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The Concept of Islamic Education and Communicative Rationality in the Thought of Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi and Jürgen Habermas

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the crisis of public communication in Indonesia's digital era, which is characterized by polarization, disinformation, and degrading identity labeling, while also tracing the pedagogical and ethical roots of this phenomenon. The study positions itself at the intersection of digital communication studies and Islamic education by proposing an integrative approach based on the thought of Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi and Jürgen Habermas. Using a qualitative approach through a literature study method, this research examines the concept of *tawhid* as an ethical-transcendental foundation and communicative rationality as a mechanism for rational dialogue in the public sphere. The analysis results in a conceptual synthesis in the form of a dialogical-tawhidi model of Islamic education that integrates the values of *tawhid* with procedures of rational discourse. This model is oriented toward developing learners who possess ethical awareness, critical thinking skills, and dialogical competence in responding to the dynamics of the digital public sphere. Normatively, this model may serve as a theoretical framework for the reform of Islamic education in strengthening a more inclusive and dignified culture of public communication in the digital era.

Keywords: *Islamic Education, Tawhid, Communicative Rationality, Tawhidi Dialogue, Ethical Digital Communication.*

1. Introduction

Indonesia is currently facing challenges in education and public communication in the digital era, characterized by the spread of unverified information, opinion manipulation, and social polarization driven by the use of identity labels in political and religious debates. In the digital public sphere, the use of identity labels such as *kadrun*, *cebong*, *wahhabi*, and *kuburiyun* has become a tool for categorizing opposing viewpoints



in public discussions, often without contributing constructively to a deeper understanding of the issues at stake (Bennett & Livingston, 2018).

The use of identity labels such as *kadrun*, *cebong*, *wahhabi*, and *kuburiyun* functions as group markers that reinforce in-group loyalty but often neglect the analysis of substantive issues. The literature on fake news and public perception indicates that identity framing can intensify “us versus them” dynamics, trigger group conformity, and increase social pressure on members who hold differing views, thereby hindering deliberative dialogue and evidence-based solutions (Angus et al., 2021; ÇIÇEK, 2024; Lafont, 2023).

The phenomenon of buzzers, hoaxes, and identity labeling in the digital sphere indicates a fundamental shift in how language is used in public communication in Indonesia. In this context, language no longer functions solely as a means of seeking truth or fostering mutual understanding; rather, it is increasingly employed as a tool to influence perceptions and reinforce the positions of particular groups. This phenomenon aligns with the global literature on how identity labels can be used to mobilize public opinion while neglecting essential issues, such as the role of language, framing, and public norms in online discourse (Angus et al., 2021; Lafont, 2023). Jürgen Habermas, a prominent figure in communication theory, argues that such conditions reflect a shift from efforts to reach mutual understanding toward a more strategic use of language aimed at achieving particular goals, which potentially undermines rational dialogue in the public sphere. (Nazaruddin et al., 2025). From the perspective of the theory of communicative action, healthy communication should be oriented toward achieving mutual understanding rather than merely serving strategic interests (Habermas, 1987b).

The language used in contemporary public discourse often reflects strong partisanship. For example, terms used to identify the opposition such as *kadrun* and *cebong* do not merely describe ideological differences, but also function as tools to attack the character of opponents and to halt dialogue. Related studies have found that language in online discussions is frequently marked by incivility and a disregard for deliberative norms, which should constitute an integral part of healthy public communication (Öz et al., 2017).

This situation leads to a condition in which productive democratic dialogue becomes obstructed, producing noise without substantive discussion. Similarly, the term “radical” is often used carelessly in religious debates within the digital sphere, contributing to increasingly divisive discussions. Fattah and Fierke emphasize that the politics of insult and violence can be exacerbated by fear and misunderstanding of differing viewpoints. Such conditions hinder efforts to promote more rational and mutually respectful dialogue among followers of different religious traditions (Fattah & Fierke, 2009).

The impact of this shift is highly significant. When public communication is dominated by language aimed at creating confusion rather than fostering clear



understanding, the space for healthy and rational dialogue gradually diminishes. Habermas underscores the importance of the public sphere as a platform for deliberation and the exchange of ideas (Nazaruddin et al., 2025). However, when communication focuses on the manipulation of perceptions, the public sphere shifts from a space of deliberative dialogue into an arena of rhetorical contestation, where information is selectively presented according to its alignment with particular agendas.

The practice of identity labeling within Indonesia's social and communicative context has shown significant impacts on humanitarian values, particularly from the perspective of Islamic education. Research and practices of identity labeling, such as the use of identity labels in political debates, religious discussions, and popular cultural discourse, indicate their influence on the quality of public discourse, the coherence of humanitarian values, and social cohesion in Indonesia. Within the framework of Islamic education, identity labeling often functions as a mechanism for framing opposition that reduces the space for dialogue grounded in humanitarian values, ethical principles, and the ideals of social justice embedded in the Islamic educational tradition (ÇİÇEK, 2024; N, 2022; Suhada et al., 2022).

Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi emphasizes that *tawhid* (the belief in the oneness of God) does not merely concern the relationship between humans and God, but also shapes attitudes toward fellow human beings. Degrading labels directed at individuals or groups indicate a failure of education to instill the principles of equality and mutual respect that should be reflected in the formation of individuals who are both faithful and intellectually grounded (Ma'arif et al., 2024).

In addition to politically driven labeling, contemporary Islamic discourse in Indonesia has also witnessed the emergence of labeling among Muslims themselves. Terms such as Wahhabi, "mukibbin, Yaman," and *penyembah kubur*, are often used loosely and in a derogatory tone, which can divide communities and undermine the humanitarian values that should be upheld in education. In many contexts, these terms are no longer used to explain theological differences in a scholarly manner; instead, they are employed to weaken or delegitimize other Muslim groups. As a result, opportunities for dialogue are often closed from the outset, since those who are labeled are immediately regarded as wrong or deviant, without space for clarification and equal discussion. Consequently, differences of opinion that should be managed through the ethics of disagreement (*adab al-ikhtilāf*) are transformed into symbolic conflicts and mutual verbal attacks.

Al-Faruqi argues that the value of *tawhid* should encourage the recognition of human dignity and respect for differences of opinion (Dian et al., 2022). When religious dialogue is reduced merely to labels that lead to marginalization, the true purpose of education—namely, to cultivate individuals who are capable of critical thinking and who uphold mutual respect—becomes difficult to achieve (Agbaria, 2022). Al-Faruqi argues that the crisis of education among Muslims stems from the loss of integration between the value



of *tawhid* and the process of rational thinking, which results in the weakening of independent thinking and the ethics of dialogue (Al-Faruqi, 1997). Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi also emphasizes that Islamic education which is not fully grounded in the principle of *tawhid* will lose its moral and social direction. According to Al-Faruqi, *tawhid* requires the integration of faith, knowledge, and action; therefore, religious knowledge should cultivate ethical and social responsibility rather than merely focusing on the mastery of instructional content (Al-Faruqi, 1997; Al-Faruqi, 2000).

To prevent the erosion of these humanitarian values, educational approaches must be directed toward encouraging constructive dialogue. Through learning methods that emphasize students' active participation in open discussions and are grounded in principles of equality, Islamic education can strengthen the understanding of the importance of tolerance and the recognition of every individual's dignity. This perspective aligns with the view that education should adopt approaches that embrace diversity rather than reject it (Rockenbach & Mayhew, 2024).

Public communication in Indonesia cannot be separated from the educational practices implemented in classrooms. Most learning practices still take place in a one-way manner, focusing on memorization and providing limited opportunities for students to understand, question, or listen to different perspectives. This situation may hinder students' ability to develop critical thinking skills and engage in healthy dialogue. As highlighted in various studies, less inclusive educational approaches can obstruct the learning process, which ideally should be collaborative and reflective (NUR et al., 2023; Warsah et al., 2021).

Educational practices dominated by one-way methods lead students to receive information passively, without being encouraged to question or understand the arguments behind it. In this context, Alkoutli points out that education which neglects active discussion and critical thinking will produce individuals who are less capable of contributing to healthy public conversations (Alkoutli, 2018). This condition directly affects the quality of public communication, which is increasingly saturated with unverified information and identity labeling that oversimplifies differences, ultimately leading to social and political polarization.

Effective education should prioritize the development of critical thinking skills. Research by Warsah et al. indicates that collaborative learning can help students better understand social issues and encourage them to explore conceptual thinking more deeply (Warsah et al., 2021). By teaching students how to ask questions, evaluate information, and engage in constructive discussions, education can contribute to the formation of individuals who are more responsive and empowered in addressing communication challenges within society.

When schools produce individuals who are trained merely to memorize rather than to think critically or collaborate, the space for healthy and productive dialogue will



gradually disappear. Research indicates that active engagement in discussions, both inside and outside the classroom, is essential for students' cognitive and social development (Hajhosseini et al., 2016; Nur et al., 2023). Thus, creating space for open discussion and the exchange of perspectives will strengthen students' capacity to participate in broader societal dialogue.

The limited experience of dialogue in education significantly influences how individuals respond to differences in society. In this context, students' ability to argue rationally is often hindered by learning practices that do not prioritize dialogue. This is clearly reflected in their interactions on social media, where responses tend to take the form of brief rejection or labeling rather than providing explanations or well-structured arguments. According to Jürgen Habermas, the learning process should not merely involve the transfer of information, but rather function as a communicative process aimed at building mutual understanding and respect. (Bennett & Livingston, 2018).

