

# Teacher Teaching Skills in Suburban Secondary School at Melaka, Malaysia: A Systematic Review

Hasan Saleh, Nur Afiqah Khumairah Abd Karim

Fakulti Pengurusan Teknologi dan Teknousahawan Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka (UTeM), Hang Tuah jaya, 76100 Durian Tunggal, Melaka, Malaysia

Email: [afiqahkhumairah08@gmail.com](mailto:afiqahkhumairah08@gmail.com)

Corresponding Authors Email: [hasansaleh@utem.edu.my](mailto:hasansaleh@utem.edu.my)

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## Abstract

This study systematically reviews existing literature on the relationship between student engagement, learning environment, student motivation, and technology integration with teaching skills in suburban secondary schools in Melaka, Malaysia. Teaching skills play a critical role in ensuring effective teaching and learning processes, particularly under-resourced educational contexts where structural and environmental challenges are crucial. Previous studies highlight that student engagement, encompassing behavioural, emotional, and cognitive dimensions, contributes significantly to classroom interaction and instructional effectiveness. A supportive learning environment and positive learning conditions enable teachers to implement diverse pedagogical strategies and enhance student understanding and participation. Student motivation further influences teaching practices by shaping students' learning behaviours, perseverance, and responsiveness to instructional approaches. Integration of technology remains essential in modern teaching, although suburban schools often face limitations in infrastructure, digital resources, and teacher training. This review synthesises findings from prior empirical and conceptual studies to provide a comprehensive understanding of how these factors collectively influence teaching skills. The findings offer valuable insights for educators, school administrators, and policymakers in improving teaching quality and promoting equitable educational development in suburban school settings.

**Keywords:** Student Engagement, Learning Environment, Student Motivation, Technology Integration, Teaching Skills, Suburban Schools

## Introduction

Teaching skills are fundamental components of effective education systems, directly influencing student learning outcomes, classroom management, and overall instructional quality (Peibin et al. 2023). In recent years, increasing attention has been given to the challenges faced by suburban and under-resourced schools, where limitations in infrastructure, access to technology, and socio-economic conditions affect both teaching and learning processes (Nemadziva, 2023). These challenges place greater demands on teachers

to adopt adaptive, student-centred, and innovative instructional practices to ensure meaningful learning experiences.

Student engagement has been widely recognised as a key indicator of teaching effectiveness and educational quality (Lunkina et al. 2023). Engaged students are more likely to participate actively in classroom activities, demonstrate sustained attention, and develop deeper understanding of learning content (Ginting, 2021). However, in suburban school contexts, engagement is often influenced by structural barriers such as limited learning resources, large class sizes, and learning environments that may not fully support students' academic and emotional needs (Patterson, 2022). As a result, teaching effectiveness in these settings is closely linked to how well teachers are able to foster engagement through appropriate pedagogical strategies (Zhao et al. 2024).

In addition to engagement, the learning environment plays a significant role in shaping teaching practices. A positive learning environment extends beyond physical classroom conditions to include psychological safety, teacher–student relationships, and peer interactions (Harjunmaa et al. 2023). Supportive environments allow teachers to implement higher-order instructional approaches, encourage collaboration, and promote critical thinking among students (Alharbi et al. 2022). Conversely, inadequate facilities and unfavourable classroom conditions may restrict teachers' instructional choices and reduce teaching effectiveness (Badmus, 2023).

Student motivation contributes to the teaching–learning dynamic by influencing learners' effort, persistence, and willingness to engage with academic tasks (Mirzaei et al. 2025). Motivated students tend to respond more positively to instructional activities, enabling teachers to apply varied teaching strategies and provide meaningful feedback (Radil et al. 2023). Students in suburban schools may face external pressures and limited exposure to academic role models and motivation becomes an essential factor in sustaining both student participation and teacher instructional confidence (Amodu et al. 2025).

Moreover, technology integration has become increasingly important in contemporary education, offering opportunities to enhance instructional delivery, support student-centred learning, and facilitate access to diverse learning resources (Abedi, 2024). Despite its potential benefits, suburban schools often experience challenges related to limited technological infrastructure, insufficient digital tools, and inadequate teacher training (Kormos and Wisdom, 2021). These constraints can hinder teachers' ability to effectively integrate technology into teaching practices, thereby affecting instructional quality (Akram et al. 2022).

Given the growing emphasis on improving teaching quality and addressing educational disparities, a comprehensive synthesis of existing literature is needed to understand how student engagement, learning environment, student motivation, and technology integration relate to teaching skills. Therefore, this systematic review aims to examine and synthesise previous studies on these relationships, with particular attention to suburban school contexts. The findings of this review are expected to contribute to a clearer understanding of factors influencing teaching skills and to inform future educational practices and policy decisions.

