

Rethinking Islamic communication studies within UIN Mataram's *Horizon of Knowledge* paradigm: A critical-integrative review

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Abstract

The discourse on the integration of knowledge in Islamic Higher Education Institutions today often remains at the level of institutional and symbolic slogans, thus requiring critical philosophical and methodological examination. This study seeks to reread the position of Islamic communication within the *Horizon of Knowledge* paradigm of UIN Mataram by examining how this paradigm can serve as a foundation for the construction of integrative knowledge. Using a qualitative approach through library research and conceptual analysis, this study examines the integration of knowledge, *Horizon of Knowledge*, and the philosophy of Islamic communication studies through a critical-hermeneutic perspective. The findings indicate that *Horizon of Knowledge* is not merely an institutional identity but also a scientific paradigm grounded in integration, interconnection, and internalization, which positions revelation, reason, empirical experience, Islamic tradition, and modern theory within an integrated framework. Within this paradigm, Islamic communication studies are not understood merely in a normative sense within the dimension of da'wah, but rather as an academic discipline with strong ontological, epistemological, axiological, and methodological foundations. This study concludes that *Horizon of Knowledge* offers a prophetic-integrative framework for the development of Islamic communication studies that is scientific, ethical, and transformative.

Abstrak

Diskursus integrasi ilmu di Perguruan Tinggi Keislaman hari ini sering kali berhenti sebagai slogan kelembagaan, simbolik, yang memerlukan tinjauan kritis secara filosofis dan metodologis. Penelitian ini hendak membaca ulang posisi Komunikasi Islam dalam paradigma *Horizon Ilmu* UIN Mataram dengan menelaah

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bagaimana paradigma ini dapat menjadi dasar konstruksi Ilmu yang integratif. Melalui pendekatan kualitatif dengan studi kepustakaan dan analisis konseptual, penelitian ini hendak mengkaji integrasi ilmu, *Horizon Ilmu*, dan falsafah ilmu komunikasi Islam secara hermeneutika-kritis. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa *Horizon Ilmu* tidak hanya menjadi identitas kelembagaan, melainkan sebagai paradigma keilmuan berbasis integrasi, interkoneksi, dan internalisasi yang menempatkan wahyu, akal, pengalaman empiris, tradisi Islam, dan teori modern. Dalam paradigma ini, ilmu komunikasi Islam tidak dipahami secara normatif dalam dimensi da'wah, namun menjadi disiplin ilmu dengan fondasi ontologis, epistemologis, aksiologis, dan metodologis yang kuat. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa *Horizon Ilmu* menawarkan kerangka profetik-integratif bagi pengembangan Ilmu Komunikasi Islam yang ilmiah, etis, dan transformatif.

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INTRODUCTION

Contemporary discourse on Islamic studies cannot be separated from the problem of knowledge integration, particularly following the transformation of IAIN/STAIN into UIN (State Islamic Universities). This transformation is not merely a change in institutional status, but also a demand to reformulate the relationship between religious sciences and general sciences. Academically, knowledge integration is understood as an effort to overcome the dichotomy between revelation and reason, normative texts and empirical experience, as well as religion and social reality. Recent studies affirm that Islamic knowledge is not grounded solely in normative texts but also involves rationality, empirical experience, spiritual intuition, and ethical responsibility (Syarip et al., 2026; Adiyono et al., 2024). Therefore, knowledge integration should be regarded as an epistemological agenda, rather than merely an institutional strategy.

The problem is that knowledge integration within State Islamic Higher Education Institutions (PTKIN) often remains symbolic. It appears in university visions, curricula, study program nomenclature, or accreditation interests, yet it does not necessarily shape the way knowledge is constructed. Knowledge integration risks losing its academic significance when it fails to involve the philosophical and methodological dimensions embedded within each discipline. Mardatillah et al. (2025) emphasize that the reconstruction of Islamic epistemology requires the courage to dismantle the dichotomy between religious knowledge and science, rather than merely preserving tradition in a normative manner. This means that integration must generate transformative modes of

thinking, methods, and scholarly orientations; otherwise, it becomes merely an institutional slogan without epistemic consequences.

This debate becomes more significant when examining the construction of Islamic communication as a field of knowledge. Institutionally, Islamic communication has gained academic space through the Study Program of Islamic Communication and Broadcasting (KPI). However, institutional existence does not automatically resolve its scholarly status. Zamroni (2014) argues that Islamic communication and broadcasting still leaves unresolved issues concerning epistemology and scholarly classification, and therefore needs to be examined through the philosophy of science. Some studies also position Islamic communication as part of da'wah because it is related to the transmission of Islamic messages, *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*, moral formation, and social responsibility. This position has a strong normative foundation, since Islamic communication is inseparable from the values of honesty, trustworthiness, deliberation, adab, and wisdom. Harahap et al. (2025) show that the principles of Islamic communication within PTKIN are integrated into the values of *sidq*, *amanah*, *syura*, *adab*, and *hikmah*, which operate in decision-making processes, conflict resolution, interpersonal relations, and institutional governance.

Nevertheless, reducing Islamic communication merely to the practice of da'wah creates an academic problem. Usman et al. (2022) show that the development of Islamic communication is shaped by research grounded in Islamic values, while at the same time it faces the dominance of general communication science. Dhona (2024) further argues that Islamic communication in Indonesia cannot be understood as a field of knowledge entirely derived from religion, because it is also shaped by discourses of modernity, development, and Western knowledge. Therefore, it is important to examine the Islamic scholarly roots of this field, although these roots alone remain insufficient. The main challenge lies in how Islamic values are constructed into ontological, epistemological, axiological, and methodological foundations, so that Islamic Communication may emerge as an integrative discipline, rather than merely a da'wah practice or communication science labeled as Islamic.

A conceptual effort can be seen in Taqiyuddin et al.'s (2025) idea of utterance or expression (*qaul*) as a paradigm of message theory within the philosophy of Islamic Communication. In dominant communication theory, a message is commonly understood as a unit of information transmitted from a communicator to a communicant. From the perspective of *qaul*, however, a message is not neutral information, but an ethical act that carries cognitive, moral, relational, social, and transcendental consequences. *Qaul* regulates not only what is said, but also how it is delivered, to whom it is addressed, in what context it is conveyed, with what intention, and for what purpose the message is

communicated. Therefore, *qaul* needs to be developed as a theoretical category, rather than merely as a list of communication ethics.

At this point, Islamic communication stands within the tension among three positions: as part of da'wah, as a branch of general communication science, and as an integrative discipline that constructs its own scholarly foundations. The first position preserves the normative roots of Islam but risks narrowing the scope of communication. The second position opens dialogue with modern theories but risks weakening the epistemic distinctiveness of Islam. The third position is more promising, but requires serious conceptual work. In this context, the *Horizon of Knowledge* as the scholarly paradigm of UIN Mataram becomes significant. This paradigm emphasizes the integration, interconnection, and internalization of knowledge while encouraging each discipline to identify its scholarly core and connect it with other disciplines. The critical question is whether the *Horizon of Knowledge* truly operates within the construction of Islamic communication at UIN Mataram, whether it shapes the curriculum, theoretical choices, research design, teaching methods, and scholarly orientation, or whether it remains merely an institutional symbol. This research departs from the academic concern that knowledge integration within PTKIN has not been sufficiently examined at the level of concrete disciplines, while Islamic communication itself continues to experience epistemological ambivalence.

