



The Impact of Teacher Competence on Inclusive Education: Moderating Role of Islamic Religious Education Understanding

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Abstract: Inclusive education ensures that children with special needs can fully participate in the learning process alongside their peers, thereby promoting educational equity and the fulfillment of their rights. This study investigates the impact of teacher competence on the implementation of inclusive education, with a specific emphasis on the moderating role of teachers' understanding of Islamic Religious Education. Employing a mixed-methods approach, the study integrates quantitative and qualitative strategies to obtain robust and comprehensive insights. Data were collected through the distribution of structured questionnaires, in-depth interviews, and direct field observations. The analysis was conducted using SPSS to ensure statistical rigor and precision. The results reveal that teacher competence significantly enhances the effectiveness of inclusive education practices. Furthermore, teachers' understanding of Islamic Religious Education positively moderates the relationship between teacher competence and inclusive education outcomes, thereby amplifying the role of teacher competence in fostering successful inclusive learning environments. These findings underscore the importance of integrating both professional competence and religious pedagogical understanding in advancing inclusive educational frameworks.

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Abstrak: Pendidikan inklusif menjamin partisipasi penuh anak-anak berkebutuhan khusus dalam proses pembelajaran bersama teman sebayanya, sehingga mendorong terciptanya keadilan pendidikan dan pemenuhan hak-hak mereka. Penelitian ini mengkaji pengaruh kompetensi guru terhadap implementasi pendidikan inklusif, dengan penekanan khusus pada peran moderasi pemahaman guru terhadap Pendidikan Agama Islam. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan metode campuran, penelitian ini mengintegrasikan strategi kuantitatif dan kualitatif secara simultan guna memperoleh temuan yang lebih mendalam dan komprehensif. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui penyebaran kuesioner terstruktur, wawancara mendalam, serta observasi langsung di lapangan. Analisis data menggunakan berbantuan perangkat lunak SPSS guna memastikan ketelitian dan akurasi statistik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kompetensi guru berkontribusi secara signifikan terhadap efektivitas pelaksanaan pendidikan inklusif. Selain itu, pemahaman guru terhadap

Pendidikan Agama Islam berperan sebagai variabel moderator yang memperkuat hubungan antara kompetensi guru dan hasil pendidikan inklusif, sehingga memperbesar kontribusi kompetensi guru dalam menciptakan lingkungan belajar yang inklusif dan berhasil. Temuan ini menegaskan pentingnya integrasi antara kompetensi profesional dan pemahaman pedagogis keagamaan dalam pengembangan kerangka pendidikan inklusif.

Keywords: Teacher Competence, Inclusive Education, Islamic Religious Education

INTRODUCTION

Education plays a very vital role in the development of a country (Warmansyah & Nirwana, 2023; Yilmaz, 2016; Yuningsih et al., 2024). Thus, increasing education is needed both in quality and quantity. The education required by humans must be continuously applied throughout life. Without education, humans cannot live developing, advanced, prosperous and happy (Alayda et al., 2022; Ariyanti, 2007; Rokhman et al., 2014; Sukron Nur Fauzi et al., 2023; Warmansyah et al., 2021). The nine-year education program reflects the government's efforts to enhance the quality of education. Furthermore, continuous attention should also be given to early childhood education.

Early Childhood Education (ECE) encompasses the period before formal schooling, concentrating on nurturing the development and growth of children between the ages of 0-6, preparing them for subsequent educational stages, which can be pursued through formal, non-formal, or informal education systems (Innes et al., 2023; Salum et al., 2024; Sari et al., 2023). This phase of education plays a critical role in the early stages of children's overall development, influencing their physical, emotional, cognitive, and social progress, thereby creating a solid and holistic foundation for their future development (Azzahra et al., 2021; Bullough Jr, 2016; Febriyani & Warmansyah, 2021).

Education should not be emphasized solely for children with high intelligence, but also for those who are considered different from others

(Hendriani et al., 2022; Jannah et al., 2023; Syamsy & Zamroni, 2023). If the Indonesian education system does not adequately cater to the needs of children with special needs, these children will persist in facing difficulties within their environment, especially when it comes to obtaining the specialized attention and educational support they need. Article 31, Paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution emphasizes that every Indonesian citizen, including those with disabilities or limitations, is entitled to receive an education (Fikriyah, 2018).

