

An integrative Qur'anic competency framework for Qur'an teachers: A thematic tafsir analysis

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ABSTRACT

Qur'an teaching required more than technical mastery of recitation and *tajwid* because effective instruction also depended on ethical orientation and productive teacher–learner relationships. This study aimed to construct an integrative competency framework for Qur'an teachers through thematic tafsir. It employed qualitative library research using a conceptual thematic (*maudhu'i*) approach. Primary data consisted of QS. Al-'Alaq [96]: 1–5, QS. Al-Kahf [18]: 65, and QS. An-Nahl [16]: 125, interpreted through selected tafsir works and supported by relevant hadith. Secondary data comprised scholarly literature on teacher competence, Qur'an education, and pedagogy. Data were collected through documentation, classified thematically, compared across interpretive sources, and synthesized through descriptive-interpretive and comparative analysis. Credibility was strengthened through source triangulation and interpretive traceability. The findings identified three interdependent dimensions: epistemic-professional, spiritual-personality, and pedagogical-relational competence. The novelty lay in explaining their functional integration within a Qur'anic competency architecture: knowledge formed the epistemic foundation, *rahmah* and moral-spiritual qualities provided ethical orientation, while *hikmah*, constructive counsel, dialogue, and gentleness shaped pedagogical transmission. The framework offered a conceptual basis for Qur'an teacher development and competency assessment.



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INTRODUCTION

The quality of Qur'an education is inseparable from the quality of those who teach it. Qur'an teachers are expected to transmit accurate recitation, *tajwid*, and basic understanding while simultaneously cultivating respect for revelation, disciplined learning, and ethical conduct. This dual expectation makes Qur'an teaching distinctive: instructional accuracy is essential, yet accuracy alone does not guarantee a learning environment in which students are willing to practise, make mistakes, receive correction, and sustain long-term engagement with the Qur'an. The competence of the teacher must therefore be understood as a combination of knowledge, pedagogy, personal character, and educational relationships rather than as a set of isolated technical skills.

The urgency of strengthening Qur'an teaching remains visible in Indonesia. A 2023 national survey on Qur'an literacy conducted by the Ministry of Religious Affairs in cooperation with BRIN and LK3P UI reported a national literacy index of 66.038. Nevertheless, only 44.57% of respondents were reported to read the Qur'an fluently in accordance with *tajwid*, while 38.49% had not yet attained basic Qur'an reading literacy (Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2023). These figures are more methodologically defensible than public claims that use a single percentage to describe national 'Qur'an illiteracy,' and they indicate that improving access to learning must be accompanied by improving the quality and competence of instructors.

Teacher competence has long been associated with instructional quality and student outcomes. Empirical research indicates that teachers' professional knowledge, motivational orientations, and instructional practices influence the quality of classroom processes and learning outcomes (Fauth et al., 2019). Teacher self-efficacy and the quality of teacher–student relationships are likewise connected to classroom processes, student adjustment, and teacher well-being (Zee & Koomen, 2016; Aldrup et al., 2018). In the context of Qur'an education, these general findings imply that mastery of subject matter

must be translated into pedagogically appropriate actions and relational practices that enable students to learn without compromising academic standards.

Previous studies on Qur'an and Islamic education have contributed important but relatively fragmented perspectives. Joni et al. (2020) examined village religious teachers and showed the practical value of repeated listening, direct correction, routine study, and motivation in improving adults' Qur'an reading. Elkarimah and Jaeni (2023) focused on practical training for Qur'an teachers, particularly classroom management, the *Iqra'* method, and basic *murattal* teaching. Hasibuan and Darlis (2024) highlighted pedagogical competence in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, whereas Zarkasi et al. (2024) emphasized the need for continuous professional development among Al-Qur'an Hadith teachers through training, professional communities, and innovation in teaching practice. These studies are important for explaining what Qur'an teachers do and how their competence can be strengthened in institutional settings.

A second body of literature attempts to formulate teacher qualities from the Qur'an. Zahra et al. (2020) identified the characteristics of a rahmani educator in Surah al-Rahman, including compassion, knowledge, the capacity to develop learners, and interactional ability. Zakariya (2021) analysed QS. Al-Qalam [68]: 1–4 and related teacher competence to personality, mastery of knowledge, information and communication technology, and writing. Muhaimin and Munawaroh (2021) stressed the interrelation between competence and educators' moral ethics, while Jumrotun et al. (2025) specifically discussed Qur'anic foundations of personality competence, including moral integrity, exemplary conduct, and professionalism. Collectively, these studies demonstrate that the Qur'an offers a rich normative basis for teacher competence, yet the dimensions are often treated as parallel lists or derived from a single passage without explaining how they function together in the specific practice of teaching the Qur'an.

