

## ANALYSIS OF THE MEANING OF 'LAA ILAAHA ILLALLAH' AND THE URGENCY OF TAUHĪD EDUCATION IN THE LIFE OF MUSLIMS

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**Abstract (In English).** This article examines the significance of *Lā ilāha illallāh* (“There is no god but Allah”) and the importance of *tawhīd* education in the lives of Muslims. As the theological foundation of Islam, the testimony of divine unity holds profound significance not only as a verbal statement but also as a transformative paradigm shaping belief, ethics, and education. The study employs a qualitative approach with descriptive-analytical methods, examining classical Islamic sources, Qur’anic and Hadith evidence, and contemporary scholarship from national and international journals, including Scopus-indexed publications. The findings indicate that *Lā ilāha illallāh* is characterized by dual aspects: negation (*nafy*) of all false deities and affirmation (*ithbāt*) of God’s sole divinity. Classical scholars such as Ibn Taymiyyah, al-Ghazālī, and Ibn Qayyim emphasize that the testimony requires both internal conviction and external practice, encompassing sincerity, certainty, and ethical obedience. Modern studies expand this framework by linking monotheism to contemporary challenges such as secularism, moral relativism, and technological ethics. In the Indonesian context, research demonstrates a gap between cognitive understanding of *tawhīd* and its practical application in everyday life, especially among students exposed to globalization and digital culture. This study concludes that *tawhīd* education must be re-centered as the axis of Islamic pedagogy. By integrating classical wisdom and modern realities, *Lā ilāha illallāh* can function as both a theological creed and an educational strategy, fostering intellectual coherence, spiritual resilience, and ethical clarity in Muslim identity formation.

**Keywords:** *Lā ilāha illallāh*, *Tawhīd*, Islamic Education, Theology, Muslim Identity

**Abstract (In Bahasa).** Artikel ini mengkaji signifikansi *Lā ilāha illallāh* (“Tiada Tuhan selain Allah”) dan pentingnya pendidikan tauhid dalam kehidupan umat Islam. Sebagai landasan teologis Islam, kesaksian keesaan Tuhan memiliki makna yang mendalam, tidak hanya sebagai pernyataan verbal, tetapi juga sebagai paradigma transformatif yang membentuk keyakinan, etika, dan pendidikan. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode deskriptif-analitis, mengkaji sumber-sumber Islam klasik, dalil Al-Qur’an dan Hadits, serta kajian ilmiah kontemporer dari jurnal nasional dan internasional, termasuk publikasi terindeks



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Scopus. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa *Lā ilāha illallāh* dicirikan oleh dua aspek: penolakan (*nafy*) terhadap semua sesembahan palsu dan penegasan (*ithbāt*) terhadap keilahian tunggal Tuhan. Para ulama klasik seperti Ibnu Taimiyah, al-Ghazālī, dan Ibnu Qayyim menekankan bahwa kesaksian menuntut keyakinan internal dan praktik eksternal, yang mencakup ketulusan, keyakinan, dan kepatuhan etis. Studi modern memperluas kerangka ini dengan menghubungkan tauhid dengan tantangan kontemporer seperti sekularisme, relativisme moral, dan etika teknologi. Dalam konteks Indonesia, penelitian menunjukkan adanya kesenjangan antara pemahaman kognitif tentang tauhid dan penerapan praktisnya dalam kehidupan sehari-hari, terutama di kalangan siswa yang terpapar globalisasi dan budaya digital. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa pendidikan tauhid harus dipusatkan kembali sebagai poros pedagogi Islam. Dengan mengintegrasikan kearifan klasik dan realitas modern, *Lā ilāha illallāh* dapat berfungsi sebagai credo teologis sekaligus strategi pendidikan, yang mendorong koherensi intelektual, ketahanan spiritual, dan kejelasan etis dalam pembentukan identitas Muslim.