The study of Islamic communication within the *Horizon of Knowledge* at UIN Mataram needs to be situated within three major streams of literature. *First*, the literature on knowledge integration within State Islamic Higher Education Institutions (PTKIN) shows that the transformation of IAIN/STAIN into UIN carries serious epistemological consequences. Muthohirin et al. (2025) argue that the institutional transformation of UIN has encouraged the integration of Islamic sciences with modern disciplines, while also revitalizing Islamic academic paradigms. However, this study still leaves a critical question: does knowledge integration truly renew Islamic epistemology, or does it merely function as an institutional language to expand the mandate of UIN? Irham (2025) shows that knowledge integration has moved toward open integration through the incorporation of themes, references, philosophical foundations, and Islamic scholarly approaches with the social and cultural sciences. Meanwhile, Khoir et al. (2025) caution that the transformation of UIN may also narrow the space for Islamic sciences due to market pressures, accreditation demands, modernization, and institutional pragmatism.

Second, the literature on the *Horizon of Knowledge* at UIN Mataram emphasizes that this paradigm is built upon the integration, interconnection, and internalization of knowledge. Parhanudin (2021) understands it as a cross-paradigmatic dialogue between Islamic scholarly traditions, modern sciences, and social reality. Fuadi et al. (2023) shift

the discussion of the *Horizon of Knowledge* into the pedagogical domain, namely, how this paradigm is manifested in learning processes, curriculum design, and students' ways of thinking. Yani (2022) positions the *Horizon of Knowledge* as an epistemological response to the transformation of IAIN into UIN, so that UIN Mataram does not merely become a general university bearing an Islamic label.

Third, the literature on Islamic communication shows that this discipline is still in the process of seeking its scholarly form. Arifin (2018) views Islamic communication as prophetic communication with social, humanistic, liberative, and transcendental orientations. Fadillah et al. (2021) critique Western communication, which tends to separate religion from science, and subsequently propose the integration of communication principles based on the Qur'an and Hadith. Zamroni (2015) emphasizes that Islamic communication and broadcasting still face epistemological and disciplinary classification issues. Harahap and Abdullah (2025) further extend Islamic communication into the organizational culture of PTKIN through the values of *sidq*, *amanah*, *syura*, *adab*, and *hikmah*.

The majority of previous studies have not specifically addressed the intersection of knowledge integration, the *Horizon of Knowledge*, and the scholarly construction of Islamic communication at UIN Mataram. This study offers a critical argument that the *Horizon of Knowledge* should not remain merely an institutional symbol but must be examined through the ways Islamic communication is constructed, taught, researched, and developed. The urgency of this study lies in strengthening Islamic communication as an integrative discipline with ontological, epistemological, axiological, and methodological foundations, while also clarifying the relevance of knowledge integration at UIN as an academic paradigm that is actively embodied in scholarly practice.

The main significance of this study lies in its attempt to bring together three fields of discussion that have thus far tended to develop separately: knowledge integration within State Islamic Higher Education Institutions (PTKIN), the *Horizon of Knowledge* at UIN Mataram, and the scholarly construction of Islamic communication. The intersection of these three domains may produce a stronger conceptual contribution to understanding Islamic communication, not merely as a practice of da'wah or as a field of media studies, but as a scholarly discipline with a clear epistemic direction. This study is expected to strengthen the position of Islamic communication as an integrative discipline that does not lose its normative Islamic roots, while at the same time being able to engage critically with modern communication science and the needs of contemporary society.

Therefore, this study does not merely aim to explain Islamic communication as a practice of da'wah or as a field of media studies; rather, it seeks to reread its scholarly construction within the framework of the *Horizon of Knowledge*. This study aims to

reinforce the position of Islamic communication as an integrative discipline, while also examining the relevance of the *Horizon of Knowledge* as a scholarly paradigm. This inquiry departs from a central question: how does the *Horizon of Knowledge* function as a comprehensive paradigm offered by UIN Mataram, and how is Islamic communication constructed within the *Horizon of Knowledge* paradigm, which is rooted in Islamic values?

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach using library research and critical-conceptual analysis. This approach was chosen because the study does not aim to measure social behavior statistically, but rather to interpret, compare, and reconstruct concepts. The main object of analysis is the epistemological relationship between the *Horizon of Knowledge* and Islamic communication science. Therefore, texts, concepts, institutional paradigms, and academic debates are treated as research data.

The data sources are divided into primary and secondary sources. The primary sources include works that directly discuss the *Horizon of Knowledge* and Islamic communication at UIN Mataram, particularly those by Mutawali et al. (2018), Fahrurrozi et al. (2019), Muhammad et al. (2022), Parhanudin (2021), Fuadi et al. (2023), Yani (2022), Fadillah et al. (2021), and Zamroni (2014). The secondary sources include works on the Islamization of knowledge, integration-interconnection, the philosophy of Islamic science, the transformation of PTKIN, and Islamic communication science, including works by Al-Attas (1993), Al-Faruqi (1989), Sardar (1989), Abdullah (2006), Kuntowijoyo (2004), Nasr (1968), Bakar (1999), Guessoum (2011), Barbour (1997), Basit (2015), and other relevant contemporary studies.

Data collection was carried out through four operational stages. *First*, the researcher identified literature using thematic keywords such as knowledge integration, Islamization of knowledge, integration-interconnection, *Horizon of Knowledge*, UIN Mataram, Islamic communication, da'wah communication, and the philosophy of communication science. *Second*, the sources identified were selected based on three criteria: direct relevance to the research problem, conceptual contribution to the discussion, and publication credibility. *Third*, the researcher extracted the main arguments from each source into a conceptual matrix containing the author, year, topic, main thesis, methodological position, and relevance to the study. *Fourth*, the extracted arguments were grouped into three analytical clusters: knowledge integration within PTKIN, the *Horizon of Knowledge* at UIN Mataram, and the philosophy of Islamic communication science.

Data analysis was conducted through content analysis and critical-hermeneutic reading. Content analysis was used to identify recurring themes, conceptual patterns, and

argumentative structures within the literature. Critical-hermeneutic reading was used to interpret the meaning of concepts within their historical, institutional, and epistemological contexts. The analytical process was carried out through five stages: identifying the main concepts; classifying the literature according to thematic clusters; comparing the arguments of scholars; evaluating the epistemological assumptions underlying each position; and synthesizing a conceptual model of Islamic Communication Science within the *Horizon of Knowledge*.

To strengthen the credibility of the analysis, this study employs source triangulation and conceptual consistency checking. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing institutional texts, philosophical works, and studies on Islamic communication science. Conceptual consistency was maintained by ensuring that each major claim in the research findings is supported by in-text citations and connected to the bibliography. Since this study is critical-conceptual in nature, its validity does not depend on statistical representativeness but on the coherence of interpretation, the adequacy of literature coverage, and the strength of the argumentation in addressing the research gap.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study show that the *Horizon of Knowledge* at UIN Mataram needs to be reread as a scientific paradigm (see Table 1), not merely as an institutional identity. The *Horizon of Knowledge* emerged from UIN Mataram's need to respond to the long-standing dichotomy between religious sciences and general sciences. This dichotomy has often caused religious sciences to be understood as normative forms of knowledge separated from social reality, while general sciences are often understood as rational-empirical knowledge detached from religious values. In this position, the *Horizon of Knowledge* appears as an effort to bring the two together within an integrative, interconnective, and internalizing scientific structure (Mutawali et al., 2018).

