

Strengthening the Spiritual Intelligence of Generation Alpha through Islamic Mindfulness in Islamic Religious Education

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the concept of strengthening the spiritual intelligence of Generation Alpha through an Islamic mindfulness approach in Islamic Religious Education. The study is grounded in the reality that contemporary learners grow up in a fast-paced digital environment filled with distractions and the potential to weaken spaces for self-reflection. In this context, Islamic Religious Education should not merely emphasize mastery of religious content, but should also be directed toward the formation of self-awareness, emotional regulation, life meaning, and religious behavior. This research employs a qualitative approach using library research. Data were obtained from academic books, journal articles, curriculum documents, and previous studies relevant to Generation Alpha, spiritual intelligence, Islamic mindfulness, and Islamic Religious Education. The data were analyzed using content analysis by identifying, classifying, comparing, and synthesizing ideas from various sources of literature. The findings indicate that Islamic mindfulness can serve as a pedagogical approach that integrates Islamic values with reflective awareness practices through intention, dhikr, supplication, contemplation, self-reflection, patience, gratitude, and trust in Allah. This approach has the potential to strengthen learners' spiritual intelligence by enhancing self-awareness, inner calm, self-control, moral responsibility, empathy, and commitment to religious behavior. Thus, Islamic mindfulness can be positioned as a reflective, spiritual, and contextual strategy for Islamic Religious Education for learners in the digital era

Keywords: *Generation Alpha; Islamic mindfulness; spiritual intelligence; Islamic Religious Education*

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Introduction

Generation Alpha has emerged in an educational environment strongly shaped by digital technology. They do not merely encounter technology as a learning aid, but experience it as part of their learning patterns, communication, entertainment, and identity formation. Mohsen, (Mohsen, W. A., Al-Rashaida, M., & Alkaabi, 2025) show that Generation Alpha children have very high access to electronic devices; in their study, 30% of children used digital devices for more than ten hours per week for both educational and entertainment purposes. This condition indicates that contemporary learning cannot be separated from digital realities, but it also should not accept digitalization naively without pedagogical and spiritual guidance.

Technological development in education certainly creates major opportunities, but it also brings risks to learners' concentration, mental health, and quality of social interaction. (UNESCO, 2024) emphasizes that technology can support access, equity, and quality in education, yet its use may also be harmful if it is not properly regulated. The UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report further notes that excessive technology use is negatively associated with student performance, and the presence of mobile devices can disrupt learning.

In the Indonesian context, the problem of digital distraction is also visible in the (OECD, 2023) PISA data. The OECD reported that 25% of Indonesian students were distracted by the use of digital devices during learning, while 27% were distracted by other students using digital devices. At the same time, 14% of Indonesian students reported dissatisfaction with their lives. These data signal that education should not be directed solely toward cognitive achievement, but must also attend to learners' ability to manage attention, emotions, life meaning, and value orientation.

This issue becomes even more important when connected to adolescents' psychological well-being in the digital era. The (WHO Regional Office for Europe, 2024) reported an increase in problematic social media use among adolescents from 7% in 2018 to 11% in 2022 and found that 12% of adolescents were at risk of problematic gaming. These findings show that young people need self-regulation, inner awareness, and the ability to control digital behavior. From the perspective of Islamic Religious Education, these capacities cannot be built merely through moral prohibitions; they must be cultivated through learning processes that foster religious awareness from within the learner.

Islamic Religious Education holds a strategic position in responding to these challenges because its orientation is not limited to the mastery of religious knowledge, but also includes the formation of faith, character, moral awareness, responsibility, and wisdom in action (Mujiono, 2025). The learning outcomes of Islamic Religious Education and Character Education at Phase E emphasize students' ability to understand teachings on competing in goodness, work ethic, maintaining personal dignity, and avoiding deviant behavior (Mansur Ali Hanafi Siregar, 2025). At Phase F, Islamic Religious Education is also directed toward strengthening critical thinking, mastery of science and technology, tolerance, religious moderation, patience, trust in Allah, responsibility, and positive assumptions toward Allah Swt.