This study addresses that gap by constructing an integrative framework specifically for Qur'an teachers through a thematic reading of three complementary Qur'anic passages: QS. Al-'Alaq [96]: 1–5, QS. Al-Kahf [18]: 65, and QS. An-Nahl [16]: 125. The novelty of the study lies in three points. First, it shifts the discussion from a catalogue of teacher traits to a functional architecture in which knowledge, moral-spiritual orientation, and pedagogical relationships are mutually dependent. Second, it combines multiple Qur'anic passages rather than relying on a single surah to explain the competency construct. Third, it positions *rahmah*, humility, *hikmah*, constructive counsel, and gentleness not as optional moral additions to professionalism but as constitutive elements that shape how professional knowledge is transmitted and received in Qur'an learning.

Accordingly, the research question is: how can the competence of Qur'an teachers be constructed through thematic tafsir in a manner that integrates professional knowledge, spiritual-personal qualities, and pedagogical-relational practice? The study aims to formulate the dimensions and indicators of this competency framework, compare them with previous empirical and Qur'anic studies, and identify their implications for the development and assessment of Qur'an teachers in formal and non-formal educational settings.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study is qualitative library research using a conceptual thematic tafsir (*maudhu'i*) approach. Library research was selected because the research object is conceptual and textual: the study seeks to construct a competency framework from Qur'anic verses, tafsir explanations, hadith, and relevant educational literature rather than to measure teacher behaviour in a field setting. Thematic tafsir is appropriate because it enables verses related to a defined theme to be collected, interpreted in context, compared, and synthesized into a coherent Qur'anic perspective. Recent methodological literature describes thematic tafsir as a systematic process that includes determining the theme, collecting relevant verses, examining contextual and interpretive information, and formulating an integrated understanding of the selected issue (Hanifah et al., 2024; Rokim & Triana, 2021).

The data were divided into primary and secondary sources. The primary textual source was the Qur'an, with particular attention to QS. Al-'Alaq [96]: 1–5, QS. Al-Kahf [18]: 65, and QS. An-Nahl [16]: 125. These verses were selected purposively because they represent three complementary educational functions: the acquisition and transmission of knowledge; the relation between knowledge, divine mercy, and the disposition of the knowledgeable person; and the manner in which truth and instruction are communicated. Primary interpretive sources included Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an by

Al-Qurthubi, Anwar al-Tanzil wa Asrar al-Ta'wil by Al-Baidhawi, and Tafsir Juz 'Ammah by Muhammad ibn Salih al-'Uthaymin. Relevant hadith from Sahih al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim were used as corroborating sources when they directly supported principles of learning, teaching, or gentleness.

Secondary sources consisted of peer-reviewed journal articles and scholarly books concerning teacher competence, Qur'an education, thematic tafsir, teacher-student relationships, classroom management, and professional development. The secondary literature was selected purposively on the basis of topical relevance, scholarly credibility, and its ability to support comparison between Qur'anic conceptual findings and contemporary educational research. Priority was given to recent Indonesian studies on Qur'an or Islamic education and to established international studies when they provided stronger empirical evidence concerning teacher competence, instructional quality, relational processes, or professional development.

Data collection used documentation. The procedure comprised four stages: (1) identifying verses and interpretive materials that contained concepts related to knowledge, teaching, mercy, wisdom, communication, correction, and educator character; (2) recording the relevant interpretive propositions from each tafsir source; (3) classifying the propositions into provisional competency themes; and (4) collecting secondary literature to test whether each theme represented a meaningful educational construct and to compare the emerging framework with prior studies. This procedure was intended to prevent the analysis from beginning with fixed modern competency labels and merely attaching verses to them.