Islamic Religious Education is a purposeful and systematic endeavor aimed at equipping students to believe in, comprehend, experience, and apply Islamic principles through structured guidance, instruction, and training (Komariah & Nihayah, 2023). Islamic education is not only intended for physically healthy children, but also for children with different physical or mental conditions (Huda et al., 2022). Students are considered as God's creations who have nature, both as individuals and in society (Demirel Ucan & Wright, 2019; Lubis et al., 2022). Each student has unique interests, skills, hobbies, experiences and learning styles.

Inclusive education refers to an educational system designed to offer opportunities for students with disabilities and special talents to learn alongside their peers in a shared educational setting (Bailey et al., 2015; Hidayati & Warmansyah, 2021). It ensures that every child, regardless of their condition, has the right to access education (Wray et al., 2022). According to Salas-Pilco

et al., (2022), inclusive education is a service model that mandates children with special needs to receive education in nearby schools, integrated into regular classrooms with other students. This approach allows children with special needs to learn together with typically developing children, fostering the development of their full potential. The goal of this educational model is to offer equal opportunities for all children (Donath et al., 2023). Schools with an inclusive focus serve as a powerful means to combat discrimination, foster a supportive society, promote inclusivity, and advance the principle of "education for all" (Woodcock et al., 2022).

Children with special needs (ABK) are those who exhibit unique characteristics that distinguish them from other children, without necessarily having mental, emotional, or physical disabilities (Rofiah, 2020). Due to their distinct traits and challenges, these children require specialized educational services that cater to their individual abilities and potential (Jelas & Mohd Ali, 2014). In accordance with Government Regulation No. 17 of 2010, students categorized as having disabilities include individuals with visual, auditory, and speech impairments; intellectual disabilities; physical limitations such as quadriplegia; learning disorders including dyslexia and slow learning abilities; autism spectrum disorders; motor impairments; substance abuse history; and other related conditions (Fikriyah, 2018).

Children are a precious blessing, yet some parents are fortunate enough to have children who are distinct, both physically and mentally, from their peers (Papadopoulos, 2021). In Islam, all individuals are regarded equally in the sight of Allah, as a person's worth is not based on their outward appearance, physical traits, intellect, wealth, or social standing, but rather on their faith and devotion. When it comes to children with special needs, despite their differences from other children due to developmental challenges, they are still

honored as creations of God and are entitled to receive care and support, including spiritual guidance, to attain inner peace, just like any other individual. (Anwar et al., 2024).

The Qur'an, serving as the primary guide for Muslims, offers unwavering direction for all aspects of human life. Thus, it is the duty of Muslims, particularly those with children who have special needs, to delve into and understand how Islam places significant importance on addressing the needs of these children. In Islam, children with special needs (ABK) are an important focus in the realm of education, as the Qur'an clearly states that education should be accessible to every child, irrespective of their differences. Allah SWT says in Surah Abasa verses 1-10 which means:

"(1) He (Muhammad) turned sour and turned away, (2) because a blind man had come to him, (3) Do you know perhaps he wanted to cleanse himself (from sin) (4) Or he wanted to get a teaching, then the teaching gave benefit to him? (5) As for the person who feels that he is sufficient (6) then you serve him (7) even though there is no reproach upon you if he does not purify himself (believe) (8) And as for the person who comes to you hastily (to) receive instruction (9) While he is afraid of (Allah), (10) So you ignore him. (QS. Abasa: 1-10)".

Ibnu Katsir narrates that the mufassir explained an incident when the Prophet Muhammad was in conversation with the leaders of Quraish. During this dialogue, a blind man approached and requested the Prophet to recite some verses of the Qur'an. However, the Prophet turned away and continued his conversation with the Quraish officials. It was from this moment that Allah admonished the Prophet, urging him not to prioritize individuals, but to treat everyone with equality. The role of teachers in educating children with special needs is crucial and indispensable. Teaching is a challenging profession, especially when it involves children with special needs (Giangreco, 2021).

Ability is a synonym for competence (Arfandi & Samsudin, 2021). A teacher is expected to have pedagogical, personal, social, and professional competencies. Teachers who work with children with special needs must possess skills that exceed those required of ordinary teachers (Rizvi Jafree et al., 2023).

