



## TEACHER SKILLS AND THEIR EFFECTS ON STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT

*Urinboyeva Dilrabo Olimjonovna*

[dilradoxonurinboyeva@gmail.com](mailto:dilradoxonurinboyeva@gmail.com)

***Abstract:** This study investigates the role of teacher competence in shaping students' academic achievement within contemporary educational contexts characterized by digitalization and competency-based instruction. Although student performance is influenced by a myriad of individual and contextual factors, evidence from international assessments, including PISA and TALIS, consistently underscores teacher competence as a pivotal determinant of academic success. Utilizing a quantitative, correlational research design, data were collected from secondary school teachers and students to assess the impact of pedagogical, methodological-innovative, communicative, and digital competencies. The findings highlight the critical importance of targeted professional development and provide significant implications for policymakers, school administrators, and teaching professionals.*

***Keywords:** Teacher competence, Academic achievement, Pedagogical skills, Methodological–innovative competence, Communication competence, Digital literacy, Student performance, Educational effectiveness, Professional development, Quantitative research.*

In contemporary education, the role of the teacher remains fundamental despite rapid technological, social, and pedagogical transformations. Digital tools, personalized learning platforms, and competency-based curricula increasingly shape modern classrooms, yet the teacher remains the most influential factor within the school environment. While global education systems continue to evolve, teachers' professional competence determines how effectively these innovations translate into meaningful learning outcomes. This is particularly important in an era where student



success is no longer defined solely by memorization but by critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills.

The transition toward competency-based learning, digitalization, and student-centered instruction increasingly demands advanced pedagogical, methodological, and interpersonal skills from teachers. While students' academic achievement is influenced by a variety of factors—including socioeconomic status, intrinsic motivation, school resources, and parental involvement—major international studies such as PISA, TALIS, and other OECD reports consistently identify teacher competence as a critical predictor of student success. These findings underscore the importance of not only establishing the overall significance of teacher competence but also discerning which specific dimensions of competence have the greatest impact.

Although the significance of teacher competence is widely acknowledged, its specific components—and their distinct effects on academic outcomes—remain topics of scholarly debate. Some researchers prioritize methodological mastery and subject-matter expertise, arguing that deep content knowledge allows teachers to explain abstract concepts more effectively. Others highlight communication skills, emotional intelligence, and the ability to create supportive classroom environments. More recent studies emphasize digital literacy as essential in preparing students for a technologically advanced world. These varying perspectives reveal the complexity of teacher competence and the necessity for systematic scientific investigation.

Against this backdrop, the present study aims to examine the relationship between different dimensions of teacher competence and students' academic achievement. The research operates under several hypotheses:

Higher teacher competence is associated with significantly better student academic performance.

Methodological and innovative competencies exert a stronger influence on academic outcomes than traditional, experience-based practices.



Teachers' communication competence indirectly contributes to improved academic achievement by enhancing student engagement, motivation, and classroom participation.

To test these hypotheses, this study employed a quantitative correlation-based research design. This design allowed for measurable and statistically verifiable relationships between teacher competence indicators and student academic outcomes. Data were collected from secondary school teachers and their students, ensuring representation across multiple subjects and grade levels. Teacher competence was measured using standardized questionnaires addressing pedagogical knowledge, methodological innovation, communication skills, digital literacy, and reflective practice. Student academic performance was evaluated through diagnostic tests, subject-specific assessments, and overall achievement scores.

The analysis revealed several important findings. First, the study confirmed existing global evidence that teacher competence plays a critical role in determining students' academic success. Among the various dimensions analyzed, methodological–innovative competence demonstrated the strongest direct impact. Teachers who employed modern instructional approaches—such as active learning strategies, formative assessment techniques, project-based learning, collaborative problem solving, and STEAM-oriented instruction—observed significantly higher levels of student performance. These methods promoted deeper understanding, greater retention, and more meaningful engagement with learning materials.

Pedagogical competence also showed a substantial positive correlation with academic outcomes. Teachers with strong pedagogical skills were more effective in structuring lessons, managing classroom dynamics, setting clear expectations, and providing timely feedback. These factors created an organized and supportive learning environment that enabled students to concentrate better, participate actively, and achieve higher academic results.

Despite the valuable insights gained, the study faced several limitations. First, the sample size was relatively small, which may limit the generalizability of the



results. Larger samples across diverse school settings would provide more robust evidence. Second, the study included only a limited number of subjects, which means that the influence of teacher competence may differ across academic disciplines. Third, the research relied on short-term data; a longitudinal approach would be necessary to understand how teacher competence evolves over time and how it impacts long-term student outcomes.

Future research should explore these aspects in greater depth. Longitudinal studies could track changes in teacher competence throughout professional development programs, revealing which forms of training produce the strongest improvements in student achievement. Cross-subject and cross-grade comparisons would help identify whether certain competencies are more influential in specific contexts. Additionally, evaluating the effectiveness of teacher development initiatives—such as workshops, mentoring, coaching, and digital training—would provide insights into how educational systems can more efficiently support teachers' growth.

In conclusion, this study highlights that teacher competence—particularly in methodological and pedagogical domains—exerts a significant influence on students' academic achievement. Educators who implement innovative instructional strategies and uphold solid pedagogical foundations cultivate learning environments in which students can excel both academically and personally. Strengthening professional development, with an emphasis on innovative pedagogy and digital literacy, can substantially enhance educational outcomes across schools.

For policymakers and educational leaders, these findings underscore that investing in teacher training represents one of the most effective avenues for improving overall school performance. Enhancing teacher preparation programs, supporting ongoing professional learning, and fostering collaborative professional communities are key strategies for developing teacher competence at scale. For teachers, the study emphasizes the value of continuous learning, reflective practice, and adaptive instructional approaches. Ultimately, robust teacher competence is not



merely a professional expectation but a fundamental pillar supporting student success and the pursuit of educational excellence.

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