PARADOKS KOMUNIKASI EMPATIS DALAM PENDIDIKAN ISLAM_TRANSLATE

Turnitin

Document Details

Submission ID

trn:oid:::27992:107723877

Submission Date

Aug 9, 2025, 9:08 PM GMT+5

Download Date

Aug 9, 2025, 9:09 PM GMT+5

File Name

PARADOKS KOMUNIKASI EMPATIS DALAM PENDIDIKAN ISLAM_TRANSLATE.docx

File Size

79.0 KB

15 Pages

6,024 Words

37,858 Characters

11% Overall Similarity

The combined total of all matches, including overlapping sources, for each database.

Filtered from the Report

▸ Bibliography

Match Groups

- **53** Not Cited or Quoted   9%
  Matches with neither in-text citation nor quotation marks
- **15** Missing Quotations   2%
  Matches that are still very similar to source material
- **0**   Missing Citation   0%
  Matches that have quotation marks, but no in-text citation
- **0**   Cited and Quoted   0%
  Matches with in-text citation present, but no quotation marks

Top Sources

6% 🌐 Internet sources

6% 📖 Publications

9% 👤 Submitted works (Student Papers)

Integrity Flags

0 Integrity Flags for Review

No suspicious text manipulations found.

Our system's algorithms look deeply at a document for any inconsistencies that would set it apart from a normal submission. If we notice something strange, we flag it for you to review.

A Flag is not necessarily an indicator of a problem. However, we'd recommend you focus your attention there for further review.

Match Groups
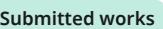
🔴 **53** Not Cited or Quoted   9%
Matches with neither in-text citation nor quotation marks

🟠 **15** Missing Quotations   2%
Matches that are still very similar to source material

🟡 **0** Missing Citation   0%
Matches that have quotation marks, but no in-text citation

🟢 **0** Cited and Quoted   0%
Matches with in-text citation present, but no quotation marks

Top Sources

6%   🌐 Internet sources

6%   📖 Publications

9%   👤 Submitted works (Student Papers)

Top Sources

The sources with the highest number of matches within the submission. Overlapping sources will not be displayed.

1 | Submitted works

Liberty University on 2025-07-13   **2%**

---

2 | Internet

pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov   **<1%**

---

3 | Submitted works

Trinity College Dublin on 2022-11-12   **<1%**

---

4 | Internet

bmcpsychology.biomedcentral.com   **<1%**

---

5 | Internet

www.mdpi.com   **<1%**

---

6 | Submitted works

The University of the West of Scotland on 2024-04-22   **<1%**

---

7 | Internet

pdfslide.tips   **<1%**

---

8 | Publication

Frédéric Tomas, Jette Immerzeel. "Chatbots in eyewitness interviews: perceived u...   **<1%**

---

9 | Internet

core.ac.uk   **<1%**

---

10 | Submitted works

Adtalem Global Education on 2025-06-12   **<1%**

---

11   Publication

Maydew, Savannah Sage. "Teaching Reading With Heart: A Mixed-Methods Exami...   <1%

12   Submitted works

Riga Technical University on 2023-04-14   <1%

13   Submitted works

University of Edinburgh on 2012-08-31   <1%

14   Submitted works

University of York on 2024-07-24   <1%

15   Internet

thercsas.com   <1%

16   Internet

www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov   <1%

17   Publication

Cheng-Yi Chao, Tsung-Kun Lin, Nai-Yung Hung, Chun-Lun Hsu, Li-Ting Kao. "Adva...   <1%

18   Internet

ijip.in   <1%

19   Internet

www.researchsquare.com   <1%

20   Submitted works

Universidade de Coimbra on 2025-07-31   <1%

21   Submitted works

Maryville University on 2014-04-20   <1%

22   Internet

doaj.org   <1%

23   Submitted works

Liberty University on 2025-08-04   <1%

24   Internet

kipdf.com   <1%

25	Submitted works	
William Paterson University on 2018-06-25		<1%

26	Internet	
agrofor.ues.rs.ba		<1%

27	Publication	
Antonio Pierro. "Regulatory mode and the joys of doing: effects of 'locomotion' a…		<1%

28	Publication	
Gunseli Oral, James C. Kaufman, Mark D. Agars. "Examining creativity in Turkey: …		<1%

29	Submitted works	
Help University College on 2009-11-22		<1%

30	Internet	
dl6.globalstf.org		<1%

31	Internet	
nzjforestryscience.springeropen.com		<1%

32	Internet	
www.frontiersin.org		<1%

33	Submitted works	
2U Baylor University MSW on 2022-06-07		<1%

34	Publication	
Harvey Regan, Rebecca Keyte, Michael Mantzios, Helen Egan. "The Importance of …		<1%

35	Publication	
Haza F. Rahim, Trudy T.M. Mooren, Femke van den Brink, Jeroen W. Knipscheer, P…		<1%

36	Publication	
Hee Jung Hong, Sungkyung Kim. "Exploring Esports - Players, Fans, and the Espor…		<1%

37	Submitted works	
Nottingham Trent University on 2024-03-01		<1%

38	Submitted works	
University of Leeds on 2023-09-06		<1%

39	Submitted works	
University of Witwatersrand on 2024-10-13		<1%

40	Internet	
acgpublishing.com		<1%

41	Internet	
doi.org		<1%

42	Internet	
managementworld.online		<1%

43	Internet	
scholar.lib.vt.edu		<1%

44	Internet	
www.tandfonline.com		<1%

45	Submitted works	
American College of Education on 2025-07-09		<1%

46	Submitted works	
University of Pecs on 2025-04-14		<1%

47	Publication	
Domenico Berdicchia, Enrico Bracci, Giovanni Masino. "Disentangling the effect o...		<1%

The Paradox of Empathic Communication in Islamic Education
(*A Quantitative Analysis of Teacher–Student Interaction and Motivation in the Qur'an Memorization Program*)