**Kata Kunci:** *Lā ilāha illallāh*, *tawḥīd*, pendidikan Islam, teologi, identitas Muslim

## A. INTRODUCTIONS

The confession of faith, *Lā ilāha illallāh* “There is no god but Allah” is universally acknowledged within Islam as the cornerstone of belief and practice. This declaration constitutes not only the entry point into Islam but also the foundation upon which all acts of devotion, morality, and social interaction must rest. The phrase, however, is not merely verbal; it encompasses a comprehensive worldview that directs Muslims to submit exclusively to God in every aspect of life. Ibn Taymiyyah, in his seminal work *al-‘Ubudiyyah*, asserts that the essence of *Lā ilāha illallāh* lies in liberating human beings from servitude to creation and binding them solely to the Creator, thereby ensuring genuine freedom and dignity<sup>1</sup>. Similarly, al-Ghazālī in *Iḥyā’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn* describes monotheism as a process of purifying the heart from attachment to anything other than Allah, situating faith not in the tongue alone but deep within the conscience<sup>2</sup>. These classical formulations remind contemporary Muslims that *tawḥīd* is not only theological but existential, shaping the totality of human existence.

In the modern era, the significance of *Lā ilāha illallāh* is challenged by forces of globalization, secularization, and technological transformation. The acceleration of information technology has paradoxically made Islamic knowledge widely accessible while simultaneously exposing Muslims to competing ideologies, relativism, and consumerist lifestyles that dilute their theological commitments. Research on religion and globalization indicates that while access to Islamic resources has expanded, the quality of internalization has weakened, producing a generation of Muslims who are often ritualistic but not grounded in a comprehensive understanding of faith<sup>3</sup>. This condition is observable in both Western minority contexts and Muslim-majority societies, including Indonesia, where religious identity is strong but frequently superficial.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibnu Taimiyah, “Al-Ubudiyyah,” *Beirut: Al-Maktabah Al-Islamiyah*, 2005.

<sup>2</sup> Abu Hamid Al-Ghazali, “Ihya Ulumuddin (Beirut, Dar Al-Ma’rifah, Tt)” (Juz, n.d.).

<sup>3</sup> Peter Beyer, “Religion and Globalization,” 1993.

Indonesia, as the world's largest Muslim-majority nation, illustrates the urgency of re-examining the role of *tawhīd* education. Despite a long history of Islamic scholarship, pesantren traditions, and state-supported religious education, contemporary surveys show an alarming trend: young Muslims are increasingly attracted to secular lifestyles, mystical practices, and even pseudo-religious movements that compromise the purity of monotheism<sup>4</sup>. The influence of digital media further amplifies these tendencies, often reducing Islamic faith to a cultural identity marker or a set of rituals without substantive theological depth. Scholars such as Azyumardi Azra have argued that the tension between tradition and modernity in Indonesia requires an educational framework that re-centers *tawhīd* as both epistemological foundation and moral compass<sup>5</sup>.

The Qur'an presents *Lā ilāha illallāh* as the essential message of all prophets. The verse "And We sent not before you any messenger except that We revealed to him: There is no deity except Me, so worship Me" (Q. Al-Anbiyā' 21:25) encapsulates the universality of monotheism across prophetic traditions. Ibn Kathīr, in his exegesis, stresses that the statement demarcates the boundary between faith and disbelief; whoever accepts it with sincerity attains salvation, whereas rejection leads to perdition<sup>6</sup>. The Hadith literature also reinforces its centrality, with the Prophet Muhammad declaring that whoever's last words are *Lā ilāha illallāh* will enter Paradise<sup>7</sup>. These sources underscore that monotheism is not an abstract idea but a lived reality with soteriological consequences.

Yet the pedagogical challenge lies in translating this creed into educational practice. Contemporary Islamic education often includes *aqīdah* in its curricula but treats it as a cognitive subject divorced from ethical and spiritual formation. Hambal's study (2020) on *tawhīd* education in Indonesia highlights this gap: while students can articulate doctrinal formulations, many fail to embody them in daily behavior<sup>8</sup>. This disjunction between knowledge and praxis reduces *Lā ilāha illallāh* to mere recitation, undermining its transformative power. In response, scholars argue for integrative pedagogies where *tawhīd* becomes the axis of all educational aims. Isma'īl al-Faruqi contends that the failure of Muslim societies to root their knowledge systems in *tawhīd* has contributed to intellectual fragmentation and the erosion of ethical values in the face of secular modernity<sup>9</sup>. Osman Bakar similarly proposes that monotheism, when understood holistically, provides a metaphysical framework that bridges religion and science, enabling Muslims to engage modernity without losing spiritual authenticity<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> Ahmad Hayati Nufus, "Pendidikan Dan Politikus : Analisis Pemikiran M. Natsir Tentang Pendidikan Islam Di Indonesia," *Al-Iltizam: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 3, no. 1 (2018): 39–52, <https://doi.org/10.33477/alt.v3i1.416>.