Educational practices that generally proceed in a one-way manner result in the formation of individuals who are proficient in memorizing material but insufficiently trained to engage in constructive dialogue (Dewi & Elfiandri, 2024). In fact, healthy and open dialogue is essential for enhancing understanding of diverse perspectives. In the context of Islamic education, pedagogical approaches that involve active interaction can create a more inclusive and tolerant learning environment. (Nazaruddin et al., 2025). However, many educational institutions have not yet implemented methods that encourage students to share, ask questions, and discuss differing ideas.

When confronted with differing views on social media, limited dialogical skills often lead to defensive attitudes. Researchers have found that individuals who are not accustomed to open communication tend to display emotional and confrontational responses, which frequently culminate in the use of derogatory labels. (Verma & Rohman, 2024). This situation creates conditions in which differences of opinion cannot be properly explored and instead intensify polarization. For example, the use of derogatory terms in social media spaces often suggests that individuals feel threatened by differing viewpoints rather than attempting to understand those perspectives.

Therefore, it is important for the education system to prioritize dialogical experiences as part of the curriculum. Sabani et al. (2024) emphasize the need for interactive methods in education to help students understand and appreciate differences, as well as to develop their critical thinking skills (Saputra, 2024). Activities such as group discussions, debates, and case analyses should become integral parts of the learning process. In this way, education will not only produce individuals who are capable of absorbing information, but also individuals who are able to face the challenges of complex social interactions.

A number of studies have identified the challenges of digital disinformation and the weakness of critical thinking skills within education. Although both issues are highly



relevant, existing studies generally address them separately, and only a few explicitly connect the crisis of communication in the digital sphere with the one-way learning practices that occur in schools. This study aims to fill this gap by integrating the perspectives of Islamic education and critical communication theory in order to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how these two problems interact. (Nasrudin et al., 2025).

To the best of the author's knowledge, studies on digital disinformation and polarization and those on the pedagogy of Islamic education have often developed in parallel. There remain limited studies that explicitly connect the crisis of communication in the digital sphere with critiques of monologic learning models, while simultaneously formulating a theoretical synthesis that integrates the ethical foundation of *tawhid* with procedures of rational dialogue.

Based on this gap, this study aims to: (1) analyze the concept of *tawhid*-based Islamic education in the thought of Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi; (2) analyze the concept of communicative rationality in the thought of Jürgen Habermas; (3) identify the points of convergence and divergence between the two; and (4) formulate a conceptual synthesis in the form of a dialogical-*tawhidi* model of Islamic education as a normative framework for strengthening students' dialogical competence in the digital era. The main contribution of this study lies in the formulation of a conceptual model that bridges religious ethics and critical communication theory for the renewal of Islamic educational pedagogy in responding to the challenges of contemporary public communication.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi: *Tawhid* as the Epistemological and Ethical Foundation of Education

Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi is one of the contemporary Muslim thinkers who made significant contributions to reformulating the intellectual foundations of Islamic education in the modern era. In his work *Al-Tawhid: Its Implications for Thought and Life*, Al-Faruqi emphasizes that *tawhid* is the central principle of Islamic civilization. It is not merely related to theological belief, but also carries epistemological, ethical, and social implications for human life (Al-Faruqi, 1997).

In Al-Faruqi's perspective, *tawhid* affirms the unity of reality and the unity of truth. All knowledge ultimately originates from the same source -God- therefore there is no dichotomy between revelation and reason. Consequently, knowledge in Islam cannot be separated from moral values and social responsibility. In this regard, *tawhid* functions as an epistemological foundation that integrates faith, reason, and experience in the process of seeking knowledge (Al Faruqi, 2000).



The consequence of this principle is the rejection of the dualism within the educational system that separates religious knowledge from secular sciences. Al-Faruqi criticizes the legacy of modern secularism, which treats knowledge as value-free, thereby stripping it of moral orientation. To address this crisis, he proposes the idea of the Islamization of Knowledge, an effort to integrate modern scientific disciplines with the values of *tawhid* so that knowledge remains oriented toward justice, humanity, and ethical responsibility (Al-Faruqi, 1997).

In addition to serving as an epistemological foundation, *tawhid* also carries fundamental ethical implications for education. Within the framework of *tawhid*, human beings are understood as *khalifah* who possess dignity and moral responsibility in cultivating life on earth. Therefore, social relations should be built upon the principles of justice, respect for others, and recognition of the unity of humankind. Education from this perspective is not only aimed at transmitting knowledge but also at shaping students' character and moral consciousness.

