilizing these skills, colleagues can establish friendly and close relationships with one another and benefit from each other's support in times of need.

- Enjoying being together: Interpersonal skills assist individuals in enjoying their time with others and building positive and constructive relationships with them.

- Focusing on a spirit of collaboration: Interpersonal skills help individuals pay attention to a spirit of collaboration and actively participate in group activities.

- Enhancing commitment in the classroom: Interpersonal skills contribute to enhancing commitment in the classroom. By using these skills, students develop a greater sense of responsibility for their own learning and that of others.

- Goal orientation: Interpersonal skills help individuals to be goal-oriented and strive towards achieving their objectives. By collaborating and engaging with others, they can more effectively reach their goals.

Overall, interpersonal skills can be viewed as a set of essential abilities for establishing effective and constructive communication with others. These skills play a significant role in various aspects of individuals' personal and social lives and contribute to improving their quality of life.

***Final Research Model:***

After completing the analysis and measurement of various data, the final research model is presented as follows.

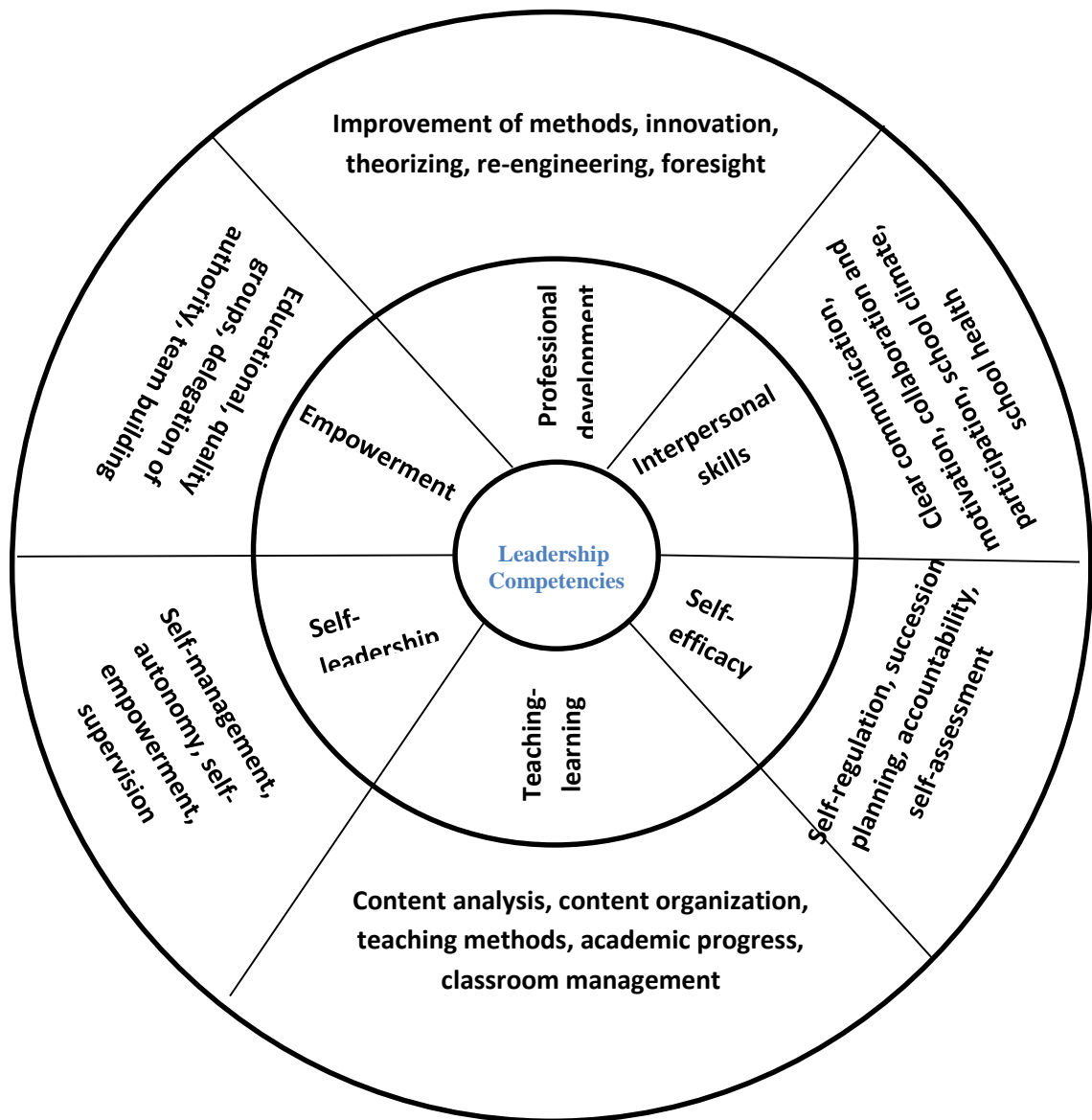


Figure 1: Final Model for Developing Teacher Competencies

After drawing the algorithm, experts were invited to assess the validity of the developed model by responding to the Delphi technique questionnaire. As a result, out of a total of 20 experts, 13 fully participated in this section. Most experts agreed with the proposed model during the validation phase, and their feedback did not lead to significant or fundamental changes in the model. Therefore, after ensuring a relative consensus among the experts, a researcher-constructed scale with a 5-point Likert response range was provided to them to rank the model on a 5-point scale. Consequently, the percentage of agreement among the experts for all listed items was above 70%, with a total agreement of 100%. Additionally, the average agreement fluctuated around a value of 4. Given that the response range for the experts was from 1 to 5, the maximum

agreement for each indicator could be a score of 5. Therefore, obtaining an average of 4 is very favorable and indicates a desirable consensus among the experts. Thus, the validity of the developed model was confirmed.

### *Research and Conclusion*

The present study was conducted in the fall of 1403 with the aim of presenting a model for developing teachers' leadership competencies based on a thematic analysis approach. The findings indicated that the model for developing teachers' leadership competencies comprises six dimensions: self-efficacy, teaching-learning, self-leadership, empowerment, professional development, and interpersonal skills. It includes 27 components: self-regulation, autonomy, self-empowerment, supervision, training, quality groups, delegation of authority, team building, improvement of methods, innovation, theorizing, reengineering, foresight, clear communication, motivation, collaboration and participation, school climate, school health, self-regulation, succession