



QURANIC LITERACY COMPETENCE OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS: THE ROLE OF RELIGIOUS HABITUS AND SOCIAL CAPITAL

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Abstract: This study aimed to analyze the role of religious habitus and social capital in strengthening the Qur'anic literacy competence of Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teachers at the elementary school level in the Special Region of Yogyakarta. This research employed a qualitative approach with a multiple case study design to obtain an in-depth understanding of teachers' Qur'anic literacy practices across different educational settings. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and documentation involving IRE teachers, school principals, and supporting informants. The data were analyzed using an interactive model consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion verification to identify patterns and relationships among the findings. The results indicated that Qur'anic literacy competence is shaped through the interaction between religious habitus, social capital, and institutional support. Continuous religious practices strengthen teachers' fluency, confidence, pedagogical flexibility, and interpretative ability in Qur'anic learning, while collaborative learning networks and professional interactions enhance competence through knowledge sharing and mutual support. Differences in teachers' Qur'anic literacy competence are influenced by variations in *religious* experiences, learning environments, and access to professional communities. These findings implied that strengthening religious learning habits, fostering collaborative professional communities, and providing sustained institutional mentoring are essential strategies for improving teachers' Qur'anic literacy competence and supporting the quality of Islamic Religious Education in elementary schools.

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INTRODUCTION

Qur'anic literacy competence among Islamic Religious Education teachers at the elementary school level has become an important issue in the development of Islamic education in Indonesia. As educators responsible for teaching the Qur'an and Islamic values, IRE teachers are expected to possess adequate competence in reading, understanding, and teaching the Qur'an (Habibah et al., 2023 and Iha Hamidah, 2023). However, the reality in many schools indicates that teachers demonstrate varying levels of Qur'anic literacy competence, particularly in recitation fluency, tajwid mastery, and interpretative teaching practices. This condition reflects a gap between institutional expectations and the actual competence of teachers in implementing Qur'anic learning effectively (Triansyah et al., 2023 and Hanafi & Pohan, 2024).

The phenomenon becomes more complex in elementary schools across the Special Region of Yogyakarta (DI Yogyakarta), where Islamic Religious Education teachers work within diverse institutional cultures, religious traditions, and community backgrounds. Based on the researchers' preliminary observations, noticeable differences exist in teachers' Qur'anic literacy competence. Some teachers demonstrate fluent recitation, strong interpretative ability, and confidence in guiding Qur'anic learning, whereas others experience difficulties in maintaining fluency, applying appropriate instructional strategies, and integrating Qur'anic literacy into classroom practice. These differences appear to be associated with variations in teachers' religious learning experiences, daily religious practices, opportunities for professional interaction, and the level of institutional support available in their schools. As a result, the quality of Qur'anic learning and students' learning experiences varies considerably across schools. This complex situation indicates that improving teachers' Qur'anic literacy competence requires a more comprehensive approach that considers not only technical pedagogical training but also the sociocultural and relational factors shaping teachers' professional development.

One important approach to addressing this issue is through strengthening religious habitus and social capital among teachers. Religious habitus refers to internalized religious dispositions formed through continuous interaction with Islamic practices, religious traditions, and Qur'anic learning environments. Teachers who are accustomed to religious practices and intensive Qur'anic engagement tend to demonstrate stronger confidence and competence in teaching the Qur'an. In addition, social capital contributes to competence development through collaborative networks, professional learning communities, and institutional support systems that facilitate continuous learning and knowledge exchange among teachers (Yusak et al., 2023 and Kholili & Mu'id, 2025). When religious habitus and social capital combine, a professional ecosystem is created that not only enhances technical teaching skills but also strengthens teachers' calling to educate. Through this synergy, Quranic teachers are able to transform spiritual values into learning methodologies that

are more adaptive, inclusive, and relevant to the challenges of the times (Kurniawan et al., 2025; Salamuddin et al., 2024; Wisono et al., 2023).