<sup>5</sup> Azyumardi Azra, *Islam in the Indonesian World: An Account of Institutional Formation* (Mizan Pustaka, 2006).

<sup>6</sup> Ibnu Katsir, "Tafsir Al Qur'anul Adzim," *Beirut-Lebanon: Dar Al Kotob Al Ilmiah* 1427 (1999).

<sup>7</sup> Abu Daud Sulaiman Ibn As-Ash'ath al-Sijistani Muhammad Muhyi al-Din, *Sunan Abu Daud* (Beirut: Beirut: Darul Kitab Al Arabi, 1996).

<sup>8</sup> Muhammad Hambal, "Pendidikan Tauhid Dan Urgensinya Bagi Kehidupan Muslim," *TADARUS* 9, no. 1 (2020).

<sup>9</sup> Isma'īl R Al-Faruqi, "Al Tawhīd: Its Implications for Thought and Life," (*No Title*), 1992.

<sup>10</sup> Osman Bakar, *Tawhid and Science Islamic Perspectives on Religion and Science* (Arah Pendidikan Sdn Bhd, 2008).

In the Indonesian context, research by Nurfalah (2014) shows that family-based *tawhīd* education plays a critical role in countering secular influences and shaping resilient religious identities<sup>11</sup>. Other studies, such as Qomaria (2024), emphasize the urgency of embedding *tawhīd* values into early childhood education, particularly for Generation Z, whose exposure to digital technologies shapes their worldview from an early age<sup>12</sup>. These findings indicate that effective *tawhīd* education must be holistic, starting within the family and extending to schools, communities, and broader societal institutions.

The urgency of *tawhīd* education also intersects with global ethical challenges. Scholars such as Seyyed Hossein Nasr argue that the doctrine of divine unity fosters an ecological and social ethic that resists material exploitation and promotes harmony with creation<sup>13</sup>. In a more contemporary vein, Scopus-indexed research by Khan et al. (2018) applies Islamic monotheism to ethical questions surrounding the Internet of Things, showing that *tawhīd* provides a moral framework for engaging with technology responsibly<sup>14</sup>. These contributions demonstrate the versatility of monotheistic principles in addressing not only personal piety but also collective human challenges.

Nevertheless, despite this growing body of scholarship, research gaps remain. Much of the existing literature either focuses on the theological exposition of *Lā ilāha illallāh* or addresses educational reform without explicitly linking pedagogy to the metaphysical depth of monotheism. Furthermore, while international studies underscore the relevance of *tawhīd* in global ethics, fewer works have contextualized it within the socio-cultural dynamics of Indonesia, where syncretism, moral relativism, and identity politics present unique challenges. The present study seeks to bridge these gaps by synthesizing classical theological insights with contemporary educational discourse, thereby reasserting *tawhīd* as both a spiritual foundation and a pedagogical imperative.

The objectives of this article are threefold. First, it aims to analyze the linguistic, theological, and spiritual dimensions of *Lā ilāha illallāh* as articulated in classical and modern scholarship. Second, it seeks to evaluate the relevance of *tawhīd* education in shaping Muslim character amid contemporary moral and intellectual crises. Third, it intends to propose educational strategies for internalizing *tawhīd* in the lives of Muslims, particularly within the Indonesian context. By addressing these aims, the article aspires to contribute to the ongoing discourse on Islamic education and to reaffirm the centrality of *Lā ilāha illallāh* in the construction of Muslim identity and morality.

## B. METHOD

This study employs a qualitative library research method aimed at analyzing the meaning of *Lā ilāha illallāh* and its urgency in the context of *tawhīd* education

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<sup>11</sup> Yasin Nurfalah, "Urgensi Pendidikan Tauhid Dalam Keluarga," *Tribakti: Jurnal Pemikiran Keislaman* 25, no. 2 (2014): 338–47.

<sup>12</sup> Elysa Nurul Qomaria, "Urgensi Pendidikan Tauhid Pada Anak Usia Dini Di Era Generasi Z," *ILJ: Islamic Learning Journal* 2, no. 2 (2024): 322–39.

