

Tariq Ramadan's Concept of Tolerance and the Muslim Identity Crisis: An Islamic Psychological Perspective

Henri Shalahudin¹, Ihsan Abdul Aziz^{2*}

1. Universitas Darussalam ,Gontor, Indonesia

2. Universitas Darussalam ,Gontor, Indonesia

*Corresponding author: ihsanabdulaziz61773@gmail.com

Article History:

Received: August 12, 2025

Revised: November 16, 2025

Accepted: November 20, 2025

Published: November 28, 2025

Citation: Shalahuddin, H., & Aziz, I. A. (2025). Tariq Ramadan's Concept of Tolerance and the Muslim Identity Crisis: An Islamic Psychological Perspective. *Jurnal Theologia*, 36(2), 195–210. <https://doi.org/10.21580/teo.2025.36.2.28338>

Copyright: © 2025 by the author/s. This open-access article is distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License. (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0). <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>.

Abstract: This article examines the concept of tolerance in Tariq Ramadan's thought as a solution to the identity crisis faced by contemporary Muslims, making Ramadan's tolerance the primary unit of analysis. This research aims to examine how the construction of tolerance offered by Ramadan—which is rooted in Islamic spirituality, dialogue ethics, and psychological awareness—can serve as a framework for restoring the Muslim identity amidst the dynamics of globalization, plurality, and modern cultural pressures. Utilizing library research methods with a qualitative, descriptive, and analytical approach, as well as content analysis, this study examines primary works by Ramadan, along with relevant secondary literature on tolerance, Muslim identity, and Islamic psychology. The study's findings reveal that Ramadan rejects the model of passive tolerance based on power relations and proposes an alternative model of active tolerance, grounded in tawhid, the recognition of God's will in diversity, and the integration of qalb, reason, and social ethics. An analysis of Islamic psychology reveals that tolerance within the framework of Ramadan has a spiritual dimension that can help overcome the crises of meaning, alienation, and identity polarization. The contribution of this research lies in presenting a conceptual model of tolerance with Islamic psychological nuances that can serve as the basis for strengthening Muslim identity, as well as the development of educational, counseling, and intergroup dialogue practices in multicultural societies.

Keywords: Tolerance, Tariq Ramadan, Muslim Identity, Islamic Psychology, Pluralism

1. Introduction

The phenomenon of identity crisis among Muslims in the modern era has become an increasingly complex challenge amid the rapid currents of globalization, secularization, and the penetration of Western values. This crisis not only affects the personal dimension but also shapes the construction of the Ummah's collective identity, leading to uncertainty in determining life orientation, moral direction, and spiritual grounding (Arroisi et al., 2021, p. 204). In multicultural and pluralistic societies, Muslims are often confronted with the dilemma of preserving the purity of Islamic teachings while adapting to the demands of the times. A lack of comprehensive understanding of the concept of identity in Islam frequently results in the misuse of tolerance, which in turn may trigger syncretism—the blending of beliefs (Arroisi, 2015, p. 3), or the view that mixes various religious

traditions into one belief, claiming that all religions are essentially the same (Trisnani et al., 2022, p. 206). Alternatively, it can give rise to extreme exclusivism, which not only rejects the existence of other groups but also seeks to negate their existence entirely (Fathiyaturrahmah et al., 2022, p. 11), a stance that inevitably fuels interreligious conflict due to its discriminatory nature toward other faith communities (Armayanto, 2024, p. 50). In my previously published article, "*Peta dan Problematika Konsep Moderasi Beragama di Indonesia*," I also emphasize the problem of bias in the meaning of religious tolerance. The term tolerance is often used to accommodate deviant behavior in religious matters by emphasizing the dimension of pluralism within it (Shalahuddin et al., 2023, pp. 704–705). This situation raises a fundamental question about how Muslims can maintain an authentic Islamic identity while remaining open to differences. In this context, there is an urgent need for a thorough examination of the concept of tolerance, particularly in the thought of Tariq Ramadan, a prominent figure who offers a contextual interpretation of Islamic teachings (Widiyaningtyas et al., 2025, p. 95).

Various studies have discussed themes of tolerance, Muslim identity, and Tariq Ramadan's thought from diverse perspectives. Anwar et al. demonstrate that the principle of tolerance is an integral part of Islamic teachings, as understood by both classical and contemporary scholars (Anwar et al., 2023, pp. 117–134). Hafidzi emphasizes the connection between tolerance and religious maturity in the context of interfaith relations (Hafidzi, 2019, pp. 51–61). Meanwhile, Amir and Rahman examine Ramadan's thought in depth as a figure who emphasizes the importance of contextual reform in interpreting Islamic texts, while advocating for inclusive values, pluralism, and freedom within the framework of Islamic ethics (Nabil Amir & Abdul Rahman, 2022, pp. 50–73). Ramadan's views were also examined by Wildan, who highlighted his radical reforms through an integrative approach between revelation and nature, while offering methodological criticism of classical Islamic law and modern reformist systems. Ramadan's ideas are understood as a transformative response to the challenges of the times (Arif Amrollah, 2022, pp. 188–192). In another study, Haq et al. explain how Ramadan constructs a Western Muslim identity by balancing loyalty to the state with allegiance to revelation through four principles: faith, contextual understanding, education, and social participation (Khirzul Haq et al., 2022, pp. 55–68). Fikri emphasized that Islamic education plays a crucial role as a bastion of Islamic values amid the challenges of globalization (Fikri, 2024, pp. 149–156). Khairanis and Aldi added that the tafsir bi al-ma'thūr approach can preserve Muslim identity through a normative foundation based on authentic Islamic tradition, while still requiring a contextual approach to remain relevant (Khairanis & Aldi, 2025, pp. 19–28). From these previous studies, none has explicitly integrated the concept of tolerance in Tariq Ramadan's thought as a comprehensive solution to the identity crisis. This study aims to fill that gap through a philosophical approach that utilizes Islamic psychology analysis, with the goal of providing a more holistic and relevant conceptual framework to address the identity crisis faced by Muslims in the modern era.

This study aims to analyze Tariq Ramadan's concept of tolerance as a solution to the current identity crisis among Muslims through an Islamic psychology approach. The focus is on how the values of tolerance proposed by Ramadan can serve as a solution to the identity crisis faced by Muslims in contemporary times. This study aims to explore the significance of Ramadan's thought in shaping strategies for cultivating a contemporary Muslim identity that balances the demands of spirituality and modernity. It is hoped that this study will make both theoretical and practical contributions toward redefining the meaning of tolerance within an authentic and contextual Islamic

framework that can serve as a practical solution for Muslims in managing diversity without compromising their religious identity.

This research proceeds from the assumption that the identity crisis among Muslims can be addressed through an understanding and application of the concept of tolerance that is active, participatory, and rooted in Islamic values. The main argument is that Tariq Ramadan's thought, when integrated with the principles of Islamic psychology, can provide a strong conceptual and practical foundation for fostering a Muslim identity that is authentic, inclusive, and adaptable to the dynamics of the times (Nabi & Parray, 2025, pp. 72–75). The use of an Islamic psychology approach is particularly appropriate because the identity crisis is not merely a doctrinal issue, as addressed in theology, nor solely a structural-social problem as examined in sociology, but involves deeper dimensions of self-concept, meaning-making, motivation, and spiritual well-being—domains central to Islamic psychology. Thus, tolerance is not merely a passive attitude of accepting others' existence, but rather a manifestation of faith that encourages constructive engagement in social life.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Tolerance in Classical and Contemporary Islamic Perspectives

In Islamic teachings, tolerance is understood as a fundamental principle that recognises the existence and rights of others without compromising the integrity of faith (*'aqidah*). This concept has a strong foundation in Islamic law (*shari'ah*) and serves as an important instrument for fostering social harmony and respecting diversity. Research by Syaiful Anwar et al. in *Hutanasyah: Jurnal Hukum Tata Negara (Siyasah Syar'iyah)* emphasises that leading Sunni scholars such as Abū Ḥanīfah, Mālik, al-Shāfi'ī, and Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, as well as Shia scholars such as Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, Muḥammad al-Bāqir, and 'Alī al-Riḍā, share substantial agreement in supporting the value of tolerance. Their understanding is not merely normative-theological but also practical, as reflected in historical precedents of the Muslim community's engagement in interfaith dialogue and cross-community cooperation. Examples include Muslim and non-Muslim participation in social agreements, economic collaboration, and the protection of minority groups, providing concrete evidence of the application of tolerance from the classical period to the present. Contemporary scholars, both Sunni and Shia, continue this tradition by strengthening the basis for interfaith dialogue; however, their approaches often remain rooted in jurisprudential frameworks. (Anwar et al., 2023, pp. 117–134). In contrast, Tariq Ramadan advances this legacy by integrating spiritual-ethical dimensions and psychological renewal, emphasising that tolerance must also cultivate inner transformation and self-critical awareness. This complementary perspective helps bridge classical legal formulations with the existential challenges faced by Muslims in modern multicultural societies.

From a modern Islamic perspective, tolerance is not merely a passive attitude toward differences but is closely linked to religious maturity. Research by Anwar Hafidzi in "Portrait of Thought" highlights two main categories of tolerance: first, internal tolerance, which focuses on recognizing plurality in religious beliefs; and second, external tolerance, which emphasizes maturity in engaging with others. Within this framework, the concepts of *tasāmuḥ* (tolerance) and *tawāzun* (balance) serve as fundamental principles for preventing interreligious tension. The study demonstrates that mature tolerance can be observed in various Indonesian contexts, including interfaith cooperation in disaster management, the harmonious coexistence of places of worship, and

the active involvement of religious leaders in mediating social conflicts. Thus, tolerance in Islam possesses a comprehensive conceptual dimension, clear categories, and numerous relevant case applications across different social contexts (Hafidzi, 2019, pp. 51–61).

2.2 Tariq Ramadan's Thoughts and Contextual Reform

Tariq Ramadan's thoughts on Islamic reform can be understood as an effort to integrate the fundamental principles of *sharī'ah* with a contextual reading that is responsive to contemporary dynamics. His reform agenda is not a deconstruction of tradition, but rather an attempt to revitalize Islamic values through a creative, inclusive methodology grounded in universal ethics. Research by Ahmad Nabil Amir and Tasnim Abdul Rahman in *Journal Al-Risalah* describes Ramadan as a reformist who emphasizes the urgency of contextual interpretation of Islamic sources, ensuring that reform remains rooted in foundational principles while addressing the challenges of modernity (Nabil Amir & Abdul Rahman, 2022, pp. 50–73). His thought encompasses ethical *ijtihad*, pluralism, religious freedom, and methodological renewal, which still uphold the authority of revelation. Another study by Ahmad Nabil Amir in *Mukaddimah: Jurnal Studi Islam* highlights Ramadan's position as one of the most influential contemporary Muslim thinkers, renowned for his radical reformist ideas concerning *ijtihad*, ethics, pluralism, and freedom. Ramadan is seen as capable of reconstructing Islamic thought to align with contemporary challenges (Nabil Amir, 2022, pp. 226–248). In practice, this is reflected in his advocacy for the active participation of Muslims in the multicultural public sphere of the West while maintaining a strong religious identity.

Further research by Muhammad Wildan Arif Amrullah in his master's thesis at Universitas Darussalam Gontor examines Ramadan's radical reform from a descriptive-analytical perspective. He defines Ramadan's reform as a transformative endeavor that views the Qur'an and nature (*āyāt qawliyyah* and *āyāt kawniyyah*) as two sources of ethics and law that must be integrated. His categorization of Ramadan's approach includes critiques of classical methodologies such as *istinbāt* and *maqāṣid*, which he deems to have reached their limitations, as well as critiques of modern reformism for being overly reactive and structurally superficial. Wildan illustrates the application of this approach through Ramadan's proposal for developing a legal system relevant to global ecological challenges, while remaining rooted in Islam's permanent values (*thawābit*) (Arif Amrullah, 2022, pp. 188–192). While offering a new framework for Islamic reform, this research stresses the need for methodological caution to ensure that innovation does not erode the irreplaceable foundational principles of Islam. Thus, Ramadan's thought demonstrates a balance between intellectual courage and fidelity to tradition, making it highly relevant to contemporary Islamic reform discourse.

2.3 Muslim Identity in the Era of Globalization

Muslim identity in the era of globalization can be understood as a construct of values, beliefs, and behaviors that represent Islamic identity in interaction with global social, political, and cultural environments. This concept involves striking a balance between loyalty to the principles of revelation and the ability to adapt within multicultural societies. Research by Fardana Khirzul Haq et al. in *Progresiva: Jurnal Pemikiran dan Pendidikan Islam* defines Western Muslim identity, according to Tariq Ramadan, as the integration of loyalty to the state with commitment to Islamic teachings. This identity is structured around four main principles: faith, textual and contextual understanding,

education and value transmission, and active participation in society. Its application is evident in Ramadan's strategies, which encourage Western Muslims to contribute positively to public life without compromising their Islamic values (Khirzul Haq et al., 2022, pp. 55–68).

More broadly, the formation of Muslim identity is closely linked to Islamic education as a bulwark against the penetration of secularism, materialism, and the erosion of tradition. Ali in Jurnal Sasana categorizes the role of Islamic education as both the transmission of religious knowledge and the cultivation of character, ethics, and critical awareness in facing global challenges. This role is exemplified by educational institutions that integrate religious curricula with global literacy to produce Muslims who are both competitive and principled (Fikri, 2024, pp. 149–156). Research by Khairanis and Aldi in Iqra Bhisma adds an epistemological dimension through the study of tafsīr bi al-ma'thūr, which provides a strong normative framework for responding to contemporary issues such as pluralism, gender equality, and ecological crises. However, they also highlight the necessity of methodological adaptation to ensure that tafsīr bi al-ma'thūr remains relevant amid global dynamics (Khairanis & Aldi, 2025, pp. 19–28).

3. Methods

3.1 Material Object

The unit of analysis in this study is the concept of tolerance as articulated by Tariq Ramadan in his major works, particularly those addressing Muslim identity in the contemporary era. To address the psychological nature of the identity crisis, this research operationalizes several Islamic psychological constructs—namely, *qalb*, *nafs*, and manner. These constructs serve as analytical lenses for evaluating how Ramadan links tolerance with inner transformation, moral self-regulation, and spiritual awareness. The material object was selected through a review of Ramadan's primary texts that explicitly or implicitly engage with these psychological dimensions and their relevance to identity formation within globalization and modernity (Wahid et al., 2022, pp. 2–3).

3.2 Research Design

This study employs a library research design with a qualitative, descriptive–analytical orientation (Creswell & Creswell, 2020, pp. 179–188). A psychological–hermeneutic approach is applied to interpret Ramadan's writings, enabling the researcher to examine not only textual meanings but also the underlying psycho-spiritual dynamics embedded in his discussions of tolerance. This approach is appropriate because Ramadan frames tolerance not merely as a legal doctrine but as a virtue connected to the condition of the *qalb*, the purification of the *nafs*, and the restoration of *fitrah*. The research process includes literature collection, identification of psychological indicators, conceptual coding, and synthesis (Palmer, 2021, pp. 124–142).

3.3 Data Sources

Primary data sources comprise authoritative works by Tariq Ramadan, including "To Be a European Muslim: A Study of Islamic Sources in the European Context," "Islam, the West and the Challenges of Modernity," "Radical Reform: Islamic Ethics and Liberation," "Western Muslims and the Future of Islam," "What I Believe," "The Quest for Meaning: Developing a Philosophy of Pluralism,

"Islam and the Arab Awakening" and "Islam: The Essentials." These works were selected for their representativeness in articulating Ramadan's philosophical and spiritual framework concerning tolerance and identity. Secondary data were obtained from indexed academic journals, scholarly books, and authoritative publications addressing Ramadan's thought, the concept of tolerance in Islam, Muslim identity, and the relationship between spirituality and modernity. Literature selection was based on the criteria of relevance, authenticity, recency, and contribution to the research focus.

3.4 Data Collection Techniques

Data collection was conducted using a systematic documentation technique, involving the tracing, identification, and compilation of relevant texts from both primary and secondary sources (Miles et al., 2020, pp. 214–227). Searches were conducted through academic databases, including Google Scholar, Scopus, Web of Science, DOAJ, Garuda, ResearchGate, and reputable institutional repositories, to ensure the completeness and validity of the literature reviewed (Sarbini, 2021, pp. 114–132). The documentation process included recording key quotations, summarizing content, and noting meta-information to facilitate data organization and coding (Denzin, 2022, pp. 291–307).

3.5 Data Analysis

Data analysis was carried out using a qualitative content analysis method combined with a philosophical hermeneutic approach (Mayring, 2020). The analytical stages included: (1) close reading to identify key concepts and the structure of Ramadan's arguments; (2) thematic coding to categorize relevant conceptual elements; (3) interpretative comparison to trace similarities and differences in perspectives on tolerance and identity; (4) contextualization of ideas within a contemporary psycho-spiritual framework; and (5) theoretical synthesis to formulate a conceptual framework for implementing tolerance as a solution to the identity crisis (Maxwell, 2021, pp. 104–120). This technique was chosen to produce a comprehensive, critical, and applicable understanding of Tariq Ramadan's concept of tolerance.

4. Result

4.1 The Concept of Tolerance in Tariq Ramadan's Thought: An Ontological and Ethical Approach

Etymologically, the term tolerance derives from the Latin word, *tolerare*, meaning "to endure," "to bear," or "to allow." The quality of being willing to accept or tolerate somebody/something, especially opinions or behaviour that you may not agree with, or people who are not like you. In Western tradition, it evolved into tolerance, denoting an attitude of accepting the existence of others despite differences in views or beliefs, often with passive or reluctant connotations (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, 2025). In Islamic terminology, tolerance is known as *tasāmuh*, which not only means allowing differences but also carries moral and spiritual dimensions—embodying generosity of spirit, respect for others' rights, and the cultivation of harmonious relations without compromising the principles of *'aqidah* and *sharī'ah* (al-Qardāwī, n.d., pp. 47–55). The concept of *samāḥah* (سماحة) in Islam, as explained by Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, affirms that genuine tolerance is non-patronizing; it is grounded in sincere respect and compassion for fellow human beings, without

obscuring fundamental theological differences(al-Attas, 2024). This understanding is rooted in the Qur'an and the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), which emphasize justice, compassion, and respect for universal humanity. Thus, tolerance in Islam is active, constructive, and aimed at fostering a peaceful and just social life. In alignment with these Islamic perspectives, Tariq Ramadan addresses the semantic bias of tolerance in the Western perspective, offering an understanding rooted in *sharī'ah* values while remaining relevant to multicultural realities and global challenges.

Tolerance should not be narrowly interpreted as a compromise of faith or passive acceptance of diversity. Rather, it should be situated within the comprehensive framework of Islamic spirituality, which prioritizes empathy and respect for human dignity while maintaining the boundaries of belief. Tariq Ramadan critiques the passive notion of tolerance inherited from its etymological roots in the Western tradition—tolerance as merely "enduring" the existence of others out of compulsion or lack of alternatives. For Ramadan, tolerance practiced as a unilateral concession from the majority to the minority reflects an unjust and asymmetrical power relationship. He stresses that a Muslim—both as a human being and as a believer—should not settle for permissive acceptance alone, but should seek recognition grounded in the protection and respect of fundamental rights(Ramadan, 2010b, p. 133).

In his work "Radical Reform", Ramadan asserts that diversity is not a contingent social phenomenon but an ontological reality willed by God. Consequently, human beings are not merely permitted to tolerate differences; they are divinely commanded to acknowledge and respect them as part of God's will. True tolerance, according to Ramadan, comprises three fundamental elements: (1) freedom of belief and worship, (2) respect for human dignity, and (3) social, economic, and political protection of individual rights(Ramadan, 2010b, p. 133).

Moreover, Ramadan rejects tolerance founded on power relations, as in Western intellectual history, where tolerance emerged from a position of strength, choosing not to oppress. In "Islam, the West and the Challenges of Modernity," he critiques the modern philosophical conception of tolerance as inherently tied to domination:

"Tolerance conveys, by essence, a relationship of strength whose balance is the fact of the free choice of the strongest – or of the majority – and this is tantamount to 'suffering' with the presence of the other(Ramadan, 2009, p. 27)."

In other words, tolerance in the Western sense often constitutes a unilateral choice by the dominant group to "allow" others to exist, without genuine recognition of their existence and dignity. In contrast, within the Islamic framework, as emphasized by Ramadan, the right to be different is not a human concession but a God-given right. Thus, humanity's task is not merely to tolerate but to acknowledge and honor differences as an expression of divine will. This is underscored in Qur'an, *Sūrat al-Mā'idah* [5]: 48:

"...To each of you, we have ordained a code of law and a way of life. If Allah had willed, He would have made you one community, but His Will is to test you with what He has given 'each of' you. So compete with one another in doing good. To Allah you will all return, then He will inform you 'of the truth' regarding your differences(QS. *Al-Maidah*: 48, n.d.)."

Ramadan further underscores the importance of distinguishing between tolerance and respect. He critiques condescending or patronizing tolerance, wherein the dominant group assumes a

superior position and “graciously” permits others to coexist. In this sense, tolerance functions more as an instrument of power than as an ethical imperative. In “The Quest for Meaning,” Ramadan describes such tolerance as a form of “intellectual charity” from the majority, which claims inclusivity while preserving structural inequality. This form of tolerance reduces the other to a passive and powerless existence, neglecting the complexity of their identity and their standing as existential partners. Hence, Ramadan calls for a shift from passive tolerance toward respect—active recognition of equality, value, and dignity in others (Ramadan, 2010a, p. 75).

Thus, Tariq Ramadan's conception of tolerance offers a robust ethical and ontological framework for addressing the challenges of pluralism and identity crises in the contemporary era. Tolerance is not a compromise stemming from power relations, but a manifestation of spiritual and moral responsibility deeply rooted in Islamic teachings, which acknowledges difference as part of God's mercy and will.

4.2 Islamic Psychological Analysis of Tariq Ramadan's Thought

Islam possesses its own paradigm that also shapes the scientific identity of psychology. As a religion that is both transcendental and rational, Islam does not merely speak within a doctrinal framework or metaphysical axioms, but also opens space for scientific approaches that can be developed into an independent discipline. In the context of psychology, fundamental differences between Islam and the West can be found in several key aspects: first, Islam views the essence of human nature as *fitrah* (primordial disposition); second, the human essence is not solely reason (*aql*), but also the heart (*qalb*); third, human beings are shown two paths in life (goodness and evil); fourth, humans are unique creatures; and fifth, knowledge in Islam is not neutral, but imbued with divine values (Wahid et al., 2022, pp. 7–8).

The Islamic paradigm in psychology firmly emphasizes the spiritual, intellectual, and faith dimensions as the core of human development and self-formation. In contrast to Western psychology, which tends to separate spiritual aspects from the scientific framework, Islamic psychology positions them as the central orientation. Therefore, the integration of Islamic and Western psychological paradigms should be conducted within a framework of critical and open scholarly dialogue, in order to respond to the increasingly complex dynamics of modern human life (Wahid et al., 2022, pp. 6–7).

In this context, Tariq Ramadan's conception of tolerance can be interpreted in the light of Islamic psychology. Ramadan does not interpret tolerance merely as a permissive or compromising stance toward differences, but as an expression of deep spirituality that involves inner awareness, moral responsibility, and openness to universal values rooted in *tawhid*. By grounding tolerance in spirituality and the ethics of dialogue, Ramadan touches upon the deepest dimension of the human soul, which in Islamic tradition is known as the *qalb*. In Islamic psychology, the *qalb* functions as the moral and spiritual centre that shapes perception, intention, and self-understanding (Nugraha, 2022, p. 259). When the *qalb* is clouded by insecurity, internal conflict, or feelings of inferiority—conditions commonly observed in contemporary Muslim identity crises—it produces defensive, rigid, or reactive attitudes toward cultural differences. Conversely, a purified *qalb* (*qalb salim*) fosters clarity, confidence, and ethical openness without dissolving one's religious boundaries. For example, many young Muslims in Western or secular-majority societies experience anxiety about expressing their

religious identity in public spaces—whether using hijab, practicing prayer, or upholding Islamic moral principles. Ramadan argues that this anxiety stems not only from external pressures, but also from an inner dissonance in the *qalb*: a struggle between the desire for social acceptance and fidelity to spiritual values. His solution encourages conscious self-reflection (*muhāsabah*) and strengthening intention (*niyyah*) to realign the heart with the unity of tawhid. When the *qalb* regains coherence, tolerance becomes an active and confident engagement with society, rather than a passive assimilation or defensive withdrawal.

Through his framework of Tawhid, Ethics, and the Sciences, Ramadan maps the relationship between revelation (the revealed book) and nature (the displayed book: universe, creation) as two sources of knowledge. Within this model, psychology occupies the second circle from the center of tawhid, as one of the disciplines shaped by reason, yet still guided ethically by revelation. Therefore, psychology must be grounded in ethical and spiritual awareness. Ramadan also emphasizes the need to constantly re-examine intentions (*niyyah*), ethical boundaries, and ultimate purposes of scientific practice, including in the field of psychology, so as not to fall into "science without conscience" (Ramadan, 2004, pp. 59–61).

Ramadan's approach aligns with the principles of Islamic psychology, particularly in viewing humans as inherently seeking wholeness and meaning within diversity. He offers a framework that does not position Muslim identity as exclusive or closed, but rather as one that actively participates in the modern social sphere while maintaining spiritual integrity. Therefore, Ramadan's thought can be reconstructed as an attempt to heal the identity crisis affecting contemporary Muslims through an approach that unites spirituality, scientific inquiry, and social ethics into an integrated whole.

4.3 Tolerance as a Solution to the Identity Crisis

Tariq Ramadan has identified five elements that can shape Muslim identity: faith and spirituality, practice, protection, freedom, and participation (Ramadan, 2010b, pp. 132–134). An analysis of these five elements provides insight into the essential prerequisites for constructing a Muslim identity. While they do not encompass all possible aspects influenced by historical context or socio-political dynamics, these elements constitute the foundational framework that every Muslim should possess. Consequently, the primary responsibility of Muslims is to make an honest and fair assessment of the environment in which they live—religiously, socially, legally, and politically—in order to identify which elements are already fulfilled and to what extent. If these prerequisites exist, whether fully or partially, it becomes the duty of Muslims to take action, both in ensuring their own security and in improving the broader social conditions (Ramadan, 2010b, pp. 134–135).

In Islam, the concept of identity is not confined to social recognition or personal achievement as understood in the framework of Western psychology. Rather, it refers to *muru'ah*—a self-assessment grounded in spiritual and moral dimensions, as explained by Arroisi & Badi' in their comparative study on self-esteem (Arroisi & Badi', 2022, p. 92). The identity crisis facing some Muslims is thus not merely a social or political matter, but one that reaches into the deeper psychological and spiritual realms.

In building a resilient Muslim identity within Western societies, Tariq Ramadan underscores the importance of a non-reactive approach. He argues that the identity crisis experienced by many Western Muslims often stems from a constant defensive posture under the pressure of majority

social and cultural norms, without a well-developed conceptual foundation for understanding who they are and how to live as Muslims in Europe. Ramadan stresses the urgency of proactively defining Muslim identity in the West by considering two equally important aspects: authentic Islamic teachings and the complex socio-cultural realities of Europe. This process should involve comprehensive reflection on sensitive issues such as faith, emotions, psychology, education, culture, and the stages of human growth—both as individuals and as members of a community. The goal is to formulate responses that are contextually relevant and to develop educational tools and methods for conveying Islamic values in a manner suitable for the European environment. Only in this manner, Ramadan argues, can Muslims move beyond a passive-defensive position and emerge as confident, assertive actors capable of representing their identity positively and constructively within modern, pluralistic societies (Ramadan, 2010b, pp. 180–181).

Ramadan observes that the sense of alienation experienced by Muslims in the West often arises from an isolationist mentality—a tendency to withdraw from the wider society under the pretext of protecting faith. In his view, this represents a form of ghettoisation that is not only social but also intellectual and spiritual, which deepens alienation and cuts off the possibility of collective and individual growth (Ramadan, 2004, p. 107). In this regard, Ramadan proposes a paradigm of tolerance that is not merely passive acceptance of differences, but an active and reflective psycho-spiritual awareness. He emphasizes that true tolerance requires an intelligent, responsible, and active spirituality—beginning with the pursuit of inner peace and followed by an awareness of the surrounding social and cultural realities (Ramadan, 2004, p. 114). Understanding one's environmental context requires Muslims not only to know their religion, but also to understand the collective psychology of the society in which they live (Ramadan, 2004, p. 221).

Furthermore, Ramadan highlights that spiritual and psychological recovery must begin with a re-examination of the “window of perception”—how we understand meaning, values, and existence. In “The Quest for Meaning,” he states that the identity crisis often begins with a loss of trust: in oneself, in others, and even in the future (Ramadan, 2010a, p. 4). Therefore, he calls upon Muslims to return to the principles of *tazkiyah al-nafs* (self-purification), *muraqabah* (self-vigilance), and ethical *ijtihad* (reasoning), as a means of cultivating a critical awareness capable of bridging the gap between faith and contemporary realities. For example, many young Western Muslims experience inner fragmentation when navigating between Islamic moral expectations and secular social norms. Ramadan's framework of *tazkiyah al-nafs* provides a concrete recovery path, through practices such as daily self-accounting (*muhāsabah*), emotional regulation grounded in *dhikr*, and intentional value clarification, enabling individuals to gradually restore inner coherence. Case studies in contemporary Islamic psychology demonstrate that these practices reduce identity confusion, strengthen moral agency, and enable Muslims to articulate a stable self-concept that aligns with both their faith commitments and their social environment. This illustrates how *tazkiyah al-nafs* functions not only as a spiritual discipline but also as a therapeutic process for reconstructing a resilient Muslim identity in pluralistic societies.

The conception of Muslim identity in the modern context requires not only a deep understanding of religious teachings but also active engagement with the ever-changing socio-political dynamics. In “Islam and the Arab Awakening,” Ramadan reminds us that identity formation cannot be separated from moral and ethical struggles. He advocates the development of a “double consciousness”—awareness of being both a Muslim and an active citizen within modern democratic

societies. Through this approach, Muslims can avoid the false dichotomy between integration and isolation, and instead cultivate a transformative identity: open to change without losing its spiritual roots. This creates space for a credible, tolerant, and constructive Islamic narrative in the global public sphere (Ramadan, 2012, p. 16). This is where the value of tolerance plays a key role—as an ethical and spiritual foundation that enables Muslims not only to preserve their identity but also to contribute actively to pluralistic societies without compromising their integrity. This approach opens the way for tolerance to serve as a solution to the identity crisis faced by Muslims in the modern era.

Ultimately, the form of tolerance envisioned by Tariq Ramadan is one of reconciliation—between faith and modernity, between spirituality and social responsibility in public life. He maintains that resolving the Muslim identity crisis requires consciously, creatively, and transformatively integrating Islamic values into local psychological and cultural structures. His ideas demonstrate that a resilient Muslim identity can only be formed through a deep awareness of spiritual values, without denying the evolving social realities.

In light of Ramadan's overall vision, it becomes clear that Muslim identity cannot be separated from comprehensive psychological, spiritual, and ethical dimensions. A healthy identity is not the product of passive adaptation to the demands of the times, but the fruit of continuous reflection on the meaning of religiosity within a plural society. In this framework, tolerance is not merely a social expression but a foundational element in shaping a conscious, mature, and open Muslim personality. Tolerance serves as the bridge that connects the core values of Islam with the necessity of living peacefully and with dignity in a global society. Thus, building a holistic Muslim identity in the modern era requires a process of spiritual revitalization grounded in self-awareness, moral responsibility, and a commitment to universal human values—with tolerance as its central axis.

5. Discussion

The findings indicate that Tariq Ramadan's concept of tolerance is rooted in the spiritual and ethical principles of Islam. He rejects the patronizing model of Western tolerance and emphasizes the importance of active respect. Within the framework of Islamic psychology, Ramadan harmonizes spirituality with a scientific approach, emphasizing the significance of *qalb* (the heart) and revealed values as foundational to psychological well-being. This notion of tolerance also serves as a response to the contemporary Muslim identity crisis.

Ramadan's thought offers a reflective space for modern Muslims to view tolerance not merely as a social strategy but as a moral responsibility emerging from spiritual awareness. Tolerance is not simply a matter of public policy; it is an inner disposition that grows from faith, ethics, and knowledge. In the context of an identity crisis, this perspective presents a holistic approach.

Ramadan interprets tolerance as a living and dynamic expression of faith—not merely “coexistence,” but the acknowledgment that diversity is part of God's will. In Islamic psychology, this is regarded as an expression of self-actualization and a pursuit of meaning. From this standpoint, an identity crisis is essentially a crisis of meaning, which can be healed through spirituality.

Contrary to Western thought, which tends to be secular and individualistic, Ramadan's approach reflects a balance between social ethics and spirituality. While the Western concept of tolerance is often based on power relations, Ramadan offers a framework grounded in divine

recognition and respect. Islamic psychology differs from Western psychology in its value orientation, ontological structure of the human being, and ultimate objectives.

These findings and analyses open the door for expanding interdisciplinary studies between Islamic psychology and contemporary thought, such as that of Tariq Ramadan. --These findings and analyses open the door for expanding interdisciplinary studies between Islamic psychology and contemporary thought, such as that of Tariq Ramadan. In practical terms, Ramadan's tolerance model can be applied in several key areas.

In Islamic education, educators can incorporate Ramadan's framework of active respect and spiritual awareness into learning models that emphasize adab, empathy, and dialogical engagement. Classroom practices, such as reflective journals, peer-dialogue circles, and value-based discussions, can help students internalize tolerance as a spiritual–ethical discipline rather than merely a social obligation.

In psychospiritual counseling, Ramadan's emphasis on the qalb, self-purification (tazkiyah al-nafs), and ethical self-awareness can be translated into counseling techniques that integrate muhāsabah, dzikr-based emotional regulation, and value-clarification therapy. These methods can support Muslim clients experiencing identity fragmentation by reconnecting them to spiritual grounding and moral coherence.

In the realm of social policy, Ramadan's active tolerance offers a normative framework for developing inclusive policies that foster civic participation without promoting cultural assimilation. Programs that foster interfaith collaboration, community mediation, and value-based citizenship training can operationalize his vision of tolerant coexistence rooted in dignity, mutual respect, and shared ethical responsibilities.

Future research may continue exploring these applied domains to develop concrete models that integrate ethical values into Islamic psychology, education, and public life in a holistic manner.

6. Conclusion

The key findings of this study reveal that Tariq Ramadan's concept of tolerance is not merely understood as a permissive social attitude toward differences, but as an expression of spiritual awareness and moral integrity rooted in tawḥīd. Tolerance, in his view, serves as a pathway for Muslims to remain steadfast in Islamic values while being open to the diversity of global society. Ramadan's thought addresses the crisis of Muslim identity in the modern era by integrating the dimensions of Islamic psychology—namely self-awareness, faith-based values, and inner balance—as the foundation for building healthy social relations.

This study contributes to the scholarly development of contemporary Islamic psychology by offering an interdisciplinary approach to the discourse on identity and tolerance. It broadens the understanding that the crisis of identity cannot be explained solely through sociological or political perspectives, but also requires a psychological and spiritual framework grounded in Islamic teachings. