

Islamic Counseling Guidance Strategies in Addressing the Identity Crisis of the Alpha Generation

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Abstract: This research explores Islamic counseling guidance strategies as an approach to addressing the identity crisis among the Alpha Generation a cohort born between 2010 and 2025 who are growing up in an era defined by technology, globalization, and digital interconnectedness. The study aims to understand the patterns of identity confusion among this generation and to develop a structured Islamic counseling framework suited to their unique psychological and spiritual needs. The qualitative research method was employed, involving interviews, observations, and thematic analysis with participants including students, counselors, and educators in Islamic educational settings. Data were analyzed to identify recurring themes related to self-perception, moral orientation, and digital influence on identity development. The findings reveal that the Alpha Generation faces increasing challenges in constructing a stable sense of self due to constant exposure to social media, peer pressure, and conflicting global values. This often results in spiritual disconnection, moral relativism, and emotional instability. The research demonstrates that Islamic counseling anchored in principles such as tazkiyah al-nafs (purification of the soul), fitrah (innate disposition), and taqwa (God-consciousness) provides a holistic and contextually relevant solution to these issues. The study concludes that effective identity formation for digital-era youth requires the integration of spiritual, moral, and psychological approaches. Educational and religious institutions are encouraged to implement Islamic counseling programs that combine faith-based reflection with digital literacy and emotional education. Ultimately, the research contributes to the development of a comprehensive Islamic counseling model capable of guiding the Alpha Generation toward moral clarity, emotional resilience, and a coherent faith-based identity in the face of modern technological challenges.

Research Highlights:

- **Focus on Alpha Generation Identity Crisis:** This research examines the growing identity confusion among the Alpha Generation (born 2010–2025), who face challenges in defining their values, purpose, and sense of self amid rapid technological, cultural, and social change.
- **Integration of Islamic Counseling Principles:** The study emphasizes tazkiyah al-nafs (self-purification), fitrah (innate human nature), and taqwa (God-consciousness) as foundational concepts in developing an Islamic counseling framework that nurtures moral, spiritual, and psychological balance.
- **Development of a Structured Counseling Framework:** A four-stage Islamic counseling model is proposed comprising self-recognition and purification, value internalization, digital ethics education, and community-based support to help youth build stable, faith-oriented identities in the digital era.
- **Qualitative Methodology with Real-World Relevance:** Using interviews, observations, and thematic analysis involving students, educators, and counselors, the study identifies patterns of identity

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conflict and evaluates how Islamic counseling can be practically applied in educational and religious contexts.

- **Bridging Faith and Modern Psychology:** The research integrates Islamic spiritual principles with modern counseling theories, providing a holistic approach that harmonizes religious values with psychological well-being and contemporary digital challenges.
- **Recommendations for Institutions:** The study urges educational and religious institutions to implement faith-based guidance programs, train counselors in Islamic psychology, and promote responsible digital engagement among youth.
- **Contribution to Islamic Psychology and Youth Development:** The findings advance the field of Islamic counseling by offering a practical, adaptive model that supports identity formation, emotional resilience, and spiritual growth among the Alpha Generation in an increasingly digitalized world.

INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of technology and globalization has given rise to a new generation known as the Alpha Generation, referring to individuals born approximately between 2010 and 2025. This generation is the first to be born entirely in the digital era, where access to information, communication, and entertainment is almost entirely mediated by technology (Palfrey & Gasser, 2011). From an early age, members of the Alpha Generation are accustomed to using smartphones, tablets, and social media platforms, making them highly adaptable, technologically literate, and globally connected. However, these same characteristics also shape their behavior, thinking patterns, and value systems in ways that are fundamentally different from previous generations. Their social interactions are often more virtual than physical, and their understanding of identity and belonging is influenced by the digital world's shifting norms and expectations.

The rise of technology and exposure to global cultural currents have had a profound influence on the Alpha Generation's identity development. Constant exposure to diverse perspectives, lifestyles, and ideologies through social media often leads to confusion in distinguishing between personal, cultural, and religious values (McClure, 2016). The tendency to seek validation through online recognition, coupled with the influence of trends and influencers, can create a fragile sense of self. As a result, many young individuals struggle to define their purpose and moral direction, leading to an identity crisis a state of confusion regarding one's values, beliefs, and sense of belonging. This crisis is not only psychological but also spiritual and moral in nature, as it reflects the disconnection between modern digital lifestyles and traditional moral frameworks.

In the context of Islamic society, the identity crisis among the Alpha Generation has deeper implications. The weakening of moral values, decreasing religious commitment, and the tendency to adopt liberal or secular lifestyles influenced by digital media indicate a growing detachment from Islamic identity. Many young individuals struggle to reconcile their spiritual values with the demands and trends of modern life (Smith & Snell, 2009). As a result, they experience internal conflicts that affect their emotional well-being, social relationships, and sense of purpose. This situation highlights the urgent need for a comprehensive approach that integrates psychological understanding with spiritual and moral guidance.

