

## THE COMPETENCE OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION TEACHERS IN REALISING INCLUSIVE ISLAMIC EDUCATION BASED ON GENDER EQUALITY

Rahmadani Akbar<sup>1a</sup>, Dwi Ratnasari<sup>2b\*</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup> Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

<sup>a</sup>E-mail: [24204011004@student.uin-suka.ac.id](mailto:24204011004@student.uin-suka.ac.id)

<sup>b</sup>E-mail: [dwi.ratnasari@uin-suka.ac.id](mailto:dwi.ratnasari@uin-suka.ac.id)

(\*) Corresponding Author

[dwi.ratnasari@uin-suka.ac.id](mailto:dwi.ratnasari@uin-suka.ac.id)

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### ABSTRACT

Gender inequality issues still color Islamic education practices, especially through curricula, teaching materials, and learning interaction patterns that are not yet fully gender-sensitive. In fact, the principles of justice and equality are fundamental values in Islamic teachings. This study aims to analyze the competence of Islamic Education teachers in realizing inclusive Islamic education based on gender equality. The study uses a qualitative approach with a literature review method of classical and contemporary Islamic literature, teacher competency theory, and studies on inclusive education and gender. The results of the study show that the implementation of gender-equitable Islamic education requires the strengthening of five core competencies of PAI teachers, namely pedagogical, professional, social, personal, and transformational competencies. Transformational competence is an important element that expands the role of teachers from mere educators to agents of social change in deconstructing patriarchal biased educational practices. The theoretical contribution of this research lies in the formulation of a conceptual framework of PAI teacher competencies from an inclusive-gender perspective that integrates progressive Islamic values with teacher competency theory. These findings enrich the discourse on contemporary Islamic education and serve as a conceptual reference for the development of more equitable and gender-responsive Islamic education policies and practices.

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### INTRODUCTION

The issue of gender equality in Islamic education is gaining momentum in line with global social dynamics that demand justice and inclusiveness in various sectors of life. In the context of Islamic education, character building of students is not only related to strengthening aspects of worship and morals, but also includes understanding the social rights inherent to every individual, including the right to equal treatment between men and women (Syafe'i & Mashvufah, 2020; Wulandari, 2023). This awareness is in line with the global agenda of the Sustainable Development

Goals (SDGs), which places gender equality as one of the main goals of sustainable development, including ensuring fair access to and opportunities for education without gender-based discrimination (Data UNICEF).

The urgency of gender equality-based Islamic education has also been emphasized by a number of contemporary Islamic thinkers, such as Asghar Ali Engineer and Husein Muhammad, who stress that Islam fundamentally upholds the principle of equality between men and women in various aspects of life, including the right to education (Fahrub dkk., 2023; Muhammad Adress Prawira Negara & Juliani, 2022). From this perspective, inclusive Islamic education is not only oriented towards gender equality, but also ensures that every individual has equal opportunities to develop their intellectual and social potential without gender bias (Nawang Sari dkk., 2020).

In Islamic education, the realization of gender equality values is largely determined by the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers. PAI teachers have a strategic position as key actors in transforming Islamic teachings to students, including values of justice and gender equality. Teachers not only serve as conveyors of teaching materials, but also as mentors and role models in shaping students' perspectives, attitudes, and character towards social realities (Akbar & Saidah, 2025). Therefore, the effectiveness of inclusive Islamic education based on gender equality greatly depends on the competence of PAI teachers.

The competencies of PAI teachers cover various aspects, such as pedagogical, professional, personal, and social competencies. In facing contemporary issues such as gender equality, PAI teachers are also required to have transformative competencies, namely the ability to understand social realities, respond to the challenges of the times, and integrate social justice values into the learning process. These competencies are important for creating a learning environment that encourages critical awareness, inclusiveness, and equal relationships among students.

