



# Elements For Developing Module For Enhancing Personal Management Practices Among D.El.Ed Students: Insights From Primary School Teachers

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**Citation:** Arjun, R.S., & Bindhu, C.M. (2023) Elements For Developing Module For Enhancing Personal Management Practices Among D.El.Ed Students: Insights From Primary School Teachers, *Educational Administration: Theory And Practice*, 29(2), 613-619  
Doi: x10.53555/kuey.v29i2.7662

## ARTICLE INFO

## ABSTRACT

Personal management is a term which is discussed in various contexts of Academic field including Philosophy, Psychology and Education. It is also a term popular in the life of modern man which is often used in the scenario of self-transformation ideas for getting desired outputs. As decades changes approaches to understand this term is getting updated and suitable relearning become a necessity. As world is functioning as an era of specialisations concepts like personal management has to be transacted in appropriate ways fitting to individuals belong to a specific specialised area. According to Covey (2013) Principles of personal management is one of three key dimensions to be aware by an individual to evolve from the state of dependent state to independent state to attain private victory. There are theories which consider personal management as a single explorative idea as well as part of bigger themes or a structure of various perceptions. Life practices based on the Habit 'Begin with the End in Mind', priority matrix, Scheduling, Time management, Value based self-management and Dignified rejection are connected with the term personal management. To prepare next generation by preparing with scientifically guided attitude on personal management practices, primary school teachers can contribute creatively if they come to realize the importance of it. This qualitative study aims to find the elements to prepare a module for enhancing personal management practices among Diploma in Elementary Education[D.El.Ed] students who are prospective primary school teachers. Experiences, Insights and suggestions from existing primary school teachers were enquired through this process along with the themes identified from related research documents.

**Key Words:** Principles of Personal Management, Begin With End in Mind

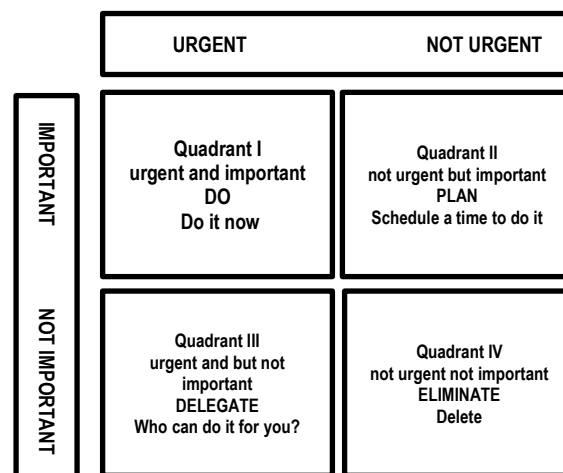
Attempts to make an individual a better person was always an exercise in the field teacher education even before it start getting a formal structure as exist in the world today. Modern academic field made several contributions and attempts to develop recommendable paths for this purpose by observing the changes in the society and evolution in science, industries and sociological theories. Concepts like Life skills, Wellbeing, Emotional Quotient, Multiple Intelligence and several others are familiar in this context. Personal Management is a term which is influenced by all these related concepts and gets renovated time to time and started finding its own theoretical perspective from several dimensions. In this study we focus on the idea principles of personal management and practices based on that.

Covey (1989) describes principles of personal management as one of the three principles which helps an individual to reach a stage from dependence to independence. Principles of personal vision and principles of personal leadership are the other two dimensions to be understood which will be beneficial to achieve private victory. Independent Will, awareness about generations of time management, time management matrix and significance of 'important-not urgent quadrant' aka 'quadrant II', time management as self-management, advances of the fourth generation of time management and delegations to improve effectiveness are the elements connected with principles of personal management. 'Put First Things First' is