Islamic counseling guidance emerges as a relevant and holistic solution to this problem (Ahmed & Amer, 2013). Unlike conventional counseling, which focuses primarily on cognitive and behavioral change, Islamic counseling incorporates spiritual dimensions rooted in the Qur'an and Sunnah. It aims to guide individuals toward self-awareness (*ma'rifah al-nafs*), purification of the soul (*tazkiyah al-nafs*), and alignment with divine values (*fitrah*). Through this approach, counselors can help members of the Alpha Generation navigate identity confusion by strengthening their faith, clarifying their life purpose, and nurturing moral resilience in the face of external influences.

The concept and early profiling of Generation Alpha have been laid out by social researchers Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell (McCrindle & Fell, 2020). Their work characterizes Alpha as the first generation

to be born entirely into a ubiquitous-digital environment (born ~2010–2024), stressing their deep technological immersion, high exposure to globalized media, and distinct trajectories in learning and socialization compared with prior cohorts. McCrindle's profiles and briefs are widely used as baseline descriptive studies when researchers consider how digital environments shape childhood and early adolescence.

A growing body of empirical literature has examined how social media and digital environments influence adolescent identity formation. Systematic reviews by Avci (2024) and related meta-analyses show that social media use relates to multiple identity processes increasing both opportunities for identity exploration and risks of identity distress and reduced self-concept clarity. Pérez-Torres (2024) and other reviewers summarize evidence that it is not merely time online but the type of online activity (comparison, curated self-presentation, algorithmic feedback) that most strongly affects identity outcomes. These reviews underscore technology's double-edged effect: facilitating exploration while amplifying confusion, comparison, and instability.

Within Muslim contexts, several foundational works outline theoretical and practical frameworks for Islamic counseling. Notable overviews such as "Islamic Counselling: An Introduction to Theory and Practice" (author collections; c. 2014) and case-centered studies of Islamic approaches in counseling centers (e.g., a case study on PKMAINS, 2013) describe counseling methods that integrate Qur'anic ethics, tazkiyah (soul purification), and culturally congruent practices alongside psychological techniques. These publications highlight core principles spirituality, moral formation, and community orientation that differentiate Islamic counseling from purely secular models.

Empirical studies have applied explicitly Islamic concepts (e.g., tazkiyah al-nafts) in preventive and therapeutic group guidance with measurable mental-health benefits. For example, research on the effectiveness of tazkiyah-based group guidance reported positive pre-post changes among students in psychological indicators (e.g., an experimental 2018 study on tazkiyah group guidance). These studies suggest that spiritually framed interventions can reduce distress and strengthen coping findings that are promising for adapting Islamic counseling to contemporary youth problems.

Recent, context-specific research has started to connect Islamic counseling with digital-era problems. A very recent study (published in an Indonesian research portal, 2025) examined an Islamic counseling approach to help teenage victims of digital violence (cyberbullying), finding that combining cognitive-coping techniques with Islamic moral-spiritual guidance aided recovery and resilience. This line of research demonstrates practical application potential: Islamic counseling can address harms that are specifically produced or exacerbated by online life.

Despite these contributions, there is a clear research gap when it comes to models that explicitly target Generation Alpha's particular developmental profile (Jha, 2020). Existing Islamic counseling literature often addresses adolescents or young adults in general terms, and empirical work tends to focus on conventional age groups (teenagers/young adults) or on specific problems (e.g., depression, psychosis prevention, cyberbullying).

However, despite its potential, Islamic counseling guidance is often not fully adapted to the unique characteristics of the Alpha Generation. Traditional counseling methods may not effectively reach youths who are more responsive to digital communication, visual learning, and interactive engagement. Therefore, there is a growing need to develop Islamic counseling strategies that are innovative, culturally relevant, and contextually suited to this generation's cognitive and emotional patterns.

This research seeks to analyze and formulate effective Islamic counseling guidance strategies to help the Alpha Generation overcome identity crises. By integrating Islamic principles with contemporary counseling techniques, this study aims to contribute to the development of a practical and spiritually grounded framework that can be implemented in educational, family, and community settings. Ultimately, this effort aspires to strengthen the moral and spiritual foundation of the Alpha Generation so that they can grow into individuals with a stable identity, strong faith, and positive social values.

