

Santri Gobal Gabul and the Praxis of Tawhid: Rethinking Inclusive Tolerance Education through Al-Faruqi's

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Abstract. *While inclusive tolerance education is frequently examined within formal academic institutions, research on non-formal religious communities as transformative agents remains scarce. Furthermore, Al-Faruqi's epistemology is often discussed as an abstract philosophical framework with limited empirical application in grassroots social contexts. This study addresses this gap by theorizing a model of inclusive tolerance education through an exploration of the praxis of tawhid within the Santri Gobal Gabul community. Employing a field-based qualitative approach with a descriptive phenomenological design, data were gathered through participant observation, documentation, and in-depth interviews with pesantren caretakers, religious counselors, santri, and interfaith community members. The findings reveal that the Santri Gobal Gabul community implements a grounded Islamic education model through the Ngopi (Ngolah Pikir) tradition an epistemological process that bridges sacred texts with social reality. This practice manifests Al-Faruqi's principles of Unity of Truth, Unity of Mankind, and Unity of Life, where tolerance is internalized through direct action (learning by doing), involving the transformation of the heart (fathul qulub) and openness of mind (fathul 'aql). This study extends Al-Faruqi's epistemology into lived community contexts, proposing a practice-based model of inclusive Islamic education that dismantles social hierarchies and fosters transformative social cohesion. This theoretical contribution offers a significant reference for developing contextual and responsive multicultural education to mitigate contemporary social polarization.*

Keywords. *Tolerance Education; Santri Gobal Gabul Community; Al-Faruqi's Epistemology; Inclusive Islamic Education.*

Abstrak. Meskipun pendidikan toleransi inklusif telah banyak dikaji dalam institusi akademik formal, penelitian mengenai peran komunitas keagamaan non-formal sebagai agen transformatif masih sangat terbatas. Selain itu, epistemologi Al-Faruqi sering kali didiskusikan sekadar sebagai kerangka filosofis abstrak dengan penerapan empiris yang minim dalam konteks sosial akar rumput. Penelitian ini berupaya mengisi celah tersebut dengan merumuskan model pendidikan toleransi inklusif melalui eksplorasi praksis tauhid dalam komunitas Santri Gobal Gabul. Menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif lapangan dengan desain fenomenologi deskriptif, data dikumpulkan melalui observasi partisipan, dokumentasi, serta wawancara mendalam dengan pengasuh pesantren, penyuluh agama, santri, hingga anggota komunitas lintas iman. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa komunitas Santri Gobal Gabul menerapkan model pendidikan Islam yang membumi melalui tradisi Ngopi (Ngolah Pikir), sebuah proses epistemologis yang menjembatani teks suci dengan realitas sosial. Praktik ini memmanifestasikan prinsip-prinsip Al-Faruqi

mengenai Kesatuan Kebenaran (*Unity of Truth*), Kesatuan Kemanusiaan (*Unity of Mankind*), dan Kesatuan Hidup (*Unity of Life*), di mana toleransi diinternalisasi melalui aksi langsung (*learning by doing*), yang melibatkan transformasi hati (*fathul qulub*) serta keterbukaan nalar (*fathul 'aql*). Studi ini memperluas jangkauan epistemologi Al-Faruqi ke dalam konteks kehidupan komunitas yang nyata, serta mengusulkan model pendidikan Islam inklusif berbasis praktik yang mampu membongkar hierarki sosial dan mendorong kohesi sosial transformatif. Kontribusi teoretis ini menawarkan referensi signifikan bagi pengembangan pendidikan multikultural yang kontekstual dan responsif guna memitigasi polarisasi sosial kontemporer.