Previous studies on Qur'anic literacy have generally focused on instructional methods, curriculum development, or student learning outcomes. Several studies (Bulqis & Fachri, 2025; Nuraini et al., 2025) also discuss teacher competence in Islamic education, but most of them emphasize formal training and pedagogical strategies. Limited research examines Qur'anic literacy competence from a sociological perspective that integrates internal religious dispositions and external social relations. In line with this, contemporary literature (Chusyairi et al., 2024 and Esa Shofa Kamila Salsabila et al., 2025) confirmed that while structural frameworks exist, the deep-seated values transmitted through religious environments function as primary cultural capital that dictates how religious pedagogy is enacted. Furthermore, recent analytical lenses on Islamic institutions (Supratman, S., Mariani Ramlan, A., Ode Sirad, L., & Bonyah, 2025; Zaharuddin et al., 2025) emphasized that an educator's agency and professional identity are not formed in a vacuum, but rather negotiated through the intricate interplay of their ingrained religious habitus and the collaborative networks available within their school field. As a result, the role of religious habitus and social capital in shaping teachers' Qur'anic literacy competence remains insufficiently explored in contemporary Islamic education studies.

This study offers novelty by integrating the concepts of religious habitus and social capital in analyzing Qur'anic literacy competence among IRE teachers. Unlike previous studies that tend to examine competence from technical or pedagogical dimensions. This research positions Qur'anic literacy as a socially constructed competence shaped through the interaction between internal religious formation and external relational support. This perspective provides a more comprehensive understanding of how teachers develop, maintain, and strengthen their Qur'anic literacy competence within specific educational contexts.

The urgency of this study lies in the growing demand for improving the quality of Islamic education, particularly in strengthening teachers' competence in Qur'anic learning at the elementary school level. Understanding the sociocultural factors influencing Qur'anic literacy competence is important for designing sustainable teacher development programs, strengthening religious learning environments, and enhancing collaborative professional communities in schools. This study is expected to contribute both theoretically and practically to the development of Islamic education research and teacher competence policies. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the role of religious habitus and social capital in shaping Qur'anic literacy competence among IRE teachers at the elementary school level in DI Yogyakarta. The research focuses on how religious dispositions, social networks, and institutional support interact in influencing teachers' competence in Qur'anic literacy practices and learning processes.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach with a multiple case study design to analyze the role of religious habitus and social capital in shaping the Qur'anic literacy competence of Islamic Religious Education teachers at the elementary school level. The research was conducted in three elementary schools in the Special Region of Yogyakarta (DI Yogyakarta), based on different institutional characteristics and socio-educational backgrounds, particularly the contrast between public elementary schools with a secular environment and private integrated public elementary schools (SDIT) with an intensive religious culture. The primary informants in this study were six certified Islamic Religious Education teachers with at least five years of teaching experience from Islamic boarding schools and state universities. To gain a comprehensive perspective, supporting informants were also involved: three school principals to explore institutional support and six students to assess the pedagogical impact in the classroom. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and documentation studies involving lesson plans, school programs, and Qur'anic learning activities. These techniques were used to obtain detailed and contextual data related to teachers' religious practices, professional interactions, and instructional experiences in Qur'anic literacy learning.

The data analysis process followed an interactive model consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion verification. The collected data were categorized and interpreted thematically to identify patterns related to religious habitus, social capital, and teachers' Qur'anic literacy competence. This study also applied data validity techniques through source triangulation, technique triangulation, member checking, and prolonged engagement to ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings. The interpretative analysis was conducted using a sociological perspective to understand how internal religious dispositions and external social networks interact in strengthening teachers' Qur'anic literacy competence within different educational contexts.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Strengthening Habitual Qur'anic Learning Practices

The first finding, derived from data collected from 13 Islamic Religious Education teachers with diverse educational backgrounds, teaching experiences, and Qur'anic competencies, reveals that religious habitus plays a central role in strengthening teachers' engagement with the Qur'an. Teachers who consistently practice daily Qur'anic recitation, tajwid exercises, and routine religious learning activities demonstrate greater fluency, confidence, and pedagogical competence in teaching the Qur'an. Participants with stronger Qur'anic competencies, including regular participation in tahsin and tahfiz activities as well as sustained religious learning practices, showed greater flexibility in guiding students and explaining Qur'anic concepts. Continuous interaction with the Qur'an gradually develops an internalized learning culture that strengthens teachers' Qur'anic literacy competence in a natural and sustainable manner.