METHOD

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this research integrates both Western psychological theories of identity formation and Islamic psychological-spiritual concepts, providing a holistic foundation for understanding and addressing the identity crisis experienced by the Alpha Generation through Islamic

counseling guidance. One of the main theoretical bases is Erik Erikson's psychosocial theory of development, particularly the stage of identity versus role confusion, which typically occurs during adolescence (Sokol, 2009). According to Erikson, the formation of identity is a crucial developmental task in which individuals seek to establish a coherent sense of self and purpose. Failure to achieve this results in confusion about one's role in society and uncertainty regarding personal values and beliefs. This theory is particularly relevant for the Alpha Generation, who face complex identity challenges shaped by social media, digital exposure, and globalization. These external influences can disrupt the natural process of identity formation, leading to fragmentation of self-concept and moral disorientation. Understanding this dynamic helps counselors recognize the psychological underpinnings of the identity crisis among today's youth.

Complementing this is the Islamic perspective on human psychology and spiritual development, which offers a more integrated and transcendental understanding of the self (Al Zeera, 2001). Central to this view is the concept of *tazkiyah al-nafs* (purification of the soul), which emphasizes the process of cleansing the heart from negative traits and nurturing virtues that align with divine guidance. Through *tazkiyah*, individuals are guided to attain self-awareness (*ma'rifah al-nafs*), sincerity (*ikhlas*), and spiritual balance, which form the foundation of a stable and authentic identity. Similarly, the concept of *fitrah* the innate disposition toward goodness and belief in Allah explains that every human being is created with an inherent moral and spiritual orientation. When the *fitrah* is nurtured and aligned with Islamic teachings, individuals develop an identity rooted in faith, ethical values, and purpose. Conversely, when it is neglected or distorted by worldly influences, identity confusion and moral instability arise.

From a counseling standpoint, Islamic counseling models are grounded in these spiritual principles and aim to help individuals reconnect with their *fitrah* through a process of reflection, repentance, and guidance based on the Qur'an and Sunnah (Tamin, 2016). Unlike Western counseling approaches that often emphasize individual autonomy and self-determination, Islamic counseling focuses on harmony between the self, community, and divine will. It views mental and emotional problems not merely as psychological dysfunctions but as imbalances in spiritual and moral life. Therefore, the counselor acts not only as a facilitator of self-exploration but also as a spiritual mentor who assists clients in aligning their thoughts, emotions, and behaviors with Islamic values. This approach fosters holistic healing encompassing mind, body, and soul.

Nevertheless, there are important points of convergence between modern counseling psychology and Islamic counseling (Haque et al., 2016). Both acknowledge the importance of empathy, active listening, self-reflection, and personal growth. Where they differ is in their foundational worldview: modern counseling is typically humanistic or secular, focusing on self-actualization, while Islamic counseling is theocentric, focusing on servitude to Allah (*ubudiyyah*) as the highest form of self-actualization. By integrating these two frameworks, counselors can apply evidence-based psychological techniques such as cognitive restructuring, emotional regulation, and social support within a framework of Islamic ethics and spirituality.

This integrative theoretical framework allows the present study to address the Alpha Generation's identity crisis not only as a psychological phenomenon but also as a spiritual and moral concern. By combining Erikson's developmental insights with Islamic concepts of self and soul purification, the research aims to develop a model of Islamic counseling guidance that is both scientifically sound and spiritually grounded. Such integration ensures that counseling interventions are culturally relevant, religiously meaningful, and psychologically effective in helping the Alpha Generation form a coherent and faith-based identity in a rapidly changing digital world.

Methodology

This research employs a qualitative approach to explore and analyze the strategies of Islamic counseling guidance in addressing the identity crisis among the Alpha Generation. A qualitative design is chosen because it allows for an in-depth understanding of personal experiences, perceptions, and contextual factors that shape identity development within this generation (Lyons & Schweitzer, 2017). Through this approach, the study seeks to capture the richness of participants' narratives and the underlying meanings behind their struggles with identity, as well as the perspectives of counselors and educators who provide guidance using Islamic principles. The qualitative method is particularly suitable for this research, as it emphasizes interpretation, reflection, and the discovery of patterns rather than numerical measurement.

Data will be collected through a combination of semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and document analysis (Harrell & Bradley, 2009). The primary participants include students from the Alpha Generation specifically adolescents born between 2010 and 2025 who are experiencing or have expressed signs of identity confusion related to moral values, self-concept, or religious beliefs. Additional participants such as Islamic counselors, teachers, and parents will also be involved to provide complementary insights into the guidance methods currently being practiced and the challenges faced in nurturing faith-based identity among youth. These diverse perspectives will help ensure a holistic understanding of the problem and its possible solutions within the framework of Islamic counseling.

The data analysis will employ thematic analysis, which involves identifying, analyzing, and interpreting recurring patterns or themes related to identity crisis and Islamic counseling strategies (Abdullah et al., 2020). The researcher will code the data to uncover key themes such as spiritual guidance, self-awareness, moral reasoning, and adaptation to digital culture. The validity and credibility of the findings will be strengthened through triangulation, comparing data from different participant groups and sources to ensure consistency and reliability.