Abstract

The relationship between empathetic communication by teachers and student learning motivation requires empirical verification in the context of traditional Islamic education, particularly in Qur'an memorization programs that emphasize an authoritative approach. This study addresses the knowledge gap regarding the motivational dynamics in Qur'an memorization learning, which has not been comprehensively documented. The study employed a cross-sectional survey design involving 83 students aged 15–18 years from four tahfidz institutions in the city and regency of Bandung through purposive sampling. Empathetic communication was measured using the Dyadic Interpersonal Communication Scale ($\alpha = 0.916$), while motivation was assessed using the Quranic Memorization Motivation Scale, which includes intrinsic ($\alpha = 0.843$) and extrinsic ($\alpha = 0.811$) dimensions. Hierarchical multiple regression analysis was conducted with demographic variables controlled according to Self-Determination Theory. The data indicate that empathetic communication predicts intrinsic motivation ($\beta = -0.261$, $p = 0.015$, $R^2 = 0.358$) and extrinsic motivation ($\beta = -0.469$, $p < 0.001$, $R^2 = 0.519$) with moderate to large effect sizes. These findings differ from Western educational theories, which predict a positive relationship, indicating that cultural context mediates the empathy-motivation relationship in traditional Islamic education. The study confirms the importance of adapting pedagogical approaches that consider local cultural values to optimize learning motivation in tahfidz programs.

Keywords: empathetic communication, student motivation, Qur'an memorization, Islamic education, teacher–student interaction

INTRODUCTION

The practice of memorizing the Qur'an (*Hifz*) is one of the most enduring and fundamental traditions in Islamic education, serving both as a spiritual discipline and an intellectual endeavor that has persisted for over fourteen centuries (Japeri et al., 2023) . This tradition, which involves the perfect memorization of the 6,236 verses of the Quran, serves as a cornerstone of the Islamic education system worldwide and shapes a unique pedagogical approach that significantly differs from conventional Western educational paradigms. Recent research indicates that students have nine distinct motivational factors in participating in Quran memorization programs, including the desire for spiritual rewards, parental influence, and personal achievement goals (Japeri et al., 2023) .

The teacher-student relationship in Islamic pedagogy is characterized by a distinctive hierarchical structure rooted in the concepts *of Tarbiyah* (holistic education) and *Ta'lim* (teaching), where the teacher acts as both *a Murshid* (spiritual guide) and *a Murabbi* (educator) (Wulandari & Hadinata, 2025) . This relationship traditionally emphasizes a balance between *Rahmah* (compassion) and *Hikmah* (wisdom), creating a learning environment that combines emotional support with disciplinary rigor. The historical significance of empathetic guidance in Islamic education can be traced back to the teaching methodology of Prophet Muhammad, who emphasized understanding, patience, and a teaching approach tailored to individual characteristics while maintaining high standards of achievement.

Empathetic communication, defined as the ability to understand and feel others' emotions while maintaining appropriate emotional boundaries, has become a crucial component of effective teaching in various educational contexts (Aldrup et al., 2022) . A recent systematic review identifies empathy as a key factor in teaching effectiveness, with significant relationships to the quality of teacher–student interactions and student learning outcomes (Aldrup et al., 2022) . The theoretical framework for empathetic communication in education draws heavily on *DeVito's Interpersonal Communication Model,* which identifies empathy as one of the five essential dimensions of effective interpersonal interaction, alongside openness, support, positive attitude, and equality.

Contemporary research reveals that empathy is a central element in teacher–student interactions and plays a crucial role in students' academic achievement, although its impact is complex and context-dependent (Sun et al., 2023) . Studies on language learning indicate a positive and significant relationship between teacher empathy and student engagement, particularly in English as a foreign language (*EFL)* learning (Z . Recent research on the role of teacher empathy in student mental health also indicates that empathetic teacher–student relationships are correlated with reduced levels of stress, anxiety, and depression in students (Ampofo et al., 2025) .

Although research in general education is quite abundant, there is a significant literature gap regarding empathetic communication in the context of Islamic religious education. This gap is even more pronounced in intensive religious learning environments, where traditional pedagogical approaches may differ significantly from Western educational models.

Motivational studies in the context of religious education present unique challenges that distinguish them from secular educational research. *Self-Determination Theory* (*SDT*) developed by Deci and Ryan provides a framework for understanding motivation through intrinsic and extrinsic perspectives, emphasizing the importance of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in maintaining learning engagement (Ryan & Deci, 2020) . Recent research explores how teachers' empathy influences student motivation from a developmental perspective and reveals the complex interactions between empathetic motivation and student engagement (Ge et al., 2021) .