planning, accountability, self-assessment, content analysis, content organization, teaching methods, academic progress, and classroom management. The validity of the identified components was examined and confirmed using Guba and Lincoln's four-part criteria. The credibility of the model was also assessed and validated through a focus group. As mentioned, this model includes six key themes, each of which is discussed in detail with reference to relevant research backgrounds, and their alignment and discrepancies with the findings of the present study are identified.

Regarding self-efficacy, it is defined as an individual's belief in their ability to perform tasks and achieve goals. The findings of the research show that self-efficacy plays a central role in developing teachers' leadership competencies. Teachers with high self-efficacy perform better in various aspects, including self-regulation, succession planning, accountability, self-assessment, commitment to goals and work, mutual trust, and more. High self-efficacy enables teachers to participate in leadership activities with greater motivation and confidence, accept challenging responsibilities, and ultimately demonstrate better performance. This finding aligns with the results of numerous studies that emphasize the importance of self-efficacy in individual and organizational success (Bandura, 1997; Zimmerman, 2000).

In relation to teaching and learning, this dimension is defined as a dynamic and interactive process aimed at facilitating the learning and growth of students. Research findings indicate that mastery of teaching and learning skills is essential for the development of teachers' leadership competencies. Teachers who are proficient in this area can communicate more effectively with

students, foster the necessary motivation within them, and create a stimulating and productive learning environment in the classroom. Decision-making regarding content, its modification and improvement, selecting appropriate teaching methods, paying attention to teaching effectiveness, setting performance standards, continuous assessment, and so on, are among the components related to teaching and learning that play a role in the development of teachers' leadership competencies. This finding aligns with the research of Darling-Hammond (2006) and Hattie (2009), which emphasizes the key role of the quality of teachers' instruction in students' academic progress.

Regarding self-leadership, this dimension encompasses a set of skills and attitudes that enable individuals to take responsibility for their lives, set their goals, and take steps toward achieving them. The findings of this research indicate that self-leadership plays a significant role in the development of teachers' leadership competencies. Teachers with a high level of self-leadership are more independent, creative, and capable of solving problems. Self-management, autonomy, self-empowerment, monitoring, personal responsibility, goal-setting, and so on, are among the components related to self-leadership that contribute to the development of teachers' leadership competencies. This finding is consistent with the research of Manz (1986) and Neck & Manz (2017), which emphasizes the importance of self-leadership in individuals' success in the workplace.