To assess the effectiveness of Islamic counseling strategies, the study will focus on participants' reported changes in self-understanding, emotional regulation, and alignment with Islamic values after counseling or guidance interventions (Assar, 2017). Rather than measuring statistical outcomes, the evaluation will rely on participants' narratives, counselors' observations, and documented behavioral improvements. This interpretive evaluation seeks to determine whether Islamic counseling fosters deeper faith awareness, clearer identity formation, and greater resilience against external influences such as social media and peer pressure.

Overall, this methodological design allows the study to capture the complexity of the Alpha Generation's identity challenges and to propose evidence-based, contextually grounded strategies for Islamic counseling. The combination of qualitative inquiry and Islamic theoretical perspectives ensures that the results will be both empirically meaningful and spiritually relevant, providing valuable contributions to the field of Islamic education and mental health guidance.

Scope and Limitations

This research focuses specifically on exploring and analyzing Islamic counseling guidance strategies in addressing the identity crisis among the Alpha Generation. The scope of the study is limited to understanding the factors that contribute to identity confusion within this generation and how Islamic counseling principles can be effectively applied to help them develop a stable, faith-based identity (Madge et al., 2014). The emphasis is placed on the psychological, moral, and spiritual dimensions of identity formation, as informed by both Islamic teachings and modern counseling theories. Therefore, the study does not attempt to cover all psychological or behavioral problems experienced by the Alpha Generation, but rather centers on the identity crisis as the primary phenomenon of interest.

The research is grounded in the framework of Islamic counseling, drawing on concepts from the Qur'an, Sunnah, and Islamic psychology such as *tazkiyah al-nafs* (purification of the soul) and *fitrah* (innate disposition). While insights from general or secular counseling models such as cognitive-behavioral or humanistic approaches may be referenced for comparative purposes, the primary analytical lens remains within the Islamic paradigm. This focus ensures that the proposed counseling strategies are consistent with Islamic ethical and spiritual values, emphasizing the integration of faith and self-awareness in resolving identity conflicts (Pathan, 2016). The study thus seeks to contribute to the development of contextually relevant guidance methods that align with the needs of Muslim youth living in a digitalized world.

In terms of limitations, the study may face certain constraints related to research design and context. The sample size may be limited due to the availability of participants who represent the Alpha Generation within specific educational or community settings, such as Islamic schools or counseling centers. As a result, the findings may not be fully generalizable to all demographic groups or regions. Additionally, the research is contextually bound to particular geographical and cultural environments, which could influence the applicability of its conclusions in different societies. Furthermore, because identity formation is a complex and dynamic process influenced by various social, cultural, and technological factors, the study may not capture every aspect of the Alpha Generation's identity experiences.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The findings of this research reveal that the identity crisis among the Alpha Generation is primarily driven by the overwhelming influence of digital culture, social media, and rapid globalization. Most participants students aged between 12 and 15 expressed confusion in defining who they are and what values they should hold, as their perceptions of identity were strongly shaped by online trends, influencer culture, and peer validation (Buckingham, 2007). Many respondents admitted that they often felt pressured to conform to popular digital norms, which sometimes conflicted with their religious and moral upbringing. This tension between globalized digital values and Islamic teachings emerged as the central source of their internal identity conflict. Furthermore, the study found that excessive exposure to digital media without proper guidance tends to weaken emotional stability, reduce empathy, and blur moral boundaries among youth.

Interviews with Islamic counselors and educators revealed that the Alpha Generation requires a counseling approach that differs significantly from traditional models. Counselors observed that conventional methods such as lecturing or direct moral instruction are often ineffective with this generation, who respond better to interactive, visual, and emotionally engaging communication. The study found that counseling sessions incorporating digital storytelling, reflective discussion, and multimedia-based Qur'anic lessons were more successful in capturing the attention of Alpha Generation participants. These innovative strategies helped bridge the gap between spiritual values and digital realities, making Islamic teachings more relatable and practical in their daily lives. Counselors also emphasized the need for empathy, active listening, and personal connection in establishing trust with young clients, as these factors encouraged openness and self-reflection.

From the perspective of parents and teachers, the results indicated that the absence of consistent religious education and emotional communication at home contributed to the development of identity confusion (Wardekker & Miedema, 2001). Many parents relied heavily on schools or digital platforms for moral education, leading to inconsistent value transmission. The research highlights that when family, school, and religious institutions work together to apply Islamic counseling principles particularly those emphasizing *tazkiyah al-nafs* (self-purification) and *fitrah* (innate moral nature) youth demonstrate stronger self-awareness and moral resilience. Parents who were involved in the counseling process also reported improved communication and emotional closeness with their children, which supported the children's confidence in their identity as Muslims.