Educators who teach children with special needs (ABK) must be capable of recognizing, comprehending, and addressing the distinct characteristics and challenges each student presents (Ulya & Hendriani, 2023). To carry out this responsibility successfully, they must cultivate strong communication abilities, patience, flexibility, and innovative problem-solving skills. In this context, soft skills play a particularly vital role. These include key personal qualities such as empathy, emotional strength, the ability to interact effectively with others, and behavioral adaptability (Fitra et al., 2023). Such attributes are essential for fostering strong relationships and creating inclusive, nurturing classroom environments. On the other hand, hard skills encompass technical competencies, specialized education, or professional certifications that support the teacher's instructional proficiency.

A teacher's understanding of Islamic Religious Education significantly impacts their competence in addressing the needs of children with special needs (Putra et al., 2021). In Islamic education, the teacher's role is highly prominent in delivering learning experiences (Rachman, 2020). According to Rukmana & Suyadi, (2020) teachers are considered professional educators who, by choice, take on a portion of the educational responsibilities traditionally borne by parents. A strong grasp of Islamic Religious Education can therefore enhance teacher competence and contribute positively to the implementation of inclusive education. Various factors impact the success of inclusive education for children with special needs, including teacher training, attitudes towards inclusion, communication and interaction between teachers and students,

parental support, and the availability of adequate infrastructure (Baş, 2022).

Teacher competency is essential for establishing quality educational systems and practices, encompassing both general and religious knowledge. The suitability of teachers in fulfilling their roles as learning agents must meet established competency standards, particularly for teachers working with children with special needs (Syaipudin & Luthfi, 2024). The role of Islamic Religious Education in Raudhatul Athfal is to provide early childhood education that lays the foundation of Islamic teachings in daily life, fostering the development of attitudes, knowledge, and skills so that children can understand and practice Islam through habituation, instruction, and exemplary behavior (Mastiyah, 2014; Warosari et al., 2024).

Based on preliminary observations conducted by the researchers in several Raudhatul Athfal institutions in Batam City, it was found that many teachers are still not competent in addressing the needs of children with special needs. There are still assistant teachers who lack an understanding of how to implement inclusive learning for students with disabilities. Furthermore, although continuous training has been provided, challenges remain regarding teachers' attitudes toward both children with disabilities and their peers without disabilities, as well as in how teachers promote the importance of education for children with special needs to the broader community. Experienced, skilled, and well-trained teachers with the appropriate personal attributes are crucial for handling cases involving children with special needs. Therefore, the researcher formulates the following conceptual framework to describe the research more clearly:

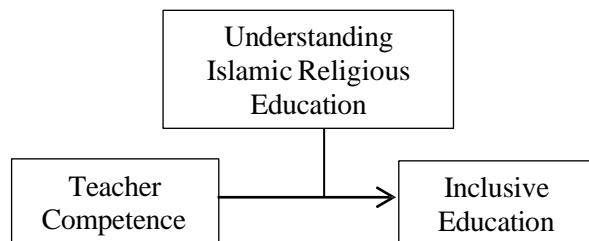


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

The hypothesis in this research is to see whether teacher competence has an effect on inclusive education and whether an understanding of the Islamic religion will moderate the relationship between teacher competence and inclusive education.

METHOD

This study adopted a mixed-methods approach by integrating quantitative and qualitative methodologies within a single research framework. As explained by Sugiyono (2019), the mixed-method strategy merges these two methods to produce data that are richer, more accurate, dependable, and objectively grounded. For this research, the case study method was selected, emphasizing the effort to build a profound comprehension through detailed exploration and elaboration of the particular case under study.

The research population and sample comprised a total of 110 teachers, with the following specific breakdown:

Table 1. Research Sample

RA / Subdistrict	School Data	Total
Sagulung	12	24
Batu Aji	10	20
Sekupang	6	12
Sei Beduk	8	16
Lubuk Baja	2	4
Batam Kota	10	20
Bengkong	2	4
Batu Ampar	2	4
Nongsa	3	6
Total	55	110

The techniques employed for data collection in this study encompassed three primary methods: questionnaires, interviews, and literature review. Kusumah defines a questionnaire as a structured compilation of written questions presented to research subjects in order to gather the information necessary for the study.

