

## Research Article

# Teaching Competency of Teachers for Curbing Drug and Substance Abuse (DSA) in Malaysian Secondary Schools

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Received November 18, 2021; Accepted December 02, 2021; Published December 09, 2021

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### Abstract

Teachers play a significant role in curbing Drug and Substance Abuse (DSA) because they spend much of their time with students in school. The teaching competency of teachers is needed in drug and substance abuse prevention. Some studies found that the school teachers still have lack knowledge to talk about DSA in their classroom and school environment. It is assumed that the problems are related to the teaching competency of teachers. This paper aims to discuss the role of teaching competency of teachers for curbing DSA in Malaysian secondary schools. The methodology used in this study is a conceptual approach, which involves conducting literature research and critical thinking to develop a hypothetical concept. This paper has classified the teaching competency for curbing DSA into abilities of teachers to (1) Set up teaching planning (2) Curriculum (3) Pedagogical knowledge (4) Learning strategies (5) Classroom environment and (6) Social approach. These competencies help teachers implement a learning situation in which the students enjoy with their class and have commitment to avoiding drug abuse in their lives. Thus, this study recommends that the government consider the classroom drug policy to eradicate drug abuse comprehensively. The government can release the guideline for teaching competencies of classroom teachers in certain subjects for curbing DSA and develop the rubrics for measuring Malaysian secondary school teachers' teaching competency.

**Keywords:** Drug prevention; Classroom; School environment; Curriculum

### Highlights

Drug prevention education in classroom situation

### Introduction

For several decades, drug prevention research in the school context has attempted to understand the causes and consequences of teachers' roles [1-3]. Previous studies have shown that a school that values teachers' roles and recognizes the importance of the school environment stands to win in terms of students' morale and commitment not to use the drug [4-6]. However, some schools and teachers pay scant regard to prevent drug abuse [7,8].

In Malaysia, drugs are one of the major problems that the nation has had to face since 1893, and since then, the handling of drug abuse has been carried out more seriously by raising awareness at all age levels. Education on how to successfully deal with violent behavior in teenagers who are inclined to consume drugs, one of which is by establishing positive behavior among adolescents, should be addressed in order to produce future potential young generations [9].

National Anti-Drug Agency [10] mentioned that there were 178 areas across Malaysia identified high risk areas for drug abuse, namely in Perak (30), Negeri Sembilan (16), Johor (23), Selangor (15), Kelantan (13), Pahang (12), Kedah (13), Pulau Pinang (11), WP Kuala Lumpur (10), Terengganu (10), Sarawak (7), Sabah (7), Malaka (7), and Perlis (4). The AADK also identified 1,017 (42%) of the 2,408 secondary schools in Malaysia as drug schools at risk. There were 913,576 (41%) of 2,188,525 secondary school students from all over Malaysia identified as having a drug or tested positive for urine. Most of those involved were 4th and 5th grade students.

The government emphasized that school institutions must be actively involved in drug prevention. The following efforts are some things that schools can do: (1) Paying attention to normative values prevailing in schools and peer influence (2) Show students the negative impact of drug use (3) Providing life skills such as communication skills, making decisions, and collaborating, as well as providing opportunities to practice them in everyday life (4) Promote better communication between parents and schools and (5) Creating stricter regulations regarding the prohibition of drug use by students [7].

Drug abuse in schools in Malaysia is strictly prohibited, but

ironically, most drug abuse starts from schools. One of the factors why that happen is that Malaysian school teachers lack the knowledge to talk about it in their classroom and school environment [5]. Moreira, Vóvio support this, and Micheli [4], the various challenges presented by the teachers in school drug prevention are related to the teachers' personality, professionalism, pedagogy, and prejudices and moral values related to the subject he or she teaches.

Gizyatova [11] describes several ways that can be done to increase the effectiveness of drug prevention in educational institutions, especially for teachers. To begin, schools must create positive motivation for instructors to include drug misuse prevention aspects into their classrooms. Second, schools provide high quality professional development with an emphasis on effective preventative strategies that teachers may apply. Additionally, maintaining control over the quality of teacher professional development. Finally, cooperation from all elements of society in drug abuse prevention activities among students.