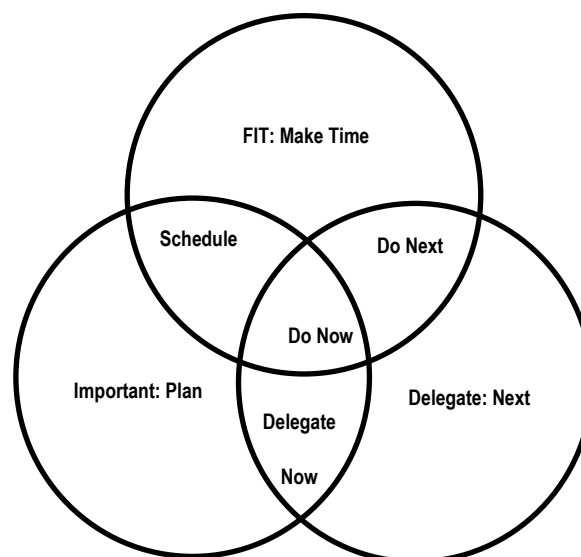
the name of habit represents to describe this principle for practicing as part of regular life style. Identifying goals, selecting goals, Scheduling and daily adapting are the four key activities of quadrant II self-management. Gofer delegation and stewardship delegation are compared to use appropriately for better production-production capacity balance along with the ideas mentioned above. Four quadrants of activities namely important-urgent, important not urgent, not important-urgent and not important-not urgent paradigms of time management matrix directs suitable selection of priorities with respect to vision of an individual. Planning, organising, directing, and controlling one's own activities and responsibilities in order to maximise both personal and professional results is the practice of personal management. It entails setting priorities, efficiently allocating time and resources, and consistently enhancing one's competencies. Personal management is the capacity to take charge of one's own life via self-directed behaviour, effective time management, and ongoing personal development in order to achieve personal goals and improve overall life satisfaction (Locke & Latham, 2002).

According to Covey, the nature of prioritising tasks is based on their urgency and importance, so that tasks that are urgent and important are given the highest priority, important but not urgent tasks are scheduled, and urgent but less important tasks are delegated as illustrated in Figure 1. Bratterud et al. (2020) added a crucial element to this basic matrix: the suitability of task assignment. To accomplish an urgent and important task, an individual must act immediately as indicated in the Eisenhower Matrix (Eisenhower, 1954). However, if the person has the resources to delegate that task to another person or group, he does not need to do it now by himself and can focus on other important activities. To address this gap, Bratterud et al. proposed an enhancement to the Eisenhower Matrix, termed the Sung Diagram, which incorporates the 'FIT' for the agent performing the task as illustrated in Figure 2.

**Figure 1** Eisenhower Matrix: Four Quadrants Mentioned by Stephen R Covey



**Figure 2** Sung Diagram: Modified Time Management Matrix



Time management behaviors can be grouped into four key dimensions: time assessment, self-awareness, planning, and monitoring. Time assessment involves an individual's orientation towards past, present, and future time perspectives. Self-awareness includes recognizing and accepting the responsibilities tied to tasks and activities. Planning behavior encompasses setting goals, prioritizing tasks, and coordinating group activities. Monitoring behavior focuses on observing one's use of time during tasks, creating feedback loops that reduce interruptions, thereby enhancing sustained focus and improving overall task continuity and efficiency. (Khan, Farooqi, Khalil & Faisal, 2016) The concept of short-range planning refers to the process of organizing tasks and activities on a daily or weekly basis, taking into account the timeframes associated with each activity. On the other hand, long-range planning involves setting long-term objectives and defining tasks that will take place over a long period of time. In order to effectively manage time and accomplish goals, both approaches are necessary. (Macan, 1994). An effective time management strategy requires prioritizing tasks. Organising activities according to importance and tackling smaller tasks intermittently allows individuals to concentrate on major tasks without constantly switching. A thoughtful approach to minor tasks can prevent the need to revisit them later on. (Wheten, 1995).

Despite the limited research on time management training, existing studies mainly assess outcomes from different types of training and suggest that such training can influence how participants allocate time to important activities like reading and completing projects (Hall & Hirsch, 1982; A. C. King, Winett, & Lovett, 1986). The incorporation of time management training into the development of administrative personnel improves learning efficiency within higher education institutions (Kirillov et al. 2015). Time management fundamentally involves self-organization, which requires skills analogous to those needed for managing people: namely, the ability to plan, organize, motivate, and control (Vinogradova et al., 2014, p. 3).