Classroom observations in SD B showed that teachers with pesantren educational backgrounds conducted Qur'anic instruction more fluently and interactively. They corrected students' pronunciation errors spontaneously, explained tajwid contextually, and connected Qur'anic verses with students' daily experiences. Learning activities became more dialogical and meaningful because teachers possessed strong personal engagement with Qur'anic practices.

One teacher explained:

"Reading the Qur'an has become part of my daily life since studying in pesantren. Therefore, teaching Qur'anic recitation in class feels natural because I practice it continuously every day."

The interview indicates that teachers' literacy competence is strengthened through repeated religious practices rather than relying solely on formal academic training. Teachers with stronger religious habits also showed greater confidence in guiding students and creating meaningful Qur'anic learning environments.

Table 1. Strengthening Habitual Qur'anic Learning Practices

Indicators	Field Findings
Daily Qur'anic recitation	Conducted consistently before and after teaching activities
Tajwid mastery	Teachers corrected recitation errors directly and accurately
Teaching confidence	Teachers explained verses fluently and contextually
Learning interaction	Classroom learning became more dialogical and active

The table demonstrates that religious habitus strengthens both technical and pedagogical dimensions of teachers' Qur'anic literacy competence. Documentation supporting this finding includes daily recitation schedules, tajwid mentoring activities, classroom learning, and teachers' Qur'anic learning journals. Technically, an established religious habitus shapes teachers' sensory acuity in instantly identifying and correcting students' errors in pronunciation and reading rules in class. Pedagogically, this spiritual routine fosters a high level of self-confidence, enabling teachers to no longer simply dictate material but to enliven the classroom through dynamic, contextual dialogue. As a result, this consistent practice successfully bridges teachers' personal piety into instructional skills that directly impact students' engagement in Quranic study.

Strengthening Collaborative Religious Learning Networks

The second finding shows that social capital contributes significantly to strengthening teachers' Qur'anic literacy competence through collaborative religious learning networks. Teachers actively involved in halaqah, Qur'anic study circles, teacher forums, and collaborative tajwid learning activities experienced more sustainable competence development. Social interaction became a medium for knowledge exchange, peer evaluation, motivation, and collective learning reinforcement. Observations in SD A and SD B revealed that teachers regularly participated in weekly Qur'anic discussions and collaborative recitation improvement sessions. These activities enabled teachers to share

learning experiences, improve tajwid accuracy, and strengthen confidence in teaching Qur'anic literacy.

One participant stated:

"Through halaqah and teacher discussions, we learn together, improve our recitation, and exchange strategies for teaching students more effectively."

The interview demonstrates that collaborative learning networks encourage continuous professional development and create a supportive environment for competence improvement. Teachers who possessed stronger social networks showed greater adaptability, confidence, and consistency in implementing Qur'anic literacy learning.

Table 2. Role of Collaborative Religious Learning Networks

Collaborative Activities	Contributions to Competence
Halaqah participation	Improved fluency and tajwid mastery
Teacher discussion forums	Expanded teaching strategies
Collaborative tajwid learning	Increased confidence in correcting students
Professional interaction	Strengthened continuous learning motivation

The findings indicate that social capital functions as a reinforcing mechanism that sustains teachers' Qur'anic literacy competence through collective learning experiences. Supporting documentation includes halaqah attendance records, collaborative learning schedules, meeting minutes, and records of Qur'anic study activities. The documentation serves as a crucial form of data triangulation to confirm the consistency between the subjective narratives conveyed in the interviews and the reality of administratively recorded practices. The existence of this track record not only validates the informants' claims about the effectiveness of the network but also provides empirical evidence that social capital in the school environment is an organized and sustainable practice. Thus, the integration of documentary data and field findings significantly strengthens the credibility of the analysis of how collaborative networks function as a primary catalyst in the development of Islamic Religious Education teachers' professional competencies.