Tawhid functions as an ontological framework that positions human beings as *khalifah* on earth, endowed with dignity and moral responsibility to nurture life. This foundation has been extensively discussed in studies emphasizing the relationship between humans, God, nature, and fellow human beings as a unified value system that guides educational actions. Such a structure has implications for how curricula and learning practices are directed toward the formation of moral character and ethical awareness. Conceptual support for the role of *tawhid* as an epistemological, ontological, and axiological foundation has also been emphasized in studies on the integration of *tawhid* within curriculum design and pedagogy based on *adab*, as well as in the development of technological ethics literacy-where *tawhid* serves as a source of values and guidance for educational practice (Angraeni et al., 2025; Ence et al., 2025; Haliza & Suryatik, 2024; Hosaini et al., 2024).

The implications of *tawhid* provide an ethical foundation for treating others as part of a unified humanity. Accordingly, practices such as identity labeling, polarization, and discourses that degrade the dignity of individuals or groups are viewed as violations of human dignity, which contradict the *khalifah* perspective that regards human beings as stewards responsible for cultivating the earth. Within Al-Faruqi's framework, the failure of education to fully instill the value of *tawhid* results in forms of public communication that are exclusive and degrading, as they fail to internalize the unity of humankind as a fundamental normative value (Abdullah et al., 2024; Husni & Hayden, 2024; Prasetyo et al., 2022). This emphasis is consistent with the idea of the Islamization of knowledge and *tawhid* as an ethical framework that highlights the *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* (including *ḥifẓ al-dīn* and *ḥifẓ al-'aql*) in safeguarding public welfare and promoting social justice in public communication and educational policy. (Abdullah et al., 2024; Al-Faqih, 2025; Prasetyo et al., 2022)



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Furthermore, Al-Faruqi emphasizes that the goal of Islamic education is to cultivate individuals who are capable of integrating faith, knowledge, and action in real life. Education should produce individuals who are not only intellectually competent but also possess moral responsibility toward society. Thus, Islamic education should function as a means of shaping a personality that harmoniously connects the spiritual, rational, and social dimensions (Al-Faruqi, 1997; Al Faruqi, 2000).

Within the framework of this study, Al-Faruqi's thought provides a moral-transcendental foundation for developing an educational model oriented toward respect for human dignity and ethical responsibility in communication. *Tawhid* functions not only as a theological principle but also as an ethical foundation that guides how human beings think, learn, and interact within the public sphere.

2. 2. Jürgen Habermas: Communicative Rationality and Discourse Ethics

Jürgen Habermas is one of the leading contemporary social philosophers who has made significant contributions to the development of communication theory and the concept of the public sphere. In his monumental work *The Theory of Communicative Action*, Habermas develops the concept of communicative rationality, a form of rationality oriented toward achieving mutual understanding (*Verständigung*) through dialogue that is free from domination (Habermas, 1984, 1987a).

Unlike instrumental rationality, which focuses on the successful achievement of particular goals, communicative rationality places communication as a means of building mutual understanding among participants. Within this framework, language does not merely function as a tool to influence others, but as a medium for rationally testing truth claims within the public discourse.

Habermas explains that rational communication must fulfill validity claims, which include four main elements: truth, normative rightness, sincerity, and comprehensibility (Habermas, 1984). In discursive practice, every claim put forward by participants must remain open to examination through rational argumentation. Thus, the legitimacy of a statement is not determined by power or authority, but by the strength of arguments that can be justified rationally.

In addition to the concept of communicative rationality, Habermas also develops an analysis of the relationship between the lifeworld and the system. The lifeworld refers to the social space in which values, norms, and cultural traditions develop through communicative interaction. In contrast, the system refers to the economic and political structures governed by the logic of money and power. Habermas warns that when the logic of the system dominates the lifeworld, what he calls the colonization of the lifeworld occurs - a condition in which social communication becomes distorted by instrumental interests (Habermas, 1987a)



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This concept is highly relevant for understanding the dynamics of public communication in the digital era. In many cases, the digital public sphere no longer fully functions as an arena for rational discourse; instead, it is often filled with practices of opinion manipulation, propaganda, and identity polarization. When communication is directed toward winning narratives or defending the interests of particular groups, it shifts from communicative action to strategic action.

Within Habermas's theoretical framework, such conditions indicate a weakening of the deliberative function of the public sphere. Ideally, the public sphere should serve as an arena where citizens can participate equally in the exchange of rational arguments concerning matters of common interest (Habermas, 1991). Therefore, strengthening the capacity for rational dialogue becomes one of the essential prerequisites for sustaining healthy public communication in democratic societies.

