Qualifications and Ideal Competencies of Teachers in the Islamic Perspective

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Abstract:
Teachers hold a vital and esteemed position within the Isl amic education system. They are not merely conveyors of knowledge but also serve as educators, mentors, and exemplary role models for their students. From an Islamic perspective, teachers are expected to possess qualifications and competencies that encompass not only intellectual capacity but also spiritual depth and moral integrity. This article aims to explore the concept of ideal teacher qualifications and competencies from an Islamic perspective by examining primary sources such as the Qur'an, Hadith, and the views of both classical and contemporary scholars. The study employs a qualitative methodology using a library research approach. The findings reveal that the ideal qualifications of a teacher in Islam consist of three fundamental aspects: profound knowledge, noble character, and sincerity in teaching. Furthermore, the ideal teacher competencies include pedagogical, professional, social, and personal abilities, all of which are grounded in Islamic values. Hence, within the Islamic framework, the teacher serves as a central figure in shaping a generation that embodies both intellectual excellence and moral virtue.
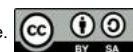
INTRODUCTION

Teachers play a pivotal role in shaping the intellectual, moral, and spiritual development of students, especially within the framework of Islamic education (Fauzan, 2020). In this context, teachers are not merely transmitters of knowledge but also mentors and role models who guide learners in developing ethical and spiritual values. The quality and competence of teachers directly influence the effectiveness of the educational process and the formation of students' character (Fauzan, 2020). Despite this crucial role, research indicates that many teachers often focus primarily on academic achievements, while the cultivation of moral and spiritual dimensions remains insufficient (Jamaludin, 2021).

Previous studies have explored teacher competencies in general educational settings, emphasizing pedagogical, professional, and social skills (Fauzan, 2020). Specifically, in Islamic education, it is essential that teachers integrate religious values into their professional practice to achieve holistic educational outcomes. Jamaludin (2021) emphasizes that the ideal teacher in Islamic education combines intellectual mastery with strong ethical conduct, pedagogical proficiency, and spiritual integrity. These insights highlight a gap in current teacher development programs, which often prioritize technical skills over the cultivation of Islamic values.

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The significance of this study lies in addressing this gap by analyzing the ideal qualifications and competencies of teachers from an Islamic perspective. By synthesizing insights from contemporary Islamic education research, this study aims to provide practical guidance for teacher development programs, ensuring that teachers can contribute effectively to the holistic growth of students.

METHOD

This research is a qualitative descriptive study employing a library research approach. The purpose of this study is to analyze and synthesize various theoretical perspectives regarding the qualifications and ideal competencies of teachers from an Islamic perspective. It seeks to explore the concepts, principles, and educational values in Islam related to the intellectual, moral, and spiritual dimensions that constitute the qualities of an ideal teacher.

The data used in this study comprise secondary sources, including books, journal articles, theses, dissertations, and other scholarly works that discuss Islamic education, teacher professionalism, and the ethics and competencies of educators from an Islamic perspective. These materials were collected from various academic databases, libraries, and reputable online journals relevant to the research topic.

Data collection was conducted through systematic library research, involving the identification, review, and compilation of relevant academic literature. The data were analyzed descriptively using content analysis, aiming to describe, examine, and interpret existing theories and findings concerning teacher qualifications and competencies in Islamic education. The data analysis process involved several stages as follows:

1. Data classification, by organizing the literature based on thematic relevance (Islamic education, teacher competencies, and Islamic values).
2. Critical examination involves analyzing the main arguments and perspectives of both classical and contemporary scholars.
3. Synthesis, by integrating various insights to develop a comprehensive understanding of the concept of teacher qualifications and ideal competencies in the Islamic perspective.

This study was conducted at the Faculty of Tarbiyah, Islamic University of Jember, from January to April 2025. During this period, data collection and analysis were carried out repeatedly and thoroughly to obtain accurate interpretations.

The results are presented descriptively to highlight how Islamic teachings conceptualize teacher competencies as a combination of intellectual capability, moral integrity, and spiritual sincerity that form the foundation of teacher professionalism. This study was conducted with full consideration of academic ethics, ensuring the originality of analysis and proper citation of all references. As it did not involve human participants, ethical clearance was not required.

RESULT

This study synthesizes various theoretical perspectives and previous studies concerning the qualifications and ideal competencies of teachers from an Islamic perspective. The analysis focuses on how Islamic education integrates intellectual, moral, spiritual, and professional aspects as essential components of teacher competency and professionalism.