The research data indicate that the *Horizon of Knowledge* is not merely intended as a name, symbol, or academic metaphor. Rather, it is positioned as a scientific perspective that regulates how knowledge is understood, developed, taught, researched, and practiced. In the 2018 book *Horizon of Knowledge*, this paradigm is explained as a shared reference for the academic community of UIN Mataram in carrying out the *tridharma* of higher education (The three pillars of higher education: education, research, and community service). This means that the *Horizon of Knowledge* should not remain at the level of ideas, but must be translated into the curriculum, learning system, research tradition, community service, and academic governance (Mutawali et al., 2018).

Table 1. Direction of the *Horizon of Knowledge* paradigm

Focus of findings	Key finding	Operational meaning
Position of the <i>Horizon of Knowledge</i>	The <i>Horizon of Knowledge</i> is the distinctive scientific paradigm of UIN Mataram.	This paradigm serves as an academic identity that distinguishes UIN Mataram from general universities and religious higher education institutions that remain dichotomous.
Scientific foundation	The <i>Horizon of Knowledge</i> is based on integration, interconnection, and internalization.	Religious sciences and general sciences are not positioned separately, but are connected within a complementary system of knowledge.
Center of orientation	The Qur'an and Sunnah are positioned as postulates and orientations of knowledge.	Revelation becomes the center of values, direction, and control so that the development of knowledge does not lose its ethical and spiritual orientation.
Structure of knowledge	The <i>Horizon of Knowledge</i> builds a structure of scientific thinking that differs from secular patterns.	Knowledge is developed through the relationship between postulates, hypotheses, principles, theories, and paradigms, while remaining directed by revelation as its foundational orientation.
Direction of implementation	The <i>Horizon of Knowledge</i> must be present in the <i>tridharma</i> of higher education.	This paradigm must be translated into the curriculum, learning processes, research, community service, and academic culture.
Problems of implementation	The <i>Horizon of Knowledge</i> still faces problems of operationalization.	The idea of integration is already strong, but technical guidelines, derivative models, and its application in learning and research still need to be clarified.

Source: Compiled by the authors, 2025.

Based on the table, the rereading of the *Horizon of Knowledge* can begin from its position as a response to the problem of institutional transformation. The change from IAIN Mataram to UIN Mataram did not merely alter the name of the institution. It also brought epistemological consequences. UIN Mataram no longer manages only religious sciences in a narrow sense, but must also develop social sciences, natural sciences, applied sciences, technology, education, economics, culture, and various other disciplines. Therefore, the *Horizon of Knowledge* becomes the foundation for ensuring that the expansion of these scientific fields does not cause UIN Mataram to lose its Islamic identity (Mutawali et al., 2018; Muhammad et al., 2022).

The *Horizon of Knowledge* cannot be understood as a simple mixture of religious sciences and general sciences. This paradigm is not merely about establishing general faculties within an Islamic campus or adding Qur'anic verses and Hadith to modern theories. Such a reading may instead reduce knowledge integration to a normative attachment. The *Horizon of Knowledge* requires more serious academic work, namely arranging the relationship between the sources of knowledge, objects of knowledge, methods of knowledge, values of knowledge, and purposes of knowledge. Conceptually, the *Horizon of Knowledge* operates through integration, interconnection, and internalization. Integration brings various disciplines together so that they do not negate one another; interconnection builds active relations among fields of knowledge; while internalization incorporates Islamic values into the ways of thinking, researching, teaching, and practicing knowledge (Mutawali et al., 2018; Parhanudin, 2021).

Within the *Horizon of Knowledge* paradigm, the Qur'an and Sunnah are positioned as postulates and as the center of scientific orientation. Revelation is not understood as a substitute for reason or empirical research, but as a source of direction, values, and ethical boundaries for the development of knowledge. At the same time, reason, empirical experience, and scientific methods are still given space to read reality. Thus, the *Horizon of Knowledge* does not reject modern science, but neither does it surrender all measures of truth to modern science. Knowledge continues to develop according to the character of each discipline, but it is directed so that it does not lose its orientation toward humanity, Islam, rationality, empirical grounding, ethics, and transcendence (Mutawali et al., 2018).

The findings of this study also show that the *Horizon of Knowledge* has a strong axiological dimension. Knowledge should not stop as a conceptual debate among academics, but must be grounded, reach society, and respond to the problems of life. Therefore, the success of knowledge is measured not only by the strength of its ontology and epistemology, but also by its social benefit. The *Horizon of Knowledge* also needs to be understood as a living system within the academic community of UIN Mataram. It must live through the relationships among lecturers, students, curriculum, research, academic culture, and society, so that it does not remain merely an academic document, symbol, or institutional branding (Fahrurrozi et al., 2019; Muhammad et al., 2022).

However, the findings indicate that the implementation of the *Horizon of Knowledge* still faces problems of operationalization. This paradigm has been prepared and popularized within UIN Mataram, but it still requires conceptual simplification, technical guidelines, continuous socialization, and a more measurable implementation model. In multi- and transdisciplinary learning, lecturers have understood the importance of combining knowledge, methods, and concepts from various disciplines, yet

team teaching has not sufficiently become a main strategy. Therefore, the rereading of the *Horizon of Knowledge* must move from grand ideas toward concrete implementation instruments in the curriculum, learning processes, research, community service, and academic culture. In this way, the *Horizon of Knowledge* can become a living paradigm that is integrative, critical, humanistic, non-dichotomous, non-secular, not merely normatively attached, and oriented toward public benefit (*maṣlaḥah*) (Fuadi et al., 2023; Parhanudin, 2021).

One elaboration of the *Horizon of Knowledge* paradigm is how to read the scientific construction of Islamic communication more specifically (see Table 2). Islamic communication studies cannot be sufficiently understood as communication that merely contains religious messages. It also cannot be understood merely as a practical branch of da'wah. Islamic communication studies need to be read as a discipline that has foundations in the philosophy of science, namely ontology, epistemology, axiology, and methodology. This reading is important because several studies show that the existence of Islamic communication and broadcasting is still frequently debated, especially regarding its disciplinary classification, object of study, sources of knowledge, and scientific orientation (Zamroni, 2014; Basit, 2017).

Ontologically, Islamic communication studies have the same material object as communication science in general, namely, human communication activities. However, its formal object is different. General communication science tends to view communication as a process of message transmission, meaning-making, symbol use, media influence, or social relations among human beings. Islamic communication studies view communication as a meaningful act involving the relationship between human beings and Allah, human beings and fellow humans, human beings and society, human beings and media, and human beings and nature. Therefore, communication from an Islamic perspective is not only horizontal, but also vertical-transcendental (Surachman, 2018; Wahyudin, 2012).

Within this framework, communication is not merely an exchange of messages. Communication is a process of meaning formation, moral responsibility, and the management of social relations based on Islamic values. Wahyudin describes this construction as a triangular relationship between Allah, human beings, and society. This relationship shows that Islamic communication does not stop at message effectiveness, but also evaluates truth, honesty, justice, the validity of sources, accountability in the hereafter, and social benefit (*maṣlaḥah*) (Wahyudin, 2012).