<sup>13</sup> Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *The Heart of Islam: Enduring Values for Humanity* (Zondervan, 2009).

<sup>14</sup> Wazir Zada Khan et al., "Ethical Aspects of Internet of Things from Islamic Perspective," in *2017 9th IEEE-GCC Conference and Exhibition (GCCCE)* (IEEE, 2017), 1–4.

for Muslims. The nature of the research is normative and conceptual, focusing on theological doctrines that cannot be measured through quantitative indicators but require interpretive analysis of textual sources. In line with George and Bennett's argument on qualitative inquiry, library research provides the most appropriate framework when the objective is to generate interpretive insights grounded in historical and doctrinal traditions rather than statistical generalizations<sup>15</sup>. Primary sources in this research consist of the Qur'an, Hadith, and classical Islamic works such as Ibn Taymiyyah's *al-'Ubudiyyah*, Ibn Kathīr's *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Aẓīm*, and al-Ghazālī's *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*. These texts serve as the theological foundation for understanding the ontological depth of monotheism. Secondary sources include contemporary scholarly works such as Osman Bakar's *Tawhid and Science* and Isma'il R. al-Faruqī's *Al-Tawhid*, which contextualize *tawḥīd* in relation to modern intellectual and ethical challenges<sup>16</sup>. In addition, the study draws on journal articles from national and international publications indexed in Sinta and Scopus, such as Hambal's analysis of *tawḥīd* education in Indonesia, which reveals the pedagogical gap between doctrinal knowledge and practical embodiment<sup>17</sup>. Data were collected through systematic reading, note-taking, and thematic coding, followed by content analysis as proposed by Krippendorff, in which recurring themes were identified and interpreted within both theological and educational frameworks<sup>18</sup>. Validity was ensured through triangulation of sources, comparing classical, modern, and contemporary perspectives to avoid one-sided interpretations. Reliability was strengthened by cross-referencing Qur'anic exegesis and prophetic traditions with multiple scholarly commentaries. Following Merriam's view, the rigor of qualitative studies lies in the coherence and transparency of interpretation rather than replicability, which justifies the methodological choice for this article<sup>19</sup>.

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<sup>15</sup> Alexander L George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (mit Press, 2005).

<sup>16</sup> Bakar, *Tawhid and Science Islamic Perspectives on Religion and Science*.

<sup>17</sup> Hambal, "Pendidikan Tauhid Dan Urgensinya Bagi Kehidupan Muslim."

<sup>18</sup> Klaus Krippendorff, *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology* (Sage publications, 2018).

<sup>19</sup> Elizabeth J Tisdell, Sharan B Merriam, and Heather L Stuckey-Peyrot, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation* (John Wiley & Sons, 2025).

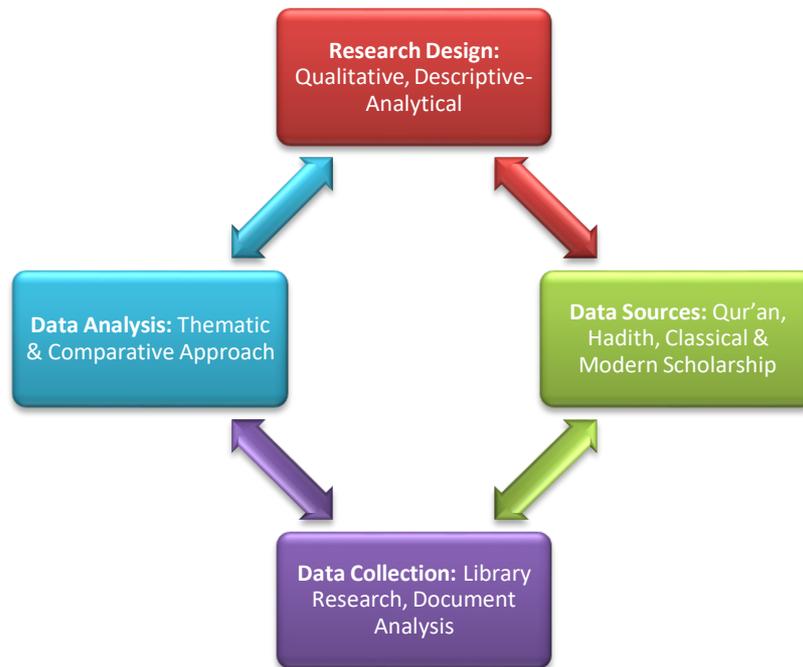


Figure 1: Research Methodology Framework

### C. RESULT

The literature review and textual analysis conducted in this study reveal several interconnected dimensions of *Lā ilāha illallāh* that demonstrate its theological, ethical, and pedagogical significance. These findings are presented descriptively to highlight the main outcomes of the library research, drawing from classical Islamic sources, contemporary scholarship, and recent journal publications.