The paradigm of inclusive Islamic education is an important foundation for these efforts. Inclusive Islamic education emphasizes the principles of justice, equality, and respect for diversity, whether in terms of gender, social background, ability, or culture (Futaqi, 2022). This principle has strong legitimacy in Islamic teachings through the concepts of *rahmatan lil 'alamin* and the value of justice (*'adl*). Inclusive Islamic education not only guarantees equal access to education for men and women, but also rejects all forms of discrimination and gender bias in the learning process, teaching materials, and social interactions in the educational environment (Nasrul Latifi & Elly Triantini, 2024).

The understanding of gender equality in Islamic education is not actually contrary to Islamic teachings, but rather in line with the spirit of justice contained in the Qur'an and hadith. Islamic history also records the significant roles of female figures such as Khadijah Ra. and Aisha Ra. in the development of science and education. However, in contemporary educational practices, there are still challenges in the form of a narrow textual understanding of religious teachings, which has implications for the emergence of gender bias and inequality in the world of education. Education that is not sensitive to gender issues has the potential to perpetuate patriarchal culture and limit the potential of students based on gender.

Previous studies have examined the issue of gender equality in Islamic education from various perspectives. Karim and Rochmawati emphasize the implementation of Islamic religious education that does not discriminate between students based on gender (Karim & Rochmahwati, 2021). Nasrul Latifi and Elly Triantini examine gender school practices in higher education (Nasrul Latifi & Elly Triantini, 2024). Meanwhile, Syafe'i and Mashvufah provide a conceptual foundation for gender in the perspective of Islamic education (Syafe'i & Mashvufah, 2020). Another study by Purnomo and Solikhah highlights the importance of Islamic inclusivity as the foundation for developing inclusive Islamic education (Purnomo & Solikhah, 2021).

However, these studies still focus more on conceptual aspects, policies, or institutional practices of Islamic education. Studies that specifically focus on the competence of Islamic Religious Education teachers as the main focus in implementing inclusive Islamic education based on gender equality are still relatively limited. In fact, Islamic Religious Education teachers are key actors who determine how gender equality values are interpreted, taught, and internalized in the learning process.

Based on these research gaps, this study aims to examine and analyze the competence of Islamic Education teachers in implementing inclusive Islamic education based on gender equality through a literature review approach.

This study is expected to provide theoretical contributions by presenting a synthesis between progressive Islamic thought and teacher competency theory, as well as practical contributions as a conceptual reference for the development of Islamic education that is more equitable, inclusive, and responsive to gender equality issues.

## METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with library research. This study is not field research, but focuses on critical review and analysis of literature sources relevant to the competencies of Islamic Education teachers, inclusive Islamic education, and gender equality in Islamic education (Hamzah, 2022).

The research design is descriptive-analytical, which describes the concepts, theories, and thoughts of experts related to the focus of the study, then analyzes and systematically relates them to answer the research questions and objectives. Through this approach, the research is directed at building a comprehensive theoretical argument regarding the role and competence of PAI teachers in realizing inclusive Islamic education based on gender equality.

The data sources in this study consist of scientific books, relevant national and international journal articles (particularly those published in the last five years), and other academic documents that support the study. Data collection was conducted through a literature review, by searching for sources digitally and manually, as well as documentary analysis to analyze the content of academic texts used as data sources (Sugiyono, 2021).

Data analysis was conducted using content analysis techniques, with the following steps: (1) selection of literature relevant to the research focus, (2) classification of data based on themes and main concepts, (3) critical analysis of the suitability and relevance of theories, and (4) preparation of a conceptual synthesis to answer the research questions. Through these stages, the research produced a systematic theoretical understanding of PAI teachers' competence in integrating gender equality values in inclusive Islamic education (Hamzah, 2022).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### The Concept of Inclusive Islamic Education Based on Gender Equality

Inclusive Islamic education based on gender equality is an educational paradigm oriented towards the principles of substantive justice, equal rights, and respect for human dignity without gender discrimination (Januar & Rahmi, 2024; Ratnasari, 2019). This concept stems from the view that education not only serves as a means of transmitting religious knowledge, but also as a space for shaping students' social awareness, ethics, and humanity. Within this framework, gender equality is understood not as an effort to standardize the roles of men and women, but as a guarantee that every individual has the opportunity to learn, develop, and participate fairly in the educational process (Kuchynka dkk., 2022).