In the context of education, the theory of communicative rationality carries important implications for the learning process. Education is not merely understood as a process of transmitting knowledge from teachers to students, but also as a space for dialogical interaction in which learners are encouraged to examine claims, present arguments, and understand differing perspectives. Dialogical learning processes enable students to develop critical thinking skills while simultaneously fostering mutual respect within discourse. Dialogical theory emphasizes shared participation, the distribution of discursive control, and the creation of supportive learning environments through guided dialogue between teachers and students. Within the framework of Communicative Rationality, learning becomes a collaborative effort to reach consensus through arguments that can be justified rationally and ethically (Alexander, 2019; Chen et al., 2025; Küçükersen & Özemir, 2025).

Thus, Habermas's thought provides a procedural framework for the formation of a rational culture of dialogue in education. If *tawhid* in Al-Faruqi's thought provides a moral-transcendental foundation for respecting human dignity, then Habermas's communicative rationality offers a discursive mechanism through which these values can be realized in social communication practices.

In this study, the theory of communicative rationality functions as an analytical basis for understanding how public communication can become distorted due to the dominance of strategic action, while also providing a conceptual framework for developing educational practices that encourage rational dialogue and deliberative participation. Habermas also develops the concept of the deliberative public sphere, a discursive space in which citizens can participate equally in the exchange of rational arguments concerning matters of common interest. Within the framework of deliberative democracy, the legitimacy of social decisions is not determined solely by political power, but by the strength of arguments that can be rationally justified within public discourse (Habermas, 1991). This perspective provides a theoretical foundation for the



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development of education that promotes rational dialogue and critical participation in social life.

3. Research Method

This study employs a qualitative approach using a literature study method. The qualitative approach is chosen because the focus of this research is to interpret and analyze in depth the concepts, ideas, and theoretical frameworks of scholars related to Islamic education and communicative rationality, rather than to test hypotheses quantitatively. The literature study method is used because the focus of the research lies in the examination of texts and ideas presented in scholarly works (Creswell, 2014; Zed, 2008).

The data sources in this study consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data are obtained from the major works of Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi and Jürgen Habermas. The main references for Al-Faruqi include *Islamization of Knowledge: General Principles and Work Plan* and *Al-Tawhid: Its Implications for Thought and Life*, which present his ideas on the integration of knowledge, tawhid, and Islamic education. Meanwhile, the primary sources of Habermas's thought are drawn from *The Theory of Communicative Action* (Volumes 1 and 2), which elaborates the concepts of communicative rationality and communicative action in social life.

Secondary data are obtained from scholarly journal articles, books, and research findings relevant to the themes of public communication, digital disinformation, identity labeling, dialogical education, and contemporary Islamic education. These secondary sources are used to strengthen the empirical context and to position this study within current academic discussions.

Data collection was conducted through documentation study, by systematically searching, reading, and examining relevant written sources. The researcher carried out an in-depth reading of the primary texts to identify key concepts related to Islamic education and communicative rationality, while also gathering supporting literature that discusses educational and communication phenomena in the digital era.

The data analysis technique employed descriptive-analytical and comparative analysis. Descriptive analysis was used to systematically present the concept of Islamic education in the thought of Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi and the concept of communicative rationality in the thought of Jürgen Habermas. Subsequently, comparative analysis was used to identify the similarities and differences between the two perspectives, both in their epistemological dimensions and in their educational practices.

The final stage of analysis involved conceptual synthesis, namely integrating the values of tawhid-based Islamic education with the principles of communicative rationality as the basis for formulating a dialogical and contextual framework of Islamic



education. The results of the analysis are then connected with the phenomena of education and public communication in Indonesia as discussed in the introduction.

4. Result

The comparative analysis between the thought of Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi and Jürgen Habermas is conducted to identify points of convergence, fundamental differences, and the potential for conceptual integration between the two. Although they originate from different intellectual traditions-Al-Faruqi from the framework of Islamic theology and philosophy, and Habermas from the tradition of critical theory and the philosophy of communication-both share a concern with the moral crisis and the distortion of communication in modern society. Therefore, this comparison does not aim to equate their ontological foundations, but rather to examine how the principles of *tawhid* and communicative rationality can be brought together within a dialogical framework of education.

4.1. Differences in Ontological and Epistemological Foundations

The most fundamental difference between Al-Faruqi and Habermas lies in their ontological foundations. Al-Faruqi begins from the principle of *tawhid* as the basis of all reality. *Tawhid* not only affirms the oneness of God, but also the unity of truth, the unity of knowledge, and the unity of humanity (Al-Faruqi, 1997). Within this framework, truth possesses a transcendental dimension that serves as the ultimate reference for all intellectual and social activities.