The variables examined in this research are outlined as follows: (1) Dependent Variable – Inclusive Education, which, according to (Thurstone & Chave, 1929), encompasses cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains; (2) Independent Variable – Teacher Competence, referring to the teacher’s ability to organize and manage the educational process for students with special needs, encompassing elements such as: (a) knowledge, (b) comprehension, (c) technical skills, (d) values, (e) attitudes, and (f) interests (Narwoko & Suyanto, 2010);

(3) Moderator Variable - RA Teachers' Understanding of Islamic Religious Education. As Horton & Hunt (1984) explain, two primary factors Impact an individual's understanding of Islamic religious education within contemporary society: (a) structural factors, including the availability and accessibility of higher-level positions such as social status or professional roles like principals and teachers; and (b) individual factors, which pertain to personal attributes such as educational attainment, personal demeanor, and professional competencies that determine success in attaining these roles.

The techniques for processing and analyzing the data collected involve strategies tailored to the nature of the data types. Considering the study integrates both quantitative and qualitative approaches, data analysis was conducted using a sequential explanatory design. Here, the quantitative analysis served as the initial phase, followed by qualitative analysis intended to provide a more detailed and contextualized interpretation of the quantitative findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study explores the impact of teacher competence on the effectiveness of inclusive education, specifically focusing on how different levels of competence contribute to the success of inclusive practices in Raudhatul Athfal (RA) institutions across Batam City. Additionally, the research examines how the teachers' understanding of Islamic Religious Education moderates the relationship between their competence and the implementation of inclusive education, suggesting that this understanding may either enhance or modify the effect of teacher competence on inclusivity. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS 25, employing correlation analysis, simple linear regression, and moderated regression analysis (MRA) to identify and analyze key patterns and relationships central to the study's objectives.

Correlation Coefficient

In accordance with the table 2, the correlation between the Teacher Competence (X) and Inclusive Education (Y) variables is 0.559. In accordance with theory, it can be said that the correlation coefficient is at a medium level, namely below 0.60, while the asterisk in the table explains that the higher the Teacher Competence (X), the better the Inclusive Education (Y). Apart from that, it is proven by the Sig value. (2-tailed) < 0.05 , then there is a correlation between variables. So, $0.000 < 0.05$ means Teacher Competence (X) has a high correlation or relationship with Inclusive Education (Y).

Moderated Regression Analysis

The Impact of Teacher Competence on Inclusive Education

The analysis presented in Table 3 reveals the regression equation: $Y = 23.005 + 0.506X_1$. The first hypothesis of this research suggests that teacher competence has a positive and significant effect on inclusive education. The regression coefficient for

teacher competence is 0.506, supported by a significance value of 0.000, which is below the 0.05 threshold. This indicates that teacher competence significantly contributes to the effectiveness of inclusive education practices.

The Impact of Teacher Competence on Inclusive Education with Understanding of Islamic Religious Education as a Moderator Variable

Based on the multiple regression analysis results presented in Table 4, the regression equation derived is: $Y = 26.975 + 0.402X_1 + 0.524X_M + 0.006(X_1)(X_M)$. This equation suggests that the value of Inclusive Education is 26.975, indicating a positive Impact of teachers' understanding of Islamic Religious Education on the relationship between Teacher Competence and Inclusive Education. The moderating variable, Understanding of Islamic Religious Education, yields a t-value of 0.564 and a significance level of 0.000, which is below the threshold of 0.05. This confirms that the moderating variable enhances (moderates) the effect of Teacher Competence on Inclusive Education.

From these results, the following conclusions can be drawn:

The Impact of Teacher Competence on Inclusive Education Practices

A significant influence of teacher competence on inclusive education is observed, indicating that as the competence of RA teachers in Batam City increases, the quality of inclusive education in RA institutions similarly improves. This is corroborated by the significance value (Sig. (2-tailed)) falling below 0.05, confirming a statistically significant correlation between the variables. Specifically, the result of $0.000 < 0.05$ further substantiates this association.

The Role of Understanding Islamic Religious Education as a Moderator

There is a positive Impact of teachers' Social Mobility Skills on the relationship

between Teacher Competence and Inclusive Education. The moderating variable, Understanding Islamic Religious Education, strengthens (moderates) the effect of Teacher Competence on Inclusive Education. This is demonstrated by the significance value of 0.000, which indicates that $0.000 < 0.05$, and the R² value in the first regression is 0.313, or 31.3%. After the second regression, the R² value increases to 0.555, or 55.5%, showing a substantial improvement in the model's explanatory power.