Normatively, inclusive Islamic education based on gender equality has a strong foundation in the Qur'an and hadith (Hairiyah dkk., 2024). The Qur'an affirms that men and women have equal standing in human dignity and spiritual responsibility. QS. al-Hujurat: 13 affirms that the creation of humans in different genders is for the purpose of getting to know one another (*li ta'ārafū*), not for dominating one another. This principle shows that Islam rejects gender hierarchy in intellectual, moral, and spiritual capacities (Muhammad, 2021b). Thus, any educational practice that perpetuates gender discrimination is contrary to the basic values of Islam itself.

The conceptual strengthening of gender-based inclusive Islamic education is also supported by the thinking of progressive Islamic figures. Asghar Ali Engineer asserts that gender inequality in Muslim societies is caused more by patriarchal social constructs and biased textual interpretations of Islamic sources than by authentic Islamic teachings (Muhammad Adress Prawira Negara & Juliani, 2022). Therefore, she encourages the reinterpretation of religious texts by placing the value of justice as the main principle. This view is in line with Amina Wadud, who emphasizes that the Qur'an does not distinguish between human rights and obligations based on gender, but rather on piety and moral qualities (Dzukroni & Isnaini, 2023). These ideas provide a theoretical basis for the development of gender-equitable Islamic education.

In the context of education, gender equality-based inclusivity requires changes in the curriculum, pedagogy, and school culture. The PAI curriculum needs to be designed in a gender-sensitive manner, avoiding social role

dichotomies between men and women, and opening space for critical dialogue on religious texts through a contextual approach and maqashid al-syari'ah (Hasbiyallah dkk., 2024). The principles of rahmatan lil 'alamin and justice ('adl) serve as the normative foundation for developing an Islamic education system that is humanistic and responsive to an ever-evolving social reality.

Husein Muhammad emphasized that all forms of discrimination, including gender-based discrimination in education, are contrary to the main objectives of Islamic law, particularly in protecting human reason, soul, and honor (Muhammad, 2021a). Therefore, inclusive Islamic education based on gender equality is not a concept that contradicts Islamic values, but rather an actualization of the spirit of Islamic justice in the contemporary social context.

Despite having a strong normative and theoretical foundation, the implementation of inclusive Islamic education based on gender equality still faces various challenges. Deep-rooted patriarchal culture, low gender literacy among educators, and limited gender-sensitive teaching resources are the main obstacles (Rohmaniyah, 2020). In addition, Islamic education curricula still tend to be normative and do not provide sufficient space for contemporary social issues, including gender inequality. This situation highlights the gap between the normative ideals of Islamic teachings and educational practices in the field.

Thus, inclusive Islamic education based on gender equality needs to be understood as a strategic necessity in the effort to realize fair, relevant, and contextual Islamic education. This paradigm is not only oriented towards justice for women, but also towards the formation of critical awareness among all students, both male and female, so that they are able to build social relationships that are equal, civilized, and in accordance with the noble values of Islam. Strengthening this concept is an important foundation for the role of Islamic Education teachers in implementing inclusive and transformative Islamic education.

### **Core Competencies of Islamic Education Teachers in Gender-Based Inclusive Education**

Islamic Education Teachers (PAI) play an important role in realizing inclusive Islamic education based on gender equality (Pujianti & Nugraha, 2025). In this context, teachers not only function as conveyors of religious knowledge, but also as pedagogical actors who play a role in shaping students' perspectives, attitudes, and social awareness of fair gender relations. Therefore, the competence of PAI teachers is a key factor in ensuring that the Islamic values taught do not reproduce patriarchal biases, but rather encourage the realization of justice and respect for human dignity.