First, the linguistic and theological essence of *Lā ilāha illallāh* is discovered to consist of two interdependent components: the negation (*nafy*) of all false deities and the affirmation (*ithbāt*) of Allah’s exclusive divinity. Classical scholars such as Ibn Taymiyyah emphasize that the testimony liberates human beings from all forms of servitude to creation and binds them solely to the Creator, ensuring authentic freedom and dignity<sup>20</sup>. Similarly, al-Ghazālī in *Iḥyā’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn* interprets this declaration as a purification of the heart from worldly attachments, making monotheism not merely an intellectual proposition but a transformative spiritual commitment<sup>21</sup>. These perspectives establish that the meaning of *Lā ilāha illallāh* transcends verbal affirmation and requires sincerity, conviction, and practice.

Second, the Qur’an explicitly anchors the missions of all prophets in the call to monotheism. Verses such as QS. Al-Anbiyā’ 21:25 and Q. Muḥammad 47:19 highlight that divine revelation across history has consistently centered on affirming God’s oneness<sup>22</sup>. Ibn Kathīr’s exegesis reinforces that the rejection of

<sup>20</sup> Taimiyah, “Al-Ubudiyah.”

<sup>21</sup> Al-Ghazali, “Ihya Ulumuddin (Beirut, Dar Al-Ma’rifah, Tt).”

<sup>22</sup> “Qur’an Kemenag,” LPMQ, 2022, <https://quran.kemenag.go.id/>.

polytheism and the recognition of divine sovereignty constitute the very boundary between belief and disbelief<sup>23</sup>. The Hadith corpus further supports this, including the Prophet's statement that "Whoever's last words are *Lā ilāha illallāh* will enter Paradise," which indicates the salvific weight of the testimony when uttered sincerely<sup>24</sup>. These textual sources form the normative foundation upon which Muslim faith and identity are built.

Third, findings from classical and modern scholarship show that *Lā ilāha illallāh* contains practical conditions and requirements that must be fulfilled. Scholars generally classify these conditions into knowledge (*'ilm*), certainty (*yaqīn*), acceptance (*qabūl*), submission (*inqiyād*), truthfulness (*ṣidq*), sincerity (*ikhlas*), and love (*maḥabbah*)<sup>25</sup>. These requirements signify that the testimony is not valid as a superficial utterance but must be embodied in both belief and conduct. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah notes that these conditions transform monotheism into a lived reality that shapes the believer's moral and spiritual life<sup>26</sup>.

Fourth, contemporary studies reveal a gap between doctrinal understanding and practical embodiment of *tawḥīd*. Hambal's research in Indonesia shows that while students in Islamic schools are often able to articulate the doctrines of monotheism, many fail to integrate them into daily behavior, resulting in a superficial religiosity disconnected from ethical practice<sup>27</sup>. Nurfalah emphasizes the role of family-based *tawḥīd* education in strengthening children's resilience against secular and materialist influences, underscoring the family as the first and most important locus of religious formation<sup>28</sup>. At the global level, modern scholars such as Isma'īl al-Faruqi and Osman Bakar stress that monotheism should function as a comprehensive paradigm for thought and life, providing an epistemological and ethical framework for integrating religion and science<sup>29</sup>.

Fifth, findings from recent international and Scopus-indexed publications indicate that the principle of *tawḥīd* extends beyond theology and ritual to address contemporary ethical challenges. For instance, Khan et al. argue that Islamic monotheism can guide the ethical use of emerging technologies such as the Internet of Things, ensuring that technological development remains aligned with divine accountability<sup>30</sup>. Similarly, Thoha's book demonstrates that monotheism offers a critical counter to relativism in a pluralist context, reaffirming God's exclusive sovereignty in the face of epistemological uncertainty. These findings demonstrate that monotheism retains both theological depth and practical relevance for modern global issues<sup>31</sup>.

