

Religious Fundamentalism: Constructs and Measurement for Indonesian Muslims

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ABSTRACT

Religious fundamentalism constitutes an attitudinal and behavioral approach to religious adherence underpinned by an intratextual cognitive framework, which prioritizes the literal interpretation and comprehension of sacred texts. This principle-oriented cognitive paradigm is not contingent upon meaning but rather on process, where in the text itself dictates the methodology of its own reading and interpretation. Consequently, this approach negates dialogical engagement, reducing the dichotomy to either adherence to textual truth or its rejection, thereby fostering epistemic closure to alternative sources of truth construction. While prior studies have sought to quantify religious fundamentalism in Indonesia through diverse constructs and instruments, none have explicitly centered on the intratextual cognitive dimension, raising critical questions regarding the development of a robust measurement framework grounded in this paradigm. Employing *confirmatory factor analysis* (CFA) and Rasch model analysis with a sample of 323 respondents, this study addresses this gap. The CFA results demonstrated that the proposed construct of religious fundamentalism, comprising six dimensions (*divine, inerrant, authoritative, self-interpretive, privileged, and unchanging*) and operationalized through 12 items, yielded a model with satisfactory fit indices, wherein 9 items exhibited validity and 3 were invalid. Concurrently, Rasch model analysis confirms that all items conform to the model's expectations, effectively measuring intratextual paradigm-based fundamentalism. Notably, certain items exhibited high difficulty indices, attributable to respondent ambivalence when engaging with contentious statements. These findings present a validated instrument for evaluating religious fundamentalism through an intratextual approach, specifically adapted to the socioreligious framework of Indonesian Muslim communities. Consequently, this tool is capable of capturing the manifestations of religious fundamentalism in Indonesia with an empirical foundation, thereby enabling a more precise understanding and analysis of religious dynamics within Indonesian society.

INTRODUCTION

Religious fundamentalism is broadly conceptualized as the propensity of specific groups or individuals to adopt a rigid adherence to textual literalism in interpreting sacred scriptures, dogmas, or ideologies, coupled with a staunch conviction in the necessity of binary categorization into 'ingroup' and 'outgroup' distinctions (Altemeyer & Hunsberger, 1992; Kunst et al., 2014).

Furthermore, this phenomenon entails an emphasis on notions of ‘purification’ – the ideological imperative to restore doctrinal orthodoxy – and a retrogressive aspiration to reinstate foundational principles perceived by fundamentalists as having deviated from their original trajectory (Nagata, 2001). The term ‘fundamentalism’ is frequently conflated with semantically adjacent concepts such as extremism, Islamism, and jihadism, which are often employed interchangeably in discourse. Such terminological ambiguity carries adverse implications for the integrity of religious communities at large, as it risks homogenizing diverse theological frameworks and perpetuating stigmatization (Winter & Hasan, 2016), such as the labeling of fundamentalism on certain Islamic educational institutions and pesantren (Islamic boarding schools) in Indonesia, as well as the dissolution of civil society organizations allegedly adhering to fundamentalist religious ideologies. Despite these definitional complexities, measuring religious fundamentalism continues to pose a critical challenge in religious studies – particularly in the context of Indonesian Muslims, where sociocultural, doctrinal, and hermeneutic specificities necessitate a contextually tailored instrument. This study bridges that gap by developing and validating a culturally sensitive scale designed to assess Islamic religious fundamentalism based on intratextual cognitive orientations.

In recent years, scholars have sought to investigate the influence and fundamental relationship between religious fundamentalism and various facets of societal life. To situate this inquiry within broader contemporary discourse, certain studies posit that religious fundamentalism correlates with adherence to COVID-19 pandemic conspiracy theories, fostering a fragmentary comprehension of the pandemic. This phenomenon has been observed both in contexts mediated by diminished religiosity (Łowicki et al., 2022) and independently of such factors (Antes, 2021; Käsehage, 2021). Furthermore, religious fundamentalism has been linked to heightened delusional ideation during the pandemic (Sobol et al., 2022). These findings not only demonstrate the profound societal impact of religious fundamentalism but also reveal a critical need for measurement tools that are both culturally attuned and theoretically rigorous. The absence of contextually validated instruments – particularly in Muslim-majority contexts such as Indonesia – significantly impedes our ability to meaningfully and rigorously examine the psychological and sociopolitical mechanisms underlying these observed relationships.

Building on these findings, empirical evidence indicates that religious fundamentalism exhibits a negative association with climate concern and pro-environmental behavior, whereas spirituality demonstrates a positive correlation with such attitudes and practices (Skalski et al., 2022). Additionally, religious fundamentalism has been shown to amplify both individualistic tendencies and collective identity formation at both individual and group levels (Razaghi et al., 2020). These multifaceted empirical findings underscore the enduring academic relevance of religious fundamentalism as a subject of rigorous scholarly inquiry.

However, a subsequent concern lies in the inherent variability and divergent perspectives that characterize the measurement of religious fundamentalism. Over time, several constructs have emerged to assess this phenomenon in individuals or groups. The foundational framework was established by Altemeyer dan Hunsberger (1992), later expanded by Paul Williamson et al. (2010), who posited six dimensions of fundamentalism: *divine authority, scriptural inerrancy, authoritative interpretation, self-interpretive exclusivity, privileged religious status, and doctrinal immutability* (Paul Williamson et al., 2010). Additionally, the *Multi-Dimensional Fundamentalism Inventory* (MDFI), developed by Liht et al. (2011), conceptualizes religious fundamentalism through seven dialectical dimensions: *protection of revealed traditions versus rational criticism; heteronomy versus autonomy and relativism; traditionalism versus progressive religious change; sacralization versus*

secularization of the public sphere; perception of secular culture as a threat versus its embrace; pluralism versus religious centrism; and millennial-messianic imminence versus prophetic skepticism (Liht et al., 2011). Both constructs have undergone rigorous validity and reliability testing, though their samples predominantly comprised Christian and Jewish adherents, with Muslim participants constituting a minority cohort.

When examining the development of religious fundamentalism constructs in Indonesia, it is essential to consider the framework formulated by Putra & Wongkaren (2010), which comprises 18 items and is not categorized into dimensional aspects. The scholars argue that existing religious fundamentalism constructs proposed by Altemeyer dan Hunsberger (1992), Liht et al. (2011) dan Paul Williamson et al. (2010) are inadequate for measuring this phenomenon within Indonesia's predominantly Muslim societal context. Consequently, they postulate that the distinct sociocultural and religious dynamics of Indonesian society necessitate the development of a tailored religious fundamentalism construct that aligns more precisely with local realities (Putra & Wongkaren, 2010). This adaptation underscores the imperative of contextualizing theoretical frameworks to reflect the unique characteristics of specific populations, particularly in religiously heterogeneous or non-Western settings.

A subsequent issue arises when examining the cognitive frameworks of fundamentalist groups through the theoretical lens proposed by Hood et al. (2005). The defining characteristic of fundamentalist thought, as posited by the authors, lies in its *intratextual* orientation, which prioritizes a literalist hermeneutic approach to sacred texts. This epistemological style emphasizes process over content, asserting that the text itself prescribes the methodology for its interpretation. Consequently, fundamentalist paradigms preclude dialogical engagement, reducing interpretive possibilities to a binary adherence to or rejection of the text's perceived absolute truth (Hood et al., 2005). In contrast, Hood et al. (2005) delineate *intertextual* reasoning as the cognitive hallmark of non-fundamentalist groups. This approach is inherently tentative, contingent, and adaptive, characterized by its responsiveness to evolving socio-cultural contexts. Non-fundamentalist hermeneutics further incorporate diverse authoritative textual sources, thereby framing truth as a relative construct derived from what the authors term "authoritative textual interplay." This intertextual openness aligns conceptually with modern epistemological notions of *modernity* and *knowledge production*, which valorize iterative revision and pluralistic input in response to external systemic changes (Hood et al., 2005). While both intratextual and intertextual paradigms rely ideologically on primary authoritative sources within their belief systems, a fundamental epistemological distinction persists in their respective treatments of sacred truth. The former rigidly upholds textual absolutism, whereas the latter acknowledges interpretive fluidity, contingent upon dynamic engagement with contextual and extratextual variables.