The aim of this study is to investigate the role of teachers in curbing Drug and Substance Abuse (DSA) in Malaysian secondary schools related to their teaching competency in the classroom situation. The teaching competency of teachers in DSA is classified into several abilities based on concepts from previous literature.

### Literature review

**Teaching competency:** For candidate teachers, knowledge pedagogy is very important to learn during the training period [12,13]. In addition, candidate teachers must also be equipped with knowledge of the world of teachers and how to be good teachers, and the opportunity to practice their knowledge [14]. A teacher should ideally be able to apply the various methods he learns in the teaching and learning process later in school. Additionally, a teacher must be familiar with the pedagogical substance of knowledge [15] and the philosophical, historical, and sociological contexts in which concepts are taught [16].

Teaching competency is related to the concept of what teachers do that will help his or her students reach their maximum potential, for example, their academic achievement, acquisition of competencies, social skills, and adaptation to the world of work [17]. Gálvez-Suarez and Milla-Toro [18] emphasized that teaching competency is teacher's self-evaluation of their abilities and performances in a teaching learning situation [19].

Teaching competence can also be said to be a competency that refers to a teacher's cognitive knowledge, which will have an impact on classroom learning. A topic of teacher's teaching competency refers to the abilities that enable them to collaborate with students, colleagues, and other professionals involved in children's education and learning to provide the most significant learning environment possibility [20-22].

Fathima, Sasikumar, and Roja [23] developed the concept of teaching competence in five dimensions, namely induction, content, pedagogy, organization, and assessment

knowledge. Meanwhile, Zhu, Wang, Cai, and Engels [24] developed four competencies teachers should have to improve their teaching performance: Learning competence, social competence, educational competence, and technological competence.

Teaching competence is related to the acquisition and demonstration of the combined skills needed for teaching students, such as providing explanation regarding subject matter, proficiency in questioning, ability to investigate, explain and convey emotional arguments, time management, feedback in teaching, understanding student psychology, recognizing student behavior, classroom management, and assessment. In the context of teaching competence, it means the right way to convey theoretical knowledge, how to apply and hone student skills [25,26].

Teachers' teaching competency for preventing drug misuse in school's entails topic knowledge and pedagogical expertise to convey the dangers of drug abuse to students. To include a drug prevention program, Teachers should be able to elaborate their teaching learning process. Teachers should be able to elaborate their teaching learning In this case, a teacher's skills are required to collaborate with students and other stakeholders to prevent DSA in their school.

### The role of school teacher's for curbing DSA in the school

The importance of the instructor in moulding pupils' behaviour and perceptions cannot be overstated. Persuasive communication by the instructor, which includes being polite, offering factual information about drug abuse, and paying attention to all pupils, is meant to help kids realize how drug usage affects them [27].

In the study by Mahadi and Bahrin [28], several samples agree on how drug abuse should be taught and learned in school. It is possible to conclude that school based education sessions on drug usage are successful. Teachers and students both have a role to play in making drug abuse education more engaging.

In everyday life, teachers interact with students so that a teacher has the opportunity to provide education related to the dangers of drug abuse among adolescents [29]. Amesty and Páez [30] found that the experimental group in their study of community drug prevention programs in schools was effective. In addition, teachers in the experimental group in their research also stated that the program increased (1) the link between schools and communities, (2) cooperation with parents, and (3) the teachers' awareness of the important role they could play in the prevention of drug abuse by students.

Miller Day, Hecht, Krieger, Pettigrew, Shin, and Graham [31] found that drug prevention was related to the level of student involvement. Student involvement and in narrative based drug prevention curriculum, teachers' spontaneous narratives are told to do so. In a narrative based curriculum, the amount to which teachers communicate their narratives, identify dominant narrative elements, forms, and

functions, and examine the relationship between teacher narratives, overall course narrative quality, and student engagement.

In comparison, drug abuse that is growing in Indonesia is an emergency that requires the attention of all parties. For example, namely in South Kalimantan. The main pillar of drug prevention in Muslim communities in South Kalimantan is to carry out Islamic teachings seriously. According to the views of the people there, they uphold Islamic teachings, namely prohibiting drug consumption.