The habit 'put first things first', living from quadrant II self-management, scheduling, Long term and short term organization, choosing right delegation method and implementing art of saying no are practices connected with principles of personal management. Educational environment especially school environment is a plot where personal management of teacher decide the impact heavily. Since Dipolma in Elementary Education [D.El.Ed] students are future primary school teachers, it will be useful to prepare programme based on the status of existing primary school teachers. Considering that personal management encompasses several abstract concepts, identifying practical inputs from teachers is relevant.

### **Objective**

To identify the elements required for developing a module for enhancing the personal management practices among D.El.Ed students

### **Sample**

Twenty-six primary school teachers belong to the schools which follow Kerala state syllabus

### **Tools used**

Semi-structured Interview schedule on personal management status of primary school teachers

### **Techniques used for Data Analysis**

Thematic Analysis is used in this qualitative study.

### **Procedure**

Referred and investigated 33 documents including five books to understand principles of personal management conceptually as well as in the context of research and for forming the semi-structured interview schedule. Based on research articles relevant to the field of study, policy documents, and discussions with various experts in general education, teacher education, and educational research, a semi-structured interview schedule is developed on the personal management status of primary school teachers. This tool consisted of items to collect information about the personal management practices of primary school teachers and suggestions for developing a module for D.El.Ed students on the same topic. Eleven questions with the option of adding individual opinions and extra remarks are included in the schedule. 26 primary school teachers are interviewed and audio recordings of the interviews are transcribed to identify the codes and respective themes.

### **Discussion**

Independent will, self-awareness, imagination, conscience, priority deciding, delegation decisions, long term organisation, short term organisation, self-based time management, value based time management, role identification, goal selection, scheduling, daily adapting, the art of saying no, personal-professional life harmony, teaching competency development, clarity about challenges as a teacher, skills updating, and interpersonal communication skills to find personal space are the main ideas which are connected to principles of personal management as per the investigation done on related documents. Some of those are

reflected from the responses of teachers along with pragmatic insights. Few aspects of this investigation are described below.

Nineteen teachers expressed it is necessary to prioritise the actions and follow them consciously. Fifteen teachers mentioned that they are already packed with priorities directed by curriculum, syllabus and educational administrative duties.

One teacher expressed that she had several challenges in personal life but she is happily committed to school commitment. She is able to participate and lead various activities on the days like environmental day, reading day and teachers day in creative ways. But she wishes if family members understand these efforts and support sensibly with her professional vision. She added that she is not able to give attention and do necessary interventions for the education of children and finding difficulty in allotting time to create quality moments with husband and family members as desired. She also feels that she is managing better than many teachers and other women in her contacts because of the training programs she attended and psychological support she received from the individuals who are counselors in life.

An upper primary school teacher reported that, in addition to excelling in his teaching duties, he derives satisfaction from leading and participating in social activities. The experience gained from these activities are useful in planning own roles and managing the events in school environment. He is pointing that few teachers of the same school and other schools are unable to take the commitments similar to his because of the limited exposure in doing such type of activities and lack of awareness about the strength and weakness of self. He expressed his disappointment that he is unable to complete the post-graduation and PhD desires as his mind diverted on various dimensions and feeling certain complex that something is missing with respect to his capacity.

Eleven teachers said that they are not able to invest necessary time to design many of the classroom experiences for learners exactly as curriculum suggest. Certain concepts and topics are able to transact with a conscious effort of designing the teaching learning process. Exams, Co-curricular tasks, administrative duties, safety measures responsibilities for students, food distribution, suggestions and concerns of parents and the time allocation for providing individual attention to necessary children are making them place in multitasking mode and effecting the space for thinking about learning process of learners. High Student-Teacher ratio of the school and limited infrastructure facilities of primary schools can be one reason for happening of the situation. Some added that since it's our duty as a professional we are supposed to do these as we receive the salary from government and tax payers. They also said inservice trainings are conducted with good intention but sometime the end product is not touching the reality of a school environment and the mind of a teacher. They expressed the need of awareness of self management, time management, decision making and priority selection are necessary in D.El.Ed level and in service level.