A critical examination of existing scholarship reveals that the conceptualization of religious fundamentalism through an intratextual paradigm remains predominantly confined to the measurement framework established by Paul Williamson et al. (2010), whose research focused extensively on Christian populations in Western societies. Although their model effectively identified core doctrinal dimensions within Christian traditions, it has yet to be systematically adapted or validated for Muslim populations – particularly in socio-religiously diverse settings like Indonesia. This reveals a significant gap in the literature: the lack of a psychometrically robust, intratextually derived scale that aligns with the epistemological, hermeneutical, and theological nuances of Islamic religiosity.

Religious fundamentalism characterized by intratextual hermeneutics, a rigid adherence to literal scriptural interpretation, constitutes a dynamically evolving phenomenon that necessitates further empirical investigation, particularly within the Indonesian context. In light of this lacuna, the current study endeavors to refine and contextualize the measurement construct of religious fundamentalism by adapting Paul Williamson et al.'s (2010) scale. This study specifically aims to reconcile the theoretical and methodological divide between prevailing Western-centric measurement paradigms and the unique doctrinal characteristics of Indonesian Islam.

This adaptation incorporates critical modifications to align with the socio-cultural and religious nuances of Indonesia's Muslim-majority demographic. Specifically, the research addresses the unique theological, cultural, and interpretive frameworks inherent to Islamic communities, which diverge significantly from the Christian-centric models prevalent in Western academia. Moreover, this study conducts a rigorous psychometric evaluation of the adapted instrument, assessing its construct validity, reliability, and methodological robustness in measuring religious fundamentalism within Indonesian society. By integrating culturally responsive indicators and validating the scale's applicability across diverse Islamic traditions, the research aims to advance a more inclusive and epistemologically sound paradigm for analyzing religious fundamentalism in non-Western, pluralistic contexts.

METHODS

This study employed a quantitative methodology, utilizing numerical data to evaluate the psychometric properties of the religious fundamentalism constructs under investigation. The research incorporated two advanced analytical techniques: (1) *Confirmatory Factor Analysis* (CFA) and (2) *Rasch Model Analysis*. These methods were applied to rigorously assess the extent to which the items comprising the religious fundamentalism construct effectively capture the underlying values and subjective perceptions of fundamentalism inherent in an individual's religious orientation. Specifically, CFA validates the theoretical structure of the construct, while the Rasch Model provides probabilistic insights into item functionality and measurement precision, ensuring robust empirical validation of the latent trait being examined. CFA was utilized to evaluate the theoretical dimensionality of the adapted measurement model by assessing the degree to which observed variables correspond to their hypothesized latent constructs. This approach is especially valuable for verifying factorial structures derived from established theoretical frameworks Paul Williamson et al.'s (2010), as it enables researchers to examine model fit indices and inter-factor relationships within a structured analytical framework. Complementarily, Rasch Model Analysis provides a probabilistic assessment grounded in *item response theory* (IRT), offering granular insights into item performance characteristics. Specifically, it evaluated item difficulty parameters, person ability estimates, scale unidimensionality, and item fit statistics. This allows for a detailed examination of how effectively each item captures the target latent trait across heterogeneous respondent populations.

The combined application of CFA and Rasch modeling served a dual validation function: CFA establishes the conceptual soundness and factorial validity of the measurement model, while Rasch analysis ensures item-level reliability and measurement invariance across diverse subgroups. This integrative approach not only reinforces the psychometric robustness of the instrument but also enhances its cross-cultural applicability—particularly in complex socioreligious contexts like Indonesia.

The dataset in this study is categorized into two distinct components: (1) construct data, operationalized as item-level measurements, and (2) respondent data. Prior to data collection, the instrument underwent a rigorous cultural and linguistic validation process to ensure both semantic precision and contextual appropriateness. A panel of three bilingual experts – specializing in Islamic studies and psychometrics, with substantial experience in scale adaptation within Indonesian socioreligious contexts—conducted this validation. The process comprised forward-and back-translation procedures, followed by systematic expert evaluation to verify conceptual equivalence and cultural relevance.

The construct data derives from a 12-item instrument termed the *Intratextual Fundamentalism Scale* (Paul Williamson et al., 2010), which delineates six theoretical dimensions of religious fundamentalism: *divine* (attributing sacred authority to texts), *inerrant* (perceiving texts as infallible), *authoritative* (viewing texts as ultimate moral directives), *self-interpretive* (asserting texts as self-explanatory), *privileged* (regarding textual interpretations as superior to external critiques), and *unchanging* (insisting on textual immutability across contexts) (Paul Williamson et al., 2010). This multidimensional framework enables a nuanced evaluation of how religious fundamentalism manifests in doctrinal adherence and interpretive practices. All items underwent rigorous cultural-linguistic validation to align with Islamic doctrinal principles and Indonesian socioreligious contexts, for instance, the original item “*The Sacred Writing is without question the words of God*” (Paul Williamson et al., 2010) was systematically reframed as “*Al-Qur'an represents the unequivocal words of Allah, whose truth is absolute and transcends human interpretation or reasoning.*” This methodological refinement ensures contextual equivalence by replacing Christocentric narratives with Islamic theological tenets while preserving the construct’s psychometric integrity. This adaptation was carefully crafted to maintain theological congruence with Islamic principles, specifically affirming the Qur'an's divine revelation and supreme authority. While the item phrasing was adjusted to incorporate Islamic theological concepts and terminology, the fundamental construct – the belief in scriptural inerrancy and divine authorship – was preserved without alteration. Crucially, this reformulation does not introduce novel interpretive elements, but rather situates the original construct within Islam's epistemological paradigm. This methodological approach safeguards the instrument's theoretical integrity while optimizing its cultural relevance and content validity for Indonesian Muslims.

The respondent dataset comprised an initial pool of 342 participants, with 328 successfully passing embedded attention-check measures. Respondents were recruited through purposive sampling, with the general criteria that they must be Indonesian citizens, Muslim, at least 18 years old, and willing to complete the questionnaire voluntarily and conscientiously. Data collection was conducted via an online survey platform, disseminated through educational networks (both higher education and secondary institutions), religious and community organizations, as well as social media platforms. This approach was implemented to ensure demographic diversity while maintaining alignment with the study's primary focus on religious orientations within the Indonesian Muslim context. Following the exclusion of 5 outliers identified through *Mahalanobis* distance analysis ($p < 0.001$), the final analytical sample consisted of 323 respondents. The cohort exhibited a mean age range of 21–22 years ($M = 21.4$, $SD = 0.6$), reflecting a demographically homogeneous sample typical of exploratory studies in social psychology. However, this homogeneity limits the sample's representativeness of the broader Indonesian Muslim population, a crucial consideration when interpreting the subsequent findings. The demographic composition is detailed as follows:

Table 1. Demographic

Description	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Male	60	18.3%
Female	268	81.7%
Age		
< 18	23	7.0%
18-24	235	71.7%
24-34	46	14.0%
35-44	17	5.2%
45-54	4	1.2%
55-64	3	0.9%
Last Education		
Religious Schools	97	29.6%
General Schools	109	33.2%
Religious University	89	27.1%
General University	33	10.1%

Note: All participants self-identified as Muslim

While the measurement construct of religious fundamentalism proposed by Paul Williamson et al. (2010) was predominantly derived from Christian populations, the empirical validation of this construct in the current study involved a majority of Indonesian Muslim participants. Consequently, the items were adapted to align with the doctrinal principles of Islam and the broader sociocultural context of Indonesia. The CFA was selected as the analytical framework due to its capacity to ascertain whether one or more latent variables (in this case, underlying construct items) account for the observed correlations among a set of variables, as these latent factors cannot be directly measured (Brewczynski & MacDonald, 2006; Brown, 2015; Jöreskog et al., 2016; Kim et al., 2016; Umar & Nisa, 2020). Complementarily, the Rasch model was employed owing to its methodological advantages in achieving precise simultaneous calibration of both item difficulty and respondent ability parameters within the model. Furthermore, this approach facilitates the identification of potential inconsistencies or misfits in the construct's measurement framework (Bond & Fox, 2015; Rahayu et al., 2020; Salsabila et al., 2023; Taufiq et al., 2021; Tennant & Conaghan, 2007; Zafrullah et al., 2023).