Data analysis was descriptive-interpretive and comparative. First, the semantic and educational significance of each focal passage was analysed using the selected tafsir works. Second, convergent and divergent interpretive emphases were compared. Third, recurring educational meanings were coded into competency attributes such as mastery of knowledge, continuous learning, humility, patience, *rahmah*, *hikmah*, constructive advice, dialogue, empathy, and gentleness. Fourth, attributes were grouped according to their educational function rather than only their similarity of wording. Fifth, the resulting groups were compared with previous studies of Qur'an teacher competence and general teacher competence. Sixth, the groups were synthesized into an integrative framework and translated into conceptual indicators that could later be operationalized in empirical research.

The credibility of the interpretation was maintained through three strategies. First, source triangulation was applied by comparing more than one tafsir work and by using hadith and educational literature as corroborating rather than substitutive evidence. Second, interpretive traceability was maintained: each competency category had to be linked to a clear Qur'anic basis and an identifiable interpretive rationale before being connected to contemporary educational concepts. Third, comparative validation was conducted by examining whether the proposed dimensions overlapped with, extended, or differed from prior studies. The study does not claim empirical validation; its validity is conceptual and interpretive. Consequently, the proposed framework should be treated as a theoretically grounded model that requires further testing in actual Qur'an teaching contexts.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The thematic analysis shows that Qur'an teacher competence is best understood as an integrated structure rather than as a collection of independent traits. QS. Al-'Alaq [96]: 1–5 foregrounds the epistemic responsibility to read, learn, record, and recognize the limits of human knowledge. QS. Al-Kahf [18]: 65 connects knowledge with *rahmah* and presents learning as a process that requires humility and patience. QS. An-Nahl [16]: 125 explains that the communication of truth must be mediated through *hikmah*, good counsel, and the best manner of dialogue. When read together, the three passages generate a sequence of educational functions: knowledge establishes what the teacher must know; *rahmah* and moral-spiritual disposition regulate why and for whom knowledge is exercised; and pedagogical wisdom regulates how knowledge is communicated.

This sequence produces three dimensions: epistemic-professional competence, spiritual-personality competence, and pedagogical-relational competence. The categories are analytically distinguishable but functionally interdependent. A teacher may possess accurate knowledge yet fail educationally if correction humiliates learners. A teacher may be compassionate yet transmit inaccurate recitation if subject mastery is weak. A teacher may employ attractive methods yet lack the ethical

orientation that makes Qur'an education a process of guidance rather than mere performance. The integrative nature of these dimensions is the central finding of the study.

Epistemic-Professional Competence: Knowledge as the Foundation of Responsible Teaching

QS. Al-'Alaq [96]: 1–5 provides the strongest epistemic foundation in the selected corpus. The command *iqra'* establishes reading and intellectual engagement as the point of entry into knowledge, while the reference to the pen emphasizes preservation, organization, and transmission. For a Qur'an teacher, this has at least four professional implications: accurate mastery of recitation and *tajwid*, sufficient understanding of the material being taught, the capacity to organize knowledge into teachable sequences, and a commitment to continued learning. Professional competence therefore cannot be reduced to the ability to recite correctly; it includes the ability to transform correct knowledge into a structured learning experience.

The repetition of the command to read also supports a developmental rather than static understanding of teacher competence. A Qur'an teacher is not professionally complete merely because he or she once achieved a particular level of recitation. Teaching generates new demands: teachers encounter learners with different ages, prior knowledge, speech patterns, and difficulties; they must therefore renew their own knowledge and refine their instructional judgement. This interpretation converges with evidence from teacher professional-development research showing that sustained, practice-focused coaching and professional learning can improve instruction and student achievement (Kraft et al., 2018). In Qur'an education, lifelong learning should include periodic *tashih* of recitation, updating pedagogical knowledge, and reflective review of recurring learner errors.

This dimension also clarifies the limits of technical training studies. Elkarimah and Jaeni (2023) appropriately emphasize classroom management, *Iqra'* teaching, and basic *murattal* as necessary competencies. Joni et al. (2020) demonstrate the practical effectiveness of listening and immediate correction in adult Qur'an learning. These studies explain important instructional actions, but the thematic findings of the present study locate those actions within a broader epistemic responsibility. Correction is professionally legitimate only when the teacher possesses sufficient knowledge to diagnose the error, explain it accurately, and select a response proportionate to the learner's level. Thus, technique is an expression of epistemic competence rather than a substitute for it.