Normatively, the Teacher and Lecturer Law and various Islamic education literature mention four main competencies of teachers, namely pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies (Akbar & Saidah, 2025). However, in the context of gender-based inclusive Islamic education, these four competencies need to be understood and operationalized in a gender-sensitive manner, and even supplemented with transformational competencies in response to contemporary social challenges. Thus, PAI teachers' competencies do not stop at the technical aspects of learning, but also include critical awareness and ethical commitment to the value of gender justice.

**Gender-Perspective Pedagogical Competence**  
Pedagogical competence reflects a teacher's ability to design, implement, and evaluate learning effectively (Milania & Murniati, 2022). In gender-based inclusive Islamic education, pedagogical competence requires PAI teachers to be able to develop learning that respects diversity and avoids gender bias (Mustafa & Pasaribu, 2024). This includes the ability to identify students' learning needs regardless of gender, as well as implementing active, participatory, and dialogic learning approaches.

PAI teachers need to ensure that the learning strategies used provide equal space for male and female students to express their opinions, ask questions, and play an active role. A gender-sensitive pedagogical approach also requires teachers to understand variations in student learning styles and prevent learning practices that unconsciously perpetuate gender stereotypes, such as biased class role assignments or unequal attention.

### **Professional Competence and Inclusive Islamic Literacy**

Professional competence relates to a deep, systematic, and contextual mastery of Islamic material. (Solong dkk., 2023). In the context of gender-based inclusive education, mastery of this material must be accompanied by the

ability to read religious texts critically and reflectively. PAI teachers are required to understand that Islamic teachings do not justify gender inequality, but rather emphasize justice and benefit as the main objectives of Sharia law.

Understanding the maqashid al-syari'ah approach is important so that teachers are able to place verses and hadiths related to gender relations in their historical and social context (Muhammad, 2021a). In addition, literacy in progressive Islamic thought that supports gender equality can enrich teachers' perspectives in delivering teaching materials that are unbiased and more relevant to the social realities of students.

#### Social Competence in Building an Inclusive Learning Environment

Social competence emphasizes teachers' ability to build harmonious, open, and equal relationships with all members of the school community (Wijaya dkk., 2023). In gender-based inclusive Islamic education, the social competence of PAI teachers is reflected in their empathetic attitudes, nondiscriminatory communication skills, and sensitivity to students' social backgrounds and experiences.

Fair interaction between teachers and male and female students will create a safe and inclusive classroom environment. Conversely, biased attitudes on the part of teachers, whether verbal or nonverbal, have the potential to reinforce gender inequality in educational practices. Therefore, the social competence of PAI teachers is an important foundation in building a classroom culture that upholds the values of mutual respect and fairness.

#### Personal Competence as a Role Model for Equality Values

Personality competence relates to moral integrity, exemplary behavior, and consistency in the teacher's professional life (Amiruddin dkk., 2025). PAI teachers need to be real examples in upholding the values of justice, equality, and respect for differences. Teachers who are inclusive, open to new ideas about Islam, and not defensive about gender issues will influence how students understand relationships between the sexes in a more fair and humane way.

In this context, teachers' exemplary behavior has a strong influence, because students learn not only from what is taught, but also from the attitudes and behaviors demonstrated by teachers in their daily lives.

#### Transformational Competence as Strengthening the Competence of PAI Teachers

In addition to the four main competencies, PAI teachers in gender-based inclusive Islamic education are also required to have transformational competencies. This competency refers to the ability of teachers to respond to changing times and socio-cultural issues, including gender inequality that is still deeply rooted in the culture of education. Teachers not only play a role as curriculum implementers, but also as agents of change who encourage a paradigm shift towards a more just and humanistic education (Dilekli dkk., 2024).