In South Kalimantan, the role of guidance and counseling teachers in schools is vital in the prevention and handling of drugs because guidance and counseling officers have the duty and authority to control, supervise, and assist students considered problematic [32].

The following is a reconstruction of Tuan Guru's (teacher) role in drug prevention and eradication in Lombok: (1) Implementing a personal approach method, (2) enforcing a real action, (3) providing counseling services, and (4) empowering the local economy. Tuan Guru's preaching responsibilities in dealing with the drug problem were determined to be quite helpful. Tuan Guru had succeeded in removing the negative effects of drugs from the younger generation. As reported by the drug investigation directorate of Lombok Barat, the number of drug cases is decreasing [33].

A study by Teesson, Newton, Slade, Chapman, Allsop, Hides, and Brownhill [34] in New South Wales, Australia, found that teachers used cartoon media in drug abuse prevention by reinforcing the learning outcomes, allowing interactive communication between students, and providing access to all program materials including what activities will be carried out, implementation guidelines, educational roles, making syllabus for each lesson. It can be concluded that the role of teachers in improving their teaching competency and self-efficacy in the teaching learning process is important in drug abuse prevention among students [35].

In Malaysia, Sukor and Hussin [36] enlisted the help of 150 teachers to construct a Substance Abuse Prevention Program (PPDA). According to the findings, the PPDA teacher had a moderate level of self-efficacy and a low level of job satisfaction. In the PPDA program, there were no significant differences based on gender or experience. Furthermore, there is no discernible difference in work satisfaction depending on the PDA program.

The role of Malaysian secondary school teachers in the teaching learning process in the classroom helps improve student's knowledge and awareness about the danger of the drug. Teachers should be able to create valuable classroom interaction to develop the potentials of student's high thinking skills to construct their conclusion about drug abuse [37]. Giving feedback is important in the learning process to give information to the teachers about students' level of knowledge.

## Methodology

What are the teaching competencies of teachers for curbing DSA in the school? This is the question that this conceptual paper is attempting to answer. Using literature study and critical thinking, the researchers investigated this subject and developed a hypothetical concept.

Conceptual papers are an effective instrument for constructing theories [38]. By analyzing existing knowledge, emphasizing problems and contradictions, identifying critical gaps in knowledge, essential insights, and providing an agenda for future study, conceptual review papers might theoretically enrich the subject [39]. The result is a theoretical contribution that refines, re-conceptualizes, or even replaces the prevailing viewpoint on a phenomenon.

This conceptual article serves as a foundation for a broader empirical study by researchers on the importance of teaching competence in preventing drug misuse in schools. Conceptual papers combine existing ideas in appealing ways, link interdisciplinary work, provide multilayered insights, and widen our thinking. Another key consideration is the necessity to present coherent and comprehensive arguments regarding this connection, rather than simply testing it [40].

Arguments in a conceptual paper are not developed in the traditional sense from actual evidence but rather require digesting and integrating information in the form of pre-formed concepts and hypotheses. Researchers looked at prior empirical studies on drug misuse prevention by school instructors and developed concepts and theories based on the findings [41].

This conceptual paper was discussed and analyzed using one of Jaakkola's four conceptual paper formats [38]. Theory Synthesis, Theory Adaptation, Typology, and Model are the four templates. This study uses the Theory Synthesis template because of the goals, method of using theories, and contribution potential.

A theoretical synthesis paper provides conceptual convergence by combining numerous hypotheses or sources of information. This study offers a fresh or improved perspective on a topic or phenomenon through novel links from previously unconnected or incompatible elements. According to MacInnis [42], summarizing aids researchers by distilling, digesting, and condensing an area of study into a more brief and comprehensible format. By translating prior discoveries and hypotheses into new high level viewpoints that integrate phenomena previously thought to be separate, integration allows researchers to see concepts or phenomena in new ways. Such articles can also look into the conceptual underpinnings of new theories or explain conflicting research findings by providing more concise explanations that bring disparate pieces together into a more comprehensible one.