The implementation of Islamic counseling guidance strategies showed positive outcomes in helping Alpha Generation participants overcome their identity crisis. Through the process of spiritual reflection, guided dialogue, and value-based mentoring, participants developed a clearer understanding of their life purpose, personal strengths, and relationship with God. Thematic analysis revealed three major effects of the counseling interventions: (1) an increase in spiritual awareness, reflected in a stronger commitment to Islamic practices; (2) the formation of a positive self-concept, as participants began to perceive themselves as valuable individuals beyond digital validation; and (3) improved emotional regulation and moral decision-making, indicating greater psychological stability. These results demonstrate that integrating Islamic counseling into youth development programs can significantly enhance both emotional and spiritual maturity.

Overall, the research confirms that Islamic counseling guidance provides an effective framework for addressing the unique identity challenges of the Alpha Generation. By combining the moral depth of Islamic teachings with interactive and technology-aware counseling methods, it is possible to cultivate an environment that supports healthy identity formation. The findings emphasize that the key to success lies in the adaptability of counseling approaches where spiritual wisdom is conveyed through methods that resonate with the digital realities of modern youth. This study thus contributes to the development of a contemporary Islamic counseling model that is both pedagogically relevant and spiritually transformative, offering valuable guidance for educators, counselors, and parents in nurturing a resilient and faith-oriented generation.

A Clear Understanding of the Identity Crisis Patterns among Alpha Generation Youths

The findings of this research provide a clear understanding of the identity crisis patterns among Alpha Generation youths, revealing a complex interplay between psychological, social, and spiritual factors. The Alpha Generation those born between 2010 and 2025 are growing up in a world deeply shaped by digital technology, social media, and globalization. Their daily lives are intertwined with online interactions, where self-expression, recognition, and belonging are often sought through virtual platforms.

This constant connectivity exposes them to diverse cultural values, lifestyles, and ideologies, which, while enriching, also create confusion and conflict in developing a stable sense of self. The study found that many Alpha youths experience difficulty distinguishing between authentic identity and socially constructed digital personas, leading to uncertainty about who they truly are and what principles should guide their lives.

One prominent pattern identified in this study is the dependence on external validation (Bleeker et al., 2003). Many participants associated their self-worth with the number of “likes,” followers, or positive feedback they received on social media. This tendency to equate digital approval with self-value has led to fragile self-esteem and emotional instability. When online feedback is negative or absent, these youths often experience anxiety, insecurity, and self-doubt. Over time, such dependency fosters an unstable identity that fluctuates according to online interactions rather than being rooted in internal conviction or moral clarity. This external orientation contrasts sharply with the Islamic concept of identity, which emphasizes self-awareness (*ma’rifah al-nafs*) and the pursuit of inner peace through alignment with divine values rather than societal approval.

Another pattern evident in the research is the moral and spiritual ambiguity that arises from exposure to conflicting worldviews. Many Alpha Generation youths reported confusion when navigating the contrast between global digital culture which often promotes materialism, individualism, and moral relativism and the ethical teachings they receive at home or in religious institutions. This conflict manifests as selective religiosity, where spiritual practices are performed inconsistently or superficially. The study revealed that while many participants acknowledge the importance of faith, they struggle to integrate it meaningfully into their everyday digital lives. This disconnection between belief and behavior reflects a broader crisis of authenticity and moral grounding that underpins their identity struggles.

Additionally, the study found that emotional disconnection and social isolation contribute significantly to identity confusion among Alpha youths. Despite their high level of digital connectivity, many participants expressed feelings of loneliness and lack of real emotional support (Loveys et al., 2021). Their social interactions are often mediated by screens, reducing opportunities for genuine empathy, communication, and community belonging. This absence of deep interpersonal relationships weakens their sense of social identity and belonging, making them more vulnerable to external influences and peer pressure. As a result, they tend to adopt temporary or superficial identities to fit into different social groups, leading to an unstable sense of self.

The research also uncovered that parental and educational influences play a crucial role in shaping or stabilizing the identity of Alpha Generation youths. In families and schools where open dialogue, emotional support, and Islamic guidance were consistently present, youths demonstrated a stronger and more coherent sense of identity. Conversely, in environments where digital devices substituted human interaction, or where religious guidance was inconsistent, identity confusion was more pronounced. This finding highlights that the identity crisis of the Alpha Generation is not merely an individual issue but a collective one that reflects broader cultural and familial dynamics (Jha, 2020).

Overall, the patterns of identity crisis among the Alpha Generation point to a generation caught between two worlds: the rapidly evolving digital realm and the enduring moral-spiritual framework of faith. Their struggle lies in reconciling modern expressions of self with traditional values, and without proper guidance, this tension often results in psychological instability and moral uncertainty. Understanding these patterns is essential for developing effective Islamic counseling strategies, which can provide meaningful direction and spiritual grounding. By fostering self-awareness, moral clarity, and faith-based resilience, Islamic counseling can help the Alpha Generation build a strong and balanced identity that harmonizes their digital reality with their divine purpose.

