

DEVELOPMENT OF THE BASIC EMPATHY SCALE OF ISLAMIC THEOLOGY TO MEASURE THE EMPATHY OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION TEACHER CANDIDATES

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KEYWORDS:

Empathy, Basic Empathy Scale in Islamic theology, Islamic education

ABSTRACT

The limited availability of empathy measurement instruments that align with Islamic values presents a significant challenge in the education of Islamic Religious Education teacher candidates in Indonesia. This study aims to develop and validate the Basic Empathy Scale - Islamic Theology, a modified version of the Basic Empathy Scale, designed to measure empathy based on Islamic values such as compassion, sincerity, tolerance, and mutual assistance. Employing a quantitative approach with an instrument development design, this research involved 211 respondents. The results of the Confirmatory Factor Analysis indicated a reasonably good model fit, with a Chi-Square (χ^2) value of 384.623 (df = 132), $p < 0.001$, CFI = 0.829, TLI = 0.802, and RMSEA = 0.095, suggesting that the model is acceptable, though not perfect. The reliability coefficients-Cronbach's Alpha (α) = 0.809 and Omega (ω) = 0.816-demonstrate excellent internal consistency. The BES-IT was found to be a valid and reliable instrument for measuring empathy based on Islamic values. Its implication lies in supporting the development of the social-spiritual character of Islamic Religious Education teacher candidates and enhancing the contextual and responsive quality of religious education.

KATA KUNCI:

Sikap Empati, Basic Empathy Scale Teologi Islam, Pendidikan Islam

ABSTRAK

Keterbatasan instrumen pengukuran empati yang sesuai dengan konteks nilai-nilai keislaman menjadi tantangan dalam pendidikan calon guru Pendidikan Agama Islam di Indonesia. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengembangkan dan memvalidasi instrumen Basic Empathy Scale Teologi Islam, modifikasi dari Basic Empathy Scale, untuk mengukur empati berbasis nilai Islam seperti kasih sayang, ketulusan, toleransi, dan tolong-menolong. Menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan desain pengembangan instrumen, penelitian ini melibatkan 211 responden. Hasil Confirmatory Factor Analysis menunjukkan kecocokan model yang cukup baik, dengan nilai Chi-Square (χ^2) = 384.623 (df = 132), $p < 0.001$, CFI = 0.829, TLI = 0.802, dan RMSEA = 0.095, yang menunjukkan model ini diterima meskipun tidak sepenuhnya sempurna. Koefisien reliabilitas Cronbach's Alpha (α) = 0.809 dan koefisien Omega (ω) = 0.816, menandakan konsistensi internal yang sangat baik. Basic Empathy Scale Teologi Islam dinyatakan valid dan reliabel sebagai alat ukur empati berbasis nilai Islam. Implikasinya, instrumen ini dapat digunakan untuk mendukung pembentukan karakter sosial-spiritual calon guru pendidikan agama Islam, serta meningkatkan kualitas pendidikan agama yang kontekstual dan responsif.

INTRODUCTION

The importance of empathy in education, particularly in the context of religious education, has been the main focus of a number of studies. As the ability to understand and feel the feelings of others, empathy has a significant impact in creating positive relationships between teachers and students. As stated by Pramuaji and Loekmono (2018) empathy in Islamic religious education plays an important role in building emotional closeness between teachers and students, which in turn improves the quality of teaching and an inclusive learning environment. In line with this, Kamila (2023) adds that empathy also allows teachers to be more sensitive to students' emotional needs, which is very important in religious education that emphasizes moral values and character. However, despite many studies revealing the importance of empathy, the measurement of empathy in the context of Islamic religious education in Indonesia is still limited. Jolliffe and Farrington (2006) developed the Basic Empathy Scale (BES) as an instrument to measure empathy that has proven effective in various populations. Research by Diswantika, et.al(2023) shows that although the BES can be used to measure empathy in the Indonesian population, it needs to be adapted to reflect more relevant local values and religious culture.