Kata Kunci. *Pendidikan Toleransi; Santri Gopal Gabul; Epistemologi Al-Faruqi; Pendidikan Islam Inklusif.*

A. INTRODUCTION

Socio-religious polarization in Indonesia has intensified significantly over the last decade, manifesting in deep-seated social fissures that jeopardize national cohesion. This escalation of identity-based tension is frequently fueled by disparate religious interpretations and pragmatic political maneuverings, necessitating a paradigmatic shift in how tolerance is conceptualized and taught within the national discourse. While the Indonesian government has proactively integrated Religious Moderation into its core educational framework (Kementerian Agama RI, 2019; Setiawan et al., 2023; Umar, 2025), the practical application of these policies frequently encounters a persistent praxis deadlock. In formal academic and bureaucratic settings, tolerance education often becomes restricted to top-down formalism, which struggles to navigate the fluid, complex, and often unpredictable social dynamics at the grassroots level (Sufratman, 2022). Consequently, a pronounced analytical gap persists between policy-driven, conceptual models of tolerance and the organic, practice-based tolerance that emerges through direct community engagement.

In response to these institutional bottlenecks, the Santri Gopal Gabul community in Blora Regency represents a compelling socio-religious anomaly. As an organic, non-formal educational entity rooted in the Al-Muhammad Cepu Islamic Boarding School, this community offers an inclusive model that successfully transcends sectarian, political, and social stratifications (Habibi, Wahyuni, et al., 2025). By utilizing the *Ngopi* (coffee-dialogue) tradition, Santri Gopal Gabul creates a "third space" that actively embraces marginalized groups, including ex-convicts and interfaith members, into a unified social fabric. Rather than viewing this movement as a mere sociological curiosity, this study interprets the community as a living laboratory that fundamentally challenges and expands the conventional boundaries of Islamic education. It posits that the community's radical inclusivity is not a deviation from tradition, but a profound re-actualization of Islamic values in a contemporary pluralistic setting.

Current academic discourse on this subject, however, exhibits a distinct bifurcation that often oversimplifies the complexity of the issue. On one hand, studies centered on Ismail Raji al-Faruqi's Islamization of Knowledge primarily reside within theoretical silos, focusing on the abstract integration of modern disciplines into formal Islamic epistemological structures (Al-Faruqi, 2012; Dewi et al., 2025). While ini provide robust philosophical foundations, they frequently lack empirical grounding in lived social realities. On the other hand, sociological inquiries into grassroots movements like Gopal Gabul often prioritize descriptive accounts of social harmony while overlooking the rigorous epistemological foundations that drive such inclusive behavior. Without an analytical lens to bridge ini two fields, grassroots inclusivity risks being misinterpreted as mere social pragmatism or shallow cultural syncretism (Zainuddin, 2013). There is a nuanced middle

ground where theoretical tawhid meets social praxis, which remains largely unexplored in existing literature.

This article fills this identified scholarly void by interpreting the Santri Gopal Gabul movement through the heuristic framework of Al-Faruqi's epistemology of tawhid. The study's novelty lies in its deliberate extension of Al-Faruqi's theoretical principles, specifically the triple unity of truth, life, and mankind (Al-Faruqi, 1995), into an empirical, lived context. This research argues that the community's radical inclusivity does not signify a dilution of religious doctrine but is, in fact, a functional manifestation of tawhid as an active principle of knowledge and social action. By shifting the focus from a purely theocentric abstraction to an anthropocentric social application, this study contributes a new model of inclusive tolerance education rooted in lived practice rather than mere bureaucratic instruction. Integrating tawhid as an epistemological foundation is crucial for overcoming knowledge fragmentation in modern Islamic studies (Anwar et al., 2023) and bridging the gap between revelation, reason, and experience (Ismatulloh & Roqib, 2025). By applying Al-Faruqi's framework to the Santri Gopal Gabul movement, this article demonstrates how grassroots praxis can foster social cohesion in pluralistic societies. Specifically, the study investigates how this community reflects Al-Faruqi's tawhid epistemology and how the synergy between theory and praxis creates a practice-based model for inclusive tolerance education.