In contrast, Habermas develops the theory of communicative rationality within a post-metaphysical philosophical framework. He does not ground the legitimacy of communication in revelation or transcendent authority, but rather in procedural rationality that can be tested through public discourse (Habermas, 1984, 1987a). From his perspective, the validity of a claim depends on its capacity to be justified within a discursive space that is free from domination.

Thus, while Al-Faruqi places God as the source of normative legitimacy, Habermas situates legitimacy within the process of argumentation itself. This difference is significant because it indicates that their integration cannot occur at the ontological level, but rather at the ethical and practical levels.

4.2. Normative Convergence: Human Dignity and Anti-Domination

Although they differ ontologically, these two thinkers share significant normative similarities. Al-Faruqi emphasizes that *tawhid* implies the unity of humankind and the recognition of the dignity of every individual as a *khalifah* (Al-Faruqi, 2000). Violations of



human dignity, including through insults or derogatory labeling, contradict the principle of *tawhid*.

Habermas, within a different framework, also rejects domination and manipulation in communication. Strategic actions that manipulate language for particular interests are regarded as a form of the colonization of the lifeworld by the system (Habermas, 1987a). In this context, healthy communication must be participatory, egalitarian, and open to rational examination. Both thinkers critique forms of domination: Al-Faruqi criticizes secularism for separating moral values from knowledge, while Habermas criticizes instrumental rationality for reducing communication to a tool of power. This convergence opens the possibility for conceptual integration at the level of communication ethics.

4.3. Differences in Goal Orientation: Devotion vs. Consensus

Al-Faruqi situates the ultimate purpose of education and knowledge in devotion to God through the integration of faith, knowledge, and action. This orientation is teleological and transcendent. Education is directed toward forming individuals who are morally and spiritually responsible.

Habermas, in contrast, places rational consensus as the goal of discourse. Consensus does not imply uniformity, but rather mutual understanding achieved through argumentation free from coercion (*force-free discourse*). This orientation is procedural and immanent.

This difference indicates that their integration does not mean equating their ultimate aims, but rather combining a moral-transcendental orientation with mechanisms of rational dialogue. In other words, *tawhid* can serve as the foundation of values, while communicative rationality functions as the method of interaction.

4.4. Conceptual Integration: Tawhidi Ethics and Procedural Rationality

Based on the analysis above, this study formulates a conceptual integration in three main dimensions:

a). Ethical Dimension

Tawhid provides a moral foundation that affirms the unity and equality of humanity. In the context of public communication, this principle requires respect for human dignity and the rejection of derogatory labeling practices.

b). Procedural Dimension

Communicative rationality provides a procedural framework for realizing these values in dialogical practice. Validity claims-truth, sincerity, normative rightness,



and comprehensibility serve as mechanisms for testing arguments rationally (Habermas, 1984).

c). Pedagogical Dimension

The integration of the two results in an educational model that not only instills moral values but also develops dialogical skills. Education does not stop at the transmission of doctrine; rather, it becomes a discursive space in which students learn to examine claims rationally within the framework of *tawhidi* ethics.

4.5. The Dialogical-Tawhidi Model of Islamic Education

This conceptual synthesis is formulated as the Dialogical-Tawhidi Model of Islamic Education. The model possesses the following characteristics:

- a). Value Foundation: *Tawhid* as an ethical foundation that guides respect for human dignity.
- b). Method of Interaction: Rational discourse based on validity claims.
- c). Pedagogical Objective: The formation of learners who are critical, dialogical, and ethically grounded.
- d). Social Orientation: The strengthening of a more deliberative and inclusive public sphere.

In the context of digital communication, this model enables students not only to reject identity labeling on moral grounds but also to deconstruct manipulative arguments through rational analysis.

4.6. Limits of Integration

It is important to emphasize that this integration is conceptual and normative rather than a complete theological or philosophical unification. Habermas's framework is not grounded in theology, and Al-Faruqi did not develop a procedural theory of communication comparable to that of Habermas. Therefore, this synthesis should be understood as a theoretical construction aimed at building a bridge between religious ethics and critical communication theory within the context of education.

4.7. Conceptual Contribution

The main contribution of this comparative analysis lies in the following:

- a). Demonstrating the normative compatibility between *tawhid* and communicative rationality.
- b). Shifting the discussion from merely critiquing digital polarization toward pedagogical reformulation.



c). Formulating an educational model that integrates moral–transcendental and procedural–rational dimensions.

Thus, this integration is not merely a comparison of two thinkers, but offers a new conceptual framework for the development of Islamic education in responding to the crisis of public communication in the digital era.

4.8. Research Findings

This study produces several conceptual findings through an integrative analysis of the thought of Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi and Jürgen Habermas.