**Student Engagement and Teaching Skills**

Student engagement has been consistently identified as a crucial determinant of teaching effectiveness, particularly in suburban school contexts where educational constraints remain prevalent (Singleton, 2023). Engagement refers to students' behavioural participation, emotional involvement, and cognitive investment in learning activities, reflecting their willingness to actively contribute to the teaching and learning process (Hasanov et al. 2021). Studies indicate that higher levels of student engagement create a more interactive classroom environment, enabling teachers to deliver instruction more effectively and responsively (Carroll et al. 2021).

Student engagement in suburban schools is often influenced by structural and contextual challenges, including limited access to learning resources, outdated instructional practices, and socio-economic disadvantages (Thelma et al. 2024). When instructional content is perceived as irrelevant or disconnected from students' lived experiences, engagement levels tend to decline, leading to reduced academic motivation and weaker learning outcomes (Yuldasheva, 2025). These conditions place additional demands on teachers, requiring them to adapt teaching strategies to sustain students' attention and participation (Feng and Xiao, 2024).

A supportive classroom climate has been shown to strengthen the relationship between student engagement and teaching skills. Positive teacher–student relationships encourage students to participate more actively in lessons (Cents-Boonstra et al. 2021). Teachers who successfully foster such environments are better able to manage classrooms, adjust instructional pacing, and respond to students' learning needs (Sigalla and Kimario, 2025).

Furthermore, engaged students demonstrate greater responsibility and ownership over their learning, which positively influences instructional satisfaction and teaching responsiveness (Khatter et al. 2024). The literature highlights that active student participation allows teachers to implement more dynamic, student-centred approaches such as collaborative learning and real-world applications, even in resource-constrained suburban settings (Abdallah et al. 2024). Overall, student engagement emerges as a key factor that supports the development and effectiveness of teaching skills.

**Learning Environment and Teaching Skills**

The learning environment plays a significant role in shaping teaching quality and instructional effectiveness, particularly in suburban schools where infrastructural and resource limitations are common (Lombo and Subban, 2024). The learning environment encompasses not only physical classroom conditions but also psychological and social dimensions, including teacher support, peer interaction, and classroom culture (Raimqulova, 2024). A positive learning environment enables teachers to implement instructional strategies that promote deeper understanding and sustained student participation (Khodadad, 2023).

Previous studies suggest that effective learning environments facilitate higher levels of student understanding, retention, and application of knowledge, which in turn enhance teachers' ability to deliver meaningful instruction (Munna and Kalam, 2021). When students demonstrate effective learning behaviours, teachers are more inclined to employ higher-

order teaching strategies such as inquiry-based learning, problem-solving activities, and formative assessment practices (Khuntia, 2024).

Fostering a conducive learning environment in suburban school settings serves as a critical response to systemic educational challenges (Sher and Inamullah, 2025). Study indicates that classrooms which support collaboration, encourage questioning, and provide structured learning opportunities contribute to improved instructional quality and classroom management (Abidin and Muhammad, 2024). Teachers operating within supportive environments are better positioned to diversify instructional methods and address diverse student learning needs (Sharma, 2024).

Moreover, the reciprocal relationship between learning environment and teaching skills has been widely acknowledged. When students engage effectively with learning content, teachers experience reduced instructional strain, greater professional satisfaction, and increased confidence in exploring innovative teaching approaches (Jones and Le Fevre, 2021). Conversely, unfavourable learning environments often result in repetitive instruction, reduced motivation, and increased teacher workload. Thus, the learning environment is a critical factor influencing both teaching effectiveness and teacher well-being.

#### *Student Motivation and Teaching Skills*

Student motivation serves as a key psychological factor influencing teaching effectiveness and classroom dynamics (Abuzar et al. 2024). Motivation drives students' academic behaviour, effort, and persistence, shaping how they respond to instructional strategies and classroom activities (Adhikari et al. 2025). Students in suburban school may face socio-economic challenges and limited academic exposure, motivation plays a particularly important role in supporting effective teaching practices (Bonga et al. 2024).

Research indicates that motivated students tend to participate more actively in lessons, respond positively to feedback, and demonstrate greater willingness to engage in learning tasks (Malecka and Boud, 2023). This heightened engagement allows teachers to implement a wider range of instructional approaches and fosters a more interactive teaching environment (Muir, 2022). Conversely, low levels of student motivation can limit instructional effectiveness and increase classroom management challenges.