Epistemologically, Islamic communication studies are rooted in revelation, reason, empirical experience, the Islamic intellectual tradition, and modern communication theory. The Qur'an and Sunnah serve as the foundation of values and

ethical direction. Reason functions as an instrument of critical thinking. Empirical experience becomes the material for reading social reality. The Islamic intellectual tradition provides conceptual resources such as *adab*, *hikmah*, *tabligh*, *amanah*, *shura*, *tabayyun*, and *qaul*. Meanwhile, modern communication theory provides analytical tools for examining messages, media, audiences, symbols, meaning, networks, and power (Basit, 2017; Fadillah et al., 2021; Tumanggor et al., 2025).

The findings also show that Islamic communication studies are situated within a debate among three major streams. The first is the normative-theological stream. This stream emphasizes that Islamic communication must be rooted in the Qur'an, Hadith, and Islamic communication principles such as *qaulan sadidan*, *qaulan ma'rufan*, *qaulan kariman*, *qaulan maysuran*, *qaulan balighan*, and *qaulan layyinan* (Fadillah et al., 2021; Arindita et al., 2022). The second is the Islamization of the communication science stream. This stream criticizes Western communication science because it is considered to have emerged from a secular worldview that separates religion from science and neglects the ethical-transcendental dimension (Basit, 2017; Fadillah et al., 2021). The third is the integrative-critical stream. This stream does not completely reject Western theory, but examines, critiques, selects, and processes modern communication theory so that it aligns with Islamic values and the social needs of the Muslim community (Basit, 2017; Tumanggor et al., 2025).

Axiologically, Islamic communication studies aim to build communication that is truthful, honest, just, civilized, harmonious, liberating, and oriented toward public benefit (*maşlahah*). This axiological value distinguishes Islamic communication studies from forms of communication that merely pursue effectiveness, persuasion, influence, ratings, virality, or economic profit. In Islamic communication, a message that is effective but manipulative cannot be considered good. Likewise, a message that goes viral but spreads slander, hatred, hoaxes, or disinformation is also contrary to the objectives of Islamic communication (Arindita et al., 2022; Saifuddin, 2025).

Table 2. Mapping the philosophy of Islamic communication studies

Philosophy of science	Main finding	Scientific meaning	References
Ontology	Islamic communication examines the relationship between human beings and Allah, fellow humans, society, media, culture, and nature.	The object of communication is not only horizontal, but also vertical-transcendental.	(Wahyudin, 2012; Surachman, 2018)
Epistemology	The sources of knowledge come from revelation, reason, empirical	Islamic communication Studies is not anti-modern	(Basit, 2017; Fadillah et al.,

	experience, Islamic tradition, and modern communication theory.	science, but reads it critically.	2021; Tumanggor et al., 2025)
Axiology	The objectives of communication are truth, <i>adab</i> , <i>amanah</i> , <i>hikmah</i> , justice, harmony, and public benefit (<i>maṣlaḥah</i>).	Communication effectiveness must be subordinated to ethical and spiritual values.	(Arindita et al., 2022; Aminullah, 2022; Harahap & Abdullah, 2025)
Methodology	The required approach is integrative, hermeneutic, critical, empirical, contextual, and transdisciplinary.	Islamic communication needs to read texts, contexts, media, culture, and technology simultaneously.	(Zamroni, 2014; Fuadi et al., 2023; Tumanggor et al., 2025)
Disciplinary position	Islamic communication studies stands at the intersection of communication science, da'wah, media studies, Islamic ethics, and social sciences.	It cannot merely function as a da'wah label, but must be developed as an integrative scientific discipline.	(Zamroni, 2014; Basit, 2017; Suhaimi, 2013)

Source: Compiled by the authors, 2025.

Based on Table 2, Islamic communication studies can be understood as a discipline that is still seeking a more mature scientific form. It has normative roots in Islam, but it also requires theoretical and methodological tools from modern communication science. It has a close relationship with da'wah, but it is not entirely identical to da'wah. It has moral and spiritual objectives, yet it must still operate through scientifically accountable methods.

Departing from these data, the authors see significant potential for constructing Islamic communication studies through the *Horizon of Knowledge* paradigm. The *Horizon of Knowledge* at UIN Mataram emphasizes knowledge integration, interconnection, and internalization. This paradigm is relevant because Islamic communication studies require a framework capable of bringing together revelation, the Islamic intellectual tradition, modern communication theory, empirical experience, media, culture, and contemporary social problems (Mutawali et al., 2018; Parhanudin, 2021; Muhammad et al., 2022).

Within this construction, the *Horizon of Knowledge* functions as an epistemological bridge. It does not merely combine religious knowledge and communication science, but arranges the relationship between the two. Revelation becomes the source of values and orientation. Modern communication science becomes an analytical tool. The tradition of da'wah and the Islamic intellectual heritage become sources of concepts. Social reality becomes the field of testing. Multi- and transdisciplinary approaches become methods of

reading. The internalization of values becomes the direction for shaping academic ethics and social praxis (Fuadi et al., 2023).

The construction of Islamic communication studies within the *Horizon of Knowledge* paradigm can be formulated through four foundations. *First*, the ontological foundation. Islamic communication studies studies communication as a human relation involving spiritual, social, symbolic, cultural, technological, and transcendental dimensions. *Second*, the epistemological foundation. Islamic communication studies obtain knowledge from revelation, reason, empirical experience, Islamic tradition, and critically examined modern theory. *Third*, the axiological foundation. Islamic communication studies aim to present communication that is truthful, civilized, just, trustworthy, wise, beneficial, and *rahmatan lil 'alamin*. *Fourth*, the methodological foundation. Islamic communication studies require hermeneutic, critical, empirical, contextual, phenomenological, and multi- and transdisciplinary methods (Basit, 2017; Zamroni, 2014; Tumanggor et al., 2025). This construction can be seen in Figure 1.

The figure shows that Islamic communication studies are not built from a single source. This discipline is formed through integrative work involving revelation, Islamic tradition, modern communication science, and social reality. The *Horizon of Knowledge* becomes the center that connects all these elements. Through this model, Islamic communication studies do not fall into closed normativism, nor does it dissolve into the secularism of modern communication science.

The findings also show that the construction of Islamic communication studies within the *Horizon of Knowledge* produces five scientific characteristics. *First*, Islamic communication studies are tawhidic because it places revelation and accountability to Allah at the center of their orientation. *Second*, Islamic communication studies are integrative because it connects da'wah studies, communication science, media studies, philosophy, ethics, culture, and technology. *Third*, Islamic communication studies are critical because it examines the assumptions of modern communication theories. *Fourth*, Islamic communication studies are prophetic because it directs communication toward humanization, liberation, and transcendence. *Fifth*, Islamic communication studies are transformative because it is directed toward building a civilized and beneficial society (*maşlahah*) (Arifin, 2018; Basit, 2017; Wahyudin, 2012).