Islamic religious education in Indonesia plays an important role in shaping religious character, especially for candidates Islamic Religious Education teachers (Kirana &

Septiana, 2022). As an integral part of forming a generation with character and religion, this education must prepare candidates educators to have high empathy, as a basis for effective and understanding social interactions (Anggraini, 2015). Empathy, which is the ability to feel and understand the feelings of others, is very important in the context of education because it can strengthen the relationship between teachers and students, and create an inclusive and supportive learning environment (Kamila, 2023; Pramuaji & Loekmono, 2018). In the world of education, especially for candidates teachers, the importance of empathy cannot be underestimated. Empathy serves as a communication bridge that allows candidates teachers to better understand the needs and feelings of students (Zhu et al., 2024). This is important because the interaction between teachers and students is greatly influenced by the social relationships that exist. A teacher who has empathy will be more sensitive to the emotional and psychological state of students, so as to be able to solve problems with a more appropriate approach. In addition, empathy also allows candidates teachers to be more aware of the actions they will take, improve the quality of teaching, and create a more comfortable classroom atmosphere that supports student character development (Aldrup et al., 2022; Batson, 2019).

Along with the development of understanding about empathy, many measurement tools have been developed to

assess this ability, one of which is the Basic Empathy Scale. This scale, which was originally developed in Western countries (Bensalah et al., 2016; Cabedo-Peris et al., 2021; Carré et al., 2013; D'Ambrosio et al., 2009), has been adapted and used in various countries with different cultural backgrounds. These adaptations suggest that the BES can be an effective instrument for measuring empathy across a variety of populations (Bensalah et al., 2016; Cabedo-Peris et al., 2021), including in the context of religious education (Anggraini, 2015; Diswantika et al., 2023). Despite their widespread use, there are still shortcomings in existing instruments, especially regarding their applicability in specific cultural and religious contexts, such as in Indonesia.

However, although many studies have highlighted the importance of empathy in education, research specifically developing instruments to measure empathy in the Islamic context in Indonesia is still very limited. This is the starting point of this study, which aims to fill this void. By developing the BES-IT (Basic Empathy Scale-Islamic Theology), this study tries to adapt the BES by incorporating relevant Islamic Theology values, such as love, tolerance, and helping, which not only focuses on the cognitive and affective dimensions, but also relates it to Islamic teachings that emphasize faith-based empathy.

This research also addresses the need to develop instruments that are more contextual and relevant to local culture in Indonesia.

Batson(2019) in his study on altruism and empathy states that measuring empathy that includes the element of concrete action to help, which is a core value in Islam, will provide a more accurate picture of empathy in the context of religious education (2019). In addition, as explained by (Doh et al., 2024) empathy also plays an important role in helping individuals overcome trauma and improve psychological well-being, which is the basis for developing this instrument for candidates Islamic Religious Education teachers in Indonesia.

The BES has been widely adopted in various countries, including China, France, Germany, and Italy, to assess empathy in adolescents and adults (Heynen et al., 2016). Although this instrument has shown good validity and reliability in many countries, the understanding of empathy in the context of deep Islamic religion in Indonesia has not been widely discussed. Therefore, this study aims to develop and validate a modified version of the BES based on Islamic Theology values, which will be called Basic Empathy Scale-Islamic Theology, to measure empathy in candidates Islamic Religious Education teacher students in Indonesia.

Although empathy has been recognized as a key element in building effective relationships between teachers and students, especially in Islamic religious education, until now there has been no empathy measurement instrument that truly reflects Islamic values that live in Indonesian culture. Existing instruments,

such as the Basic Empathy Scale, were developed in Western contexts and are not fully relevant to the religious teachings, norms and values that form the foundation of Islamic education in Indonesia. This limitation creates a gap in efforts to form candidates Islamic Religious Education teachers who are not only intellectually intelligent, but also have social and spiritual sensitivity in line with Islamic values. Without a contextual measurement tool, the process of forming the social-emotional character of candidates teachers is potentially not optimal, thus affecting the effectiveness of Islamic religious education in instilling the values of empathy, compassion, and tolerance to students.

This research not only adapts the BES for the Indonesian context, but also integrates religious elements relevant to Islamic religious education. This scale is expected to cover the two main dimensions of empathy, namely cognitive and affective, but with an emphasis on dimensions that connect empathy with religious values taught in Islam, such as compassion, *ihsan*, tolerance, and helping. This is in line with Sakiz's research (2017) that connects altruism with empathy in social and religious contexts, which shows that empathy not only includes understanding the feelings of others, but also involves real actions to help (Batson, 2019; Sakiz, 2017).

This research is expected to make a significant contribution in filling the void of literature related to measuring empathy in

candidates Islamic Religious Education teachers in Indonesia. Previously, not many studies have modified this instrument for the context of Islam, especially in measuring empathy in candidates Islamic Religious Education teachers. Therefore, this study has a unique contribution in linking empathy measurement with religious values contained in Islamic teachings, as well as creating a more relevant and contextual instrument for Indonesia. Thus, the BES-IT can be used as a measuring tool to assess the level of empathy of candidates Islamic Religious Education teachers, which in turn can improve the quality of Islamic religious education in Indonesia.

In addition, this research also provides insight into how Islamic religious values can enrich empathy measurement instruments and how Islamic religious education can place more emphasis on the formation of stronger social-emotional characters among candidates Islamic Religious Education teachers. By using this instrument, it is hoped to create an educational environment that is more inclusive, compassionate and more responsive to the social and emotional needs of students in Indonesia. This research also has the potential to be applied in countries with Muslim-majority populations, thus guiding the development of similar instruments across different cultural and religious contexts.

THEORY DESCRIPTION

In this study, empathy in the context of Islamic religious education is the main focus

because of its crucial role in building effective relationships between teachers and students. As the ability to understand and feel the feelings of others, empathy has a significant impact in creating an inclusive and supportive learning environment, which is needed in Islamic religious education. As explained by Pramuaji and Loekmono (2018), empathy in Islamic religious education plays a very important role in strengthening the emotional connection between teachers and students, which in turn can improve the quality of teaching and support students' character development. This is further emphasized by Kamila (2023), who states that empathy allows teachers to be more sensitive to students' emotional needs, an aspect that is particularly important in religious education that emphasizes moral values and character.

However, despite many studies revealing the importance of empathy, instruments that can measure empathy in the context of Islamic religious education in Indonesia are still limited. The Basic Empathy Scale originally developed in Western countries has been shown to be effective for use in various populations, however, as stated by Diswantika et al., (2023), the BES needs to be modified to be more relevant to the culture and Islamic religious values underlying education in Indonesia. Therefore, this study aims to develop the BES-IT (Basic Empathy Scale-Islamic Theology), a modified version of the BES that adds dimensions of Islamic theological values, such as compassion, *ihsan*, tolerance, and helping.

The grand theory underlying this research is the Theory of Empathy which includes cognitive and affective dimensions. This theory states that empathy involves not only understanding the feelings of others (cognitive dimension), but also feelings that encourage real action to help (affective dimension). Batson (2019) in his theory states that empathy, which leads to prosocial actions, is very relevant in the context of education, especially in Islamic religious education which emphasizes real actions based on compassion and kindness towards others. In Islamic religious education, this empathy not only serves as an understanding and feeling, but also as a foundation for performing beneficial social actions, in accordance with the values of Islamic teachings.

Qomaruzzaman's Islamic Theology (2020) also provides an important foundation in the development of this instrument. In the context of Islamic teachings, empathy is associated with values such as *rahmah* (compassion), *ihsan* (good deeds with perfection), and tolerance. These values are very deep in Islamic teachings and are expected to be reflected in the BES-IT instrument, which not only measures empathy from the psychological side but also from the moral and spiritual side in accordance with the context of Islamic religious education in Indonesia.

By integrating Batson's (2019) empathy theory and Islamic theological theory in the development of the instrument, this study not

only adapts the BES to measure cognitive and affective dimensions, but also introduces a new dimension that links empathy with Islamic teachings. This is in line with the purpose of the study which is to produce a more relevant and contextualized empathy measurement instrument for Islamic religious education in Indonesia.

The method used in this research is a quantitative approach with an instrument development design that involves several systematic stages to ensure the validity and reliability of the instrument. The instrument development process begins with identifying the dimensions of empathy that are relevant in the context of Islamic teachings, such as compassion, *ihsan*, and helping, which are an integral part of Islamic teachings that must be integrated in the empathy measurement instrument. Furthermore, the items in the existing BES were modified to reflect these dimensions, so that this instrument could be more in line with the prevailing values in Indonesia.

The next stage was evaluation by experts in the field of Islamic religious education and educational psychology to ensure that the instrument had high content validity. After that, the instrument was tested for validity and reliability using content validity and construct validity approaches, as well as field trials to see the extent to which the BES-IT instrument was accepted in the field by candidates Islamic Religious Education teachers. The results of this

trial were then analyzed using statistical techniques to ensure that the instrument can measure empathy in accordance with the desired dimensions and is relevant to the Indonesian social and religious context.

Thus, through the development of BES-IT based on empathy theory and Islamic theological values, this research is expected to make a significant contribution in improving the quality of Islamic religious education in Indonesia. The instrument developed will not only measure empathy in cognitive and affective contexts, but will also include real actions that are in accordance with Islamic religious teachings, which in the end can help candidates Islamic Religious Education teachers to be more sensitive to the social and emotional needs of students and form better student characters.

METHOD

This study aims to develop and validate the Basic Empathy Scale-Islamic Theology, a modified version of the Basic Empathy Scale that aims to measure empathy in candidates Islamic Religious Education teachers in Indonesia. This study uses a quantitative approach with an instrument development design that involves several systematic stages to ensure the validity and reliability of the resulting instrument (Alloway et al., 2016; Bensalah et al., 2016).

The research approach used in this study is a quantitative approach with an instrument development design, which is designed to

modify an existing instrument, in this case the BES, into an instrument that is more relevant to the Indonesian cultural and religious context. The main focus of this study was to modify the instrument by adding an element of Islamic Theology, which aims to ensure that the instrument used in this study measures empathy in a more appropriate and contextualized way for candidates Islamic teachers in Indonesia. This approach is relevant as it allows for the customization of the instrument to local values, while maintaining the sustainability of empathy measurement at the international level (Swank, Limberg, & Liu, 2020).

This research was conducted in several stages which include:

1. Stage 1: Instrument Development (BES Modification)

In the first stage, this research modified the Basic Empathy Scale to adapt its items to be more in line with the values of Islamic theology that underlie Islamic religious education. The process of developing this instrument was carried out through several stages: (a) Identification of Empathy Dimensions in Islam: The first step is to identify the dimensions of empathy in the context of Islamic teachings that are relevant to religious education, such as compassion, ihsan, tolerance, and mutual help (Qomaruzzaman, 2020). These values are an integral part of Islamic teachings that must be integrated into the empathy measurement instrument, to ensure that the instrument

can measure empathy in accordance with the prevailing religious values in Indonesia (Adiyono et al., 2023); (b) Item Modification: Once the dimensions of empathy are identified, the items in the existing BES will be modified to reflect these dimensions. This modification process is based on previous research that indicated the importance of adapting Western culture-based instruments to relevant cultural and religious values (Deniz et al., 2024), (c) Evaluation by Experts: Once modified, the resulting instrument will be evaluated by experts in the field of Islamic religious education and educational psychology to ensure the relevance and appropriateness of the items used. This is an important step to ensure that the instrument developed has high content validity (Pramuaji & Loekmono, 2018).

2. Stage 2: Testing the Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

Once the instrument had been developed, the next step was to conduct validity and reliability tests to ensure that the BES-IT could accurately measure empathy in the context of Islamic religious education in Indonesia. (a) Validity was tested using two main approaches: Content Validity: The content validity test was conducted by inviting experts in the field of educational psychology and Islamic religious education to provide an assessment of the relevance and suitability of the items in the instrument.

This is to ensure that each item in the BES-IT measures the desired dimension, namely empathy based on Islamic values in accordance with the educational context in Indonesia (Pramuaji & Loekmono, 2018). Construct Validity: Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to ensure that the items in the instrument cluster according to the two main dimensions of empathy - cognitive and affective - as well as the newly added dimension of Islamic theology. CFA will test whether the instrument measures what it is supposed to measure and ensure a factor structure that is consistent with existing theory (Swank et al., 2020) ; (b) Reliability of the instrument is measured using Cronbach's alpha to test the internal consistency of the modified instrument, as well as test-retest to test the stability of the instrument over a period of time (Alloway et al., 2016) .

3. Stage 3: Field Trial After the instrument has been tested for validity and reliability, the next step is to conduct a field trial on 211 candidates Islamic religious education teacher students in Indonesia. The sample will be selected using stratified random sampling technique, to ensure fair representation of students from various universities in Indonesia. This trial aims to see how the BES-IT instrument is received in the field, as well as to evaluate the suitability of the items in the instrument

with the experiences of candidates Islamic education teachers.

4. Stage 4: Data Analysis, After the data was collected, it was analyzed using JASP statistical software. The analysis techniques used include: (a) Descriptive Statistical Analysis to describe the distribution of empathy scores of candidates Islamic education teachers and demographic characteristics of respondents, (b) Factor Analysis to evaluate the dimensions of empathy in BES-IT and identify the relationship between Islamic values and cognitive and affective dimensions of empathy.

5. Stage 5: Instrument Refinement; Based on the results of data analysis, the BES-IT instrument will be refined by revising items that are less relevant or invalid, as well as strengthening items that are appropriate. This refinement is done by considering expert input, statistical analysis results, and evaluations from field trials to improve the quality of the instrument developed (Bensalah et al., 2016).

Data Validity Assurance Techniques in this study were carried out through several steps to ensure the validity and reliability of the data obtained. Content validity is maintained by involving experts in Islamic religious education and educational psychology in the process of assessing and preparing instrument items, so that the items used truly reflect the constructs being measured. Construct validity was tested

through confirmatory factor analysis to ensure that the empathy dimensions measured were in accordance with the underlying theory. Data reliability was tested using Cronbach's Alpha and test-retest coefficients to ensure consistency and stability of measurement results. In addition, for qualitative data from interviews, validity was maintained by triangulating sources and member checking, which is reconfirming the findings with expert informants to ensure the truth and consistency of the data. These techniques were integrated to increase confidence in the research results and strengthen the accuracy of the BES-IT instrument development.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Basic Empathy Scale Islamic Theology Instrument

The Basic Empathy Scale (BES) instrument consists of two dimensions, namely cognitive empathy and affective empathy dimensions. In the process of identification, modification, and evaluation of the Empathy Scale-Islamic Theology (BES-IT) instrument at the initial stage consisted of 26 statement items designed to measure three main dimensions, namely: Cognitive Empathy (9 items), which aims to assess an individual's ability to understand the feelings and perspectives of others, including the ability to identify and understand the emotions felt by others; Affective Empathy (11 items) (Geng, Xia, & Qin, 2012), which measures the extent to which individuals are able to feel and share the emotions of others, as well as the ability to respond emotionally to the emotional

state of others; Islamic Theology (6 items), which focuses on understanding and practicing Islamic teachings related to empathy values and how a person's social behavior is influenced by Islamic religious principles (Muh. Subhan Ashari, 2020). However, after evaluation by experts through content validation, it was found that some items in this instrument were not fully in line with the established measurement objectives. This led to the elimination of some items and simplification of the number of statements to 18 items, with each dimension consisting of 6 items that are more relevant and in accordance with the measurement objectives. This simplification aims to improve measurement accuracy and focus on more specific dimensions. The following dimensions, indicators, and statements are ready to be tested for validity and reliability:

1. Indicators of the Affective Empathy Dimension: Emotional response to others' feelings, sympathizing with others and emotional involvement with others' feelings (Carré et al., 2013).
2. Cognitive Empathy Dimension Indicators: Understanding of others' feelings, understanding the emotional context and assessing others' perspectives (Heynen et al., 2016).
3. Islamic Theology Dimension Indicators: Belief in God's presence in daily life, religious social behavior and sincerity in worship (Zuhri, 2016).

Instrument Validity and Reliability Test: Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

Validity and reliability test, this process includes data processing and testing the validity and reliability of the instrument through Confirmatory Factor Analysis. CFA is used to verify whether the dimensional structure measured by the instrument is in accordance

with the theory that has been formulated, and to ensure that the instrument is reliable in measuring the intended variable. This process is very important to ensure that the instrument used has the accuracy of measuring the intended construct. The following results are presented in the table below:

Table 1. Model Fit Test Chi-square Model Fit Test

Model	X ²	df	p
Base model	1630.918	153	
Factor model	384.623	132	< .001

The chi-square test presented in Table 1 above, obtained a chi-square value for the baseline model of 1630.918 with degrees of freedom (df) 153 and an insignificant p value. In contrast, for the factor model, the chi-square value obtained was 384.623 with 132 degrees of

freedom and a highly significant p value (<.001). This result indicates that the factor model fits the data better than the original model, which is reflected in the very small p value of the factor model, indicating a significant fit to the data tested.

Table 2. Fit Index

Index	Values
Comparative fit index (CFI)	0.829
Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI)	0.802
Bentler-Bonett Non-norm Fit Index (NNFI)	0.802
Bentler-Bonett Normed Fit Index (NFI)	0.764
Partial Normed Fit Index (PNFI)	0.659
Bollen Relative Fit Index (RFI)	0.727
Bollen's Incremental Fit Index (IFI)	0.831
Relative Non-Centrality Index (RNI)	0.829

The model fit in the CFA analysis was evaluated using several fit indices in Table 2 that indicate the extent to which the proposed model fits the data obtained. The results of the analysis showed that the Chi-Square (χ^2) value for the factor model was 384.623 with 132 degrees of freedom (df), and a p value of $<.001$, indicating that the model was not fully fit. However, the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) value of 0.829 and the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) of 0.802 indicated that the model had a fairly good fit, although it was still below the ideal value threshold (≥ 0.90). In addition, the Root Mean Square Error of

Approximation (RMSEA) value of 0.095 indicates that the model is acceptable. Although the CFA results indicate a less than perfect model fit, the indications of a fairly good fit on the CFI and TLI provide an idea that the BES-IT instrument has a fairly strong potential in measuring empathy based on Islamic values. Therefore, although there is still room for improvement, the proposed model can be used as a basis for further instrument development, with attention to improving items or factors that are less suitable in the model.

Table 3. Factor Loadings

Factor	Indicator	Estimation	Std. error	z-value	p	95% Confidence Interval	
						Bottom	Top
Factor 1	Item1	1.000	0.000			1.000	1.000
	Item2	1.918	0.26	7.368	$<.001$	1.408	2.428
	Item3	1.486	0.22	6.742	$<.001$	1.054	1.918
	Item4	1.819	0.245	7.428	$<.001$	1.339	2.299
	Item5	2.125	0.263	8.08	$<.001$	1.61	2.641
	Item6	2.069	0.262	7.903	$<.001$	1.556	2.582
Factor 2	Item7	1.000	0.000			1.000	1.000
	Item8	1.221	0.186	6.552	$<.001$	0.856	1.586
	Item9	0.749	0.155	4.843	$<.001$	0.446	1.053
	Item10	1.818	0.246	7.384	$<.001$	1.336	2.301
	Item11	1.316	0.211	6.24	$<.001$	0.902	1.729
	Item12	1.204	0.205	5.887	$<.001$	0.803	1.605
Factor 3	Item13	1.000	0.000			1.000	1.000
	Item14	38.655	121.582	0.318	0.751	-199.642	276.951
	Item15	36.872	115.977	0.318	0.751	-190.439	264.184
	Item16	36.566	115.017	0.318	0.751	-188.863	261.995
	Item17	39.709	124.892	0.318	0.751	-205.074	284.493
	Item18	36.581	115.064	0.318	0.751	-188.94	262.102

The factor loadings presented in Table 3 show that Factor 1 has highly significant factor loadings, with estimates ranging from 1.000

(item 1) to 2.069 (item 6), and all items have p values $<.001$ and z values > 5 , indicating strong consistency in measurement. . Factor 2 also

showed significant results, with factor load estimates between 1.000 (item 7) to 1.204 (item 12), and p values < .001 and z values > 5, indicating a strong contribution to the instrument. Factor 3 showed lower factor load

estimates, ranging from 1.000 (item 13) to 38.655 (item 14), but all items remained significant with p values < .001, although there was greater variability in some items in terms of standard errors.

Table 4. Construct Validity and Reliability

Factor	AVE
Factor 1	0.476
Factor 2	0.354
Factor 3	0.539

The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) in Table 4 shows that the factors in the BES-IT instrument have variations that can be explained by their indicators, although there are differences in measurement quality between factors. Factor 1 has an AVE of 0.476, slightly

below the 0.50 threshold, indicating that this factor is good enough although there is still room for improvement. Factor 2, with an AVE of 0.354, indicates that this factor is less than optimal and requires further evaluation. Factor 3 has an AVE of 0.53.

Table 5. Construct Reliability

	Coefficient ω	Coefficient α
Factor 1	0.836	0.831
Factor 2	0.753	0.744
Factor 3	0.860	0.821
Total	0.816	0.809

The reliability analysis in Table 5 shows that the BES-IT instrument has excellent internal consistency. Factor 1 has a coefficient ω of 0.836 and α of 0.831, Factor 2 has a coefficient ω of 0.753 and α of 0.744, and Factor 3 has a coefficient ω of 0.860 and α of 0.821, all of which are above the threshold of 0.70, indicating good reliability. The total reliability coefficients of the instruments were 0.816 (ω)

and 0.809 (α). These findings confirm that each factor within the BES-IT consistently measures the intended construct with high reliability, ensuring that the instrument is dependable for assessing empathy in the context of Islamic theological education. Such strong internal consistency is essential to guarantee the accuracy and stability of the measurement results across different populations and settings.

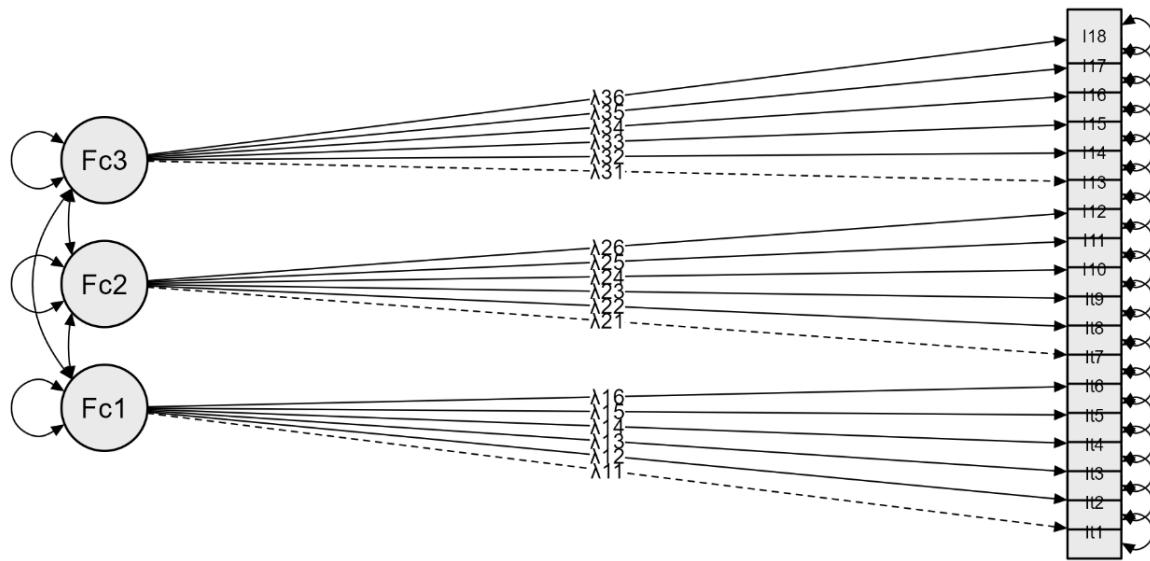


Figure 1. CFA Plot Model

The CFA model in Figure 1 illustrates the relationship between three latent factors in the BESTI instrument: cognitive empathy (Fc1), affective empathy (Fc2), and Islamic theology (Fc3), each of which is connected to measurement items (I1 to I18). Cognitive empathy (Fc1) shows significant contributions from items such as I1 (load of 0.57), although some items, such as I3 (load of 0.15), have lower contributions. Affective empathy (Fc2) correlates positively with Fc1 (0.32), but negatively with Fc3 (-0.22), supporting discriminant validity between factors. Islamic theology (Fc3) showed strong contributions from items such as I15 (loadings of 0.56).

Implications of BES-IT for Candidates Islamic Education Teachers in Indonesia

This study aims to validate the Basic Empathy Scale-Islamic Theology instrument, which is a modification of the Basic Empathy

Scale, to measure the level of empathy in candidates Islamic Religious Education teachers in Indonesia. The modification of this instrument is done by integrating relevant Islamic values, such as compassion, tolerance, ihsan, and mutual help, to provide additional dimensions to the measurement of empathy in social and religious contexts.

Figure 1: Frequency distribution of respondents' gender in a sample of 211 people. Based on the available data, there were 39 male respondents 18.48% and 172 female respondents 81.52%. There were no missing or invalid data. Thus, the majority of respondents were female, indicating that this study tends to be dominated by female participants. The domicile of respondents in the sample includes districts spread across Indonesia, namely Tuban, Pamekasan, Lamongan, Situbondo, Gresik, Rembang, Jember, Blora, South Kalimantan, and Surabaya City.

The process of developing the BES-IT instrument begins with the identification of empathy dimensions that are in accordance with Islamic teachings, which include three main dimensions: cognitive empathy, affective empathy, and Islamic theology. The cognitive empathy dimension aims to measure an individual's ability to understand the feelings and perspectives of others, while affective empathy focuses more on emotional involvement in feeling the feelings of others.

Meanwhile, the Islamic theology dimension measures the influence of Islamic religious teachings in empathic social behavior, such as compassion, tolerance, and sincerity. The cognitive empathy and affective empathy dimensions measured in the BES-IT lead to a more comprehensive understanding of empathy. It includes not only cognitive aspects such as understanding the feelings of others, but also affective aspects that involve emotional involvement in feeling the feelings of others. Thus, this instrument provides a more in-depth picture of empathy in social and religious contexts.

The development of this instrument has significant practical implications for Islamic religious education in Indonesia. The BES-IT can be used to assess the level of empathy of candidates Islamic religious education teachers, which in turn can improve the quality of teaching and create a classroom atmosphere that is more inclusive, compassionate and responsive to students' social and emotional needs.

The instrument can also be adapted for use in other Muslim-majority countries, thus providing a guide for the development of similar instruments that are more relevant to local cultural and religious contexts. Based on the results of the analysis and field evaluation, some suggestions for further development of the BES-IT include: (1) Refinement of items with low factor loadings: Items with low factor loadings such as Item 7 and Item 8 need to be further evaluated and adjusted to improve measurement accuracy; (2) Refinement of the Measurement Model: Although the CFA model has shown a fairly good fit, further research may consider further modifications to the factor structure to achieve a more optimal fit; (3) Testing on a Wider Population: To improve the generalizability of the instrument, further research could include a more diverse sample from various universities and regions in Indonesia.

The BES-IT is a very relevant and potential measuring instrument to improve the understanding of empathy in Islamic religious education, as well as to contribute to the development of the social-emotional character of candidates Islamic religious education teachers. It is hoped that this instrument can be used as a more contextual and relevant measurement tool, and provide deeper insights for the development of Islamic religious education in Indonesia.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of data analysis involving 211 respondents, the modified Basic Empathy Scale-Islamic Theology instrument

showed excellent validity and reliability to be used in measuring empathy in candidates PAI teachers in Indonesia. Confirmatory Factor Analysis results showed a fairly good model fit with CFI = 0.829, TLI = 0.802, and RMSEA = 0.095, although still below the ideal threshold. The instrument also showed excellent internal consistency with Cronbach's Alpha (α) = 0.809 and Omega coefficient (ω) = 0.816, which guarantees the reliability of the instrument in measuring the Islamic Theology values-based empathy dimension. Modification of the BES-IT instrument by incorporating elements of Islamic Theology such as compassion, tolerance, ihsan, and mutual help has proven effective in measuring empathy in the Islamic social and religious context. The dimensions of cognitive empathy and affective empathy measured in BES-IT provide a more comprehensive picture of empathy, including understanding of other people's feelings and emotional involvement in feeling other people's feelings. This answers the first problem formulation regarding the validity and reliability of the instrument. In addition, the BES-IT instrument also makes a practical contribution to Islamic religious education in Indonesia. By measuring empathy based on Islamic religious values, this instrument is expected to improve the quality of teaching of candidates Islamic education teachers and create a classroom atmosphere that is inclusive and more responsive to the social and emotional needs of students. This answers the second problem formulation regarding the extent to

which the BES-IT can measure empathy dimensions related to Islamic Theological values. The use of the BES-IT can be adapted for countries with other Muslim majority populations, providing insights for the development of similar instruments in relevant cultural and religious contexts. Therefore, the BES-IT makes an important contribution to the development of the socio-emotional character of candidates PAI teachers and can be a relevant and contextualized measurement tool for Islamic religious education in Indonesia and similar countries.

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