B. METHOD

This study employs a qualitative field research approach with a hermeneutic phenomenological design to uncover the essence of the lived experience within the Santri Gopal Gabul community (Anshori, 2018; Moleong, 2019). This design was selected over a purely descriptive phenomenology to allow for an interpretive dialogue between the organic practices of the santri and the formal epistemological framework of Al-Faruqi (Miles & Huberman, 2014). The primary focus is to explore actions, meaning-making processes, and social relations that represent the values of spirituality and tolerance in everyday interactions. By adopting this lens, the research transcends mere theoretical conceptualization, revealing the essential meaning of tolerance as a practiced reality (Lebenswelt) in the social world of the community (Bable, 2002; Rame, 2014).

Participants were selected through a purposive sampling technique (Sugiyono, 2019), involving 18 informants to ensure data saturation. As shown in Table 1, informants were categorized into two analytical groups: Key Informants (n=5), consisting of the Kyai (caretaker) and administrators as the primary authorities in value construction, and Informants (n=13), comprising santri and local residents involved in direct social interaction (Creswell, 2020; Syam, 2025). This categorization is analytically vital to distinguish between the architects of value and the actors of praxis. An inclusion criterion of a minimum of two years of active involvement was strictly applied; this duration ensures that informants have undergone sufficient social acculturation to provide a profound and stable understanding of the community's inclusive practices.

Table 1. *Research Informants*

Category	Role/Background	Gender	n	Inclusion Criteria
Key Informants	Kyai & Senior Administrators	M	3	Policy makers; >5 years involvement
Key Informants	Community Coordinators	M/F	2	Value internalizers; operational leaders
Informants	Senior Santri & Ex-convicts	M	8	Active participants; >2 years involvement
Informants	Local Residents/Interfaith	M/F	5	Direct social actors in <i>ngopi</i> tradition
Total			18	

Data collection was conducted over a six-month fieldwork period (January–June 2025) in Blora Regency, utilizing the researcher's role as a participant-observer to capture behavioral nuances within the *ngopi* (coffee-dialogue) sessions. This moderate involvement allowed for a naturalistic inquiry into the community's social flow without disrupting the spontaneity of interactions. Primary data were gathered through 18 semi-structured in-depth interviews, each lasting 60–90 minutes, conducted face-to-face and audio-recorded with explicit consent. To ensure technical triangulation, these were supplemented by documentary analysis of the community's curriculum and longitudinal observations of inter-group interactions (Arikunto, 2014; Nawawi & Hadari, 2005; Sarlito, 2000). This multi-method approach ensures the credibility and confirmability of the findings while adhering to strict ethical standards of anonymity and informed consent (Rahmat, 2022).

The data analysis followed an iterative process, integrating the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña with theoretical coding as the final interpretive stage (Mu'min, 2023; Strauss & Corbin, 2003). After the initial stages of data condensation and display which involved horizontalization and the identification of meaning units the results were engaged in a hermeneutic dialogue with Al-Faruqi's tawhidic epistemology. This step is framed as an interpretive analytical framework to reveal the underlying philosophical meanings of the community's inclusive behavior (Faruqi, 2007; Tiara & Danu, 2023). By synthesizing empirical insights from the field with classical and modern educational theories, this study aims to construct a robust, practice-based model of multicultural Islamic education that is intellectually grounded and socially responsive (Ibrahim et al., 2024; Mahmudulhassan et al., 2025).

C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. The *Ngopi* Epistemology of the Santri Gopal Gabul Community

The Santri Gopal Gabul community embodies an organic, grassroots model of non-formal Islamic education that stands in stark contrast to the rigid structures of formal institutions. This community constructs knowledge through the *Ngopi* (Processing Thought) tradition, which serves as an epistemological bridge between sacred religious texts and immediate social realities. The evolution of this community originating from traditional *Al-Hikam* text studies in 2006 to becoming a radically inclusive space for marginalized groups marks a fundamental shift in the community's way of knowing. In this dialectical space, the traditional hierarchy of the *pesantren* is flattened, allowing *alumni*, *santri*, and ex-convicts to engage in egalitarian dialogue (Interview with KH-01, October 24, 2024). This phenomenon suggests that within this community, knowledge is no longer treated as a static theoretical entity but as a living truth that must be validated through social practice (Al-Faruqi, 1995; Safitri et al., 2025).