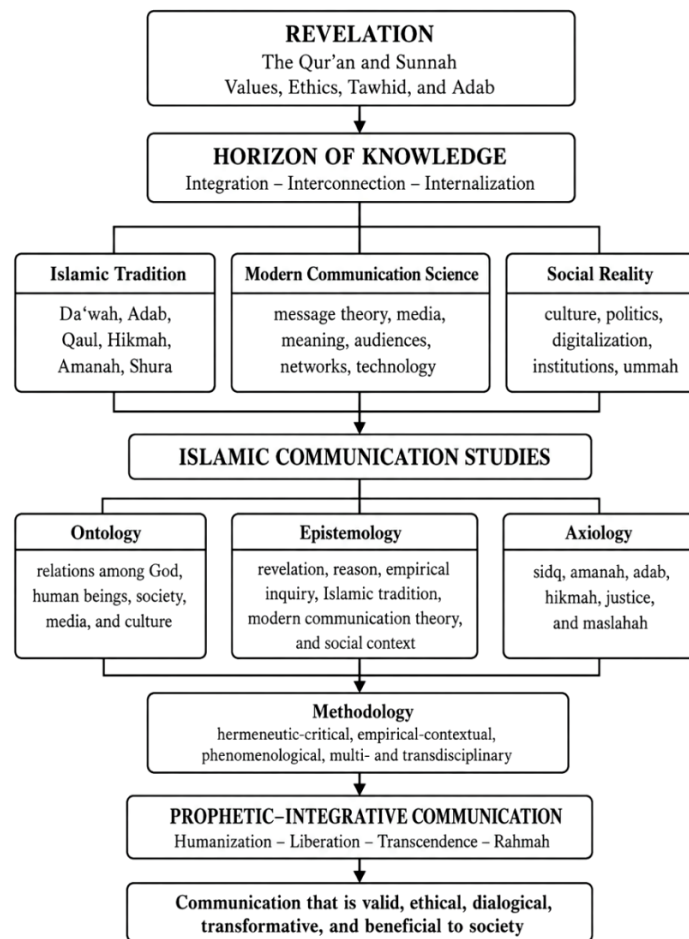


Figure 1. The construction of Islamic communication studies
Source: Developed by the authors, 2025.

Revisiting the *Horizon of Knowledge* paradigm

The problem of the dichotomy of knowledge has long been examined by contemporary Muslim thinkers. Al-Attas (1993) views the crisis of modern knowledge as a crisis of *adab*. Modern knowledge is not problematic merely because it originates from the West, but because it operates within a secular worldview that separates knowledge from the ethical and spiritual purposes of human life. Therefore, for Al-Attas, the Islamization of knowledge is a process of liberating knowledge from secular, mythological, magical, and ideological elements that distance human beings from their *fitrah* and from the Islamic order of meaning. Thus, Al-Attas' emphasis lies in reforming the subject of knowledge, the worldview, and the value system that shape the way human beings understand reality.

Al-Faruqi (1989) offers a different emphasis. He views the Islamization of knowledge as a methodological-disciplinary project. Muslim scholars must master both the Islamic intellectual heritage and modern disciplines, and then reconstruct modern disciplines based on the principle of *tawhīd*. In this model, Islamization does not only reform the subject, but also reconstructs the object of knowledge, disciplinary structures, data, theories, objectives, and the direction of knowledge development. If Al-Attas emphasizes Islamization at the level of worldview and *adab*, then Al-Faruqi emphasizes Islamization at the level of disciplinary reconstruction. Both are equally important because they show that knowledge is not neutral and always carries certain assumptions about human beings, nature, values, and the purpose of life.

However, the project of Islamization of knowledge is not free from criticism. Sardar argues that the Islamization of knowledge may fall into an apologetic stance if it operates merely as a reaction against the West. Islamic knowledge cannot be sufficiently developed by rejecting modernity or by seeking Islamic legitimacy for modern knowledge. Islamic knowledge must become a living, critical, futuristic system of knowledge that is responsive to social, technological, environmental, justice, and humanitarian problems (Sardar, 1989). This critique is important because it shows that the Islamization of knowledge should not stop as a movement of conceptual filtering. Rather, it must move toward the reconstruction of knowledge that is capable of responding to real problems.

At this point, Amin Abdullah's thought becomes highly significant. Amin Abdullah does not reject the spirit of Islamization, but he shifts the workings of Islamic knowledge from a dichotomous pattern toward an integrative-interconnective one. Through the concepts of *ḥaḍārah al-naṣṣ*, *ḥaḍārah al-ilm*, and *ḥaḍārah al-falsafah*, Amin Abdullah offers a reading in which Islamic sciences should not revolve only around texts, but must also engage in dialogue with empirical sciences and ethical-philosophical reflection (Abdullah, 2006). *Ḥaḍārah al-naṣṣ* represents the civilization of texts and normative religious sources. *Ḥaḍārah al-ilm* represents empirical sciences, social sciences, humanities, and modern science. *Ḥaḍārah al-falsafah* represents ethical, critical, and philosophical reflection on knowledge. These three should not stand separately, because their separation would produce an unbalanced form of knowledge.

The strength of Amin Abdullah's thought lies in its ability to avoid two extremes. The first extreme is normativism, namely, the tendency to understand Islam only through texts without reading social reality and the development of knowledge. The second extreme is academic secularism, namely the tendency to accept modern knowledge without critically examining its value assumptions and epistemological orientation. Amin Abdullah's integration-interconnection does not forcibly merge religion and science but

brings them together in a relationship of mutual engagement, mutual correction, and mutual enrichment (Abdullah, 2006; Diu, 2018). In other words, Amin Abdullah provides a methodological foundation so that Islamic knowledge does not become alienated from modern reality, while also ensuring that it does not lose its ethical and spiritual basis.

The *Horizon of Knowledge* at UIN Mataram can be read as a local-institutional development of the spirit of integration-interconnection. In the *Horizon of Knowledge* document, UIN Mataram does not merely adopt the term integration, but also adds the elements of interconnection and internalization. Integration means bringing together religious sciences and general sciences. Interconnection means linking various disciplines so that they provide perspectives for one another. Internalization means incorporating Islamic values into academic consciousness, curriculum, research, and community service. Thus, the *Horizon of Knowledge* does not stop at dialogue among disciplines, but also demands the absorption of values into ways of thinking and academic working practices (Mutawali et al., 2018; Parhanudin, 2021).

The *Horizon of Knowledge* is needed because the concept of integration alone is not sufficient. Integration can be interpreted superficially as the combination of two fields of knowledge. In fact, two bodies of knowledge that are combined do not necessarily influence one another. Religious courses can be placed side by side with general courses, yet both may continue to operate separately. Qur'anic verses may be quoted in science learning, but this does not automatically transform the epistemological structure of science. Therefore, the *Horizon of Knowledge* demands more than formal integration. It requires methodological interconnection and value internalization. This is what distinguishes it from integration that is merely administrative or symbolic.

This debate is also related to Kuntowijoyo's idea of Islam as science. For Kuntowijoyo, Islam should not be understood merely as a normative system, but needs to be objectified into knowledge that can provide benefits for public life. Objectification does not mean eliminating Islamic values, but translating Islamic values into scientific and social categories that can be widely understood. This idea is important for reading the *Horizon of Knowledge* because the *Horizon of Knowledge* likewise does not seek to make Islam merely a symbol of identity. Rather, it seeks to present Islamic values as the basis for the development of knowledge that is humanistic, objective, and beneficial to society (Kuntowijoyo, 2004).