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Dimensions of Teacher Competence in Islamic Education

The findings indicate that Islamic education defines teacher competence as a combination of pedagogical, professional, personal, and social dimensions, all of which must be grounded in Islamic values. Zaqiah et al. (2024) emphasize that teacher competence can be strengthened through continuous professional education programs (PPG Daljab), particularly in improving pedagogical and personal competence. Their study also found that while teachers demonstrate strong personality development, areas such as digital literacy and professional assessment require further enhancement.

Similarly, Arif, Nor Abd Aziz, and Ma'arif (2025) revealed that in the digital age, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers must master not only traditional competencies but also digital pedagogical skills. Their systematic review emphasizes the importance of teachers integrating Islamic values into contemporary learning environments, striking a balance between faith, ethics, and technology-based pedagogy.

These studies affirm that competence in Islamic education extends beyond technical skills. It represents a holistic integration of knowledge, pedagogy, morality, and spirituality, ensuring that teachers act as both educators and ethical exemplars in society.

Professionalism and Moral Integrity of Teachers in the Qur'anic Perspective

According to Fadhil et al. (2024), the Qur'an views teachers not merely as transmitters of knowledge but as moral and spiritual guides. The concept of a professional teacher in Islam encompasses three key dimensions: 'ilm (knowledge), akhlaq (morality), and amanah (social responsibility). Through this framework, teachers are expected to uphold intellectual integrity, demonstrate virtuous conduct, and act responsibly within their communities.

In line with this, Cahyadi and Qomariyah (2022) explain that pedagogical competence in the Qur'anic perspective is rooted in the principles of hikmah (wisdom), qaulan balighah (effective communication), and uswatun hasanah (good example). These principles suggest that teaching should not only transfer knowledge but also transform character, enabling learners to embody Islamic ethics in everyday life.

Qualifications and Responsibilities of Teachers as Moral Educators

Mimin (2020) stresses that qualified Islamic educators must possess both academic mastery and moral integrity. A teacher in Islam is described as murabbī (character builder), mu'allim (knowledge transmitter), and mu'addib (discipline enforcer). This tripartite model reflects the Qur'anic vision that the ultimate goal of education is not only intellectual enlightenment but also spiritual refinement and moral responsibility.

In the same vein, all reviewed studies underscore that Islamic teacher qualification is not limited to formal education or certification but also includes the internalization of Islamic values such as sincerity (ikhlas), responsibility (amanah), and consistency (istiqamah).

Synthesis of Findings

From the reviewed literature, it can be concluded that the ideal teacher competencies in the Islamic perspective are built upon the integration of knowledge ('ilm), ethics (akhlaq), and spirituality (ruhiyyah). These competencies ensure that teachers serve as role models, guiding learners not only intellectually but also morally and spiritually.

Furthermore, contemporary scholars agree that Islamic teacher professionalism must evolve in response to the times. While maintaining strong ethical and religious foundations, teachers are

also expected to develop technological and reflective abilities that support effective learning in modern educational settings (Zaqiah et al., 2024; Arif et al., 2025).

Table 1. Summary of Core Teacher Competencies in the Islamic Perspective

Core Dimension	Description	Supporting Sources
Pedagogical	Ability to design, implement, and evaluate learning based on Islamic values and student-centered methods.	Zaqiah et al. (2024); Cahyadi & Qomariyah (2022)
Professional	Mastery of subject matter, continuous self-development, and adaptation to technological change.	Arif et al. (2025)
Personal	Integrity, sincerity, self-discipline, and exemplary behavior as a role model for students.	Fadhil et al. (2024)
Social and Spiritual	Moral leadership, empathy, and commitment to social welfare grounded in Islamic teachings.	Mimin (2020); Fadhil et al. (2024)

Overall, the results demonstrate that the qualifications and competencies of teachers in the Islamic perspective are comprehensive, value-oriented, and future-relevant. They integrate religious ethics with modern educational demands, ensuring that teachers not only educate minds but also nurture hearts and character in accordance with Islamic values.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study reveal that the qualifications and competencies of teachers in the Islamic perspective are comprehensive, integrating intellectual, moral, and spiritual dimensions. This interpretation aligns with the view of Fadhil et al. (2024), who emphasize that the Qur'an positions teachers as moral and spiritual guides, not merely as transmitters of knowledge. The present study builds upon this understanding by demonstrating how Islamic teacher competence must adapt to contemporary educational challenges while maintaining a strong spiritual foundation.