Theoretically, the *Ngopi* tradition represents a localized manifestation of Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi's principle of the Unity of Truth. Al-Faruqi (2012) posits that the truth of revelation must harmonize with objective reality; in the Gopal Gabul context, this harmony is achieved through informal, egalitarian coffee dialogues. Here, *Ngopi* functions as a heuristic instrument for interpreting Islamic values so they remain relevant to contemporary human struggles. This is evidenced by the strategic reinterpretation of the community's identity from *ngalor-ngidul* (aimless wandering) to *ngaji ngalor-ngidul* (studying while wandering). This semantic shift is not merely linguistic but represents a profound strategy for the social reintegration of marginalized actors, or *bedigul* (Interview with KH-01, October 25, 2024). In this light, Al-Faruqi's Unity of Truth becomes demonstrative: the veracity of tawhid is proven by its capacity to transform social stigma into a dignified energy for change (Syam, 2025).

Furthermore, the community's inclusivity, exemplified by the establishment of the Al-Hijrah Mushola by former marginalized actors, reflects Al-Faruqi's principles of the Unity of Life and the Unity of Mankind. This inclusive praxis rejects the dichotomy between ritual piety and social responsibility. Education is framed as *Sinau Urip* (Learning to Live), where religious texts are not merely memorized but teleologically applied to improve the social order (Firmansyah & Saepuloh, 2022). By positioning tawhid as an active principle of social action, Santri Gopal Gabul successfully bridges the gap between metaphysical doctrine and empirical reality. This aligns with Al-Faruqi's Islamization of Knowledge agenda, which argues that every discipline and human activity must maintain an ethical-theological relevance rooted in the oneness of God (Adu et al., 2023; Muthohirin et al., 2025).

Ultimately, integrating Al-Faruqi's tawhidic epistemology into the *Ngopi* praxis offers a more functional and inclusive model for tolerance education. By emphasizing the unity of creation and the unity of knowledge, the community embraces diverse identities without compromising core doctrinal principles. Tawhid functions here as a worldview core that liberates individuals from social isolation and the epistemic confusion caused by fragmented knowledge (Bistara, 2022; Ismatulloh & Roqib, 2025). The Gopal Gabul phenomenon thus validates Al-Faruqi's argument that tawhid is an essential living methodology for addressing contemporary crises, where religiosity must engage with human issues at their most fundamental level (Inayah, 2018; Rijal, 2014). This synthesis of high-level epistemology and grassroots praxis provides a responsive prototype for fostering social cohesion in an era of increasing polarization.

2. The Principle of Tawhid as the Unity of Mankind

Within the framework of Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi's thought (2012), Tawhid functions as a transformative social ethic that radically affirms the Unity of Mankind. This principle posits that because God is one, the human race is inherently a single, unified entity (*Ummatan Wahidah*), where dignity is an intrinsic divine endowment rather than a social or religious merit (Nuha, 2025; Putra, 2020). In the Gopal Gabul community, this theoretical premise is operationalized through the deliberate dissolution of social hierarchies and the deconstruction of the pious-marginal binary that often characterizes traditional religious settings (Maksum, 2011; Rahman & Amir, 2023; Yulianto, 2020). KH. Abdul Halim Mujtaba (KH-01) implements this by emphasizing social competence over mere academic erudition. His pedagogical approach suggests that true religiosity is manifested in the ability to coexist with diverse social strata without the interference of ideological barriers, provided that such interactions remain anchored in core moral values (Interview with KH-01, 2024). This indicates a shift from exclusive piety to a dialogical morality that prioritizes human presence over dogmatic distance.