QS. Al-'Alaq additionally prevents professional knowledge from becoming a source of intellectual arrogance. The passage situates human knowing within dependence on divine teaching and human limitation. In pedagogical terms, this produces epistemic humility: the competent teacher distinguishes what is known from what still requires verification, avoids improvising religious explanations without sufficient basis, and remains willing to consult more authoritative teachers or sources. Such humility is especially important in Qur'an teaching because an authoritative classroom role can easily make unverified explanations appear definitive to learners.

The contribution of this dimension therefore differs from studies that equate professionalism primarily with qualification, training participation, or teaching techniques. Zarkasi et al. (2024) found that the improvement of Al-Qur'an Hadith teachers requires innovation, training, professional education, and stronger qualifications. The present study supports those recommendations but adds a normative logic: professional development is not merely an institutional strategy for performance improvement; it is an epistemic obligation arising from the teacher's responsibility to acquire, verify, organize, and faithfully transmit Qur'anic knowledge.

Spiritual-Personality Competence: Rahmah, Humility, Patience, and Exemplarity

QS. Al-Kahf [18]: 65 depicts a servant to whom Allah grants both mercy and knowledge. The juxtaposition of *rahmah* and 'ilm is educationally significant because it resists a separation between knowing and caring. In the context of Qur'an teaching, *rahmah* is not a sentimental addition to expertise; it is the ethical orientation that governs the use of expertise. The teacher's knowledge is directed toward the learner's growth rather than toward demonstrating superiority, preserving authority, or producing short-term performance at the cost of dignity and motivation.

Rahmah becomes observable in the way teachers respond to mistakes. Errors in *makhraj*, *madd*, or *tajwid* cannot simply be ignored because accuracy is part of the instructional objective. However, correction can be academically strict while remaining psychologically safe. A teacher who repeats a model patiently, distinguishes major from minor errors, allows another attempt, and corrects without

ridicule demonstrates *rahmah* as professional conduct. This interpretation is consistent with research showing that teacher–student relationships are related to student engagement and teacher well-being and can mediate the effects of classroom difficulties (Aldrup et al., 2018; Zee & Koomen, 2016). In this sense, compassion has an instructional function: it keeps the learner in the learning process long enough for correction to become effective.

The narrative context of Musa and Khidr also highlights humility and patience in the pursuit of knowledge. Musa’s willingness to learn from another knowledgeable figure provides an important corrective to a hierarchical image of the teacher as someone who has finished learning. Qur’an teachers occupy an authoritative role in relation to their students, yet they remain learners in relation to the Qur’an, more expert teachers, and the limits of their own understanding. This double position—teacher and continuing learner—is a defining feature of spiritual-personality competence.

Previous Qur’anic studies have identified related qualities but typically emphasize one aspect at a time. Zahra et al. (2020) describe a rahmani educator as compassionate, knowledgeable, able to develop learners, and capable of interaction. Muhaimin and Munawaroh (2021) place strong emphasis on moral ethics and *akhlaq karimah*, while Jumrotun et al. (2025) foreground integrity, exemplary conduct, and personality competence. The present framework does not contradict these findings. Its contribution is to specify the professional function of these moral qualities in Qur’an teaching: *rahmah* regulates correction, humility regulates claims to knowledge, patience regulates response to unequal learning pace, and exemplarity regulates the credibility of the teacher’s religious message.

This functional interpretation also explains why personality cannot be assessed only through abstract moral descriptors. In Qur’an education, the relevant question is not merely whether a teacher is described as patient or compassionate, but whether those qualities are visible in instructional decisions. Does the teacher allow repeated practice? Does the teacher avoid humiliating a learner who repeatedly mispronounces a letter? Does the teacher acknowledge uncertainty? Does the teacher model *adab* toward the Qur’an and toward learners? By connecting moral-spiritual attributes to instructional behaviour, the framework moves from a normative list of virtues toward a concept that can later be operationalized for teacher development and assessment.

Pedagogical-Relational Competence: Hikmah, Good Counsel, Dialogue, and Gentleness

QS. An-Nahl [16]: 125 provides a direct basis for the manner of communication. The verse combines *hikmah*, *mau’izhah hasanah*, and dialogue in the best manner. Al-Baidhawi’s interpretation of *hikmah* emphasizes discourse that clarifies truth and removes doubt, while the best form of argumentation is associated with a manner that is more acceptable and less harmful. Applied to Qur’an teaching, this means that correct content must be accompanied by a method suited to the learner’s condition and a communicative form that makes correction understandable and receivable.