Coefficient of Determination

Referring to Table 5, the initial regression analysis reveals an R² value of 0.313, or 31.3%. This implies that Teacher Competence alone accounts for 31.3% of the variance in Inclusive Education, whereas the other 68.7% can be explained by variables beyond the scope of this model.

Upon adding the moderating variable, Understanding of Islamic Religious Education,

the results in Table 6 indicate a significant increase in the R² value, rising to 0.555, or 55.5%. The integration of Islamic Religious Education insight as a moderating construct substantially intensifies the correlation between teacher competence and the execution of inclusive education.

The R² value of 0.555 indicates that 55.5% of the variability in Inclusive Education is accounted for by Teacher Competence and Understanding of Islamic Religious Education, while the remaining 44.5% is influenced by other factors not explored in this study.

Table 2. Correlation Coefficient

	Inclusive Education	Teacher Competence
Inclusive Education		
Pearson Correlation	1.000	.559**
Sig. (2-tailed)	—	.000
N	110	110
Teacher Competence		
Pearson Correlation	.559**	1.000
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	—
N	110	110

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Results from SPSS 25 data processing.

Table 3. Simple Linear Regression Test

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	23.005	3.313		6.943	.000
Teacher Competence	.506	.072	.559	7.013	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Inclusive Education

Results from SPSS 25 data processing.

Table 4. Multiple Linear Regression Test with MRA

Coefficients ^a					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1(Constant)	26.975	22.937		.176	.000
Teacher Competence	.402	.554	.445	.726	.000
Understanding Islamic Religious Education	.524	.463	.555	.132	.000
Moderator	.006	.011	.581	.564	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Inclusive Education

Results from SPSS 25 data processing.

Table 5. Coefficient of Determination of Simple Regression

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.559a	.313	.307	4.396

a. Predictors: (Constant), Teacher Competence

Source: Results from SPSS 25 data processing.

Table 6. Coefficient of Determination of MRA Regression

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.745a	.555	.542	3.573

a. Predictors: (Constant), Moderate, Social Mobility, Teacher Competence

Results from SPSS 25 data processing.

The Impact of Teacher Competence on Inclusive Education among RA teachers in Batam City

The expansion of inclusive education within Raudhatul Athfal (RA) institutions in Batam City is progressing at a rapid pace. Research by Warosari et al (2024), reveals that the implementation of inclusive education in RA schools presents both distinct challenges and notable successes. Key findings from the study include: the necessity for curriculum adaptations, the critical role of parental involvement in fostering the development of children with special needs, the creation of an inclusive learning environment, and the importance of specialized teacher training, including both foundational and advanced methods for managing children with special needs. Notably, the study emphasizes that teachers' competencies in addressing the needs

of children with special needs must surpass those of general educators in RA settings than competent teachers in general at RA.

As the interviews conducted by researchers with several informants also explained that a competent teacher is a teacher who plays an active role in learning activities, both in the classroom and outside the child's education. Teachers should be able to develop professional personalities on an ongoing basis, so that teachers are able and ready to play a professional role in the school environment and society (Hendriani et al., 2022).

Teacher competency in inclusive education refers to the skills and knowledge required to support and facilitate the learning process of children with special needs (Mosbiran et al., 2021). This competency includes four main dimensions: pedagogical, personality, social, and professional. Pedagogical competence involves

understanding the diverse characteristics of children with special needs—physically, morally, socio-culturally, emotionally, and intellectually. Personality competence emphasizes the teacher’s integrity, moral character, and ability to treat students with empathy and respect. Social competence requires teachers to act inclusively and objectively, avoiding discrimination based on gender, religion, ethnicity, physical condition, family background, or socio-economic status. Meanwhile, professional competence demands the ability to develop creative and innovative learning materials, engage in continuous professional development through reflective practices, and utilize information and communication technology to enhance the learning experience of children with special needs.

In addition to managing the learning process, teachers are also responsible for providing guidance and support to these students. This aspect of inclusive education is supported by Government Regulation No. 28 of 1990, which mandates the implementation of guidance and counseling services at the elementary level to be carried out by designated supervisors (Nurfaidah et al., 2024). The PP is an elaboration of Law Number 26 of 1989 concerning the National Education System (Fikriyah, 2018). The PP explicitly states that there are guidance and counseling services which are part of the implementation of education in elementary schools and these services are provided by competent teaching staff.