The manifestation of the Unity of Mankind is empirically observed in the flattened social structure of the community's study circles. The interaction between formal authority figures and individuals with criminal backgrounds, such as Sunarto (ST-04), demonstrates how the community serves as a site for restorative dignity. This inclusive praxis suggests that human potential is a moral subject equal before God, transcending past social stigmas (Daniel et al., 2024; Habibi, Kusmanto, et al., 2025; Jalaluddin, 2001). For participants like ST-04, the transition from a thug identity to a santri was not achieved through formal lecturing but through the internalized ethics of accepting and respecting others. This transformation indicates that tolerance in this context is an affective, heart-centered process fostered by non-judgmental acceptance and shared dialogue (Interview with ST-04, 2025). By positioning every individual within the same divine mandate (*khilafah*), the community offers a prototype for inclusive education that replaces religious exclusivism

with a sense of universal brotherhood.

However, a critical interrogation of this practice reveals that such inclusivity is not entirely boundless; it operates within a dialectical tension between radical openness and adherence to the community's morality and values. While the community embraces marginalized actors, this inclusivity is mediated by a shared commitment to behavioral transformation, as evidenced by the establishment of the *Al-Hijrah Mushola*. This suggests that the Unity of Mankind in the Gopal Gabul context is a principled inclusivity it welcomes the person but demands a reorientation of action toward the tawhidic ideal of social harmony (Yunita et al., 2025). The success in integrating figures like Sunarto demonstrates that when Tawhid is understood as a principle of human unity, Islamic education moves beyond theoretical silos and becomes a catalyst for profound social cohesion at the grassroots level (Lestari & Bahar, 2024).

Furthermore, Al-Faruqi's framework provides the necessary worldview core to prevent this inclusive behavior from devolving into shallow cultural syncretism. By grounding social ethics in the Unity of Truth and Mankind, the community ensures that its pluralistic values are intellectually rooted in Islamic ontology rather than mere social pragmatism (Muthohirin et al., 2025; Rijal, 2014). This approach addresses the contemporary challenge of knowledge fragmentation by integrating the divine dimension into empirical social relations, thereby creating an educational paradigm that is both spiritually grounded and socially responsive (Inayah, 2018; Ismatulloh & Roqib, 2025).

3. Integration of Islamic Values and Local Reality: Wisdom-Based Islamization

Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi (2012) posited that the Islamization of knowledge and life must remain tethered to contemporary socio-political realities and local contexts to avoid intellectual alienation. In this study, the Santri Gopal Gabul community demonstrates what is termed here as Organic Islamization. Conceptually, organic Islamization is defined as a bottom-up, praxis-led integration of revelatory values into local cultural fabrics without eroding the community's local genius or original identity (Mardatillah et al., 2025; Wahyudi et al., 2025). While Al-Faruqi's original framework often focused on formal academic disciplines, this organic model extends the principle to the *Lebenswelt* (lived world), where universal Tawhidic values are filtered through the local genius of Javanese wisdom to create a functional, non-confrontational religious expression (Hadziq et al., 2024).

This integration is most visible in the hybrid character of the santri, who often appear *urakan* (unconventional/rebellious) yet remain deeply virtuous. Within this specific community context, this character is not a deviation from tradition but an intelligent adaptation to a harsh grassroots environment. This reflects Al-Faruqi's Unity of Life, where the dichotomy between ritual piety in the mosque and social engagement in the public sphere is dissolved. KH. Abdul Halim Muftaba (KH-01) attributes this spirit to the inherent flexibility of Javanese culture, which prioritizes communal harmony and politeness. In his view, the Gopal Gabul identity represents a cultural transformation within an Islamic framework, ensuring that religiosity is grounded and dialogical rather than purely formalistic (Interview with KH-01, 2025). This cultural hybridity suggests that the Islamization of life is most effective when it utilizes local wisdom as its primary vehicle.

The community's non-bureaucratic and flexible structure further facilitates this organic integration, allowing Islamic values to manifest as tangible social solutions. Unlike rigid formal institutions, the Santri Gopal Gabul community utilizes a less formal hierarchy to respond rapidly to village-level issues, ranging from family mediation to logistical crisis intervention. According to Prayitno (PA-03), their religious activities are intentionally designed to be non-rigid, fostering a dependable santri persona who is actively involved in the residents' daily struggles (Interview with PA-03, 2025). This practical advocacy serves

as an empirical validation of the Unity of Life, where spiritual devotion is translated directly into social utility.