In general, the CFA procedure entails the formulation of a theoretical model based on operational definitions corresponding to the construct under investigation, in this case, *religious fundamentalism*, conceptualized as a fundamentalist religious orientation characterized by an intra-textual cognitive framework. Subsequently, hypotheses are constructed under the assumption that all measurement items are valid and reliable in assessing the aforementioned construct. The analytical process proceeds with the estimation of error parameters, computation of inter-item correlations, and hypothesis testing to evaluate discrepancies between the parameter correlation matrix and the observed data correlation matrix. Finally, model modifications are implemented if statistically or theoretically warranted (Umar & Nisa, 2020). The CFA analysis was performed using LISREL version 8.70, while the Rasch model analysis was conducted via the Winsteps software version 3.65 (Linacre, 2008).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The CFA results revealed that the initial one-factor model demonstrated poor fit with the empirical data, as evidenced by the following fit indices: $\chi^2(54) = 373.67$, $p < .001$; root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = 0.14 (90% CI [0.13, 0.15]); probability of RMSEA < 0.05 = .00;

and comparative fit index (CFI) = 0.71. These values indicate that the single-factor structure adapted from the original theoretical model (Paul Williamson et al., 2010) failed to adequately capture the inter-item relationship patterns within the Indonesian Muslim respondent context. In response to these findings, the model was refined by introducing 21 error covariance parameters between specific items. The modification was empirically justified by elevated modification indices in the CFA output (MI >10), which revealed substantial residual correlations not adequately accounted for by the hypothesized latent factor structure (Kline, 2016). These modifications were not merely statistical adjustments but were theoretically justified through both empirical evidence from modification indices and semantic analysis of items sharing doctrinal conceptual similarities. For instance, items addressing textual authority and scriptural inerrancy demonstrated natural thematic connections warranting error covariance. The modified model exhibited excellent fit statistics: $\chi^2(33) = 46.43$, $p = .061$; RMSEA = 0.033 (90% CI [0.00, 0.056]); probability of RMSEA < 0.05 = .88; and CFI = 0.99.

Subsequently, the factor loading coefficients and t -values of each item must be scrutinized to evaluate their validity in measuring the intended construct and to identify any items necessitating elimination. Refer to Table 2 below for detailed results.

Tabel 2. Factor Loading Coefficients for the Religious Fundamentalism Construct.

Item	Coef.	Std.Error	t-value	Note
1	0.42	0.06	7.06	Valid
2	0.85	0.06	14.36	Valid
3	0.08	0.05	1.61	Not Valid
4	0.40	0.06	7.57	Valid
5	0.24	0.06	4.03	Valid
6	0.52	0.06	8.87	Valid
7	0.07	0.05	1.35	Not Valid
8	0.18	0.05	3.56	Valid
9	-0.14	0.05	-2.82	Not Valid
10	0.27	0.05	5.33	Valid
11	0.54	0.05	10.02	Valid
12	1.02	0.07	14.63	Valid

Table 2 demonstrates that among the 12 items analyzed through CFA, 9 were statistically valid with significant factor loadings and t -values ($p < 0.05$), while 3 items were invalid. Within the valid items, Item 12 exhibited the highest standardized coefficient (1.02), followed by Item 2 (0.85) and Item 11 (0.54). The elevated factor loadings of these items indicate their substantial contribution to the latent construct of religious fundamentalism. Practically, this suggests that Items 2 and 12, which address *absolute acceptance of scriptural authority and revelatory truth absolutism*, are particularly effective in capturing respondents' fundamentalist orientations toward sacred texts. Conversely, other valid items such as Item 5 (0.24) and Item 8 (0.18) displayed weaker loadings, implying that while these dimensions remain theoretically relevant, they may reflect less salient or more variably interpreted aspects of fundamentalism within the respondents' cognitive framework.