However, the practice of Islamic Religious Education often still faces a fundamental weakness: the tendency to position religion as memorized content rather than as an inner experience and a process of forming awareness. Religious learning that is overly verbalistic may lead students to know religious concepts without necessarily being able to internalize them, control themselves, or make religious values a guide for behavior (Bahtiar Siregar & Agustia, 2025). Therefore, strengthening spiritual intelligence has become an important need in Islamic Religious Education, especially for learners who grow under digital, social, and emotional pressure.

Spiritual intelligence in Islamic education can be understood as learners' ability to recognize their relationship with Allah Swt., understand the meaning of life, control inner impulses, make ethical decisions, and display noble character in everyday life. Widodo, Nashihin, and Pramono state that effective Islamic educational methods for enhancing spiritual

intelligence include exemplary conduct, habituation of worship, internalization of Qur'anic and hadith values, and reflective dialogue. These approaches are important because spiritual intelligence does not emerge from lectures alone, but from habituation, reflection, and guided religious experience.

One relevant approach for addressing this need is Islamic mindfulness. Unlike secular mindfulness, which usually centers on self-awareness and psychological calm, Islamic mindfulness places awareness within the framework of tawhid, muraqabah, dhikr, tafakkur, muhasabah, tawakkul, patience, and gratitude. (Muhammad Yunan Harahap et al., 2023) Manan explains that Islamic mindfulness in Islamic Religious Education can help students develop emotional regulation, especially in managing stress, controlling impulses, and improving psychological well-being. Norman and colleagues also show that Islamic mindfulness combining dhikr and tafakkur can improve students' self-regulation, focus, and academic achievement.

The Islamic mindfulness approach is also aligned with the needs of Islamic Religious Education teachers in creating more reflective learning. (Sufiani et al., 2022) found that Islamic psychospiritual approaches in mindfulness programs integrate the elements of muraqabah, muhasabah, and tazkiyatun nafs. These elements are important because Islamic Religious Education should not merely convey norms, but should guide learners to be consciously present, evaluate themselves, organize emotions, and connect learning activities with awareness of Allah.

Based on this discussion, research on strengthening the spiritual intelligence of Generation Alpha through Islamic mindfulness in Islamic Religious Education is relevant. This study can be directed toward examining how Islamic Religious Education teachers design, implement, and evaluate Islamic mindfulness practices in learning; how students experience spiritual reflection and how this approach contributes to self-awareness, inner calm, emotional control, responsibility, and religious behavior among learners. The novelty of this study lies in positioning Islamic mindfulness not simply as a relaxation technique, but as a tawhid-based pedagogical approach to strengthen learners' spiritual intelligence amid digital challenges.

Literature Review

1. Generation Alpha and the Challenges of Islamic Religious Education

Generation Alpha is generally understood as the generation born around 2010 onward. The main characteristic of this generation is not simply that they are "technologically skilled," but that they grow up in a digital environment in which devices, the internet, games, short videos, and social media become normal parts of everyday life. (Höfrová et al., 2024) explain that Generation Alpha is the first generation to grow up in deep digital immersion. However, they also caution that claims about the differences between Generation Alpha and previous generations must be read carefully because not all such claims are supported by strong empirical evidence. This means that research on Generation Alpha should not merely use a popular label, but must clearly describe the subjects' age, year of birth, grade level, digital experiences, and learning habits.