In addition, the thoughts of Nasr and Osman Bakar strengthen the importance of the *Horizon of Knowledge* from the perspective of Islamic cosmology and philosophy of science. Nasr views that knowledge in the Islamic tradition is never separated from the hierarchy of reality and the spiritual meaning of the cosmos. Modern science becomes problematic when nature is understood merely as a material object that can be exploited,

rather than as a sign that carries metaphysical meaning (Nasr, 1968). Osman Bakar also emphasizes that the philosophy of Islamic science is built upon the unity of knowledge, the hierarchy of being, and the relationship between science, ethics, and spirituality (Bakar, 1999). Within this framework, the *Horizon of Knowledge* is needed so that knowledge at UIN Mataram does not develop only technically, but also possesses cosmological, ethical, and spiritual orientations.

However, the positions of Nasr and Bakar need to be complemented by a more dialogical perspective, such as that offered by Guessoum. Guessoum proposes a relationship between religion and science through the principles of non-contradiction, multilayered interpretation, and openness to scientific findings. Religion should not be read so literally that it rejects science, but science also should not be made the sole measure of truth to the point of falling into scientism (Guessoum, 2011). The *Horizon of Knowledge* stands within this space. It must be able to maintain a balance between revelation and science, between values and data, between text and context, and between spirituality and rationality.

In studies on the relationship between religion and science, Barbour offers four models of relationship: conflict, independence, dialogue, and integration. The conflict model views religion and science as opposing one another. The independence model separates the two into their respective domains. The dialogue model opens communication between them. The integration model seeks to build a more comprehensive unity of understanding (Barbour, 1997). The *Horizon of Knowledge* clearly does not belong to the conflict or independence model. It is closer to the dialogue and integration models. However, the *Horizon of Knowledge* is not limited to dialogue, because it also demands the internalization of values within the *tridharma* of higher education. Therefore, the *Horizon of Knowledge* can be read as a more practical and institutional model of integration.

The importance of the *Horizon of Knowledge* can also be understood through contemporary critiques of knowledge integration. Laabdi and Elbittoui show that the discourse of Islamic knowledge has shifted from the Islamization of knowledge toward knowledge integration. However, they raise an important question: does the shift from Islamization to integration truly produce a new paradigm, or does it merely replace an old term with softer language (Laabdi & Elbittoui, 2024)? This question is highly relevant to the *Horizon of Knowledge*. The *Horizon of Knowledge* must not become merely a new term for knowledge integration. It must demonstrate its novelty through concrete epistemological, methodological, and operational instruments.

Supena's critique also reinforces this need. According to Supena, knowledge integration should not focus only on the spiritualization of secular knowledge. Islamic

sciences also need to undergo humanization so that they do not lose sensitivity toward social problems (Supena, 2022). This means that integration must not move in only one direction. General sciences may be given Islamic values, but Islamic sciences must also be opened to issues of humanity, democracy, the environment, poverty, technology, and social change. The *Horizon of Knowledge* is needed because it provides space for this two-way movement. It not only Islamizes general sciences but also makes Islamic sciences more dialogical, contextual, and responsive to reality.

In the context of Indonesian Islamic higher education, the need for the *Horizon of Knowledge* becomes even stronger because the transformation of IAIN/STAIN into UIN carries serious epistemological consequences. Muthohirin et al. show that the transformation into UIN does not merely expand institutional structures but also changes the academic mandate and the orientation of knowledge development (Muthohirin et al., 2025). However, institutional transformation does not automatically produce epistemological transformation. A campus may change into a UIN, but its academic way of thinking may remain dichotomous. Study programs may increase in number, but knowledge integration does not necessarily occur in the curriculum, research, and academic culture. Therefore, the *Horizon of Knowledge* is needed as a framework to ensure that institutional transformation has a clear epistemic direction.

On the other hand, Khoir et al. warn that knowledge integration within UIN also contains certain risks. The expansion of institutional mandates, accreditation pressures, market orientation, and pride in general disciplines can narrow the space for Islamic sciences (Khoir et al., 2025). This shows that integration is not always identical with the strengthening of Islam. Integration can turn into the subordination of Islamic sciences to the logic of modernization and the academic market. The *Horizon of Knowledge* is needed to prevent this risk. It ensures that general sciences do not develop without an Islamic orientation, and that Islamic sciences are not marginalized by the pragmatic logic of institutions.

Irham shows that knowledge integration at UIN Jakarta is moving toward open integration. Integration is no longer understood as a rigid form of Islamization, but as a combination of themes, references, philosophical foundations, and approaches between Islamic sciences and socio-cultural sciences (Irham, 2025). This model is important because it shows that integration needs to be flexible and contextual. However, open integration still requires a foundation so that it does not become merely an academic compromise. In the context of UIN Mataram, the *Horizon of Knowledge* provides this foundation through integration, interconnection, and internalization directed by revelation, reason, empirical inquiry, values, and public benefit.

Thus, the question of why the *Horizon of Knowledge* is needed can be answered through four main arguments. *First*, the *Horizon of Knowledge* is needed to overcome the dichotomy between religious sciences and general sciences. This dichotomy not only separates disciplines but also separates ways of viewing truth, methods, and the purposes of knowledge. *Second*, the *Horizon of Knowledge* is needed to avoid two major weaknesses: an overly defensive Islamization and an overly symbolic integration. *Third*, the *Horizon of Knowledge* is needed to provide an epistemological direction for the transformation of UIN Mataram. *Fourth*, the *Horizon of Knowledge* is needed to ensure that knowledge is not only academically valid but also ethically valuable, socially useful, and spiritually meaningful.

Studies on the Islamization of knowledge have widely discussed critiques of the secularism of knowledge. Studies on Amin Abdullah have extensively explained integration-interconnection as a way to bring together *ḥaḍārah al-naṣṣ*, *ḥaḍārah al-ilm*, and *ḥaḍārah al-falsafah*. Studies on State Islamic Higher Education Institutions (PTKIN) have widely discussed the transformation of IAIN into UIN and policies on knowledge integration. However, there remains an unexplored space regarding how a local paradigm such as the *Horizon of Knowledge* at UIN Mataram can be read as a critical synthesis of these various debates. In other words, the *Horizon of Knowledge* has not been sufficiently read as an epistemological concept that bridges the Islamization of knowledge, integration-interconnection, the objectification of Islam, and the operational needs of the *tridharma* of higher education.

The novelty of this study lies in reading the *Horizon of Knowledge* as a paradigm of critical-internalizing integration. It is called critical because the *Horizon of Knowledge* does not accept modern knowledge uncritically and does not reject modernity *a priori*. It is called integrative because it brings together revelation, reason, empirical experience, tradition, and social reality. It is called internalizing because Islamic values are not merely attached to knowledge, but enter into ways of thinking, researching, teaching, and serving society. This is the position that distinguishes the *Horizon of Knowledge* from integration that is merely sloganistic, Islamization that is merely defensive, or the modernization of UIN that is merely administrative.