Through this harmonious dialectic between sacred texts and local wisdom, Islamic values within this community context are perceived as an integral part of a flexible communal identity rather than a foreign or threatening doctrine. This indicates that epistemological integration, as envisioned by Al-Faruqi, is realized when universal Islamic principles are accommodated by local cultural intelligence. This synergy strengthens social cohesion and proves that the indigenization of Islam, grounded in Tawhid, can provide a robust framework for multicultural education that respects traditional roots while addressing contemporary dilemmas (Syihabuddin et al., 2023).

4. Inclusive Tolerance Education Model: A Synthesis of *Fathul Qulub* and *Fathul 'Aql*

The educational model demonstrated by the Santri Gopal Gabul community represents a unique pedagogical paradigm that synthesizes the opening of the heart (*fathul qulub*) with the opening of thought (*fathul 'aql*) (Parekh, 2008; Umar, 2014). This model suggests that spirituality is not an escapist withdrawal from social reality, but a grounded spirituality that is inherently inclusive and socially responsive. Within this framework, the maturity of an individual's faith is perceived as being directly proportional to their level of social sensitivity (Maskuri, 2024).

Fathul qulub serves as the affective foundation of this model, redefining spirituality as an ethical engagement with the other. In this community, spirituality is decoupled from purely ritualistic diligence or scriptural fluency; instead, it is interpreted as the cultivation of a clean, compassionate heart capable of viewing others without prejudice. According to KH. Abdul Halim Mujtaba (KH-01), true spirituality is manifested when closeness to the Divine is mirrored in one's closeness to humanity, particularly through acts of respect and non-judgmentalism (Interview with KH-01, 2025).

Analytically, this indicates that *fathul qulub* functions as a primary prerequisite for social cohesion. It transforms the heart into a receptive vessel for tolerance, moving religiosity from the prayer mat into the sphere of empathy. Theoretically, this reflects Al-Faruqi's Unity of Life, which rejects the dichotomy between the sacred (worship) and the profane (social interaction). In this view, worship is not confined to religious rites but extends to mundane acts of service, such as maintaining the communal space or caring for the sick, which are seen as externalizations of an inner Tawhidic consciousness.

Building upon the affective foundation of the heart, *fathul 'aql* represents the cognitive expansion where knowledge of God is articulated through rational and micro-social actions (Habibi, Kusmanto, et al., 2025). In this stage, theological discourse is translated into a rational openness toward interfaith activities and unconditional communal help. KH-01 emphasizes that spirituality must be visible in "small things," where everyday kindness is recognized as a profound expression of inner awareness rather than mere politeness (Interview with KH-01, 2025).

This demonstrates that *fathul 'aql* prevents tolerance from becoming a shallow sentiment; it provides the intellectual structure necessary to navigate a pluralistic society. By positioning empathy as an instrument of knowledge, the community indicates that an open mind is a direct byproduct of an open heart. This interaction creates a robust model because it targets both the cognitive-intellectual and affective-existential dimensions of the learner.

The interaction between *fathul qulub* and *fathul 'aql* can be interpreted as a localized implementation of Al-Faruqi's Unity of Truth. Al-Faruqi argues that all knowledge, whether revealed or empirical, must converge toward the oneness of God (Rachman, 2020). In the Gopal Gabul praxis, this convergence is achieved when religious truth

(revelation) is validated through the authentic experience of loving and respecting creation (empirical social reality).

This synthesis proves that tolerance education is most sustainable when it is not merely taught as a set of rules, but experienced as a unified epistemological reality. By presenting Islam as a concrete *rahmatan lil alamin* (mercy to all creation), the community indicates that Tawhid is the ultimate principle that integrates science, religion, and social ethics (M. Quraish, 2020; Rijal, 2014). Ultimately, this model offers a transformative perspective: an open heart is the essential gateway to an open mind, producing authentic tolerant behavior that can withstand the pressures of social polarization.