The researchers began their investigation into the role of school teachers' teaching competency in drug abuse prevention by looking at concepts of teaching competency and drug abuse prevention in schools. These two ideas were

chosen as the subject of additional research. The researchers next looked at the focused phenomena, which were not thoroughly addressed in the previous study. By evaluating material found on Google scholar using the keywords teaching competency and drug abuse prevention, the researchers were able to identify different conceptualizations of the problem. The researchers looked for patterns, resemblances, and regularities in the observed premises then used the theoretical framework to come up with an explanation before concluding the study. The researchers proposed to discuss the following concepts as a result of this framework in Figure 1 below:

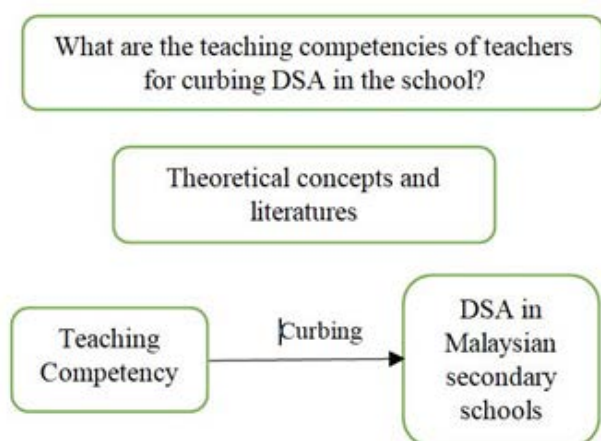


Figure 1: Methodology.

## Results and Discussion

Some studies have been done to show the importance of teachers in preventing drug misuse [5,27,30,43]. Teachers in Venezuela place a premium on building relationships with the community, involving parents, and educating children [30]. Australian teachers supervise classroom settings, preparing online worksheets, discussion, and intervention online cartoon lessons [34]. In the United Kingdom, Teachers strive to enhance their teaching skills and pay attention, which leads to mindfulness about the things being discussed [44]. In Indonesia, teachers focus on providing information and giving attention to the students [27]. Meanwhile, in Malaysia, teachers are actively involved in handling drug abuse prevention programs (PPDA) in their schools [36].

Based on the literature, teachers play a significant role in curbing DSA in school related to their teaching competency. The teaching competency includes the abilities of a teacher to improve the valuable relationship between the students and all school members in the school. Teachers also treat all their students with the best attitude that they have to make students enjoy learning at the school. They give attention to all their students not to be involved with drug abuse because it will harm their future. For students whose teachers display greater interactive teaching, a good adjustment in lifestyle patterns and commitment is no substance usage. Furthermore, in classrooms with interactive teaching, cognitive requirements were connected with lower levels of alcohol use, whereas impulse decision making was associated with lower rates of cannabis use [45].

In the teaching learning process, teaching competency means that teachers should be able to create interactive and innovative learning in their classes. They open opportunities to students to discuss any topics to trigger student's knowledge and their understanding, especially about the danger of drugs. A teacher should apply a soft approach to students in drug abuse prevention in school. Teachers need to implement Project Based Learning (PBL) in the classroom situation. Students are working to find the meaning contained in the project's assignment, making the project work meaningful to their own experience and in real life. So that, students leave and far away from the drug is not because of compulsion but their knowledge and self's awareness.

Pereira, Paes, and Sanchez [46] found that experimenting with novel strategies boosted the likelihood of schools developing drug prevention programs by nearly 6 times. Implementation challenges are more common in public and municipal schools than in private schools, owing to a lack of teaching resources, a lack of funding, and instruction conflicting with other topics. The study showed that some difficulties in drug prevention in public and private schools still exist. Teaching competency is needed to solve these problems. Teachers should take action with their roles amid the limited access to items.

Teachers' performance is usually characterized by a wide range of teaching skills linked with the use of technology. Learning competence, social competence, educational competence, and technical competence are the four primary competencies that teachers must have in order to improve their teaching ability [24]. These elements have contribution to supporting the teaching learning process in DSA from a pedagogical, ethical, and professional standpoint, as shown in Figure 2.



Figure 2: Elements of teaching competencies.