In relation to empowerment, this dimension is a multifaceted process aimed at enhancing the abilities, capacities, and competencies of individuals and groups to perform tasks more effectively, solve problems, and achieve goals. The findings of the present study indicate that empowering teachers through training, delegation of authority, and participation in decision-making can contribute to the development of their leadership competencies. Teachers who undergo the empowerment process gain greater confidence through acquiring the necessary knowledge and skills, enabling them to actively participate in decision-making and take on more responsibility. This finding aligns with the research of Conger & Kanungo (1988) and Thomas & Velthouse (1990), which emphasizes the role of employee empowerment in increasing their motivation and performance.

Regarding professional development, this dimension is a continuous and dynamic process aimed at enhancing individuals' knowledge, skills, and abilities in their work field. The findings of the present study show that the professional development of teachers through participation in training courses, workshops, and conferences can aid in the development of their leadership

competencies. Teachers who consistently engage in their professional development can acquire new knowledge and skills, allowing them to play a more effective role in various areas, including leadership. Improvement of methods, innovation, theorizing, re-engineering, foresight, employing new approaches, risk-taking, brainstorming, and so on are among the components related to professional development that play a role in the development of teachers' leadership competencies. This finding is consistent with the research of Fullan (2016) and Guskey (2017), which emphasizes the role of teachers' professional development in improving the quality of their teaching and performance. Additionally, the findings of the research by Lijtenberg and Wartenberg (2023) indicate that linking educational practice with school leadership performance may have positive effects on the professional development of novice school leaders, which aligns with the findings of the present study.

In relation to interpersonal skills, this dimension encompasses a set of communication abilities and behaviors that enable an individual to interact effectively and constructively with others. The findings of the present study indicate that interpersonal skills play a significant role in the development of teachers' leadership competencies. Teachers who possess high interpersonal skills are able to establish positive and constructive relationships with students, colleagues, and parents, creating a supportive and friendly learning environment in the classroom. Clear communication, multi-directional interaction, attention to feedback, accountability, motivation, achievement, challenging goals, collaborative learning, cooperation, and participation are among the components related to interpersonal skills that contribute to the development of teachers' leadership competencies. This finding aligns with the research of Goleman (1998) and Lopes et al. (2006), which emphasizes the importance of interpersonal skills in individuals' success in personal and professional life. Furthermore, the findings of Gomez et al. (2022) indicate that emotional intelligence (which overlaps with interpersonal skills) is key to effective leadership, with self-awareness, self-management, and empathy being among the most important competencies related to it, which is consistent with the findings of the present study.

Overall, the findings of the present research are consistent with some other studies and inconsistent with others. For example, the research by Mahdi et al. (2023) also highlights the importance of various factors, including the structure of the educational system, organizational vision, leadership skills,

leadership style, personality traits of the leader, organizational culture, technology, leadership capabilities, leadership attitudes, and the financial resources of the organization in the development of educational leadership among higher education administrators, which aligns with the present study's findings regarding the importance of various components in developing teachers' leadership competencies. However, Mahdi et al. (2023) focused on the educational leadership of higher education administrators, while the present study concentrates on the development of teachers' leadership competencies in education. The research by Sahraei Biravand et al. (2023) also points to the importance of individual, organizational, and environmental factors.

### ***Practical Suggestions from the Research***

The present research utilized a qualitative approach to thematic analysis for data collection and analysis. This approach, while allowing for a deeper examination of various aspects of leadership competencies, may have limitations in providing quantitative results and the ability to compare them with other studies. Additionally, this research did not directly investigate the impact of contextual factors such as organizational culture, school structure, and teachers' personality traits on the development of leadership competencies. However, it is recommended that future research focus on designing and implementing intervention programs aimed at developing teachers' leadership competencies and evaluating the effectiveness of these programs. It is also suggested that future studies employ mixed methods (qualitative and quantitative) for data collection and analysis to benefit from the advantages of both approaches. Furthermore, future research should explore other dimensions of teachers' leadership competencies, such as cognitive, emotional, and behavioral competencies. Overall, considering the mentioned limitations and the provided suggestions, it is hoped that future research can offer a more comprehensive and precise model for developing teachers' leadership competencies and contribute to improving their performance in the education system.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, based on the findings of the present research, it can be inferred that the attention of education stakeholders to the identified indicators in this study can be beneficial for improving teachers' effectiveness.

### **Ethical Considerations**

Adherence to Research Ethics Principles

In the present study, informed consent forms were completed by all participants.

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The costs of the present research were covered by the authors of the article.

### *Authors' Contribution*

All three authors contributed equally to the writing of the article.

### *Conflict of Interest*

According to the authors' declaration, the present article has no conflicts of interest.

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