In the context of Islamic Religious Education, the digital character of Generation Alpha requires an approach that does not only deliver religious material normatively, but also helps learners develop self-awareness, emotional control, media ethics, and meaningful life orientation. The learning outcomes of Islamic Religious Education and Character Education at Phase F position the subject not only as a space for discussing the Qur'an, hadith, creed, ethics, Islamic jurisprudence, and Islamic history, but also as a means to develop critical thinking, understanding of science and technology, tolerance, religious moderation, responsibility, patience, trust in Allah, and positive assumptions toward Allah Swt. Thus, Islamic Religious Education has a curricular basis for strengthening students' spiritual intelligence, not merely

their cognitive religious competence (Karim, A., Fathurohman, O., Sulaiman, Marlioni, L., Kurniawan, F. F., Nugraha, F., 2025).

Theoretically, Generation Alpha in this study can be positioned as learners who live under digital pressure and therefore require more reflective religious learning. The focus is not simply whether they use technology, but how Islamic Religious Education helps them manage attention, emotions, moral choices, and spiritual awareness amid digital flows. For this reason, Islamic mindfulness is relevant as an approach that connects religious learning experiences with self-awareness and closeness to Allah Swt.

2. Spiritual Intelligence in Islamic Education

Spiritual intelligence refers to the human capacity to understand meaning, values, purpose, and the direction of action. (Zohar & Marshall, 2022) explain that spiritual intelligence is related to the human ability to construct meaning, vision, values, beliefs, and the foundation for life decisions. In the Islamic context, this concept should not be understood merely as a general search for meaning; rather, it must be connected to tawhid, faith, ihsan, noble character, awareness as a servant of Allah, and human responsibility as khalifah on earth.

In Islamic education, spiritual intelligence does not stand alone. It is connected to the formation of religious character, moral awareness, self-control, and social responsibility. Widodo, Nashihin, and Pramono explain that spiritual intelligence from the perspective of Islamic education is the ability to understand the meaning of life, the purpose of human existence, and the essential relationship between human beings and Allah Swt. They further emphasize that effective Islamic education does not merely stress cognitive aspects, but also the formation of noble character and the intelligence of the heart.

Strengthening spiritual intelligence in Islamic Religious Education can be carried out through teacher exemplarity, habituation of worship, internalization of Qur'anic and hadith values, and reflective dialogue. (Nashihin et al., 2025) state that methods such as *uswah hasanah*, worship habituation, internalization of Qur'anic-hadith values, and reflective dialogue can build students' spiritual awareness as reflected in religious attitudes, social empathy, and self-control. (Mhd. Habibu Rahman, 2024) also emphasize that integrating spiritual intelligence into the Islamic Religious Education curriculum helps learners develop religious awareness, self-control, and the ability to make wiser decisions.

3. Islamic Mindfulness in Islamic Religious Education

Islamic mindfulness is an approach to full awareness placed within the framework of Islamic values. Unlike secular mindfulness, which is generally oriented toward present-moment awareness and psychological calm, Islamic mindfulness links self-awareness with tawhid, *muraqabah*, *dhikr*, *tafakkur*, *muhasabah*, *khushu'*, supplication, patience, *tawakkul*, and awareness of the presence of Allah Swt. Syafii explains that Islamic Mindfulness-Based Counseling integrates mindfulness principles with Islamic values such as *muraqabah*, *muhasabah*, and *khushu'*; practices such as mindful prayer, *dhikr*, and Qur'anic reflection also contribute to students' emotional regulation and psychological resilience.

In an educational context, Islamic mindfulness can be used to help students be consciously present in Islamic Religious Education learning. Its practices may include setting an intention before learning, brief *dhikr* to calm attention, reflection on verses or hadith, pauses for *muhasabah*, contemplation of life experiences, supplication, and evaluation of behavior after learning. (Norman et al., 2025) found that Islamic mindfulness incorporating *dhikr* and *tafakkur* can help students improve self-regulation, focus, and academic achievement. Although the study did not specifically examine Generation Alpha, its findings are relevant as a basis for arguing that Islamic awareness practices can help students face distractions, learning pressure, and emotional regulation challenges. From the perspective of Islamic tradition, Islamic mindfulness is closely related to Sufi practices such as *dhikr* and spiritual meditation. (Afifi et al., 2025) explain that *dhikr* and meditation in Sufism aim to purify the self, deepen awareness of Allah, and build spiritual tranquility. Their findings show that such practices are associated

with spiritual well-being, gratitude, emotional balance, divine awareness, reduced stress, and increased resilience. This strengthens the theoretical basis that Islamic mindfulness should not be understood as a foreign concept imposed on Islamic Religious Education, but rather as a pedagogical development of spiritual practices already familiar in the Islamic educational tradition.