Psychological factors such as emotional well-being, self-regulation, and academic confidence further influence student motivation and learning behaviour (Morosanova, 2023). Teachers who demonstrate emotional intelligence and provide psychological support are better able to address students' anxiety and disengagement, thereby creating conditions that support both motivation and effective instruction (Sharma et al. 2023).

In addition, motivational strategies such as constructive feedback, recognition, and goal-setting have been shown to enhance classroom engagement and instructional satisfaction (Hassan, 2024). When students experience a sense of achievement and relevance in learning, teachers benefit from improved classroom interaction and instructional flow (Mandhana and Caruso, 2023). The literature suggests student motivation not only enhances learning outcomes but also strengthens teaching skills by enabling teachers to adopt more innovative and responsive pedagogical practices.

### *Technology Integration and Teaching Skills*

Technology integration has increasingly become an essential component of effective teaching and learning in modern education systems (Kharchenko et al. 2024). Digital tools and technological resources support interactive instruction, facilitate access to learning materials, and enable student-centred pedagogical approaches (Awidi and Paynter, 2024). However, suburban schools often face significant barriers in accessing and utilising educational technologies due to limited infrastructure, financial constraints, and insufficient teacher training (Mncube et al. 2023).

Lack of adequate technological resources in suburban schools has been associated with reduced instructional flexibility and reliance on traditional teaching methods (Scott and Husain, 2021). Studies indicate that limited access to digital tools negatively affects student engagement and restricts teachers' ability to implement innovative instructional strategies, particularly in subjects requiring visualisation and interactive learning (Sabri et al. 2024).

Teacher competence and confidence in using technology further influence the effectiveness of technology integration (Sulistiani and Dewi, 2024). Research highlights that teachers who receive continuous professional development in digital skills are more capable of integrating technology into teaching practices and promoting collaborative learning environments (Dahri et al. 2021). Insufficient training and limited exposure to digital tools hinder teachers' ability to maximise the benefits of technology in instruction (Bećirović, 2023).

Furthermore, technology integration supports administrative efficiency, formative assessment, and communication between teachers and students (Krishnan, 2023). However, weak internet connectivity and inadequate digital infrastructure in suburban areas continue to limit these benefits (Kaur and Karim, 2023). The literature consistently indicates that improving access to technology and enhancing teacher digital competency are essential for strengthening teaching skills and reducing educational disparities between suburban and urban schools.

### **Conclusion**

This systematic review highlights the interconnected roles of student engagement, learning environment, student motivation, and technology integration in shaping teaching skills, particularly within suburban school contexts. The reviewed literature consistently indicates that effective teaching is not solely dependent on teachers' individual competencies but is strongly influenced by students' behavioural, emotional, and cognitive responses to instruction, as well as the conditions in which teaching and learning take place.

Student engagement emerges as a critical factor that enhances classroom interaction and instructional responsiveness. Engaged students create learning environments that allow teachers to apply adaptive and student-centred teaching strategies, thereby strengthening instructional effectiveness. Similarly, a supportive learning environment encompassing both physical and psychological dimensions which enables teachers to diversify pedagogical approaches, promote deeper learning, and sustain positive classroom dynamics. When learning environments are conducive, teachers experience improved instructional flow, reduced workload pressure, and greater professional satisfaction.

Student motivation further contributes to teaching effectiveness by influencing learners' persistence, participation, and receptiveness to instructional practices. Motivated students respond more positively to feedback and instructional variation, allowing teachers to implement innovative teaching strategies with greater confidence. In suburban school settings, where students may face socio-economic and emotional challenges, motivation plays a particularly important role in supporting effective teaching and maintaining instructional quality.

Technology integration is increasingly recognised as an essential component of effective teaching. While digital tools offer opportunities to enhance engagement, collaboration, and instructional delivery, suburban schools continue to face challenges related to limited infrastructure, inadequate access to digital resources, and insufficient teacher training. These limitations restrict teachers' ability to fully integrate technology into classroom practices, highlighting the need for targeted support and professional development.

Overall, the findings of this review suggest that improving teaching skills in suburban schools requires a holistic approach that addresses student-related factors, learning conditions, motivational aspects, and access to technology. The review provides valuable insights for educators, school administrators, and policymakers in developing strategies to enhance teaching quality and promote more equitable educational outcomes. Future research may further explore context-specific interventions and longitudinal impacts of these factors on teaching effectiveness in suburban and rural educational settings.

#### **Declaration**

We declare this manuscript is our original work and has not been submitted or published in any other journal. All authors have contributed significantly to the conception and completion of this study. Any remaining errors or oversights are entirely our own and occurred beyond our knowledge or observation.

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