Therefore, the *Horizon of Knowledge* needs to be positioned as UIN Mataram's epistemological path for building holistic knowledge. Knowledge is not sufficient if it is only rational; it must also be ethical. Knowledge is not sufficient if it is only empirical; it must also be meaningful. Knowledge is not sufficient if it is only methodologically valid; it must also bring public benefit (*maṣlaḥah*). The *Horizon of Knowledge* is important because it makes knowledge integration not only a matter of the relationship between religion and science, but also a matter of shaping human beings, academic culture, and

the social responsibility of the university. In this position, the *Horizon of Knowledge* is not merely a local paradigm of UIN Mataram but also a conceptual contribution to enriching discussions on the integration of Islamic and secular sciences within Islamic higher education.

The construction of Islamic communication studies

The academic debate at the second stage centers on the question of why Islamic communication studies need to be built through the philosophy of science. The answer lies in the fundamental problem that Islamic communication studies is often treated practically, but has not always been strengthened epistemologically. In many writings, Islamic communication is explained through principles of good speech, da'wah ethics, media etiquette, or Qur'anic messages. This approach is important, but it is not sufficient to build a scientific discipline. A scientific discipline requires clarity regarding its object, sources of knowledge, objectives, methods, and scientific boundaries (Zamroni, 2014; Basit, 2017).

The first debate emerges between Western communication science and Islamic communication. Several authors criticize Western communication theory because it is considered to be rooted in a secular worldview. This critique arises because modern communication science has largely been developed within the traditions of empiricism, positivism, pragmatism, and a functional orientation toward message effects. Within this framework, communication is often understood as a process of transmitting messages, shaping opinions, changing attitudes, controlling information, or influencing behavior. The problem is that such an orientation can become problematic when it is detached from the values of truth, morality, and social responsibility (Nashrillah, 2016; Basit, 2017; Fadillah et al., 2021).

However, criticism of Western communication should not turn into total rejection. Modern communication science still makes important contributions. Theories of symbols, meaning, interaction, media, audiences, digital communication, and social change remain necessary for reading contemporary communication phenomena. Therefore, the more productive position is not anti-Western, but evaluative-critical. Western theories need to be examined in terms of their ontological, epistemological, and axiological assumptions. Elements that contradict Islamic values need to be critiqued, while useful elements need to be processed and situated within the framework of Islamic values (Basit, 2017; Fadillah et al., 2021).

The second debate occurs between the normative approach and the scientific approach. The normative approach emphasizes that Islamic communication must be rooted in the Qur'an and Sunnah. This approach provides a strong foundation because

Islamic communication cannot be separated from the values of revelation. The concepts of *qaulan sadidan*, *qaulan ma'rufan*, *qaulan kariman*, *qaulan maysuran*, *qaulan balighan*, and *qaulan layyinan* show that Islam has a very rich communication ethics (Fadillah et al., 2021). However, the normative approach becomes weak if it stops at a list of principles without social analysis. The principle of *qaul* needs to be explained in the context of social media, digital journalism, political communication, online da'wah, algorithms, disinformation, and public polarization.

This is where the scientific approach is needed. The scientific approach helps Islamic communication studies examine how messages are produced, disseminated, interpreted, debated, and manipulated. Fisher's theory, for example, positions communication as a dynamic, contextual, and unfinished process of meaning-making. This theory is important because religious messages in the digital era are no longer fully controlled by religious authority. Religious meanings are negotiated by audiences, digital communities, influencers, algorithms, and a fluid public sphere. However, Islamic communication must not fall into relativism of meaning. Islam provides ethical boundaries through the principles of *ṣidq*, *'adl*, *amanah*, and *hikmah* (Tumanggor et al., 2025).

The third debate concerns the relationship between da'wah and Islamic communication studies. Some scholars view da'wah as the core of Islamic communication because da'wah involves the process of conveying Islamic messages to human beings. This view has a basis because both da'wah and communication discuss communicators, messages, media, recipients, effects, and objectives (Suhaimi, 2013; Zamroni, 2014). However, equating Islamic communication studies entirely with da'wah also leaves a problem. Islamic communication is broader than verbal da'wah or religious broadcasting. It encompasses interpersonal communication, organizational communication, cultural communication, political communication, digital communication, transcendental communication, prophetic communication, and information ethics.

Therefore, Islamic communication studies needs to be positioned as an integrative discipline. It intersects with da'wah, but does not dissolve entirely into da'wah. It uses communication theory, but does not fully submit to a secular worldview. It employs Islamic values, but does not stop at normative advice. This integrative position enables Islamic communication studies to become a discipline capable of responding to contemporary problems, such as hoaxes, hate speech, political polarization, the crisis of media ethics, algorithmic manipulation, and religious disinformation.

The fourth debate concerns the axiology of communication. Modern communication science often measures the success of communication through effectiveness, attitude change, influence, and message achievement. Islamic

communication does not reject the measure of effectiveness, but adds an ethical measure. Effective communication is not necessarily truthful. Persuasive communication is not necessarily just. Viral communication is not necessarily beneficial. Therefore, Islamic communication studies places values at the center of its axiology. These values include truth, justice, honesty, integrity, source validity, *adab*, *hikmah*, *tabayyun*, and social responsibility (Wahyudin, 2012; Arindita et al., 2022; Saifuddin, 2025).

In the digital context, this axiology becomes increasingly important. Saifuddin (2025) shows that Hadith-based digital ethics can be formulated through the principles of information integrity, control of digital expression, ethics of public communication, and social responsibility. Marwantika et al. (2025) also extend this discussion into the fields of journalism and generative AI by emphasizing the need for journalism education based on Islamic communication ethics. These two studies show that Islamic communication studies should not view communication merely as the transmission of messages, but also as a moral responsibility within the digital ecosystem.

Thus, the critical analysis of the philosophy of Islamic communication studies produces the following theoretical position. Islamic communication studies is a discipline that examines the processes of producing, conveying, exchanging, interpreting, and assessing the impact of messages within the relationships between human beings and Allah, human beings and fellow humans, human beings and society, human beings and media, and human beings and nature, based on the values of revelation, reason, empirical experience, the Islamic intellectual tradition, and critically examined modern communication theory. This formulation affirms that Islamic communication studies is not merely da'wah communication, nor is it simply Western communication science labeled as Islamic. It is an integrative discipline with its own ontological, epistemological, axiological, and methodological foundations.

Islamic communication studies within the *Horizon of Knowledge* paradigm

Islamic communication studies require integration between revelation and modern communication theory. It also requires interconnection with social sciences, philosophy, culture, technology, and media studies. In addition, it requires the internalization of Islamic values so that communication is not only effective but also civilized and oriented toward public benefit (*maṣlaḥah*) (Mutawali et al., 2018; Parhanudin, 2021). This construction is important because Islamic communication studies has so far faced three problems. The first is an epistemological problem. Many studies of Islamic communication still rely on normative principles, but do not always explain how these principles become scientific methods. For example, the concepts of *qaulan sadidan* and *qaulan layyinan* are often mentioned as communication ethics, but

they are not always explained in terms of how they can be used to analyze digital journalism, political communication, social media algorithms, or religious disinformation. The *Horizon of Knowledge* can help address this problem because it demands a relationship between text, context, values, and methods (Fadillah et al., 2021; Fuadi et al., 2023).

The second is a disciplinary problem. Islamic communication is often positioned between da'wah and communication science. If it is placed too strongly within da'wah, it risks becoming normative and narrow. If it is placed too strongly within modern communication science, it risks losing its Islamic values. Zamroni (2015) shows that Islamic communication and broadcasting indeed stands at the intersection between communication science and da'wah studies. Therefore, an integrative-interconnective paradigm is needed so that this discipline has a clear identity. The *Horizon of Knowledge* provides a framework for overcoming this tension.