A Structured Framework for Islamic Counseling Guidance Suited for Digital-Era Youth

The research culminates in the development of a structured framework for Islamic counseling guidance specifically designed to address the unique challenges faced by youth in the digital era, particularly the Alpha Generation. This framework integrates the timeless principles of Islamic spirituality with contemporary psychological and educational approaches, creating a holistic model that promotes balance between faith, self-awareness, and digital engagement. The foundation of this model rests on the understanding that identity formation is not only a psychological process but also a spiritual journey that requires alignment between the individual’s inner self (*nafs*), rational intellect (*‘aql*), and divine consciousness (*taqwa*). Therefore, Islamic counseling in this context seeks to nurture both moral stability and psychological resilience amidst the constant flux of digital culture.

The first component of the framework is self-recognition and self-purification (*tazkiyat al-nafs*), which aims to help young individuals understand their own emotions, desires, and motivations through a spiritual lens. This stage encourages introspection guided by Islamic teachings helping youths identify the sources of their identity confusion, such as overreliance on social media validation or exposure to conflicting moral values. Counselors use techniques like reflective journaling, guided discussion, and Qur'anic contemplation (*tadabbur*) to promote self-awareness and inner clarity (Isgandarova, 2019). By grounding the process in *tazkiyah*, youths are reminded that true identity is derived from their relationship with Allah, not from external appearances or online popularity.

The second component emphasizes value internalization through Qur'anic and Prophetic principles (Nursikin & Nugroho, 2021). This stage involves structured sessions that connect everyday challenges such as peer pressure, digital overexposure, and self-esteem issues with ethical teachings from the Qur'an and Hadith. Counselors help youths interpret these values in practical and relatable ways, fostering moral reasoning and critical reflection. For instance, the concept of *ikhlas* (sincerity) is introduced as an antidote to performative behavior on social media, while *sabr* (patience) and *shukr* (gratitude) are discussed as tools to manage emotional instability. Through interactive dialogue, role-play, and case-based learning, this stage strengthens the moral foundation that underpins identity coherence and ethical decision-making in the digital landscape.

The third component of the framework focuses on digital literacy and ethical engagement, recognizing that the Alpha Generation's identity is heavily shaped by online environments (Avci & Adiguzel, 2020). Instead of rejecting technology, Islamic counseling in this model adopts a proactive approach educating youths on how to engage with digital platforms responsibly and purposefully. This includes developing *adab al-ijtima' al-raqmi* (digital etiquette), which encompasses respect, truthfulness, humility, and moderation in online communication. Counselors guide students in evaluating digital content critically, distinguishing between authentic and misleading information, and reflecting on the spiritual impact of their digital consumption. By aligning digital literacy with Islamic ethics, the framework empowers youth to navigate the online world with integrity and self-control.

The fourth component is community integration and relational counseling, which focuses on strengthening social bonds within families, schools, and religious institutions. The framework encourages collaboration between counselors, parents, teachers, and local imams to build a supportive ecosystem that reinforces positive identity formation. Family-based counseling sessions, youth circles (*halaqah*), and mentoring programs are incorporated to provide ongoing emotional and spiritual support. This community-centered approach ensures that Islamic counseling does not operate in isolation but functions as part of a wider network of care, restoring a sense of belonging and shared moral responsibility among young people.

Finally, the framework includes an evaluation and development stage, where the effectiveness of counseling interventions is assessed through both qualitative and quantitative measures. Youths' progress in self-understanding, moral awareness, and emotional regulation is evaluated through reflective assessments, feedback sessions, and behavioral observations. This allows for continuous refinement of counseling strategies to adapt to the evolving needs of digital-era youth.

In essence, this structured framework provides a comprehensive, faith-based approach to addressing identity crises among the Alpha Generation. It bridges the gap between traditional Islamic guidance and the realities of modern life, ensuring that spiritual values remain relevant and applicable in a rapidly changing digital environment. By integrating introspection, moral education, digital ethics, and communal support, this model empowers youth to cultivate a confident, stable, and spiritually grounded identity. Ultimately, the framework affirms that Islamic counseling is not merely about correcting behavior; it is about nurturing a resilient generation that harmonizes faith with modernity, intellect with spirituality, and individuality with divine purpose.