In contrast, three items were deemed invalid (Items 3, 7, and 9) all exhibiting extremely low factor coefficients (≤ 0.08) and non-significant t -values, with Item 9 even displaying a negative value. Theoretically, this lack of validity may stem from two primary factors. First, Items 3 and 7 employed excessively abstract or theologically extreme phrasing, such as assumptions about 'direct knowledge from Allah' or 'the irrelevance of external knowledge', which may have proven confusing or pragmatically irrelevant for younger respondents with modern educational backgrounds. Second, Item 9's assertion of the Qur'an's superiority over other Abrahamic scriptures might have been

Regarding the remaining item characteristics, it is established that the difficulty measures of the items span a range from 1.11 to -1.9. A higher measure corresponds to a more challenging item, while a lower measure indicates greater ease. Concerning item fit, in accordance with the INFIT MNSQ and OUTFIT MNSQ criteria, an item is deemed psychometrically optimal if its value lies within the interval of 0.5 to 1.5 (Linacre, 2002). The analytical findings demonstrate that all items satisfy both the OUTFIT MNSQ and INFIT MNSQ thresholds. Consequently, all items exhibit compatibility with the Rasch Model, confirming their statistical appropriateness within the measurement framework. Subsequently, concerning the discriminatory power of the items, this can be observed through the PTMEA CORR (*Point Measure Correlation*) column. According to the criteria established by Keeves et al. (2005), an item is classified as excellent if its point measure correlation exceeds 0.40, good if it falls within the range of 0.30 to 0.39, adequate between 0.20 and 0.29, non-discriminatory if within 0.00 to 0.19, and requiring revision if below 0. The analytical results indicate that all items demonstrate discriminatory capacity, with point measure correlations spanning 0.12 to 0.63 (Aryadoust et al., 2021; Dobriban, 2017).

The difficulty measures (logit values) of the items, derived from the analytical results, reveal that Item C5 "*In instances where scientific knowledge or empirical evidence contradicts the Quran's explicit narratives, the Quran retains unequivocal authority, while scientific claims are deemed epistemologically fallible*" exhibits the highest measure of 1.59, indicating superior difficulty. Conversely, Item C8 "*Scientific inquiry, historical analysis, and empirical evidence hold greater efficacy in elucidating the Quran's meaning than reliance on isolated recitation or engagement with its textual narratives alone*" demonstrates the lowest measure of -1.07, reflecting comparatively minimal difficulty.

Regarding discriminatory capacity, as quantified by *point measure correlation* (PTMEA CORR), Item C11 "*Understanding the Quran does not require adaptation to contemporary societal developments*" achieves the highest correlation coefficient of 0.63. This signifies its robust efficacy in discriminating religious fundamentalism. In contrast, Item C9 "*The Quran represents the most veracious and comprehensive sacred text...*" demonstrates the lowest PTMEA-CORR value (0.12), indicating inadequate discriminatory power. The presence of such weakly discriminating items carries significant methodological and substantive implications. While theologically central, this item likely reflects a near-universal conviction among Muslims irrespective of their fundamentalist orientation, thereby failing to differentiate degrees of intratextual fundamentalism. Its near-consensus endorsement suggests it functions as a normative doctrinal affirmation rather than a meaningful indicator of ideological rigidity. Parallel issues emerge with other borderline-valid items (e.g., C3, C7 from the CFA results), which may employ abstract or metaphorical language that proves less accessible to younger or less theologically-trained respondents.

These findings collectively suggest that while the Rasch model confirms statistical item fit, conceptual refinement remains imperative. Effective measurement requires items that not only satisfy psychometric criteria but also capture meaningful variance in religious commitment, avoiding mere restatements of shared theological tenets. Item C9's poor discrimination underscores the necessity of developing indicators capable of distinguishing intensity within religious orientations rather than reflecting universal beliefs. Consequently, targeted item revisions are crucial to mitigate ceiling effects and maintain the scale's discriminative validity across heterogeneous populations.

The hierarchical ordering of all instrument items, ranked by ascending difficulty measures, is presented in the subsequent table (see Table 5):

Tabel 5. Religious Fundamentalism Items Ranked by Difficulty Measures.