Strengthening Institutional Support Systems

The third finding highlights the role of institutional support systems in strengthening teachers' Qur'anic literacy competence. Schools that implemented structured Qur'anic programs, regular mentoring, and collaborative religious activities created stronger environments for sustainable competence development. Institutional support became an important bridge connecting personal religious habits and collaborative learning practices. Field observations in SD B showed that the school routinely organized tajwid workshops, Qur'anic mentoring programs, collective recitation sessions, and internal religious development activities for teachers. These programs encouraged teachers to improve their competence continuously while building a stronger religious learning culture within the school environment.

A school principal explained:

"Teachers also need continuous Qur'anic guidance and development. Therefore, the school provides regular mentoring and collaborative religious learning programs."

This statement from the principal emphasized that teachers' Quranic literacy competency is not static, but rather a skill that requires ongoing maintenance through institutional intervention. Through regular mentoring programs and collaborative religious learning, schools function not only as workplaces but also transform into learning societies that support the spiritual and pedagogical growth of teacher professionalism. The presence of these institutional policies provides crucial social capital for teachers to continuously revitalize the quality of their reading and teaching methods to maintain standards of classroom learning.

Table 3. Institutional Support Systems for Qur'anic Literacy Competence

Institutional Programs	Contributions to Teacher Competence
Tajwid workshops	Strengthened technical recitation skills
Qur'anic mentoring	Improved learning consistency
Collective recitation programs	Increased engagement and motivation
Professional religious development	Supported sustainable competence improvement

The findings reveal that institutional support strengthens the sustainability of teachers' competence by integrating personal religious practices with collaborative learning systems. Documentation related to this finding includes mentoring schedules, workshop implementation reports, Qur'anic literacy program documents, and photographs of school religious activities. The documentation serves as a crucial form of data triangulation to confirm the consistency between the subjective narratives conveyed in the interviews and the reality of administratively recorded practices. The existence of this track record not only validates the informants' claims about the effectiveness of the network but also provides empirical evidence that social capital in the school environment is an organized and sustainable practice. Thus, the integration of documentary data and field findings significantly strengthens the credibility of the analysis of how collaborative networks function as a primary catalyst in the development of Islamic Religious Education teachers' professional competencies.

Framework of Teachers' Qur'anic Literacy Competence

Based on the findings, this study formulates a framework showing that teachers' Qur'anic literacy competence is constructed through the interaction of three interconnected dimensions:



Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of Teachers' Qur'anic Literacy Competence

The framework illustrates that teachers' Qur'anic literacy competence is constructed through the dynamic interaction of religious habitus, social capital, and institutional support. Religious habitus strengthens continuous engagement with the Qur'an through regular religious practices and personal learning discipline. Social capital reinforces competence through collaborative learning, halaqah participation, and professional interaction, while institutional support ensures competence sustainability through structured mentoring, school programs, and supportive learning environments. These interconnected dimensions collectively enhance teachers' fluency, confidence, pedagogical competence, and interpretative understanding in Qur'anic literacy instruction. The findings further indicate that institutional support systems strengthen competence development by integrating personal religious habits with collaborative professional interaction. Teachers involved in structured mentoring programs and collective Qur'anic activities demonstrate greater motivation and pedagogical confidence because learning occurs within organized and supportive systems. Institutional programs provide teachers with opportunities to receive guidance, feedback, and continuous reinforcement from school leaders and professional communities.