Hikmah can therefore be interpreted pedagogically as situational judgement. Learners differ in age, motivation, prior exposure, cognitive readiness, and the type of reading error they make. A single instructional response is unlikely to be equally effective for a child who is still recognizing letters, an adolescent refining *tajwid*, and an adult learner who is embarrassed by long-standing reading difficulties. Effective classroom-management research similarly shows that instructional and management strategies influence academic, behavioural, emotional, and motivational outcomes (Korpershoek et al., 2016). The Qur’anic concept of *hikmah* provides a normative rationale for this adaptability: the teacher selects the method that best serves correct learning in a particular situation.

Mau’izhah hasanah adds a motivational and ethical dimension. Qur’an teachers frequently need to remind learners about consistency, effort, etiquette, and the spiritual importance of learning. Such reminders can either strengthen motivation or become moral pressure. The qualification *hasanah* requires counsel that is constructive in content and form. In practice, it means distinguishing advice from public shaming, and encouragement from moralizing language that ignores a learner’s difficulty. Good counsel is therefore part of pedagogical communication, not an activity outside teaching.

The dialogical element of the verse also has practical significance. Qur’an learning often becomes highly teacher-centred because recitation requires direct modelling and correction. Yet a correction-only model may conceal whether the learner understands the reason for the correction. Dialogue allows the teacher to ask what the learner finds difficult, check comprehension, invite self-correction, and explain why a particular sound or *tajwid* rule matters. This shifts the learner from passive repetition toward guided awareness without abandoning the importance of *talaqqi* and direct modelling.

Gentleness strengthens these principles. The Prophetic teaching recorded in Sahih Muslim that gentleness beautifies what it enters supports an instructional ethic in which strict standards do not require harsh communication. A Qur'an teacher can insist on accurate articulation while using a calm tone, progressive correction, and specific feedback. The distinction between strictness of standard and harshness of manner is important: the former protects the integrity of the learning objective, while the latter may undermine learner confidence and participation.

The pedagogical-relational dimension extends empirical studies of pedagogical competence. Hasibuan and Darlis (2024) show that pedagogical competence among Al-Qur'an Hadith teachers can be strengthened through training, workshops, professional communities, reading, collaboration, and supervision. Zarkasi et al. (2024) similarly identify the need to move beyond monotonous, teacher-centred practices. The present study contributes a Qur'anic criterion for such improvement: innovation is not valuable merely because it is new; it is pedagogically meaningful when it embodies *hikmah*, helps remove confusion, respects learner conditions, and communicates correction in the best possible manner.

Comparative Positioning and the Novelty of the Integrative Framework

The reviewer's concern regarding novelty is best addressed by positioning the findings explicitly against prior studies. Table 1 shows that existing research has generated valuable insights but usually concentrates on one level of analysis: teaching strategy, practical training, pedagogical competence, moral character, or a single Qur'anic passage. The present study integrates these levels and explains their functional relation in the specific role of a Qur'an teacher.

Table 1 Comparative Positioning of Previous Studies and the Present Study

Study	Primary focus	Main contribution	Difference from the present study
Joni et al. (2020)	Village Qur'an teaching strategies	Shows the practical value of routine study, listening, correction, repetition, and motivation.	Empirical strategy study; does not construct a multidimensional competency architecture.
Zahra et al. (2020)	Rahmani educator in Surah al-Rahman	Highlights compassion, knowledge, learner development, and interaction.	Strong moral-educational profile, but centred on one surah and general educator characteristics.
Zakariya (2021)	Teacher competence in QS. Al-Qalam 1–4	Links Qur'anic interpretation with personality, knowledge, ICT, and writing competence.	Single-passage focus; dimensions are not organized into an interdependent model for Qur'an teachers.
Muhaimin & Munawaroh (2021)	Competence and educator moral ethics	Emphasizes broad religious knowledge and akhlaq karimah.	Primarily normative-moral; less explicit on how moral qualities function in concrete Qur'an pedagogy.
Elkarimah & Jaeni (2023)	Basic competence training for Qur'an teachers	Focuses on classroom management, Iqra' teaching, and basic murattal.	Practical-technical orientation; limited conceptual integration with spiritual and relational dimensions.
Hasibuan & Darlis (2024)	Pedagogical competence of Al-Qur'an Hadith teachers	Shows institutional strategies for strengthening pedagogy in the Independent Curriculum.	Empirical and pedagogical focus; does not theorize Qur'anic spiritual-personality integration.
Zarkasi et al. (2024)	Competence development through MGMP	Identifies needs for innovation, professional learning, and teacher development.	Professional-development focus; not a Qur'anic conceptual framework.
Jumrotun et al. (2025)	Qur'anic personality competence	Highlights morals, integrity, exemplary conduct, and professionalism.	Personality-focused; does not integrate epistemic and pedagogical-relational functions.
Present study	Qur'an teacher competence across three thematic passages	Constructs epistemic-professional, spiritual-personality, and pedagogical-relational dimensions as one functional system.	Novelty lies in the multi-passage, function-based integration and its translation into conceptual indicators for Qur'an teacher development.