Research Methodology

This study uses a qualitative approach with library research. Library research was selected because this study focuses on a conceptual analysis of literature discussing Generation Alpha, spiritual intelligence, Islamic mindfulness, and Islamic Religious Education. The research data consist of secondary data obtained from academic books, national and international journal articles, conference proceedings, curriculum documents, and official institutional reports relevant to the topic. Data collection was carried out through literature searching and selection based on thematic relevance, source credibility, publication recency, and suitability to the research focus. The selected literature was classified into four main themes: the characteristics of Generation Alpha, the concept of spiritual intelligence, the principles of Islamic mindfulness, and the orientation of Islamic Religious Education learning. The data were analyzed using content analysis by reading, identifying, grouping, comparing, and synthesizing ideas from various sources of literature. Data validity was maintained through literature triangulation, namely by comparing various scholarly sources to ensure that the resulting synthesis had a strong academic foundation. In this study, Islamic mindfulness is understood as Islamic awareness involving intention, dhikr, supplication, muhasabah, tafakkur, patience, gratitude, and tawakkul. Spiritual intelligence is understood as learners' ability to understand the meaning of life, recognize their relationship with Allah Swt., control themselves, and display religious behavior. The findings are directed toward formulating a conceptual framework for strengthening the spiritual intelligence of Generation Alpha through Islamic mindfulness in Islamic Religious Education.

Results

Based on a literature review of Generation Alpha, spiritual intelligence, Islamic mindfulness, and Islamic Religious Education, four main findings were identified. These findings are not the result of field observation, but rather a conceptual synthesis of academic literature and official educational documents.

1. Generation Alpha Requires Reflective Islamic Religious Education

The literature review shows that Generation Alpha lives in a highly intensive digital environment. However, the term Generation Alpha should not be used loosely. (McCrindle & Fell, 2020) emphasize that although the term is frequently used in educational literature, empirical evidence on the differences between Generation Alpha and previous generations remains limited. What is clearer is the concern that technology use may reduce opportunities for socio-emotional development and increase mental health problems.

This finding is important for Islamic Religious Education because the subject should not merely convey religious content. Learners living in a digital culture require learning that helps them manage attention, emotions, moral choices, and spiritual awareness. The Phase E learning outcomes of Islamic Religious Education emphasize learners' understanding of competition in goodness, work ethic, maintaining personal dignity, and avoiding deviant behavior. At Phase F, Islamic Religious Education is also directed toward strengthening critical thinking, science and technology literacy, tolerance, religious moderation, responsibility, patience, trust in Allah, and positive assumptions toward Allah Swt. Thus, the literature review shows that Islamic Religious Education has a curricular foundation for being developed into reflective-spiritual learning. It functions not only as a normative subject, but also as a space for cultivating self-awareness, inner calm, emotional regulation, and learners' character.

2. Spiritual Intelligence Is a Central Need in Islamic Religious Education

The literature review indicates that spiritual intelligence occupies an important position in Islamic education. (Nurislamiah et al., 2025) explain that spiritual intelligence plays a role in connecting religious understanding, moral development, and human self-awareness of the existence of God and humanity. This means that spiritual intelligence is not only related to religious knowledge, but also to learners' ability to interpret life, control themselves, assess actions ethically, and build a conscious relationship with Allah Swt.