Discussion

Strengthening Habitual Qur'anic Learning Practices

The findings of this study demonstrate that religious habitus plays a fundamental role in strengthening teachers' Qur'anic literacy competence through continuous and repetitive religious learning practices. Teachers who consistently engage in daily Qur'anic recitation, tajwid repetition, memorization activities, and religious study sessions demonstrate stronger fluency, confidence, pedagogical flexibility, and interpretative ability in Qur'anic learning. This finding is closely related to Pierre Bourdieu's theory of habitus (Kusnawan & Saepulah, 2024 and Fithrah Syauqi Abdullah et al., 2025), which explained that repeated social and cultural practices gradually become internalized dispositions

shaping individuals' perceptions, actions, and ways of thinking. In the context of this study, continuous engagement with the Qur'an creates embodied religious dispositions that influence how teachers understand, practice, and teach Qur'anic literacy. Teachers who were raised in pesantren traditions or intensive religious learning environments possess stronger embodied cultural capital because Qur'anic practices have been internalized through years of repetitive exposure and disciplined learning experiences. Consequently, their competence appears more spontaneous, confident, and reflective during classroom instruction. This finding supports previous studies (Faelasup & Nurwati, 2025 and Hayi et al., 2025) emphasizing that intensive religious environments contribute significantly to the formation of stable religious dispositions and sustainable learning discipline among teachers.

Furthermore, the findings reveal that habitual religious practices function as a mechanism for sustaining teachers' professional identity in Islamic education. Teachers who consistently maintain Qur'anic learning routines demonstrate stronger motivation, learning commitment, and emotional attachment to their professional roles as religious educators. The internalization of Qur'anic values creates a pedagogical orientation that positions teaching not merely as professional responsibility but also as religious devotion and moral commitment. This explains why teachers with stronger religious habitus tend to demonstrate greater resilience, consistency, and adaptability in facing instructional challenges. Therefore, religious habitus can be understood as the foundational structure that continuously shapes teachers' Qur'anic literacy competence through the integration of cognitive, spiritual, and pedagogical dimensions.

Strengthening Collaborative Religious Learning Networks

The findings of this study reveal that social capital plays a crucial role in strengthening teachers' Qur'anic literacy competence through collaborative religious learning networks and continuous professional interaction. Teachers actively involved in halaqah, Qur'anic study circles, teacher discussion forums, collaborative tajwid learning, and religious mentoring communities demonstrate more sustainable competence development compared to teachers who rely solely on individual learning practices. This finding is closely related to Pierre Bourdieu's concept of social capital, which explains that social relationships and network participation function as valuable resources that provide individuals with access to knowledge, support, recognition, and opportunities for development. In the context of this study, social capital is reflected through teachers' involvement in collaborative religious communities where Qur'anic literacy practices are continuously strengthened through interaction and collective engagement (Sunhaji et al., 2025 and Zakiyah et al., 2025). Through regular interaction with colleagues and mentors, teachers develop a collective learning culture that encourages continuous improvement and reflective practice. This condition aligns with Wenger's Communities of Practice theory, which explains that professional competence develops through active

participation in social communities where individuals share experiences, negotiate meaning, and construct knowledge collaboratively. Competence is therefore not produced individually, but emerges through collective participation and continuous interaction within professional learning communities (A. Samad et al., 2023).

In a complex way, the teacher's function in this study shows the role of the teacher in creating an interactional and responsive atmosphere. Teachers improve their Qur'anic literacy competence not only by practicing individually but also by observing, discussing, and learning collectively within collaborative religious networks. Furthermore, social capital functions as a sustaining mechanism that maintains the continuity of teachers' professional development in Qur'anic literacy learning. Strong collaborative relationships create a supportive educational climate where teachers feel encouraged to improve continuously without experiencing professional isolation. Teachers who possess stronger social networks demonstrate higher resilience, learning motivation, and openness toward pedagogical innovation because competence development is reinforced collectively through mutual trust and shared religious values. Therefore, social capital can be understood as an essential relational foundation that strengthens teachers' Qur'anic literacy competence through collaborative interaction, collective learning experiences, and sustainable professional engagement within religious learning communities.