This notion, also known as adaptive learning, has been defined as the ability to change teaching abilities in such a way that subject knowledge may be implemented [47]. As a result, the situational aspect of the learning process is linked to topic themes, which pertain to teaching style characteristics. The elements of classroom management must be incorporated into teaching approaches that have a variety of positive conditions in student learning. According to this perspective, regulating the learning process with activities handled in the classroom necessitates teachers with adaptive teaching competencies to have self-regulated management directed to teaching in specific disciplines [48,49]. Classroom management is quickly linked to teach-

er subject matter expertise and interpersonal behavior in terms of how to connect with students to integrate DSA into the learning process. It also incorporates motivation for teachers, as well as interpersonal behavior and classroom management.

The term “Teaching competency” is made up of two terms: “Teaching” and “Competence.” Teaching is the process of imparting knowledge or skills to someone in order to assist them in achieving their aims and objectives in the future. A person’s skill or capability to accomplish a job has long been defined as competence. Motivation and self-awareness and a desire and readiness to do well are all aspects of competence [20]. Teaching when dealing in a classroom teaching scenario, a teacher’s competence refers to their actions. Creative attitudes based on expectations for certain teaching competencies and assessment criteria offer a lot of potentials to improve education quality [50]. The role of teaching competencies in preventing DSA is to expand on teachers’ knowledge, abilities, and attitudes to assist students in avoiding drug abuse by enhancing motivation, willingness, and teacher performance in the teaching and learning process. This is also linked to instructors’ ability to promote the hazards of drug misuse in the classroom.

Teaching competency of the classroom teachers means that the message of curbing DSA should be delivered in every situation, including the classroom. The teachers should create a learning situation in which the students feel with their class and commit to avoid drug abuse in their lives. Spanierman, Heppner, Neville, Mobley, Wright, and Navarro [51] formulated the teaching competency of teachers and can be integrated as abilities for curbing DSA in the classroom situation as (1) Set up teaching planning. The teacher should plan the activities in teaching planning to prevent drug abuse in school. The materials used in the teaching and learning process should provide information and increase student’s knowledge about the danger of drug abuse (2) Curriculum. The needs of curricula development include integrating drug prevention in the teaching process. Teachers should pay attention to the student’s situation, what happened to their community, and what problems that they face in daily life.

Teachers can develop syllabi, lesson plans, and topics of the material subjects which integrate drug prevention based on student needs (3) Pedagogical knowledge. The teachers should know about particular teaching strategies that affirm drug prevention to all students. They also have a clear understanding of drug abuse prevention in pedagogy. Teachers should know about drug abuse prevention theories (4) Learning strategies. Teachers should understand the various activities of drug prevention in their classrooms. They examine the instructional materials that they use in the classroom for drug abuse prevention. They include examples of the destructive effect of drug abuse during their classroom lessons (5) Classroom environment. Teachers should make changes within the general school environment so that the students will have understood the danger of drug abuse for them. They promote drug abuse preven-

tion by the behaviors they exhibit and (6) Social approach. Teachers should meet with other teachers or administrators regularly to discuss drug prevention in the classroom. They establish solid and supportive relationships with the parents for drug prevention in the school. They are knowledgeable of how the drug abuse environment may affect students’ learning. They are knowledgeable about the community’s involvement in drug prevention programs within the city that they teach.

## Conclusion

Substance abuse is a global enemy, and it already spreads in school institutions. The teachers play a significant role to prevent drug abuse in school because students spend much of their time in the school. Some studies found that the school teachers still lack knowledge to talk about substance abuse in their classroom and school environment. It is assumed that the problems are related to the teaching competency of teachers. Teaching competency is needed in drug abuse prevention in school. This paper classified the teaching competency in drug prevention into abilities of teachers to (1) Set up teaching planning (2) Curriculum (3) Pedagogical knowledge (4) Learning strategies (5) Classroom environment and (6) Social approach. The implementation of drug policy in the classroom has to be considered by the government for eradicating drug abuse comprehensively. The government can release guideline for classroom teachers for curbing DSA and rubrics to measure the teaching competency of secondary school’s teachers. Students must be involved in drug abuse prevention and teachers should pay attention to that effort. All the integrated efforts by the school community will help them to protect.

## Acknowledgement

The Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia supported this study through Long Term Research Grant Scheme (LRGS/1/2019/UKM/02/2/4). We would like to express our gratitude to editorial board and reviewers who spent their valuable time to improve this article

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