First, the crisis of public communication in Indonesia cannot be understood merely as a political issue or a consequence of digital technological developments; it also possesses pedagogical and ethical dimensions. Educational practices that remain dominated by one-way approaches contribute to the limited development of students' critical and dialogical thinking skills. At the same time, the weak internalization of *tawhid* values within the educational process influences how individuals perceive and treat others in the public sphere.

Second, the phenomena of buzzers, opinion manipulation, and polarization in the digital sphere represent the dominance of strategic action as described in Habermas's theory of communicative action. Communication is no longer directed toward achieving rational understanding, but rather toward winning narratives and maintaining particular interests. This condition indicates the weakening of deliberative communication practices in public life.

Third, the comparative analysis reveals a point of convergence between *tawhid* as an ethical–transcendental foundation in Al-Faruqi's thought and communicative rationality as a procedural framework in Habermas's thought. Both emphasize the importance of respecting human dignity and promoting dialogue oriented toward truth and mutual understanding.

Fourth, the integration of these two perspectives results in the formulation of a dialogical-*tawhidi* model of Islamic education. This model combines *tawhid* as a moral foundation with the principles of rational discourse as a mechanism for learning. Its primary orientation is the development of students who possess ethical awareness, critical thinking skills, and dialogical competence in responding to the dynamics of communication in the digital era.

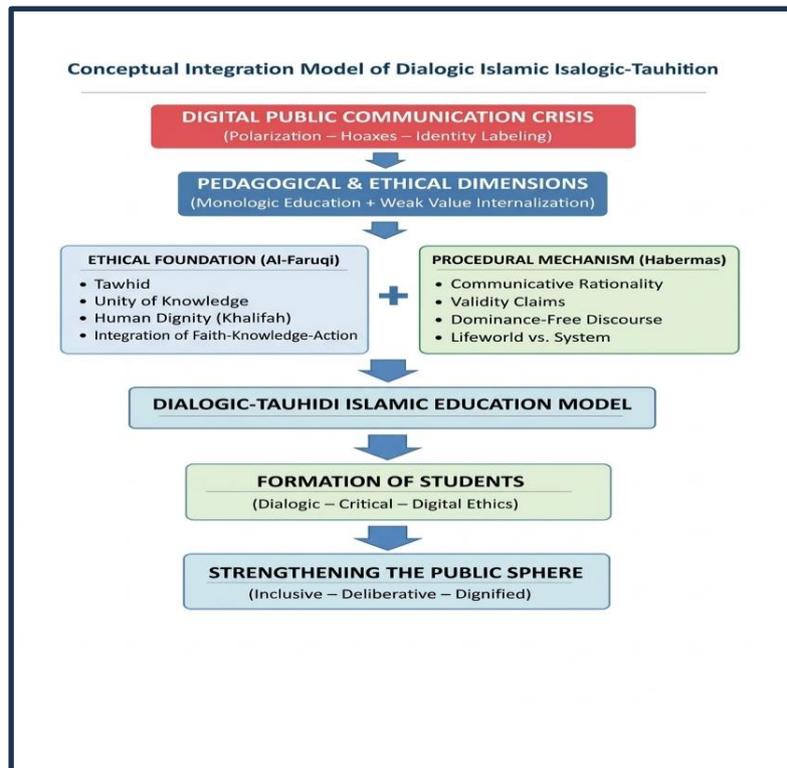
Fifth, theoretically, this dialogical-*tawhidi* model carries important implications for strengthening the public sphere. As a normative framework, it may serve as a basis for developing a more participatory and reflective pedagogy of Islamic education. By positioning *tawhid* as a moral foundation and rational dialogue as the procedure of interaction, this approach has the potential to contribute to the formation of a more inclusive, critical, and dignified culture of public communication in the long term.



Table 1. Conceptual Comparison between Al-Faruqi and Habermas

Aspect	Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi	Jürgen Habermas	Potential Integration
Ontological Foundation	<i>Tawhid</i> (Divine transcendence)	Communicative rationality (post-metaphysical)	Transcendental values + rational procedures
Source of Legitimacy	Revelation and the integration of faith and knowledge	Rational discourse free from domination	Morality + argumentative validity
Critique of Modernity	Secularism and the dichotomy of knowledge	Instrumental rationality and the colonization of the lifeworld	Ethical critique of communication distortion
Educational Aim	Formation of individuals who possess faith and practice righteous action	Rational consensus through discourse	Dialogical and ethically grounded learners
Social Orientation	Justice and the dignity of humans as <i>khalifah</i>	Deliberative public sphere	A civilized public sphere

Figure 2. Conceptual Framework of the Study



5. Discussion

The research findings on the integration of *tawhid* in the thought of Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi and communicative rationality in the thought of Jürgen Habermas reveal several important implications for the development of Islamic education, particularly in responding to the challenges of public communication in the digital era. The conceptual synthesis between the two perspectives produces a dialogical-tawhidi model of Islamic education, which positions *tawhid* as a moral foundation and communicative rationality as the mechanism of dialogue in the learning process. This approach emphasizes that Islamic education should not only focus on the transmission of religious knowledge, but also on the development of ethical awareness, critical thinking skills, and the capacity for rational dialogue within social life.