Strengthening Institutional Support Systems

Another important finding of this study is the significant role of institutional support systems in strengthening teachers' Qur'anic literacy competence. Schools that provide structured Qur'anic literacy programs, regular tajwid workshops, mentoring systems, collective recitation activities, and collaborative religious learning environments demonstrate stronger and more sustainable competence development among teachers. This finding is closely related to Pierre Bourdieu's concept of field, which explains that social practices are strongly influenced by the structural environment in which individuals operate. In the context of this study, schools function as educational fields that shape teachers' opportunities, learning practices, and professional orientations. Institutional culture determines whether Qur'anic literacy practices become sustainable professional habits or remain limited to formal instructional obligations (Rochmah & Marno, 2023 and Mayarisa, 2024). This condition aligns with organizational learning theory, which emphasizes that institutions play an essential role in facilitating continuous knowledge development, reflective learning, and professional improvement through structured learning systems. Competence therefore develops more effectively when institutions create learning environments that encourage collaboration, consistency, and continuous engagement (Asia, A., Idi, A. ., & Karoma, 2024; Koutroubas & Galanakis, 2023; Parua, 2023).

This finding was causally driven by the school's structural intervention, which consciously placed the religious literacy program as a top priority. When

the school integrated these spiritual values into the institution's vision, the policy successfully shifted teachers' perspectives from viewing Quranic learning as a burden on the formal curriculum to a deep collective identity. This paradigm shift then sparked a strong sense of belonging and professional responsibility within educators. Furthermore, the internal motivation that had been built was consistently reinforced through routine institutional facilitation, such as mentoring programs, workshops, and shared reflection spaces. The presence of these structured programs directly eroded the professional isolation often experienced by teachers and replaced it with a supportive collective learning space. As a result, the combination of strengthening organizational culture and ongoing facility support systematically built teachers' resilience and adaptability in facing various pedagogical challenges in the classroom. Ultimately, this causal chain explains why teachers' Quranic literacy competencies are no longer fluctuating, but instead develop in a stable, measurable, and sustainable manner, supported by a robust institutional ecosystem.

Research Contribution and Action Plan

Practically, this research provides a tangible contribution in the form of a multi-perspective conceptual framework that schools can apply to improve teachers' Quranic literacy competency through structured mentoring programs, halaqah communities, and sustainable institutional support systems. Its empirical contribution is demonstrated through field evidence that Quranic literacy competency is not merely an individual technical skill, but rather a socially constructed skill through the habituation of daily worship and collaborative networks between teachers. Through this multidimensional strategy, Islamic educational institutions obtain applicable guidance in designing more contextual and reflective teacher professional development programs. This investigation empirically successfully maps how the dynamic interaction between internal religious dispositions and external social relations works in the elementary school environment. Ultimately, the entire proposed action plan provides an operational basis for policymakers to create a madrasah or school ecosystem that is adaptive to strengthening character based on religious literacy.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Qur'anic literacy competence among Islamic Religious Education teachers is a multidimensional competence formed through the interaction between religious habitus, social capital, and institutional support. The most important finding of this research is that teachers' Qur'anic literacy competence is not merely developed through technical training, but is strengthened through continuous religious practices, collaborative learning networks, and supportive educational environments. Teachers who possess strong religious habits and active social learning relationships demonstrate higher fluency, confidence, pedagogical flexibility, and interpretative ability in Qur'anic learning. Practically, the implication of this study that the findings provide a conceptual framework for strengthening teachers' Qur'anic literacy

competence through habitual religious learning practices, collaborative professional communities, and institutional mentoring programs. The strength of this study lies in its qualitative depth and integrative analysis of sociocultural factors influencing teacher competence, while its limitation is the relatively limited research scope within several elementary schools in DI Yogyakarta, which may not fully represent broader educational contexts. Therefore, future research is recommended to involve wider geographical coverage, longitudinal approaches, and mixed-method designs to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the development of Qur'anic literacy competence across diverse educational settings.

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