Finally, in the Indonesian context, the findings reveal that the urgency of *tawḥīd* education arises from the increasing influence of globalization, secularization, and digital culture. Although Islamic education formally

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<sup>23</sup> Katsir, "Tafsir Al Qur'anul Adzim."

<sup>24</sup> Abu Daud, *Sunan Abu Daud* (Dar Ul-Kutub Al-Ilmiyyat, 1981).

<sup>25</sup> Muhammad Ibn'Ali Al-Shawkani and Muhammad bin Abdullah, "Fath Al-Qadir," *Damascus: Dar Ibn Kathir*, 1993.

<sup>26</sup> Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah and Abu Bakr, "Madarij Al-Salikin Bayna Manazil Iyyaka Na 'budu Wa Iyyaka Nasta 'In," *Beirut: Dar Al-Kutub Al-'Arabi, t. Th*, 1996.

<sup>27</sup> Hambal, "Pendidikan Tauhid Dan Urgensinya Bagi Kehidupan Muslim."

<sup>28</sup> Nurfalah, "Urgensi Pendidikan Tauhid Dalam Keluarga."

<sup>29</sup> Al-Faruqi, "Al Tawḥīd: Its Implications for Thought and Life."

<sup>30</sup> Khan et al., "Ethical Aspects of Internet of Things from Islamic Perspective."

<sup>31</sup> Anis Malik Thoha, *Tren Pluralisme Agama: Tinjauan Kritis* (Gema Insani, 2005).

incorporates *aqidah* into its curricula, studies show that the approach often remains fragmented and cognitive, focusing on memorization rather than holistic character formation<sup>32</sup>. The proliferation of digital media has further exposed Muslim youth to ideological pluralism and materialism, making the integration of *tawhīd* into educational strategies a pressing necessity. Scholars such as Azyumardi Azra emphasize that without a renewed focus on monotheism, religious identity risks being reduced to superficial rituals lacking substantive theological grounding<sup>33</sup>.

In summary, the findings indicate that *Lā ilāha illallāh* functions simultaneously as a doctrinal foundation, a spiritual practice, and an educational imperative. Its meaning requires not only intellectual acknowledgment but also spiritual internalization and ethical application. The testimony provides Muslims with a framework to navigate personal piety, social justice, and global challenges, while also highlighting the urgent need for comprehensive *tawhīd* education in contemporary contexts, particularly in Indonesia. These findings point toward a research gap in the integration of classical theology with modern educational strategies, a gap which the subsequent discussion will address in greater depth.

#### D. RESEARCH

The findings of this study underscore the profound theological, ethical, and pedagogical significance of *Lā ilāha illallāh*. In this section, the implications of the testimony are discussed considering classical scholarship, contemporary Islamic thought, and the urgent challenges of Muslim education in the globalized era. The discussion integrates scriptural analysis with contemporary concerns, situating *tawhīd* as both a doctrinal foundation and a transformative paradigm for Muslim identity and practice.

##### 1. *Theological Centrality of Lā ilāha illallāh*

The declaration *Lā ilāha illallāh* is universally acknowledged as the cornerstone of Islamic belief. As Ibn Taymiyyah emphasizes, the testimony is not a mere utterance but a binding covenant that requires the rejection of all forms of false worship (*nafy*) and the exclusive affirmation of God's divinity (*ithbāt*)<sup>34</sup>. This dual function situates monotheism at the very heart of Islamic theology. Without such rejection and affirmation, Islamic faith is incomplete. The Qur'an repeatedly reminds the faithful that every prophet was sent to proclaim the oneness of God (QS. Al-Anbiyā' 21:25), thereby establishing theological continuity across prophetic missions<sup>35</sup>.

At the same time, the testimony carries existential implications. Al-Ghazālī, in his *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*, describes *tawhīd* as the purification of the heart from all attachments other than Allah, a process that shapes the soul's orientation toward divine reality<sup>36</sup>. For him, monotheism is not solely intellectual but also spiritual,

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<sup>32</sup> Hambal, "Pendidikan Tauhid Dan Urgensinya Bagi Kehidupan Muslim."

<sup>33</sup> Azra, *Islam in the Indonesian World: An Account of Institutional Formation*.

<sup>34</sup> Taimiyah, "Al-Ubudiyyah."