In the context of Islamic Religious Education, spiritual intelligence can be observed through several indicators: awareness of worship, the ability to engage in muhasabah, patience, gratitude, tawakkul, responsibility, empathy, self-control, and the ability to make decisions based on Islamic values. Spiritual intelligence cannot be adequately formed through lectures or memorization alone; it requires the internalization of values through learning experiences that touch the inner dimension of learners. The literature also shows that strengthening spiritual intelligence is relevant to the challenges faced by learners in the digital era. When students experience gadget distraction, social pressure, academic fatigue, and behavioral changes, Islamic Religious Education needs to provide space for them to pause, become aware of their inner condition, organize their emotions, and connect life experiences with Islamic values.

3. Islamic Mindfulness Is Relevant as an Approach to Islamic Religious Education

The literature review shows that Islamic mindfulness can be understood as a self-awareness approach based on Islamic values. Islamic mindfulness is not identical to secular mindfulness, which focuses primarily on present awareness and psychological calm. Islamic mindfulness places self-awareness within the framework of tawhid, muraqabah, muhasabah, dhikr, tafakkur, tazkiyatun nafs, supplication, patience, gratitude, and tawakkul. (Khalid-Khan et al., 2022) show that Islamic psychospiritual approaches in mindfulness programs integrate elements of muraqabah, muhasabah, and tazkiyatun nafs. Their review of 43 studies from 2020 to 2025 indicates that integrating Islamic psychospiritual elements into a mindfulness framework contributes to strengthening self-awareness and emotional intelligence. Norman, Megayanti, Paramansyah, and Rahmawati also strengthen the relevance of Islamic mindfulness in an educational context. Their study shows that Islamic mindfulness incorporating dhikr and tafakkur was used to improve self-regulation and academic success among senior high school students in Indonesia. These findings indicate that Islamic mindfulness can help students manage stress, attention, emotions, and learning behavior.

In Islamic Religious Education, Islamic mindfulness can be implemented through simple activities such as setting an intention for learning, brief dhikr, supplication, reflection on verses, contemplation of life experiences, self-reflection, reflective journals, and daily character evaluation. These activities should not stand as additional rituals detached from learning, but should become part of a pedagogical strategy for deepening students' understanding and meaning-making of Islamic Religious Education content.

4. Islamic Mindfulness Has the Potential to Strengthen the Spiritual Intelligence of Generation Alpha

The synthesis shows a strong conceptual relationship between Islamic mindfulness and spiritual intelligence. Islamic mindfulness helps learners become aware of their inner condition, manage emotions, connect life experiences with Islamic values, and build awareness of the presence of Allah Swt. Meanwhile, spiritual intelligence requires the ability to understand the meaning of life, control oneself, act based on values, and build a transcendental relationship with God. Thus, Islamic mindfulness has the potential to become an approach to Islamic Religious Education that strengthens learners' spiritual intelligence, particularly in the aspects of self-awareness, inner calm, emotional control, gratitude, patience, responsibility, and religious behavior. This potential is especially relevant for Generation Alpha, who grow up in a fast-paced, distracting digital environment that often reduces opportunities for reflection.

Islamic Religious Education is often still understood as a process of delivering religious material, memorizing scriptural arguments, and understanding basic Islamic legal concepts. This model is not wrong, but it is insufficient. Its weakness lies in the distance between religious knowledge and learners' inner experience. Students may know the concepts of patience, gratitude, tawakkul, and noble character, but may not necessarily be able to practice them when facing pressure, peer conflict, digital distraction, or emotional problems. Islamic mindfulness offers a correction to this weakness.

This approach shifts Islamic Religious Education from merely "knowing religious teachings" toward "experiencing, becoming aware of, and internalizing religious values." For example, the topic of patience should not only be explained through definitions and scriptural evidence, but also connected to students' experiences of failure, friendship conflict, academic pressure, or gadget dependence. The teacher can then guide students through reflection, dhikr, supplication, and muhasabah so that patience does not remain a concept, but becomes selfawareness. In this way, Islamic Religious Education becomes more transformative. Students are not only required to answer religious questions, but are also guided to know themselves, regulate their emotions, understand the meaning of life, and improve their behavior. This is the key point in strengthening spiritual intelligence.