Wilson et al. (2007), identify three key competencies that educators in special needs education must have: the capacity to foster a supportive learning environment, the skill to design and implement assessments that are in line with the curriculum, and the ability to develop effective educational programs. Additionally, specific competencies include the creation of specialized teaching materials, providing focused support and services,

offering ongoing assistance to children with special needs, and engaging in continuous professional development through training opportunities (Gargiulo & Metcalf, 2011).

In the realm of inclusive education, it is essential for educators to possess a thorough understanding of the concept, types, characteristics, and causes of special needs, along with effective strategies to address the unique requirements of these students within the school setting. Children with Special Needs (ABK) are those who, due to their physical, emotional, mental, social conditions, or extraordinary abilities and talents, require specialized support in their educational journey. It is the duty of RA teachers to identify ABK during the initial registration process of new students (Yunitasari et al., 2023).

The Impact of Teacher Competence on Inclusive Education in RA Institutions: Examining the Role of Islamic Religious Education Understanding as a Moderating Factor

Inclusive education is an educational approach that addresses the varied learning needs of all children, irrespective of their physical, intellectual, emotional, or social conditions, within a cohesive learning environment (Hidayati & Warmansyah, 2021; Rukmana & Suyadi, 2020). In the Indonesian context, this model is especially crucial in Islamic-based early childhood education institutions, such as Raudhatul Athfal (RA), where the equitable fulfillment of every child's educational rights is prioritized. As mandated by the Minister of Education and Culture Regulation No. 70 of 2009, schools are required to integrate students with special needs into mainstream classrooms. This obligation calls for teachers to possess a broad range of competencies—pedagogical, professional, personal, and social—that are in harmony with inclusive teaching methodologies (Fikriyah, 2018).

Interviews conducted across various RA institutions reveal a notable enhancement in teacher competence following participation in professional development initiatives related to inclusive education, instructional differentiation, and the identification of special educational needs. Teachers in Batam have demonstrated a proactive stance in fostering an inclusive culture by enriching their pedagogical knowledge and refining their approaches to special education. Despite these efforts, observational data indicate that some educators continue to employ undifferentiated teaching methods, inadvertently overlooking the specific learning requirements of students with special needs (Baş, 2022). In some instances, these children are perceived as merely behaviorally distinct, leading to a superficial form of inclusion characterized by tolerance rather than meaningful pedagogical adaptation.

The success of inclusive education is intrinsically linked not only to the technical competence of educators but also to their personal disposition and interpersonal sensitivity (Woodcock et al., 2022). Teachers who demonstrate emotional resilience and a compassionate understanding of student diversity are generally more effective in managing inclusive classrooms (Dwimarta, 2015). Hence, developing both the structural capabilities and socio-emotional skills of educators—through targeted training, enhanced academic qualifications, and accumulated teaching experience is crucial.

Orientation and mobility instruction emerges as a strategic intervention to assist learners, particularly those with visual impairments, in becoming acclimated to their educational environment. The efficacy of such strategies hinges on the teacher's imaginative capacity to create an engaging and accessible learning atmosphere. This perspective resonates with the learning theory proposed by Merriam and Caffarella's theory (2007) which posits that education is a deliberate process of

behavioral transformation, requiring conscious participation from both instructors and learners. Accordingly, early childhood educators are tasked with the complex responsibility of designing learning strategies that are both inclusive and sensitive to the unique profiles of all children in their classrooms.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that Teacher Competence exerts a significant and positive Impact on the implementation of Inclusive Education in RA institutions across Batam City. The results of the correlation analysis demonstrate a strong relationship, with a significance value of 0.000, indicating that higher levels of teacher competence are closely associated with more effective inclusive education practices.

Furthermore, the study reveals that Understanding of Islamic Religious Education acts as a strengthening factor in the relationship between Teacher Competence and Inclusive Education. This is evidenced by the increase in the coefficient of determination (R^2), which rose from 31.3% in the initial regression to 55.5% after the moderating variable was incorporated. This enhancement suggests that a deeper understanding of Islamic Religious Education among teachers significantly contributes to the advancement of inclusive learning environments, thereby amplifying the positive impact of teacher competence.

Overall, these findings underscore the importance of enhancing both teacher competence and religious understanding to promote inclusive educational practices, ensuring that every child receives equitable, supportive, and effective learning opportunities.

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