<sup>35</sup> "Qur'an Kemenag."

<sup>36</sup> Al-Ghazali, *Ihya Ulumuddin* (Beirut, Dar Al-Ma'rifah, Tt)."

requiring the integration of belief, intention, and devotion. This view echoes the Qur'anic insistence that true faith involves both conviction and righteous action (QS. Al-‘Asr 103:1–3)<sup>37</sup>.

## 2. *Educational Dimensions of Tawhīd*

The findings also show that *tawhīd* education is indispensable in the formation of Muslim character. Contemporary Islamic pedagogical discourse argues that the transmission of *tawhīd* must go beyond rote memorization to encompass internalization and practice. Hambal observes that Islamic education often remains cognitive, leaving students vulnerable to secular and materialist ideologies when they leave the classroom<sup>38</sup>. Similarly, Nurfalah stresses that the family remains the primary arena for transmitting monotheism, particularly in instilling resilience against cultural relativism and moral erosion<sup>39</sup>.

From a broader perspective, al-Faruqi's *al-Tawhīd: Its Implications for Thought and Life* insists that the unity of God should inform the unity of knowledge, ethics, and society<sup>40</sup>. This view resonates strongly in contemporary contexts where Muslim students encounter fragmented worldviews in digital and global environments. Osman Bakar expands this framework by linking *tawhīd* with the integration of scientific and religious knowledge, showing that monotheism offers an epistemological foundation for reconciling reason and revelation<sup>41</sup>. Thus, the educational urgency of *tawhīd* lies not only in preventing syncretism but also in fostering holistic intellectual and moral development.

## 3. *The Ethical Implications of Monotheism*

Another significant point emerging from the findings is the ethical dimension of *Lā ilāha illallāh*. To affirm God's oneness is simultaneously to recognize His exclusive authority over human conduct. The Qur'an describes believers as those who "worship none but Allah" (QS. Al-Fātiḥah 1:5), a declaration that integrates worship and obedience into a coherent ethical framework<sup>42</sup>. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah highlights that *tawhīd* is both the beginning and end of the spiritual journey, without which all deeds lose their meaning<sup>43</sup>.

This perspective resonates with modern discussions on Islamic ethics in relation to contemporary challenges. Khan and colleagues argue that *tawhīd* can serve as a moral compass for addressing dilemmas in technology, particularly the ethical implications of the Internet of Things<sup>44</sup>. Similarly, Zahra and Shabbir contend that monotheism guards against moral relativism by anchoring human responsibility in divine sovereignty. These insights illustrate that *tawhīd* is not confined to ritual devotion but extends into ethical deliberations in global society.

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<sup>37</sup> "Qur'an Kemenag."

<sup>38</sup> Hambal, "Pendidikan Tauhid Dan Urgensinya Bagi Kehidupan Muslim."

<sup>39</sup> Nurfalah, "Urgensi Pendidikan Tauhid Dalam Keluarga."

<sup>40</sup> Al-Faruqi, "Al Tawhīd: Its Implications for Thought and Life."

<sup>41</sup> Bakar, *Tawhid and Science Islamic Perspectives on Religion and Science*.

<sup>42</sup> "Qur'an Kemenag."

<sup>43</sup> al-Jawziyyah and Bakr, "Madarij Al-Salikin Bayna Manazil Iyyaka Na 'budu Wa Iyyaka Nasta 'In."

<sup>44</sup> Khan et al., "Ethical Aspects of Internet of Things from Islamic Perspective."

#### 4. *Challenges in Contemporary Muslim Societies*

The study also highlights a discrepancy between doctrinal knowledge and lived practice. While many Muslims affirm *Lā ilāha illallāh* verbally, their daily actions may reflect divided loyalties whether in reliance on material means, the pursuit of worldly validation, or acquiescence to secular norms. As Azra observes in his study of Indonesian Islam, modern Muslims often experience religiosity as cultural identity rather than deep conviction<sup>45</sup>. This superficial religiosity risks reducing *tawhīd* to symbolic affiliation, detached from moral and intellectual substance.

The challenge becomes sharper in the digital era. With social media and global communication, Muslims are exposed to competing truth-claims and ideologies. Without strong grounding in *tawhīd*, young Muslims may be drawn toward secular humanism, consumerism, or even radical misinterpretations of Islam. This underscores the need for pedagogical models that foster critical understanding and existential commitment to *tawhīd*. Only then can Muslims engage with global pluralism without compromising theological integrity.