In comparison, Zaqiah et al. (2024) found that professional development programs such as PPG Daljab significantly enhance teachers' pedagogical and personal competencies. However, their findings were more focused on technical and institutional improvements. In contrast, this study contributes a deeper theoretical synthesis by incorporating Qur'anic and classical Islamic concepts such as hikmah, ikhlas, and amanah into the modern framework of teacher professionalism. This indicates that the ideal teacher in Islam should embody both professional expertise and moral authenticity, forming a unique integration that differs from secular educational models.

Furthermore, Arif, Nor Abd Aziz, and Ma'arif (2025) identified the urgency for Islamic teachers to acquire digital competencies in the 21st century. This study confirms and extends their findings by showing that digital literacy must coexist with Islamic ethical values. Teachers should not only use technology effectively but also ensure that digital learning promotes the ethical, spiritual, and intellectual development of their students. This synthesis positions Islamic pedagogy as both value-based and adaptive to modernization, ensuring its relevance in the era of globalization and technological disruption.

The results also align with Masuwai, Zulkifli, and Hamzah (2024), who proposed self-assessment as a vital approach to continuous professional development for Islamic Education teachers. In light of these findings, this research suggests that reflective self-assessment must include not only pedagogical evaluation but also spiritual accountability, emphasizing the teacher's awareness of their role as murabbī (character builder) and mu'addib (moral disciplinarian).

Comparatively, Syafi'i et al. (2023) and Febriana (2024) discussed the competencies of Islamic education teachers in the context of the 5.0 era and the conceptualization of Islamic culture in teaching. While these studies primarily explored the structural and institutional roles of teachers, the novelty of this study lies in synthesizing Islamic philosophical and pedagogical values to develop a holistic model of teacher qualification that combines intellectual mastery, moral integrity, and spiritual sincerity. This integrative perspective contributes new insight into how teacher professionalism in Islam can serve as an ethical and spiritual compass in the global education landscape.

From a global perspective, this study contributes to the broader exploration of Islam as a multifaceted and dynamic educational system. It emphasizes that Islamic teacher education does not exist in isolation but interacts with global pedagogical trends, particularly in promoting value-based education amid the dominance of secular and market-driven systems. The Islamic concept of teacher competency, as formulated here, offers a counterbalance to Western paradigms by reinstating spirituality as a central dimension of teacher identity. This finding can enrich comparative education studies, intercultural ethics, and global teacher training programs that aim to integrate moral and spiritual intelligence into modern education.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the qualifications and ideal competencies of teachers in the Islamic perspective represent an integration of intellectual, moral, and spiritual dimensions. A teacher in Islam is not merely a transmitter of knowledge but also a moral educator and character builder who guides learners toward holistic personal development. The Islamic framework views teaching as both an act of intellect and worship, where the teacher embodies sincerity, responsibility, and exemplary behavior in fulfilling educational duties.

The findings of this research indicate that ideal teacher competence encompasses four interconnected domains: pedagogical, professional, personal, and social. Each dimension must be grounded in Islamic values such as hikmah (wisdom), ikhlas (sincerity), and amanah (trustworthiness). This integration ensures that teachers are not only knowledgeable and technologically literate but also morally upright and spiritually aware. In this regard, the study answers the central research question by affirming that teacher qualifications in Islam are defined not solely by academic achievements or certification, but by the harmony between knowledge, ethics, and spirituality.

In the context of contemporary education, particularly in the era of globalization and digital transformation, Islamic teachers are expected to strike a balance between modern competencies and spiritual and ethical integrity. Teacher professionalism in Islam, therefore, extends beyond technical mastery; it embodies the mission of nurturing humanity and transmitting divine values through education.

This study makes a conceptual contribution to the ongoing discourse on Islamic teacher professionalism by proposing a model that harmonizes classical Islamic principles with modern educational standards. Practically, it provides a framework for Islamic educational institutions to design teacher development programs that emphasize moral and spiritual formation alongside pedagogical and technological proficiency.

Future studies are recommended to validate and expand this conceptual model through empirical research, including field observations and interviews with Islamic education teachers. Such research would provide a deeper understanding of how Islamic teacher competencies are practiced

in real educational settings and strengthen the applicability of this model across diverse cultural and global contexts.

Ultimately, this study highlights that the qualifications and competencies of teachers in Islam extend beyond intellectual expertise to encompass a spiritual mission that fosters noble character and ethical awareness. This concept offers a transformative contribution to global education—promoting an approach that enlightens the mind, purifies the heart, and elevates the human spirit.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. The research was conducted independently, without any financial or personal relationships that could influence the results or interpretations presented in this study.

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