Spiritual intelligence cannot be developed through a purely rational approach. It requires the involvement of the heart, experience, habituation, and reflection. Islamic mindfulness is relevant because it unites spiritual, emotional, and moral aspects in one learning process. Spiritually, Islamic mindfulness cultivates the awareness that learning is part of worship. Intention before learning, supplication, dhikr, and tafakkur help students understand that knowledge is not only for academic grades, but also for drawing closer to Allah Swt. Emotionally, Islamic mindfulness helps students recognize feelings, manage anxiety, calm themselves, and avoid impulsive reactions. Morally, Islamic mindfulness encourages students to engage in muhasabah regarding daily behavior, such as honesty, discipline, responsibility, manners toward teachers, and relationships with peers.

One of the main problems faced by learners in the digital era is the loss of reflective pause. They are accustomed to fast information, instant responses, notifications, short videos, and constantly moving patterns of digital consumption. As a result, the ability to be silent, reflect, listen to oneself, and interpret life experience may weaken. This is why Islamic mindfulness is important in Islamic Religious Education. However, it must be clarified that the problem of Generation Alpha is not simply that they are "addicted to technology." Such a claim oversimplifies the issue. The literature shows that the term Generation Alpha must be used carefully because not all characteristics attached to this generation are supported by strong empirical evidence. Therefore, a stronger academic argument is that contemporary learners live in an intensive digital environment and thus require learning approaches that help them manage attention, emotions, and value orientation.

Islamic mindfulness can serve as such a spiritual pause. In Islamic Religious Education, teachers may begin class with conscious intention, invite students to perform brief dhikr, provide time for reflection after reading a verse, ask students to write muhasabah notes, or connect religious material with their concrete experiences. These practices are simple, but important because they train students not to react impulsively to digital and social stimuli.

Conclusion

Islamic mindfulness is a relevant approach for strengthening the spiritual intelligence of Generation Alpha in Islamic Religious Education. Generation Alpha grows up in a fast-paced digital environment filled with distractions and a tendency to reduce spaces for self-reflection. Therefore, Islamic Religious Education should not only be directed toward mastery of religious content, but should also be developed as a space for cultivating self-awareness, emotional control, life meaning, and religious behavior. Islamic mindfulness offers a learning approach

that combines Islamic values with reflective awareness practices. Elements such as intention, dhikr, supplication, tafakkur, muhasabah, patience, gratitude, and tawakkul can become pedagogical strategies to help learners be consciously present in the learning process. Through this approach, students do not only understand Islamic teachings cognitively, but are also guided to internalize religious values, evaluate their own behavior, regulate emotions, and build a more conscious relationship with Allah Swt. Strengthening spiritual intelligence through Islamic mindfulness can be seen in several main aspects: increased self-awareness, inner calm, self-control, moral responsibility, empathy, the capacity for muhasabah, and commitment to displaying religious behavior in daily life. Thus, Islamic mindfulness can be positioned as a bridge between religious knowledge and learners' inner experience.

However, because this study uses library research, the findings remain conceptual and do not yet empirically prove the effectiveness of Islamic mindfulness in classroom practice. Therefore, further research is needed through field studies, classroom action research, or limited experiments to test the implementation of Islamic mindfulness directly in Islamic Religious Education. In addition, the use of the term Generation Alpha needs to be clearly explained based on age and year-of-birth boundaries so that it does not become merely a popular label without a strong academic basis. In general, this study affirms that Islamic Religious Education based on Islamic mindfulness has the potential to become a more reflective, spiritual, and contextual learning approach in responding to the challenges of education in the digital era. This approach not only strengthens students' religious dimension, but also helps them build balance among spiritual intelligence, self-control, and readiness to face the dynamics of twenty-first-century life.

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