In the context of the Qur'an memorization program, these motivational factors interact with spiritual, cultural, and social dimensions that are not generally found in conventional education. Empirical research has identified nine primary motivational factors in participating in tahfidz programs, including the expectation of divine reward, parental guidance, peer influence, and personal spiritual development goals (Japeri et al., 2023) . Unique challenges in Qur'an memorization programs include the intensive nature of learning, the demand for perfect accuracy in recitation, and the integration of spiritual development and cognitive achievement.

The cultural and spiritual dimensions of motivation in Islamic education transcend the traditional intrinsic–extrinsic dichotomy, encompassing concepts such as *Ikhlas* (sincerity), *Taqwa* (consciousness of Allah), and *Barakah* (divine blessing). These spiritual motivational factors form a complex motivational landscape, requiring careful consideration when applying Western psychological theories to the Islamic educational context.

The intersection between empathetic communication and student motivation in Islamic education remains largely unexplored, creating a knowledge gap that limits the development of evidence-based pedagogical approaches. This limitation is particularly evident in intensive religious programs such as tahfidz, where traditional Islamic pedagogical principles interact with modern educational psychology in complex and sometimes contradictory ways.

Current understanding of the influence of empathetic communication on student motivation in intensive religious programs is limited due to a lack of culturally sensitive research methodologies and instruments. Most research on empathetic communication in education has been conducted in Western and secular contexts, raising questions about the applicability of its findings in Islamic educational settings. The need for evidence-based approaches in Islamic education is becoming increasingly urgent as these institutions seek to balance traditional values with the best contemporary educational practices.

Furthermore, the potential tension between traditional Islamic pedagogy and modern educational theory remains unresolved. While Western educational psychology generally promotes high levels of empathy as beneficial for student motivation and achievement, traditional Islamic education emphasizes the importance of maintaining appropriate boundaries between teachers and students, so that excessive empathy may actually be counterproductive.

This study seeks to answer the main research question: *How does empathetic communication between teachers and students relate to student motivation in a Qur'an memorization program?* Sub-questions include: (1) How does empathetic communication influence intrinsic and extrinsic motivation differently in an Islamic educational context? (2) What are the implications of empathetic communication patterns for teacher training in Islamic educational institutions?

The specific objectives of this study are**:** (1) to measure the level of empathetic communication in teacher–student interactions in the Qur'an memorization program; (2) to assess the level of student motivation (both intrinsic and extrinsic) in this context; (3) to analyze the correlation between empathetic communication and various types of motivation; and (4) to provide evidence-based recommendations for educational practices and teacher training programs in Islamic educational institutions.

This study contributes to the understanding of empathy in religious education by presenting the first quantitative study that examines the relationship between empathetic communication and motivation in an Islamic educational setting. This research challenges universal assumptions of Western educational psychology theory and provides a basis for the development of a culturally sensitive theoretical framework that is consistent with the characteristics of Islamic pedagogy.

The findings of this study provide important insights for teacher training and pedagogical approaches in Islamic educational institutions through empirical evidence on the optimization of teacher-student communication patterns. This study offers practical guidance for institution administrators, teacher trainers, and Islamic education policymakers in their efforts to enhance student motivation while maintaining traditional pedagogical values.

This research bridges Western educational psychology with Islamic pedagogical principles, while enriching understanding of the effectiveness of cross-cultural education. The study emphasizes the importance of cultural sensitivity in educational research and provides a culturally appropriate research model for religious education contexts.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Empathetic Communication in an Educational Context

Empathic communication is widely recognized as a key element in building effective teacher–student relationships. Empathy is defined as the ability to understand and feel another person's emotional

state while maintaining appropriate professional boundaries (Aldrup et al., 2022) , and consistently associated with positive educational outcomes. A systematic review indicates that teachers with high empathy promote greater classroom engagement, build trust, and create emotional safety (Aldrup et al., 2022; Zhang, 2022) .

Theoretically, empathetic communication is rooted in *DeVito's Interpersonal Communication Model*, which positions empathy as one of five fundamental dimensions alongside openness, supportiveness, positiveness, and equality that contribute to effective interpersonal exchange (DeVito, 2019) . In the classroom context, empathy is manifested through teachers' responses to students' emotional cues and their ability to convey concern while maintaining the structure and clarity of instructions.

However, recent findings suggest that the effects of empathy are not always positive or linear. Emerging evidence indicates that excessive empathy can inadvertently lower academic expectations, reduce teaching assertiveness, or foster student dependence (Ampofo et al., 2025) . These studies encourage a more context-sensitive interpretation of teacher empathy, particularly in different cultural and pedagogical environments.

2. Student Learning Motivation and *Self-Determination Theory*

In educational psychology, student learning motivation is generally conceptualized through the *Self-Determination Theory* (*SDT*) framework developed by Deci and Ryan (2020). *SDT* distinguishes between intrinsic motivation, which is driven by interest or internal satisfaction, and extrinsic motivation, which is driven by external incentives such as grades, praise, or parental approval.

This theory argues that motivation is optimal when three psychological needs are met: autonomy, competence, and *relatedness*. In this context, empathy supports the need for "relatedness" by fostering meaningful interpersonal relationships between teachers and students. Research indicates that teacher empathy enhances student engagement and motivation through *a sense of belonging* and emotional security (Ge et al., 2021; Sun et al., 2023) .

However, the relationship between empathy and motivation can be influenced by contextual variables, including teaching styles and cultural norms. For example, an overly supportive environment that reduces autonomy can actually decrease intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2020) . This dynamic is particularly relevant in traditional discipline-oriented educational settings, such as Islamic schools.

3. Islamic Pedagogy and Cultural Interpretation of Empathy

Islamic educational philosophy is rooted in the principle *of Tarbiyah*, which emphasizes holistic development encompassing spiritual, moral, and intellectual aspects (Wulandari & Hadinata, 2025) . Teachers (*Murabbi)* in Islamic environments play a dual role as academic instructors and moral guides, balancing *rahmah* (compassion) and *hikmah* (wisdom). This dual role creates a structured yet emotionally rich learning environment.

Unlike the egalitarian norms of Western classrooms, Islamic pedagogy traditionally maintains a hierarchical teacher–student relationship based on respect and discipline. In this context, emotional expressions, including empathy, are interpreted through a cultural and religious lens that may not align with secular psychological models. Excessive empathy may be viewed as a loss of authority or a disruption of spiritual discipline, particularly in tahfidz programs that require precision and repetition as keys to success.

These cultural nuances emphasize the need to interpret the empathy–motivation relationship in Islamic education as a *culturally contingent* phenomenon, not a universal one. Therefore, localized theoretical and pedagogical models tailored to the cultural context are required (Japeri et al., 2023; Ampofo et al., 2025) .

4. Research Gap

While many studies have explored teacher empathy in general or secular contexts, empirical research examining its role in Islamic education, particularly in intensive tahfidz programs, remains limited. Most measurement instruments and conceptual models originate from Western contexts, potentially failing to fully capture the dynamics of Islamic pedagogy or student motivations rooted in spiritual constructs such as *ikhlas* (sincerity), *taqwa* (consciousness of Allah), or *barakah* (divine blessing).

These limitations hinder the development of culturally responsive educational strategies. This study addresses this need by quantitatively examining how empathetic communication influences intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in the context of challenging Qur'an memorization, challenging the assumption that empathy always has a positive impact, while offering insights into its cultural contextualization.

METHOD

Research Design

This study employs a quantitative *cross-sectional* survey design to examine the relationship between teachers' empathetic communication and students' motivation in the context of Islamic education, specifically the Qur'an memorization program. The *cross-sectional* approach was chosen to capture the current relationship between variables, while acknowledging its limitations in establishing causal relationships.

Participants

Research Setting

Data collection was conducted at four Islamic boarding schools in the city and regency of Bandung, which have special programs for memorizing the Qur'an (*tahfidz*), from March to May 2024. The institutions were selected based on the reputation of their intensive memorization programs and their willingness to participate in educational research.

Sampling Techniques and Sample Size Determination

This study used *purposive sampling* to recruit participants from intensive tahfidz programs. The sample size was calculated using G*Power 3.1.9.7 software for multiple regression analysis with *a medium effect size* ($f^2 = 0.15$), $\alpha = 0.05$, *power* $= 0.80$, and two predictors. This calculation resulted in a minimum of 68 participants. The final sample consisted of 83 students, exceeding the minimum requirement by 22%.

Participant Characteristics

A total of 83 students participated (response rate: 89.2%) with the following inclusion criteria:

1. Have actively participated in a memorization program for at least six months

2. Aged between 15–18 years

3. Voluntarily agreed to participate

Exclusion criteria included students with documented learning disabilities or those planning to withdraw from the program during the study period.

Sample characteristics:

- Average age: 16.4 years (SD = 1.2)

- Gender distribution: 48 males (57.8%), 35 females (42.2%)

- Average program duration: 2.3 years (range: 6 months – 4 years)

- Average memorization achievement: 8.7 juz (SD = 4.2)

Research instruments

Empathic Communication Scale

Dyadic Interpersonal Communication Scale – Empathy Subscale (Richmond & McCroskey, 1990) adapted for the Islamic education context. The subscale consists of 12 items measuring students' perceptions of teachers' empathetic communication behavior (e.g*., "My teacher understands my feelings about memorizing the Qur'an"*). Assessment uses a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). This adapted version shows very high internal reliability (α = 0.916) and adequate construct validity based on *confirmatory factor analysis* (CFI = 0.942, RMSEA = 0.078).

Student Motivation in Memorizing the Quran

The *Motivation in Quranic Memorization Scale* was specifically developed to measure two dimensions of motivation: First, the Intrinsic Motivation Subscale (14 items, α = 0.843): Measures personal satisfaction and fulfillment derived from memorizing the Quran (example: *"I memorize the Quran because it gives me inner peace")*. Second, the Extrinsic Motivation Subscale (15 items, α = 0.811): Measures motivation driven by external rewards or recognition (e.g., *"I memorize the Quran to receive praise from my teacher")*. Both subscales use a 5-point Likert scale. Factor analysis confirmed a two-factor structure with *eigenvalue* values > 1.0 and *factor loadings* > 0.50.

Research Procedure

Data collection was conducted using a standard protocol by trained research assistants during regular class hours. Questionnaire completion took approximately 25 minutes under direct supervision. Participants were assured of confidentiality and given the right to withdraw without consequences.

Data Analysis

Statistical analysis was performed using SPSS 28.0, including:

1. Descriptive Statistics: Mean, standard deviation, and variable distribution characteristics

2. Assumption Tests: Normality (*Shapiro-Wilk*), multicollinearity (VIF < 5.0), homoscedasticity (*Breusch-Pagan test*), and residual independence (*Durbin-Watson statistic*)

3. Main Analysis: Hierarchical multiple regression with demographic variables in Step 1 and empathetic communication in Step 2

4. *Effect Size* Reporting: Cohen's f^2 for practical significance interpretation

5. *Post-hoc* Analysis: Simple correlation and confidence intervals for regression coefficients

The statistical significance level is set at $p < 0.05$, with *effect size* interpretations following Cohen's conventions (small: $f^2 = 0.02$; medium: $f^2 = 0.15$; large: $f^2 = 0.35$).

Ethical Considerations

This study obtained approval from *the Institutional Review Board* of Bandung Islamic University. *Informed* consent was obtained from all students, as well as from the boarding school administration for those under 18 years of age. Data were collected anonymously using identification codes, and all data were stored securely and accessible only to the research team.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Preliminary Analysis

Assumption Tests

All statistical assumptions for hierarchical multiple regression analysis were well met. The Shapiro-Wilk test showed a normal distribution for all variables: empathetic communication (W = 0.976, p = 0.084), intrinsic motivation (W = 0.979, p = 0.119), and extrinsic motivation (W = 0.981, p = 0.104). Multicollinearity is not an issue, with all VIF values below 2.5. The Durbin-Watson statistic (d = 1.89) indicates residual independence, and visual inspection of scatterplots confirms the absence of homoscedasticity.

Reliability and Validity Tests

The internal consistency reliability coefficients exceeded the acceptable threshold for all instruments. The adapted *Dyadic Interpersonal Communication Scale – Empathy subscale* demonstrated excellent reliability (α = 0.916). The newly developed *Quranic Memorization Motivation Scale* showed good reliability on the intrinsic motivation subscale (α = 0.843) and extrinsic motivation subscale (α = 0.811).

Construct validity was supported through confirmatory factor analysis. The empathy scale showed an acceptable *model fit* (CFI = 0.942, RMSEA = 0.078), while the motivation scale confirmed a clear two-factor structure with eigenvalues greater than 1.0 and *factor loadings* above 0.50 for all items.

Descriptive Statistics

Empathic communication scores ranged from 2.1 to 4.8 (M = 3.4, SD = 0.7), indicating that teachers' perceived empathy levels were in the moderate category. Intrinsic motivation scores were relatively high (M = 4.1, SD = 0.6, range: 2.3–5.0), while extrinsic motivation showed greater variation (M = 3.2, SD = 0.8, range: 1.4–4.9).

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics and Intercorrelations Among Study Variables

Variable	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Age	1	1.2	—						
2. Gender†	—	—	.12	—					
3. Program duration (years)	2.3	1.1	.34**	-.08	—				
4. Memorization completion (*Juz*)	8.7	4	.41**	.05	.67**	—			
5. Empathetic communication	3	0	-.18	.09	-.21	-.23*	—		
6. Intrinsic motivation	4.	0	.28*	-.15	.45**	.52**	-.35**	—	
7. Extrinsic motivation	3	0	.19	.11	.38**	.44**	-.51**	.62**	—

Note. N = 83. †Gender coded as 0 = male, 1 = female. *p < .05. **p < .01.

Main Analysis

Hierarchical Multiple Regression: Intrinsic Motivation

Hierarchical multiple regression was conducted to examine the relationship between empathetic communication and intrinsic motivation, while controlling for demographic variables.

Table 2

Hierarchical Regression Analysis Predicting Intrinsic Motivation

Variable	Step		Step	
	β	*t*	β	*t*
Age	.375***	3.82	.380***	4.21
Gender	-.079	-0.85	-.079	-0.95
Program duration	.199*	1.98	.199	2.12
Memorization completion	.570***	5.64	.570***	6.38
Empathetic communication	—	—	-.261*	-2.48
R	.423		.519	
ΔR²	—		.096**	
F	14.26***		16.71***	

Note. N = 83. *p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

In the first step, demographic variables explained 42.3% of the variation in intrinsic motivation, $F_{(4, 78)}$ = 14.26, $p < 0.001$. The addition of empathetic communication in the second step significantly increased the explained variation, ΔR^2 = 0.096, $F_{(1, 77)}$ = 15.31, $p < 0.001$. The final model explains 51.9% of the variation in intrinsic motivation, $F_{(5, 77)}$ = 16.71, $p < 0.001$.

Contrary to theoretical predictions, empathetic communication negatively predicted intrinsic motivation (β = -0.261, t = -2.48, p = 0.015) with a moderate effect (f^2 = 0.56). Among the control variables, memory achievement (β = 0.570, $p < 0.001$) and age (β = 0.380, $p < 0.001$) were significant positive predictors.

Hierarchical Multiple Regression: Extrinsic Motivation

Parallel analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between empathetic communication and extrinsic motivation.

Table 3

Hierarchical Regression Analysis Predicting Extrinsic Motivation

Variable	Step		Step	
	β	t	β	t
Age	.507***	4.85	.506***	5.73
Gender	.024	0.24	.024	0.29
Program duration	.152	1.44	.152	1.71
Memorization completion	.537***	5.01	.537***	6.09
Empathetic communication	—	—	-.469***	-4.89
R	.341		.588	
ΔR²	—		.247***	
F	10.08***		22.04***	

Note. N = 83. *$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$.

Demographic variables in the first step explained 34.1% of the variation in extrinsic motivation, $F_{(4, 78)} = 10.08$, $p < 0.001$. The addition of empathetic communication in the second step resulted in a significant increase in the explained variation, $\Delta R^2 = 0.247$, $F_{(1, 77)} = 46.38$, $p < 0.001$. The final model explains 58.8% of the variation in extrinsic motivation, $F_{(5, 77)} = 22.04$, $p < 0.001$.

Empathetic communication shows a strong negative relationship with extrinsic motivation (β = -0.469, $t = -4.89$, $p < 0.001$) with a large effect ($f^2 = 1.08$). Age (β = 0.506, $p < 0.001$) and memorization achievement (β = 0.537, $p < 0.001$) remained significant positive predictors.

Further Analysis

Comparison of Effect Sizes

The negative relationship between empathetic communication and motivation differs significantly based on the type of motivation. According to Cohen's guidelines, the relationship with intrinsic motivation has a moderate effect ($f^2 = 0.56$), while the relationship with extrinsic motivation has a large effect (, $f^2 = 1.08$). This indicates the presence of different underlying mechanisms for each type of motivation.

Confidence Interval

The 95% confidence interval for the empathetic communication coefficient is:

- Intrinsic motivation: β = -0.261, CI [-0.468, -0.054]

- Extrinsic motivation: β = -0.469, CI [-0.656, -0.282]

Both confidence intervals do not include the zero value, confirming the statistical significance of the negative relationship.

Additional Correlation Analysis

Bivariate correlation shows that empathetic communication is negatively correlated with intrinsic motivation ($r = -0.35$, $p < 0.01$) and extrinsic motivation ($r = -0.51$, $p < 0.01$). The stronger correlation

with extrinsic motivation is consistent with the regression findings, indicating that empathetic communication has a greater negative impact on externally motivated behavior.

Summary of Key Findings

This study yielded three main findings that challenge common assumptions about empathetic communication in education:

1. Negative Empathy–Motivation Relationship – Contrary to theoretical predictions and the majority of previous research, teachers' empathetic communication negatively predicted both types of student motivation in the context of Quran memorization.

2. Differential Effects Based on Motivation Type – The negative effect is stronger for extrinsic motivation (β = -0.469, f^2 = 1.08) than for intrinsic motivation (β = -0.261, f^2 = 0.56).

3. Large Effect Size – Despite the counterintuitive results, this relationship demonstrates substantial practical significance, with medium to large effect sizes exceeding conventional thresholds for meaningful educational interventions.

These findings suggest that the relationship between teacher empathy and student motivation may be more complex and context-dependent than previously understood, particularly in traditional religious educational settings that emphasize hierarchical teacher–student relationships and academic rigor.

DISCUSSION

Interpretation of Key Findings The Empathy Paradox

1. The Empathy Paradox in Islamic Education

Contrary to dominant Western theory, this study found a statistically significant negative relationship between teachers' empathetic communication and students' intrinsic motivation (β = -0.261) and extrinsic motivation (β = -0.469) in a Qur'an memorization program. These findings challenge the assumption that teacher empathy always provides universal benefits (Aldrup et al., 2022; Zhang, 2022) , and instead suggest the existence of a cultural paradox in highly structured Islamic learning environments where increased teacher empathy may be interpreted by students as a decrease in academic expectations or a relaxation of learning standards.

These results deviate from the common assumption in educational psychology that empathy universally increases motivation (Sarwer et al., 2024) . This deviation underscores the need to revisit the *one-size-fits-all* approach in teacher–student affective dynamics in the global educational context.

This interpretation aligns with concerns raised by previous research, where excessive empathy has the potential to reduce student independence and increase dependency (Ampofo et al., 2025; Y. S. D. Zhang & Noels, 2024) . In the context of Islamic pedagogy, which places discipline, authority, and spiritual development at the core of empathy, teachers' empathy without clear boundaries may disrupt students' perceptions of the seriousness of learning and reduce their motivation to learn (Okonofua et al., 2016) .

The main findings of this study reveal an unexpected negative correlation between teachers' empathetic communication and students' learning motivation (-0.388), contrary to most general

educational literature. These results present a paradox that requires in-depth interpretation within the context of Islamic education.

This unexpected negative correlation can be explained through several theoretical perspectives. First, over-empathy or excessive empathy may reduce the academic rigor required in learning. When teachers are overly empathetic, they may tend to lower academic standards or provide excessive leniency, which can actually reduce students' intrinsic motivation to achieve . Second, in the context of Islamic education, there are traditional values that emphasize discipline and hierarchical structures in teacher-student relationships. Excessive empathy may be interpreted as a weakness in the teacher's authority, which in traditional Islamic culture is considered important for creating an effective learning environment.

Third, there is a possibility of conceptual confusion between empathy and permissiveness in the context of this study. Students may interpret empathetic communication from teachers as a sign of low expectations toward them, which paradoxically reduces their motivation to achieve. This aligns with the findings of Y. S. D. Zhang & Noels (2024) in , which indicate that in certain cultural contexts, teacher empathy can be perceived as an indicator of low academic standards.

Differential Impact on Types of Motivation

2. Differences in Influence on Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

This study also found that the negative relationship between empathy and motivation is stronger for extrinsic motivation (large effect, $f^2 = 1.08$) compared to intrinsic motivation (moderate effect, $f^2 = 0.56$). These findings indicate that while both types of motivation are affected, motivation derived from external factors such as praise, recognition, and rewards is more sensitive to changes in teacher behavior. Excessive empathy may unintentionally weaken extrinsic motivation by reducing performance-based expectations (. This phenomenon is related to the concept of empathy fatigue, where the natural capacity for caring becomes excessive and can lead to a decline in maintaining strict performance standards (Figley, 2002) . Research indicates that when teachers overly focus on empathetic aspects, they may lower their academic expectations of students, which can ultimately hinder students' extrinsic motivation to achieve (Hornstra et al., 2018) .

Conversely, intrinsic motivation stemming from internal satisfaction and spiritual fulfillment demonstrates greater resilience, consistent with the premise *of Self-Determination Theory* that intrinsic drives are more resistant to external changes (Ryan & Deci, 2020) . Nevertheless, this negative trend still indicates that empathetic communication that is not aligned can subtly erode students' internal motivation when perceived as a form of leniency.

It is highly likely that students in a tahfidz environment view excessive empathy as a weakening of the expected discipline, especially when spiritual goals are closely linked to perseverance and self-control. Therefore, understanding students' interpretations of teachers' behavior becomes a crucial factor.

Further analysis shows that the negative impact of teachers' empathetic communication is stronger on extrinsic motivation (-0.469) than on intrinsic motivation (-0.261). This difference provides important insights into the psychological mechanisms involved in the empathy-motivation relationship.

The stronger negative effect on extrinsic motivation can be explained through the self-determination theory developed by Ryan & Deci (2020) . Highly empathetic teachers may tend to reduce external pressure and the reward-punishment system traditionally used to motivate students extrinsically. In the context of Islamic education, where assessment systems and academic competition often serve as strong external motivators, reducing this pressure can significantly decrease students' extrinsic motivation.

Conversely, intrinsic motivation demonstrates greater resilience to empathetic teacher communication. This suggests that motivation originating from within students is more stable and less susceptible to changes in teacher communication style. These findings align with research by Cooper (2004) and Warren (2017) , which indicate that intrinsic motivation tends to be more resistant to external factors compared to extrinsic motivation.

Contextual Considerations

3. Cultural Context and Pedagogical Implications

Traditionally, Islamic pedagogy combines compassion (*rahmah*) with wisdom (*hikmah*), forming a framework in which emotional support is valued, yet remains within the bounds of respect and discipline (Wulandari & Hadinata, 2025) . In this context, empathy is not something to be rejected, but must be expressed appropriately according to cultural norms, while maintaining the moral and spiritual authority of the teacher.

This finding emphasizes the importance of culturally calibrated teacher training (Warren, 2018). Empathy, when conveyed through Islamic values such as *ikhlas* (sincerity) and *ta'dib* (d manners), can remain an asset without weakening teaching authority (Hardaker & Sabki, 2018; Taufikin et al., 2025) . This highlights the need for a contextual pedagogical framework that integrates affective and disciplinary aspects in a balanced manner (Bialystok & Kukar, 2017) .

Policy makers and boarding school administrators may consider developing specialized training modules to equip tahfidz teachers with the ability to balance affective communication with structured discipline, so that empathy serves to strengthen, rather than diminish, pedagogical authority (Sacre et al., 2023; Jaffe et al., 2025) .

The cultural and philosophical context of Islamic education provides an important interpretive framework for understanding the findings of this study (Hardaker & Sabki, 2018) . In Islamic educational philosophy, there is a delicate balance between rahma (compassion) and hikmah (wisdom). Teachers in the Islamic tradition are expected to show compassion toward students while also maintaining authority and high academic standards (Safa, 2024) .

The integration of traditional and modern approaches in Islamic education faces its own challenges (Warren, 2018). Empathetic communication derived from Western educational theory may not be fully compatible with hierarchical values in traditional Islamic education (Bialystok & Kukar, 2018). This creates tension between the desire to implement modern pedagogical practices and the preservation of deeply rooted traditional values.

Cultural sensitivity is also an important factor in understanding these findings (Lin & Chung, 2024) . The concept of empathy in a Western context may have different connotations and expectations in Indonesian culture and Islamic education (Warren, 2017) . Further research is needed to explore how the concept of empathy can be adapted to local and religious values (Jaffe et al., 2025) .

Comparison with Previous Research

The findings of this study show limited alignment with some studies indicating negative effects of teacher empathy. Y. S. D. Zhang & Noels (2024) in their study found that in certain cultural contexts, excessive teacher empathy can reduce academic expectations and ultimately lower student achievement. However, these findings contrast with the majority of the literature showing a positive relationship between teacher empathy and student achievement and motivation.

Previous research consistently indicates that teacher empathy can enhance students' academic achievement, learning motivation, and the quality of teacher-student relationships. Studies by Cadima et al., (2015) , Warren (2017) , and Prananto et al., (2025) all demonstrate a positive correlation between teacher empathy and various positive student outcomes.

The unique contribution of this study lies in its focus on the Islamic education context, which has not been extensively explored in the international literature. As the first quantitative study specifically examining the relationship between teacher empathy and student motivation in an Islamic education setting, this research offers new insights into how cultural and religious factors may moderate the relationship between teacher empathy and student outcomes.

Theoretical Implications of Empathetic Communication Theory

4. Theoretical Contributions

This study expands DeVito's *Interpersonal Communication Model* by showing that the effectiveness of empathy is not a universal trait but depends on context. These findings also refine *Self-Determination Theory* by highlighting that *relatedness* facilitated by empathy can interact differently with student motivation in hierarchical educational systems. The concept of *empathy paradox* that emerges from this study provides a more culturally nuanced perspective in the global discourse on teacher–student interaction.

These findings indicate the need for contextual adaptation in empathetic communication theory, particularly in religious educational settings. Theories originating from Western contexts may need to be reformulated when applied to Islamic education, which is rich in hierarchical structures and traditional values. The integration of Islamic pedagogical principles such as *adab* (ethics), *ta'dib* (character education), and *ta'lim* (knowledge transfer) is crucial and needs to be harmonized with modern empathetic communication theory to create a culturally relevant framework.

Theory of Motivation in a Religious Context

This study also expands motivation theory by emphasizing cultural specificity, where spiritual motivation has the potential to become a third dimension beyond the common intrinsic–extrinsic motivation dichotomy. In Islamic education, the dynamics of teacher authority are not only based on academic competence but also grounded in moral and spiritual authority—factors that influence students' responses to teacher empathy.

Practical Implications

Teacher Training Programs

The research findings emphasize the importance of balance in empathetic communication training. Training programs need to internalize cultural sensitivity, with an awareness that forms of empathy

that are effective in one culture may not be effective in another. Islamic pedagogical values must be integrated so that teachers can express empathy without losing authority or academic standards, in line with the principle of balance between *rahmah* (compassion) and *hikmah* (wisdom).

Institutional Policies

Islamic educational institutions need to formulate guidelines for teacher-student interaction that accommodate traditional values while adopting effective modern educational practices. Evaluations of teacher communication effectiveness should consider cultural and religious dimensions. In addition, teacher professional development frameworks should include ongoing training in expressing empathy in ways that maintain motivation in the context of Islamic education.

Limitations

This study has several limitations. First, the relatively small sample size (N = 83) limits the generalizability of the findings; further research with a larger and more representative sample is needed. Second, the *cross-sectional* design does not allow for the determination of causal relationships; a longitudinal design is needed to track the influence of teacher empathy on motivation from one time to an . Third, these findings are specific to the context of Islamic education in Indonesia and may not be applicable to other cultural contexts, including Islamic institutions in different countries. Fourth, the use of measurement instruments developed in the West may not fully capture local cultural and religious nuances. Finally, contextual variables such as institutional factors, school organizational culture, and broader social dynamics were not measured in this study.

Future Research Directions

Further research is recommended to adopt a longitudinal design, involve multiple research sites (*multi-site*), and utilize qualitative approaches to understand students' perceptions of empathy in Islamic educational settings. The development of culturally adapted instruments is also essential to accurately measure teachers' empathy outside Western contexts.

CONCLUSION

Based on quantitative analysis of 83 students in the Al-Qur'an memorization program at several leading Islamic boarding schools, this study found that teachers' empathetic communication is significantly negatively correlated with students' learning motivation, both intrinsic ($\beta = -0.261$, $p = 0.015$) and extrinsic ($\beta = -0.469$, $p < 0.001$). This negative effect is stronger on extrinsic motivation than intrinsic motivation, indicating the presence of different psychological mechanisms at work on the two types of motivation.

The answer to the main research question shows that, contrary to the dominant assumption in Western literature, teacher empathy in the context of traditional Islamic education does not always increase motivation. Instead, over-empathy can be interpreted by students as a decrease in academic expectations or lax standards, which actually erodes the drive to learn, especially motivation that comes from external incentives.

For the first sub-question, findings indicate that extrinsic motivation is far more vulnerable to the negative effects of excessive empathy because it depends on performance expectations, rewards, and formal recognition. In contrast, intrinsic motivation rooted in internal satisfaction and spiritual goals demonstrates greater resilience, although it remains affected. This phenomenon expands *Self-*

Determination Theory by emphasizing the need to consider spiritual motivation as a third dimension unique to Islamic education.

Addressing the second question, the practical implication is the need for culturally sensitive teacher training modules that integrate the principles *of rahmah* (compassion) and *hikmah* (wisdom) with rigorous academic discipline. Teachers need to be trained to express empathy within limits that maintain moral and spiritual authority, so that emotional support strengthens, rather than weakens, student motivation.

Thus, this study contributes two important insights: first, it introduces the concept of the "empathy paradox," challenging the universalism of empathetic communication theory in education; second, it offers a theoretical and practical foundation for designing teaching strategies in Islamic educational institutions that preserve the integrity of traditional values while leveraging modern empirical findings.