The third problem is axiological. Modern communication is often technically successful, but not necessarily morally successful. Political communication can be effective, yet manipulative. Advertising can be persuasive, yet exploitative. Digital content can go viral, yet be misleading. Digital da'wah can have a wide reach, yet remain shallow in meaning. Therefore, Islamic communication studies must provide a measure of value. The *Horizon of Knowledge* places revelation at the center of orientation so that communication is not measured only by its effects, but also by truth, *adab*, responsibility, and public benefit (*maṣlahah*) (Wahyudin, 2012; Saifuddin, 2025; Marwantika et al., 2025).

In the debate between Islamization and knowledge integration, the *Horizon of Knowledge* model occupies a productive position. The Islamization of communication science is important because it reminds us that modern communication science is not value-free. It emerged from modern Western history, which carries certain assumptions about human beings, society, media, and truth. However, Islamization that works merely by attaching an Islamic label to communication theory is not sufficient. Knowledge integration is also important because it opens a dialogue with modern theory. However, integration that merely mixes Qur'anic verses with theory without a clear method is also insufficient. The *Horizon of Knowledge* offers a third way, namely critical-transformative integration (Basit, 2017; Laabdi & Elbittioui, 2024).

This third way operates through three stages. *First*, modern communication theory is read critically. Theories of meaning, symbols, media, audiences, networks, effects, and technology are still used, but their secular assumptions are examined. *Second*, Islamic values are incorporated as epistemological and axiological orientations. Values such as *tawhīd*, *adab*, *amanah*, *hikmah*, *tabayyun*, and *maṣlahah* do not merely become

normative ornaments but serve as the basis for evaluating communication. *Third*, the results of this integration are directed toward social transformation. Islamic communication not only explains reality but also seeks to improve reality.

This construction is also relevant to the development of digital communication. In the digital space, messages move rapidly, meanings are openly negotiated, religious authority becomes fragmented, and audiences become both producers and consumers of messages. Fisher's theory helps explain that meaning in communication is not final but dynamic and contextual. However, Islam provides a horizon of values so that the dynamics of meaning do not turn into unrestricted relativism. Therefore, Islamic communication studies within the *Horizon of Knowledge* paradigm must be able to combine a processual theory of meaning with Islamic ethics concerning truth, justice, and responsibility (Tumanggor et al., 2025).

This study does not merely state that Islamic communication requires knowledge integration. It offers the construction that the *Horizon of Knowledge* can serve as a paradigm for developing Islamic communication studies. Its novelty lies in the shift from three older models toward a new model. The first older model is Islamic communication as speaking ethics. The second older model is Islamic communication as da'wah. The third older model is Islamic communication, as the Islamization of Western communication theory. This study offers a new model, namely Islamic communication studies as an integrative discipline within the *Horizon of Knowledge* paradigm.

This new model has several contributions. *First*, ontologically, it expands the object of communication from human-to-human relations toward the relations among Allah, human beings, society, media, culture, and nature. *Second*, epistemologically, it expands the sources of knowledge from modern communication theory toward revelation, reason, empirical experience, Islamic tradition, and social reality. *Third*, axiologically, it shifts the objective of communication from effectiveness toward effectiveness that is civilized and oriented toward public benefit (*maṣlahah*). *Fourth*, methodologically, it combines hermeneutic reading, social critique, empirical research, phenomenology, and multi- and transdisciplinary approaches.

The theoretical implication is that Islamic communication studies can be developed as a discipline equal to modern communication science, yet with a different worldview and value orientation. It is not merely a branch of da'wah, although da'wah constitutes one of its important domains. It is not merely general communication given Islamic values, although general communication theories are still used. Rather, it is a discipline that builds a synthesis between Islam, communication, media, culture, technology, and social reality.

The practical implication is that the Islamic communication curriculum within State Islamic Higher Education Institutions (PTKIN), particularly at UIN Mataram, needs to be directed toward four pillars. The first pillar is the philosophy and epistemology of Islamic communication. The second pillar is modern communication theory and its critique. The third pillar is the ethics, *adab*, and values of Islamic communication. The fourth pillar is research on digital communication, media, culture, organizations, and society based on the *Horizon of Knowledge*. Thus, students do not only become media practitioners or digital preachers, but also communication scholars who are able to think integratively, critically, and transformatively.

Thus, the construction of Islamic communication studies within the *Horizon of Knowledge* paradigm can be formulated as follows: Islamic communication studies is an integrative discipline that examines the processes of production, distribution, interpretation, negotiation, and impact of messages within the relationships between human beings and Allah, fellow humans, society, media, culture, technology, and nature, based on revelation, reason, empirical experience, Islamic tradition, and critically examined modern communication theory, with the aim of building communication that is truthful, civilized, dialogical, just, beneficial, and transformative.

This formulation constitutes the main finding of the third stage. The *Horizon of Knowledge* provides space for Islamic communication studies to move beyond the old dichotomy between religious sciences and general sciences. The *Horizon of Knowledge* also provides a foundation so that Islamic communication studies do not remain merely an academic nomenclature but develop as a scientific discipline with clear ontological, epistemological, axiological, and methodological foundations. The *Horizon of Knowledge* at UIN Mataram needs to be read as a scientific paradigm that is more fundamental than merely an institutional identity or a slogan of integration.

CONCLUSION

The *Horizon of Knowledge* emerges to respond to the problem of the dichotomy between religious sciences and general sciences, which has long caused Islamic sciences to tend toward a textual-normative orientation, while general sciences tend to be rational-empirical but are often detached from ethical and spiritual values. Through the principles of integration, interconnection, and internalization, the *Horizon of Knowledge* offers a perspective that places revelation at the center of value orientation without rejecting reason, empirical experience, the Islamic intellectual tradition, and modern theory. However, the conceptual strength of the *Horizon of Knowledge* still needs to be followed by a clearer operational model, especially in curriculum, learning, research, community service, and academic culture. Thus, the *Horizon of Knowledge* should not

merely be maintained as a grand idea, but must continue to be reconstructed as an academic system that is living, critical, and grounded.

More specifically, Islamic communication studies can be firmly constructed through the *Horizon of Knowledge* paradigm. Islamic communication studies cannot be sufficiently understood as da'wah communication, speaking ethics, or Western communication science labeled as Islamic. It is built as an integrative discipline with its own ontological, epistemological, axiological, and methodological foundations. Ontologically, Islamic communication studies examine human communication relations with Allah, fellow humans, society, media, culture, technology, and nature. Epistemologically, it is rooted in revelation, reason, empirical experience, Islamic tradition, and critically examined modern communication theory. Axiologically, it is directed toward truth, *adab*, *amanah*, *hikmah*, justice, and public benefit (*maṣlaḥah*). Methodologically, it requires hermeneutic, critical, empirical, contextual, and transdisciplinary approaches. As an epistemological bridge, the *Horizon of Knowledge* enables Islamic communication studies to avoid both closed normativism and the secularism of modern communication, while developing as a prophetic-integrative discipline that is scientifically valid, ethically grounded, and transformative for society.

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