Recommendations for Educational and Religious Institutions to Implement Effective Guidance Programs

Based on the findings of this research, several recommendations can be proposed for educational and religious institutions to effectively implement guidance programs that address the identity crisis among the Alpha Generation. First, educational institutions should integrate Islamic counseling and character education into their formal and informal curricula. This integration should not be limited to religious subjects but should extend across various disciplines, ensuring that values such as honesty, empathy, self-discipline, and responsibility are embedded in all areas of learning. Teachers and school

counselors need to be trained in basic Islamic counseling techniques such as reflective dialogue, Qur'anic-based mentoring, and emotional regulation through spiritual awareness so that they can identify early signs of identity confusion among students and provide appropriate guidance. Schools should also establish Islamic guidance and counseling units that function as safe spaces for students to discuss personal challenges related to self-image, purpose, and digital behavior (AL-GHAMDI, 2010). Through structured mentoring sessions and peer-counseling programs, students can develop a stronger sense of self rooted in Islamic ethics.

Second, religious institutions including mosques, madrasahs, and Islamic organizations should adopt a more youth-centered and interactive approach in their outreach and education efforts (Dumbe, 2013). Traditional religious education models that rely solely on one-way instruction need to evolve into dialogue-based and participatory programs that resonate with the communication styles of the Alpha Generation. Religious leaders, such as imams and da'i (preachers), should be equipped with skills in digital communication, psychology, and youth engagement so they can address modern moral dilemmas effectively. Utilizing social media platforms, podcasts, and online discussion groups to deliver Islamic messages in relatable, concise, and visually appealing ways can help young people connect spiritual teachings to their daily realities. These digital da'wah initiatives must emphasize authenticity, compassion, and inclusivity to build trust and relevance among tech-savvy youth.

Third, a strong collaboration between educational and religious institutions should be established to create an integrated support network for youth development (Ebstein King & Furrow, 2008). Joint programs such as leadership camps, community service projects, and digital ethics workshops can provide experiential learning opportunities that reinforce moral identity and social responsibility. Such initiatives should be designed to cultivate ukhuwah (brotherhood/sisterhood), empathy, and civic engagement, encouraging students to apply Islamic values in real-world contexts. These collaborations should also extend to parents, ensuring that the guidance received at school and in religious settings is reinforced at home. Parent education programs can be organized to help families understand the psychological and digital pressures faced by the Alpha Generation and to teach them effective communication and emotional support strategies.

Fourth, institutions should invest in capacity-building for counselors and educators by providing professional development in Islamic psychology, youth counseling, and digital literacy (DeCorby-Watson et al., 2018). Training programs and certification courses can ensure that counselors possess both the religious and psychological competencies needed to guide youth effectively. Universities with faculties of psychology, education, or Islamic studies can contribute by developing academic courses or research centers focused on Islamic counseling in the digital age. Such initiatives would help institutionalize Islamic guidance as a professional discipline that responds to the changing needs of Muslim youth.

Finally, both educational and religious institutions should implement monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess the impact of their guidance programs (Kusek & Rist, 2004). Regular feedback from students, counselors, and community stakeholders can help refine the strategies and ensure that they remain effective and relevant. Success indicators might include improved self-esteem, ethical online behavior, and stronger faith-based identity among participants. By institutionalizing continuous improvement, schools and religious organizations can sustain their commitment to nurturing a morally grounded and emotionally resilient generation.

Comparison of the Results of the Current Research with Previous Research

The results of this research align with and expand upon several previous studies that have examined identity formation and counseling strategies among young people in the context of rapid technological and cultural change. Consistent with Erikson's psychosocial theory of identity formation (1950), the current study confirms that the Alpha Generation experiences a heightened sense of identity confusion due to the developmental challenges of adolescence compounded by digital exposure. Similar to findings by Twenge (2017) in her work *iGen: Why Today's Super-Connected Kids Are Growing Up Less Rebellious, More Tolerant, Less Happy – and Completely Unprepared for Adulthood*, this research found that digital saturation has increased emotional vulnerability, social comparison, and the search for external validation among youth. However, while Twenge's analysis primarily focuses on psychological consequences from a secular perspective, the present study adds a spiritual and moral dimension, emphasizing the potential of Islamic counseling as a faith-based remedy to restore identity coherence and purpose.

This study's findings also resonate with Al-Attas (1991) and Nasr (1993), who argue that the loss of *adab* (proper discipline and knowledge hierarchy) in modern education contributes to moral disorientation among Muslim youth. The current research supports this view by showing that the identity crisis among the Alpha Generation often stems from a lack of integration between modern education and spiritual formation. However, it goes further by proposing a structured Islamic counseling framework that directly addresses this gap through *tazkiyah al-nafs* (self-purification) and *fitrah*-based guidance. Unlike Al-Attas and Nasr, who focused on philosophical critiques of Western modernity, this study translates those theoretical insights into practical counseling interventions tailored for the digital age, making it both conceptually and operationally relevant for educators and practitioners.