Through transformational competence, PAI teachers can contribute to deconstructing narrow and patriarchal religious understandings, replacing them with an understanding of Islam that liberates and humanizes all parties. This competence serves as a bridge between the normative foundations of Islamic education and the social realities faced by students.

#### Islamic Education Teachers as Agents of Social Transformation

In the context of inclusive Islamic education based on gender equality, Islamic Education (PAI) teachers cannot be positioned solely as implementers of the curriculum and conveyors of normative religious teachings. More than that, PAI teachers have a strategic role as agents of social transformation who are able to influence the way students think, behave, and act in interpreting gender relations in a fair and humane manner. This role is even more important considering that educational institutions often become spaces for the reproduction of social values, including patriarchal values that are still deeply rooted in society.

As agents of social transformation, PAI teachers are at the intersection of religious texts, social traditions, and contemporary realities. Many practices of gender inequality in educational settings stem from a textual and ahistorical understanding of religion. In this context, PAI teachers have an epistemic responsibility to abandon narrow interpretations of religious texts that are often used to legitimize gender inequality (Asrohah & Idayatni, 2020). Through an educational and reflective approach, teachers can introduce a more contextual reading of Islam, oriented towards justice and in line with the objectives of maqashid al-syari'ah.

The social transformation carried out by PAI teachers is not always radical or confrontational, but can be realized through daily pedagogical practices in the classroom. The classroom becomes an important arena for building students' critical awareness of the value of gender equality in Islam (Akbar dkk., 2025; Nasution dkk., 2022). Teachers can open up dialogue, discussion, and reflection on social issues related to the roles of men and women, whether in the family, society, or Islamic history. This dialogical approach allows students to understand that gender equality is not a foreign concept in Islam, but rather an integral part of the teachings of justice and humanity.

In addition to discourse and discussion, the role of PAI teachers as agents of social transformation is also reflected through role modeling. Teachers' attitudes, language, and patterns of interaction with students become powerful pedagogical messages that shape students' perspectives. Equal treatment of male and female students, avoidance of gender stereotypes in communication, and the courage of teachers to act fairly in sensitive situations are forms of transformational praxis that have a direct impact on the formation of an inclusive classroom culture (Muafiah dkk., 2024).

Furthermore, the transformational role of PAI teachers is not limited to the classroom, but also extends to the school environment as a whole. Teachers can contribute to encouraging change in the patriarchal school culture, whether through involvement in the curriculum team, school religious activities, or internal policies concerning the division of roles and student participation (Donovan dkk., 2023). Thus, PAI teachers act as mediators of liberating Islamic values and as drivers of change towards a more just and civilized Islamic education.

By positioning PAI teachers as agents of social transformation, inclusive Islamic education based on gender equality is not understood merely as a normative discourse, but as a continuous practical process. This transformation depends on the critical awareness, competence, and commitment of teachers in making education a means of liberation from social injustice, including gender inequality, without having to abandon the fundamental values of Islamic teachings.

## CONCLUSION

Inclusive Islamic education based on gender equality is a manifestation of the values of justice ('adl) and humanity inherent in Islamic teachings. The realization of this paradigm is highly dependent on the competence of Islamic Education teachers as key actors in the learning process. The results of the study show that strengthening pedagogical, professional, social, personality, and transformational competencies are key prerequisites for Islamic Education teachers to critically and contextually integrate gender equality values into Islamic education.

The theoretical contribution of this study lies in the development of a perspective on Islamic education teachers' competencies that is not only technical and pedagogical, but also transformative and oriented towards social justice. By positioning Islamic education teachers as agents of social transformation, this study broadens the understanding of the role of teachers in deconstructing patriarchal culture and building inclusive Islamic educational practices. These findings confirm that gender-equitable Islamic education cannot be achieved through normative means alone, but requires teachers who are reflective, critical, and responsive to contemporary social realities.

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