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In terms of educational objectives, the dialogical-tawhidi model highlights the importance of developing individuals who possess not only religious knowledge but also the ability to communicate responsibly in the public sphere. *Tawhid* as a moral foundation affirms respect for human dignity and the awareness that every individual bears ethical responsibility in the use of language and knowledge. Meanwhile, communicative rationality provides a procedural framework that enables dialogue to take place in an open, rational, and domination-free manner. In this way, Islamic education does not merely shape individuals who are personally religious, but also individuals who are capable of participating ethically and rationally in social life.

Another implication of this model concerns the transformation of pedagogy within Islamic education. Learning practices that have traditionally tended to be monological and oriented toward memorization need to be redirected toward more dialogical and participatory approaches. From the perspective of communicative rationality, the learning process should not only be understood as the transmission of information from teacher to student, but also as a communicative space that enables the rational exchange of ideas. Within this framework, teachers and students are positioned as subjects who jointly seek understanding through open and argumentative dialogue. Such pedagogical approaches can encourage the development of critical thinking skills as well as constructive discussion abilities.

Furthermore, the dialogical-tawhidi model also holds significant relevance for strengthening digital literacy grounded in ethical values. The phenomena of polarization, hoaxes, and identity labeling in digital spaces indicate that many individuals still lack healthy public communication skills. In this context, Islamic education has a strategic role in fostering ethical awareness in the use of language and information. The value of *tawhid* teaches respect for human dignity and moral responsibility in communication, while communicative rationality encourages the use of rational argumentation grounded in truth and mutual understanding. Therefore, education can become an important means of fostering a more inclusive and civilized culture of digital communication.

This model also carries implications for the development of a more integrative Islamic education curriculum. The integration of *tawhid*-based values with the principles of rational dialogue opens opportunities for Islamic education to combine the mastery of religious knowledge with critical thinking skills, rational argumentation, and digital literacy. Such an approach enables Islamic education not only to function as a medium for transmitting religious values but also as a space for cultivating citizens who are capable of participating constructively in public life. In this way, Islamic education can contribute to strengthening a culture of public communication that is more dialogical, inclusive, and oriented toward the collective search for truth.

Nevertheless, this study has several limitations. The analysis conducted is conceptual in nature, as it is based on a literature analysis of the thought of Al-Faruqi and Habermas.



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Therefore, the dialogical-tawhidi educational model formulated in this study still requires further testing through empirical research within the context of educational practice. Future studies may examine how this model can be implemented in the learning processes of Islamic educational institutions and how it influences the development of students' dialogical competence and digital literacy.

6. Conclusion

In the research conclusion section, the answers to the research problem's formulation must be explained clearly and concisely. It can also reveal the impact of the research results and the research limitations so that further researchers can carry it out.

This study aims to examine the concept of Islamic education in the thought of Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi and the concept of communicative rationality in the thought of Jürgen Habermas, while also formulating a conceptual synthesis relevant to addressing the crisis of public communication in the digital era. Based on descriptive-analytical and comparative analyses of these two perspectives, this study demonstrates that the crisis of public communication is not merely related to the development of digital technology or political dynamics, but also involves pedagogical and ethical dimensions associated with educational practices and the internalization of moral values.

Al-Faruqi's thought emphasizes that tawhid serves as an epistemological and ethical foundation that requires the integration of faith, knowledge, and action in the educational process. Meanwhile, Habermas's theory of communicative rationality offers a procedural framework for rational dialogue oriented toward achieving mutual understanding through the argumentative testing of truth claims. The comparative analysis shows that although both thinkers originate from different intellectual traditions, they share a normative convergence in their emphasis on respect for human dignity and the importance of dialogue in social life.

Through the conceptual synthesis of these two perspectives, this study formulates a dialogical-tawhidi model of Islamic education, an educational approach that integrates tawhid as a moral foundation with communicative rationality as the dialogical mechanism within the learning process. This model positions education as a space for communicative action that encourages students to develop critical thinking skills, engage in rational dialogue, and respect differences within the framework of tawhidi values.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the development of Islamic education studies by bringing together religious ethics and critical communication theory within a single conceptual framework. In the context of contemporary education, the dialogical-tawhidi approach has the potential to serve as a foundation for developing more participatory and reflective pedagogies, while also supporting the formation of a more inclusive, critical, and dignified culture of public communication in the digital era.



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