The comparison clarifies that the novelty is not a claim to have discovered compassion, knowledge, pedagogy, or personality as entirely new teacher qualities. Each has substantial precedent. The new contribution is the relational structure among them. The framework proposes that epistemic-professional competence answers the question 'what must the teacher know and be able to transmit?';

spiritual-personality competence answers ‘with what ethical orientation and self-disposition should that knowledge be exercised?’; and pedagogical-relational competence answers ‘through what mode of interaction should knowledge be made learnable?’ The three questions are inseparable in Qur’an education.

This integration also changes the meaning of professionalism. In a narrow model, professionalism may be assessed through certification, mastery of *tajwid*, years of teaching, or the ability to use a particular method. The thematic findings suggest a more demanding concept: professional competence includes the moral regulation of expertise and the relational conditions of its transmission. *Rahmah*, humility, and gentleness are therefore not external virtues that decorate professional competence; they are mechanisms that determine whether professional knowledge produces guidance, trust, persistence, and corrective learning.

A second element of novelty is the use of multiple passages to avoid overloading a single verse with all modern competency categories. QS. Al-‘Alaq is allowed to contribute primarily to the epistemic logic of learning and transmission; QS. Al-Kahf contributes to the ethical-spiritual relation between mercy and knowledge; and QS. An-Nahl contributes to pedagogical communication. The model emerges from synthesis after interpretation rather than from forcing every verse to reproduce a pre-existing four-competency taxonomy. This improves conceptual transparency and reduces the risk of merely legitimizing contemporary categories through scriptural citation.

The Integrative Competency Model and Its Conceptual Indicators

The synthesis can be translated into a preliminary set of conceptual indicators for Qur’an teacher development. These indicators are not yet a validated instrument, but they make the framework more operational and create a bridge from thematic tafsir to future empirical research.

Table 2 Proposed Integrative Competency Model for Qur’an Teachers

Dimension	Main Qur’anic basis	Core attributes	Educational function	Illustrative indicators
Epistemic-professional	QS. Al-‘Alaq 96:1–5	Knowledge mastery; accurate recitation; continuous learning; epistemic humility	Ensures the accuracy, organization, and responsible transmission of Qur’anic knowledge	Models correct recitation; diagnoses errors accurately; explains material systematically; verifies uncertain information; pursues ongoing tashih and learning.
Spiritual-personality	QS. Al-Kahf 18:65	<i>Rahmah</i> ; patience; humility; integrity; exemplary conduct	Regulates the ethical use of knowledge and sustains learner dignity and trust	Corrects without humiliation; tolerates varied learning pace; admits limits; models <i>adab</i> ; treats knowledge as an amanah.
Pedagogical-relational	QS. An-Nahl 16:125	Hikmah; good counsel; dialogue; empathy; gentleness	Adapts knowledge to learner conditions and makes correction understandable and receivable	Differentiates explanation; gives constructive feedback; invites questions and self-correction; maintains calm communication while upholding standards.

The model suggests a multiplicative rather than additive logic. If one dimension is seriously deficient, the educational effect of the others is reduced. Strong knowledge with weak relational competence may produce fear and withdrawal; warm relationships with weak epistemic competence may normalize inaccurate recitation; engaging pedagogy without moral-spiritual integrity may produce instructional effectiveness without the exemplary dimension expected in Qur’an education. This interdependence is the theoretical core of the framework.