5. Action-Based Education: Learning by Doing

Within the Santri Gopal Gabul ecosystem, tolerance is repositioned from a static cognitive subject to an internalized existential necessity through direct praxis. This study suggests that the truth of inclusive education is not found in theoretical syllabi but through the intensity of organic, cross-identity interactions (Muvid & Kholis, 2024). This pedagogical stance aligns with Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi's (2012) assertion that Tawhid is fundamentally a principle of action. In this community, Islamic education serves as a transformative bridge where religious values are not merely contemplated but are tested and validated through real encounters with the other.

The most salient empirical evidence of this model is the active participation of non-Muslim members, such as Muradi a Christian village head who identifies as a santri within this circle. His experience indicates that genuine acceptance occurs when formalist barriers are replaced by a sincere spirit of brotherhood fostered through shared physical labor. By participating in manual tasks, such as constructing the pesantren's ablution facilities, non-Muslim members find that spirituality in this community transcends ritualistic boundaries and manifests as radical humanism (Interview with NM-08, 2025). This praxis demonstrates that the community has successfully liberated itself from rigid religious formalism, proving that when Tawhid is understood integrally, it naturally produces an inclusive attitude responsive to diversity (Fahmi et al., 2023; Paisun et al., 2025).

Further analysis reveals that tolerance grows through shared vulnerability and collective crisis response. As observed by Sugiyono the act of cleaning a non-Muslim neighbor's house after a disaster and the subsequent communal meal serve as powerful pedagogical moments where theological values are felt rather than studied (Interview with PA-02, 2025). This learning-by-doing model demonstrates that effective tolerance education necessitates active participation and deep empathy (Azra, 2012; M. Quraish, 2020; Nurdi et al., 2025). By transforming social space into an educational laboratory, the Gopal Gabul community moves beyond the legalistic and cognitive dimensions of traditional Islamic Religious Education (IRE) which often prioritize internal theological coherence over pluralistic engagement (Rohman & Muhtamiroh, 2022; Suparjo et al., 2022).

D. CONCLUSION

This research concludes that the Santri Gopal Gabul community serves as a profound empirical manifestation of Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi's Tawhidic epistemology within a grassroots sociocultural context. By operationalizing the Ngopi tradition as a heuristic bridge, the community facilitates a unique pedagogical synthesis between *fathul qulub* (affective heart-opening) and *fathul 'aql* (cognitive mind-opening), effectively harmonizing sacred religious texts with immediate social realities. This model suggests that the Unity of Truth is not merely a theoretical construct but is dually validated through behavioral transformation and the organic integration of egalitarian local wisdom, ensuring that

inclusive education moves beyond rote memorization toward a lived ontological experience. Furthermore, the community's success in dissolving social hierarchies to embrace marginalized groups and interfaith members tangibly manifests the Unity of Mankind as a resilient social ethic, shifting the focus from the formal Islamization of Knowledge to a praxis-led Islamization of Life.

However, this study is not without limitations. As a qualitative inquiry centered on a specific community in Blora, the findings may lack immediate generalizability to more urbanized or structurally rigid institutional settings. The organic nature of the Gopal Gabul movement also raises questions regarding its long-term sustainability and scalability without formalized administrative support. Additionally, while the tawhidic framework provides a robust analytical lens, future research could benefit from a longitudinal approach to measure the long-term impact of this inclusive model on the broader community's social fabric.

Despite these constraints, the learning-by-doing model provides an actionable blueprint for multicultural Islamic education in Indonesia. It indicates that national policy frameworks should prioritize the strengthening of non-formal third spaces as critical laboratories for testing and sustaining authentic religious moderation. By shifting the focus from purely theocentric abstraction to anthropocentric social application, this study contributes a grounded model that fosters restorative dignity and universal brotherhood in an increasingly pluralistic society.

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