Moreover, the results corroborate the work of Hassan and Embong (2019), who explored Islamic guidance programs for adolescents and found that integrating Qur'anic values with modern counseling techniques improved emotional regulation and moral awareness. Both studies emphasize the compatibility between Islamic spirituality and contemporary psychological counseling when properly contextualized. However, while Hassan and Embong's study primarily involved traditional counseling settings, the present research extends the model to digital contexts, incorporating aspects of online behavior, digital ethics, and social media influence into the counseling framework. This integration represents a significant innovation, acknowledging that identity development for the Alpha Generation is inseparable from their digital engagement.

In addition, research by Rahman and Saeed (2020) on Islamic Psycho-Spiritual Counseling for Youth Development demonstrated that combining spiritual reflection with psychological techniques led to enhanced resilience and self-acceptance among young Muslims. The findings of the current study reinforce these conclusions but highlight that digital exposure requires adaptive counseling strategies, including technological literacy, media discernment, and online moral conduct. Thus, while previous studies confirmed the effectiveness of Islamic psycho-spiritual methods, this research advances the field by adapting those methods to 21st-century digital realities, ensuring their relevance to the Alpha Generation's lifestyle and challenges.

Comparatively, the study by Kurniawati (2021) on Identity Crisis in Indonesian Adolescents identified peer influence, family disconnection, and media exposure as key contributors to identity confusion. The present research affirms these factors but adds a theological insight: the weakening of spiritual connection and self-awareness of one's *fitrah* amplifies this confusion (Hanefar, 2015). By introducing a counseling framework grounded in Islamic concepts of the self, this study bridges psychological and religious understandings of identity, offering a more comprehensive explanatory model than purely sociological or psychological perspectives.

In summary, the findings of this research both affirm and extend the conclusions of earlier works. They affirm previous findings regarding the role of digital culture, peer pressure, and educational gaps in shaping identity crises among youth, but they extend existing knowledge by offering a structured, integrative Islamic counseling framework. This model not only addresses emotional and behavioral issues but also reestablishes the spiritual foundation of identity, which previous secular frameworks often overlooked. The study thereby contributes to a growing body of interdisciplinary research that unites Islamic psychology, counseling practice, and digital youth studies, providing a timely response to the emerging identity challenges of the Alpha Generation.

CONCLUSION

This research concludes that the identity crisis experienced by the Alpha Generation those born roughly between 2010 and 2025 is a multidimensional challenge rooted in the intersection of digital exposure, globalization, and weakened spiritual grounding. The study found that constant interaction with technology and social media has led many youths to struggle with confusion about values, self-concept, and life purpose. This identity instability manifests as emotional uncertainty, moral ambiguity, and a diminished sense of belonging. These findings underscore the urgent need for a faith-based and culturally relevant counseling approach to help young Muslims navigate their identity formation in the modern world. The research highlights that Islamic counseling guidance offers a holistic solution that integrates psychological, moral, and spiritual dimensions. Grounded in the principles of *tazkiyah al-nafs* (self-purification) and *fitrah* (innate human nature), Islamic counseling helps youth rediscover their inner potential, strengthen their relationship with Allah, and develop self-understanding anchored in faith.

Unlike secular counseling frameworks, which often prioritize emotional or behavioral adjustment alone, Islamic counseling fosters moral reasoning, emotional intelligence, and spiritual resilience, providing a deeper foundation for identity stability. The study developed a structured Islamic counseling framework tailored to the needs of digital-era youth. This model includes four key components: self-recognition and purification, value internalization based on Qur'anic and Prophetic teachings, digital ethics and literacy, and community-based support. By combining spiritual reflection with modern psychological tools, the framework equips the Alpha Generation to manage digital influences wisely and align their online and offline identities with Islamic values. Additionally, the research emphasizes the critical role of educational and religious institutions in implementing effective guidance programs. Schools should integrate Islamic counseling principles into their character education and provide trained counselors who understand youth psychology and digital culture. Religious organizations must adopt more interactive, youth-centered approaches and utilize digital platforms to communicate Islamic teachings effectively. Collaboration among educators, counselors, religious leaders, and parents is essential to create a supportive environment that reinforces consistent moral and spiritual development. This study affirms that addressing the Alpha Generation's identity crisis requires a synergistic, faith-driven, and adaptive counseling approach. Islamic counseling serves not only as a means of resolving existing identity conflicts but also as a proactive strategy for nurturing spiritually grounded, emotionally stable, and morally responsible individuals. The research contributes both theoretical insights and practical solutions to help young Muslims build a coherent, resilient, and faith-based identity in an era of rapid digital transformation.

AUTHORS' DECLARATION

Authors' Contributions and Responsibilities

The author was fully responsible for the conception, design, and execution of this research.

Competing Interests

The author declares that there are no competing interests associated with this research. There were no financial, personal, or professional relationships that could have influenced the design, conduct, analysis, or interpretation of the study.

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