#### 5. *Integrating Classical Insights with Modern Realities*

The findings suggest that effective *tawhīd* education must bridge classical theological insights with modern realities. Classical scholars provide robust frameworks for understanding the conditions of *tawhīd* knowledge, certainty, acceptance, submission, truthfulness, sincerity, and love<sup>46</sup>. Yet these conditions must be contextualized for contemporary learners. For example, teaching “certainty” today must address epistemological skepticism, while “submission” must confront the relativism of individual autonomy.

Imam al-Shāfiʿī’s remark that a little deed with *tawhīd* outweighs abundant deeds without it reinforces the priority of internal conviction<sup>47</sup>. Yet, as Ibn Kathīr notes, the testimony is beneficial only for those who fulfill its conditions and avoid its nullifiers<sup>48</sup>. This perspective calls for a pedagogy that emphasizes both orthodoxy (correct belief) and orthopraxy (correct practice).

#### 6. *The Transformative Potential of Lā ilāha illallāh*

The overarching implication of these findings is that *Lā ilāha illallāh* represents more than a theological formula; it is a transformative paradigm for Muslim existence. It informs how Muslims worship, legislate, interact socially, and approach knowledge. Its integration into education ensures that students develop not only intellectual understanding but also spiritual resilience and ethical clarity. As modern scholars argue, *tawhīd* provides a framework for responding to globalization, technological disruption, and moral fragmentation.

The challenge, therefore, is not merely to teach *Lā ilāha illallāh* but to cultivate its lived reality. This involves integrating classical sources, modern scholarship, and pedagogical innovation to ensure that Muslims embody monotheism as both creed and practice. In doing so, Islamic education can fulfill

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<sup>45</sup> Azra, *Islam in the Indonesian World: An Account of Institutional Formation*.

<sup>46</sup> Al-Shawkani and bin Abdullah, “Fath Al-Qadir.”

<sup>47</sup> Ibnu Hajar Al-Asqalani, “Fathul Bari,” *Maktabah Salafiyah*, 2008.

<sup>48</sup> Katsir, “Tafsir Al Qur’anul Adzim.”

its role of nurturing believers who are intellectually sound, spiritually steadfast, and ethically committed.

**Table 1: Dimensions of Tawhīd and Educational Implications**

Dimension	Key Elements	Educational Implications
<b>Theological</b>	Negation ( <i>nafy</i> ) of false deities; affirmation ( <i>ithbāt</i> ) of Allah’s sole divinity.	Teach students that faith requires both rejection of shirk and affirmation of divine unity.
<b>Ethical</b>	Exclusive worship, sincerity, moral responsibility, and loyalty to divine law.	Foster ethical decision-making rooted in <i>tawhīd</i> values; integrate creed with daily conduct.
<b>Spiritual</b>	Purification of the heart (al-Ghazālī); beginning and end of spiritual journey (Ibn Qayyim).	Develop spiritual resilience and sincerity beyond ritual memorization.
<b>Educational</b>	Unity of knowledge (al-Faruqi); integration of science and faith (Bakar).	Reform curricula to harmonize religious, scientific, and ethical education.
<b>Contemporary</b>	Addressing relativism, secularism, and technological ethics (Zahra, Shabbir, Khan).	Use <i>tawhīd</i> as a paradigm to respond to globalization, pluralism, and digital challenges.

## E. CONCLUSION

This study has explored the meaning of *Lā ilāha illallāh* and the urgency of *tawhīd* education in Muslim life. The findings affirm that the testimony of divine unity is more than a verbal statement; it is a comprehensive creed with theological, ethical, and educational implications. Theologically, it links Islam with all prophetic traditions, affirming liberation from false worship and exclusive devotion to Allah. Ethically, it provides a framework for sincere worship, moral responsibility, and guidance in addressing modern challenges such as technological ethics and pluralism. Educationally, it highlights the gap between rote memorization and lived practice, calling for holistic approaches that integrate knowledge, faith, and character. In an era shaped by globalization and digital culture, *tawhīd* emerges as the axis of theology, the foundation of education, and the compass of ethics. Embracing its full meaning equips Muslims with resilience, clarity, and authenticity in faith and practice.

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