The model also helps reinterpret the four conventional teacher competencies—pedagogical, professional, social, and personality—as overlapping functions rather than isolated administrative categories. Epistemic-professional competence corresponds partly with professional competence, but it explicitly includes intellectual humility and continuous verification. Spiritual-personality competence overlaps with personality competence but specifies the educational functions of *rahmah* and patience. Pedagogical-relational competence combines pedagogical and social capacities because, in Qur’an teaching, communication and relationship are not external to pedagogy; they are the medium through which correction and modelling occur.

Implications for Qur'an Teacher Development and Assessment

The first implication concerns teacher-development programs. Training should not be limited to *tajwid*, *makhraj*, *Iqra'*, *murattal*, or classroom techniques. Those components remain essential, but the framework indicates that a complete program should contain three strands: subject-matter and recitation mastery; spiritual-personality formation linked to concrete teaching behaviour; and pedagogical communication, including feedback, differentiated explanation, emotional regulation, and respectful correction. This proposal extends the practical emphasis of Elkarimah and Jaeni (2023) and the professional-development recommendations of Hasibuan and Darlis (2024) and Zarkasi et al. (2024).

The second implication concerns assessment. Qur'an teacher quality is often inferred from the teacher's own reading ability or from students' recitation outcomes. These are important but incomplete indicators. An integrative assessment should also examine how the teacher diagnoses errors, whether explanations are matched to learner level, how feedback is delivered, whether learners are given opportunities to try again, how the teacher responds to uncertainty, and whether the teacher models the *adab* expected in Qur'an learning. Such indicators would make moral-spiritual competence observable without reducing it to vague personality judgements.

The third implication concerns institutional supervision. Supervisors or heads of Qur'an education programs can use the three dimensions as a reflective structure for lesson observation and coaching. Feedback can distinguish epistemic problems (for example, inaccurate explanation), pedagogical problems (for example, correction that is unclear or not differentiated), and relational-ethical problems (for example, public humiliation or impatience). This diagnostic separation is useful because the intervention needed for each problem is different even though the dimensions remain interdependent.

The fourth implication is theoretical. Qur'an education research can move beyond asking whether a teacher possesses a list of competencies toward examining the mechanisms through which competencies interact. Future studies can test, for example, whether pedagogical-relational competence mediates the effect of subject mastery on learner persistence, or whether spiritual-personality competence predicts students' willingness to accept corrective feedback. In this way, the proposed framework can generate empirically testable hypotheses rather than remaining only a normative description.

The study also has limitations. The framework is based on a purposive selection of Qur'anic passages and interpretive sources and therefore does not claim to exhaust all verses relevant to education. It is conceptual rather than empirical, and the proposed indicators have not been tested for reliability, validity, or predictive value. Further research should broaden the tafsir corpus, involve Qur'an education experts in content validation, and test the model in diverse settings such as TPA/TPQ, pesantren, schools, adult learning groups, and teacher-training programs.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the competence of Qur'an teachers is an integrative construct composed of three interdependent dimensions. Epistemic-professional competence, grounded primarily in QS. Al-'Alaq [96]: 1–5, includes accurate mastery of Qur'anic knowledge, the ability to organize and transmit it, continuous learning, and epistemic humility. Spiritual-personality competence, illuminated by QS. Al-Kahf [18]: 65, includes *rahmah*, patience, humility, integrity, and exemplary conduct that regulate the ethical use of knowledge. Pedagogical-relational competence, grounded in QS. An-Nahl [16]: 125, includes *hikmah*, constructive counsel, dialogue, empathy, and gentleness that enable knowledge and correction to be received effectively. The principal novelty is the functional integration of these dimensions: knowledge is the epistemic foundation, moral-spiritual qualities are the ethical orientation, and pedagogical-relational qualities are the mode of transmission. This positioning extends previous studies that have generally emphasized technical training, pedagogical competence, moral character, or single-passage Qur'anic formulations separately.

Based on these findings, Qur'an education institutions are recommended to design teacher development and assessment around the three dimensions simultaneously. Training should combine *tashih* and subject mastery with reflective formation in *rahmah*, patience, and professional humility, as well as practice in constructive feedback, differentiated explanation, dialogue, and gentle but

academically firm correction. Future research should validate the proposed indicators through expert judgement and field studies, develop a measurable competency instrument, and test the relationship between the three dimensions and outcomes such as recitation accuracy, learner persistence, psychological safety, and engagement with Qur'an learning.

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