One teacher said that few active teachers are working in their school with a vision on education and it is helpful for all other teachers to learn and build better school environment and it helps for self-management too. Creative discussions, healthy self-expressions and duty division based on interest create good team spirit and build positive environment in the minds of learners and school. Many teachers learned to improve personal management efforts as a result of this. How delegation of works with colleagues can be done rightly is learned from these active teachers and helpful in family functioning and other social activities.

Head Master of a school feel young teachers can be learned many things quickly than old teachers especially in ICT and online related skills. They need to get trained to choose right priorities in life so that it will be a great benefit for schools and society. Long term planning is necessary for all teachers because process of education is designed to realize long term and sustainable objectives.

A primary school teacher with 22 years of experience shared that concrete, measurable and observable objectives can be achieved if proper planning is made. In that aspects she feel she is able to do what she feels her best is. But she doubts subjective qualities, values and true awareness of life is developing or not. She added it may be developed through own thinking and experiences from life at later stage of life. The attitudes and mindsets of teachers towards self-management and life management are evolving. Many unnecessary and unwanted tasks or actions in professional, personal and social life could be avoided if an awareness about time management and scheduling was introduced earlier. She said she could have completed PG in English in distance mode long and think it was her limiting belief that she can not manage it along with other duties in home and school. She think if she had a PG, her attitude about English books and reading could have been more serious than now and her students might have got innovative information and learning experiences. The reason for this thinking is the changes happened in her friends attitude after completing the PG. Recently she attended few workshops and programs related to English learning languages by finding time in holidays. Seven teachers responded that ability to avoid less important meetings and expressing the difficulties in attending at the moment in order to do an important task is necessary for living based on priorities. Health, good relationship and expanding wisdom are important aspects in life which cannot be achieved just in an urgency deal, but required peace of mind and commitment. Allocating time for long term benefits are important in time management.

Based on introspection on the responses of teachers in the context of review of related studies, following themes are derived based on the respective codes. Codes with examples from interview responses are mentioned in the respective table of each theme given below.

The theme of Dignified rejection is based on the codes namely Willpower, Expressing difficulties, Self-respect, Personal vision and Focus as mentioned in Table 1 with examples.

**Table 1 Theme: Dignified rejection**

<b>Codes</b>	<b>Example</b>
Will power	“Need extra ordinary determination in some situations, to act based on personal values”
Expressing difficulties	“It’s important to explain about the nature of my professional commitment to my family members when needed”
Self-respect	“When I do not do what I like to do, I feel inferior. I wish if others understand situation and respond, but I have to try my best if others do not support too.”
Personal vision	“Teaching career does not mean that I will not be able to live as per my true visions. By doing duties we need to use talents in as much areas as possible in life. If we do not choose it, we may end up in wasting time and doing unwanted tasks.”
Focus	“Whenever I am committed to execute a lesson plan in classroom, I was able to overcome distracting suggestions from others and thoughts.”

The theme of Quadrant II Paradigm is based on the codes namely Selection of important Tasks, Prioritising the actions, Awareness of emergency Situations, Identifying unimportant activities, Aiming for sustainable changes and Need for long-term commitments as mentioned in Table 2 with examples.

**Table 2 Theme: Quadrant II Paradigm**

<b>Codes</b>	<b>Example</b>
Selection of important Tasks	“Necessary to act based on the importance of situations especially if it effects students directly.”
Prioritising the actions	“I will struggle if I postpone the works to last minute.”
Awareness of emergency Situations	“Covid time forced us to make immediate changes in life style ,both professionally and personally.”
Identifying unimportant activities	“I do not participate in unwanted discussions in staffroom.”
Aiming for sustainable changes	“To develop communication skills, I need to have patience and daily efforts for several weeks and attend classes from experts, and read books for vocabulary development.”
Need for long-term commitments	‘Family duties especially for children are for next 2-3 decades.” “It require preparation to maintain good home environment.”

The theme of Delegation is based on the codes namely Gofer delegation, Stewardship delegation, Support of family members, Support of colleagues and Teamwork as mentioned in Table 3 with examples.

**Table 3 Theme: Delegation**

<b>Codes</b>	<b>Example</b>
Gofer delegation	“I am not good in giving directions to others especially to my mother in law. I think I have to be there with her to do works related to my child.”
Stewardship delegation	“I trust my charity organisation members, they will do in their way I do not have to worry. They are my friends.”
Support of family members	“When I attend training classes outside of academic world, husband take care of duties of mine.”
Support of colleagues	“Head master has to watch each step of the process. Sometime teachers may forget to note. Final responsibility is mine when come to matters related to government.”
Teamwork	“Our school has a wonderful team to work. On emergency, others take my role and do efficiently.”

The theme of Time management is based on the codes namely Time with family members, Social activities, Entertainment, Holidays and Professional Development as mentioned in Table 4 with examples.

**Table 4 Theme: Time management**

<b>Codes</b>	<b>Example</b>
Time with family members	"Unable to balance personal and school life properly"
Social activities	"I like to participate in social events. But, our schedule is tight and we cannot plan it easily."
Entertainment	"I value entertainment with kids. it's important for me and them. But, I know my home environment is not suit for it and I get very little time for it in the evening."
Holidays	"Me and wife are working parents and we cannot plan a holiday together always."
Professional Development	"I take time to read about psychology because I think it will help in school."

The theme of Self-management is based on the codes namely Thoughts, Attitude, Feelings, Ability, Personality, Health and Values as mentioned in Table 5 with examples.

**Table 5 Theme: Self-management**

<b>Codes</b>	<b>Example</b>
Thoughts	"I changed my thinking patterns about classroom design after seeing the effort of him."
Attitude	"Attitude of some teachers invite unwanted issues to themselves from parents."
Feelings	"I have to control my emotions. It creates stress and anger in home as well as school."
Ability	"I am not a talented teacher like her. I admire such talents."
Personality	"It's difficult to manage my personality in connection with organising an event"
Health	"I have health issues for last 3 years."
Values	"Unable to see democratic values in many programs conducted in school."

The responses of the teachers were based on several factors, including self-awareness, self-evaluation, social commitment, emotional regulation, holistic awareness, teaching competencies, and personal–professional life balance. Insights from teachers and concepts of Covey et al.(1995) are aligned in several aspects of principles of personal management. Concepts explained by Covey(1989) acted as an inspiration in organising codes and themes. With the help of related studies and suggestions from experts in the field of teacher education, a module suited to D.El.Ed students for enhancing personal management practices can be developed based on the insights derived from this study.

### Conclusion

Themes identified based on the responses of primary school teachers along with the indications derived from related studies ,research documents and suggestions from experts are Dignified rejection, Quadrant II paradigm, Delegation, Time management and Self-management. Twenty-eight codes connected to five different themes are recognised in this study. Primary school teachers shared their own difficulties, realisations and achievements from the perspective of principle of personal management. Deeper meanings of the codes and awareness about practical situations of school environment can be helpful while developing module or any other efforts for enhancing personal management practices among prospective primary school teachers and teachers in general. Content, transaction styles and selection of activities of the module can be prepared based on the five themes mentioned in this study, related research literature and suggestions from experts in the field.

Time management and priority selection is considered as integral part of personal management. Today time management is shifted from the generation of noting down in papers to keeping calendars to self-management. Organizing one's own true inner self became major key in time management in the today's scenario. Several Social changes in Twentieth Century influence of jumps in the level of modernization and changes in perceptions of human resource management caused these shifts. Codes and Themes identified indicate the need of enquiring innovative methods and strategies to transact content in while developing module. Approaches which helps to understand oneself deeply has to be included to communicate the essence of personal management for future primary school teachers.

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