No.	Item	Difficulty)
C10	*The sacred scriptures acknowledged in Islam, when examined historically, are not limited to the Quran; rather, they include other complementary texts that collectively form a cohesive theological corpus.	1.11
C7	To comprehend the interpretation (semantic meaning) of the Quran, one need only engage in regular recitation and allow Allah to impart divine knowledge directly. Thus, supplementary knowledge external to the Quran is superfluous.	0.99
C2	*The Quran remains inherently general in its prescriptions, necessitating human hermeneutic interpretation and contextual reasoning to align its teachings with evolving temporal realities.	0.66
C12	*The exegesis of the Quran necessitates the incorporation of modern scientific knowledge to ensure its relevance amid sociocultural and technological advancements.	0.65
C4	*The codices of the Quran exhibit textual variations across versions, accompanied by a plurality of exegetical traditions and interpretative methodologies.	0.55
C11	Understanding the Quran does not require adaptation to contemporary societal developments.	0.34
C8	*Scientific inquiry, historical analysis, and empirical evidence hold greater efficacy in elucidating the Quran's meaning than reliance on isolated recitation or engagement with its textual narratives alone.	0.2
C6	*When Quranic narratives conflict with scientific findings, such empirical discoveries may inform temporally contextualized interpretations of the Quran's teachings.	0.16
C1	The Quran constitutes the divine word of Allah, self-sufficient in its veracity, and thus impervious to the necessity of anthropocentric interpretation or rationalization.	-0.47
C5	In instances where scientific knowledge or empirical evidence contradicts the Quran's explicit narratives, the Quran retains unequivocal authority, while scientific claims are deemed epistemologically fallible.	-0.86
C3	All textual content within the Quranic codices is inerrant in its truth value, mandating unconditional adherence regardless of contextual circumstances.	-1.41
C9	The Quran represents the most veracious and comprehensive sacred text, encompassing doctrinal and historical narratives that surpass those of other scriptures within the Abrahamic tradition.	-1.9

The data presented in the table indicate that the item exhibiting an exceptionally high difficulty level, which respondents found challenging to engage with, pertains to the statement: "*The sacred scriptures acknowledged in Islam, when examined historically, are not limited to the Quran; rather, they include other complementary texts that collectively form a cohesive theological corpus*". This phenomenon can be ascribed to the limited comprehensive understanding among the majority of Indonesian Muslims regarding the theological and historical interrelations between the various canonical texts within Abrahamic religious traditions. Consequently, this knowledge gap engenders ambiguity and impedes respondents' ability to formulate definitive responses to the aforementioned item.

In contrast, the item displaying the lowest difficulty level asserts: "*The Quran represents the most veracious and comprehensive sacred text, encompassing doctrinal and historical narratives that surpass those of other scriptures within the Abrahamic tradition*". The ease with which respondents endorsed this statement reflects the deeply entrenched religious convictions within Indonesia's Muslim populace, who predominantly uphold the Qur'an's doctrinal supremacy with unwavering certainty. This unequivocal acceptance stems from the socioreligious context in which adherence to Islamic tenets is both normative and culturally reinforced, thereby negating skepticism toward the Qur'an's preeminence.

Indonesia, a nation characterized by exceptionally high levels of religiosity among its population (Latifa et al., 2022; Subchi et al., 2022), inherently exhibits a diverse spectrum of religious orientations and practices. Scholarly inquiry into Indonesian religiosity has predominantly centered on themes of morality and well-being (El Hafiz, 2020), whereas investigations into religious

typologies, particularly those emphasizing the measurement of fundamentalist religious orientations, remain underexplored.

The findings of this study, derived from both CFA and Rasch model evaluations, substantiate and extend the foundational work of Paul Williamson et al. (2010), whose *Intratextual Fundamentalism Scale* (IFS) identified six conceptual dimensions of religious fundamentalism. While the original framework relied on a smaller item pool and was developed primarily within Christian-Western populations, the current study adapts and expands this model to twelve items, contextualized for the Indonesian Muslim majority. Notably, although the initial one-factor model exhibited poor fit, the revised model demonstrated excellent statistical alignment, suggesting that the construct remains theoretically coherent but requires structural modifications when applied to non-Western religious contexts. This finding aligns with recent research (Hood et al., 2005; Liht et al., 2011) that emphasizes the need for cultural calibration in measuring religious orientations.

This study confirms that the intratextual paradigm is relevant across religious traditions, but not all original items function optimally in different theological contexts, for instance, certain items that were conceptually strong in the original IFS – particularly those dealing with scriptural superiority or divine communication – displayed weak discriminative power in this Indonesian sample, mirroring similar findings in cross-cultural adaptations of the MDFI. This indicates that some theological assertions may be universally accepted within Islam, thus failing to differentiate degrees of fundamentalism among respondents. Consequently, this reinforces the importance of item-level revision to capture within-group variability without relying on doctrinal universals.

The revised structure affirms that intratextual fundamentalism remains a unidimensional construct within the Indonesian Islamic context, but that its operationalization must reflect local interpretive norms and religious discourses. The model's excellent post-modification fit implies that the psychological mechanisms underlying fundamentalist attitudes – such as resistance to contextual reinterpretation and a literalist epistemology – are present, yet expressed through locally resonant narratives. This adds empirical weight to the proposition that religious fundamentalism is a globally observable, but contextually embedded phenomenon. The culturally attuned instrument validated in this study provides a robust measure for assessing religious fundamentalism among Indonesian Muslims with greater depth, particularly for Indonesian Muslim youth. This tool can be employed in subsequent research to either explore factors influencing religious fundamentalism or examine its behavioral manifestations across social, educational, political, and religious domains. By offering comprehensive insights into religious fundamentalism within Indonesian Muslim communities, this instrument paves the way for developing targeted interventions. Such measures could potentially moderate extreme religious orientations and foster more harmonious interfaith coexistence in Indonesia's pluralistic society. It may also help scholars identify ideological markers that predict either constructive engagement or sectarian rigidity in religious discourse.

CONCLUSION

Drawing upon the integrated analysis of CFA and Rasch modeling, this study affirmed the psychometric robustness of a culturally adapted instrument for measuring religious fundamentalism within Indonesia's Muslim population. Anchored in the intratextual paradigm, the instrument demonstrated strong validity and reliability across most components, reflecting the feasibility of operationalizing a Western-derived construct within a non-Western, Islamic context. Theoretically, this confirmed that *literalist scripturalism* – as a core dimension of fundamentalism – is a translatable

phenomenon, yet one that must be semantically refined to reflect local doctrinal sensibilities. While the majority of items performed well, inconsistencies in Items 3, 7, and 9 highlight the need to revise overly abstract or universally accepted theological statements that fail to differentiate levels of fundamentalist orientation. Instead, future iterations should prioritize items that capture ideological rigidity rather than general belief consensus. The validated structure provides a foundation for broader scholarly inquiry into religious meaning-making and text-centered orthodoxy in Muslim-majority societies.

Nonetheless, certain limitations invite further investigation. The lack of external validity testing – such as correlations with sociopolitical variables (e.g., authoritarianism, interreligious prejudice, or political conservatism) – limits interpretive scope. Addressing this gap would enhance the explanatory power of the instrument beyond internal structure. Practically, the instrument can support longitudinal studies, intergroup comparisons, or educational and policy-based interventions aimed at understanding the sociopsychological effects of religious fundamentalism. Its deployment offers potential to inform programs that promote critical religious literacy, mitigate sectarian rigidity, and strengthen pluralistic engagement. Overall, this study contributes a theoretically grounded, empirically validated framework for advancing religious fundamentalism research in Indonesia, and sets the stage for more contextually attuned, socially impactful studies moving forward.

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AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS: This collaborative research project involved distinct intellectual contributions, with Y serving as the principal investigator who conceived the core research idea and oversaw its conceptual framework; Z as the research supervisor, ensuring methodological coherence and maintaining the study's theoretical and empirical alignment; MF as the data analyst, employing psychometric approaches to derive and interpret analytical findings; RL as the critical validator, rigorously assessing data analysis outcomes and their interpretations while overseeing final manuscript preparation; and NSN as the coordinator responsible for research data collection and managing administrative and logistical aspects of the study.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST: The authors declare no conflicts of interest, whether financial, institutional, or personal, pertaining to any aspect of this research from its conception to publication. All data were analyzed in aggregate form, ensuring no inclusion of personally identifiable information. Participants voluntarily provided informed consent under these stipulated conditions. All methodological decisions concerning the measurement construct of religious fundamentalism were determined exclusively through academic deliberation while maintaining rigorous scientific objectivity.

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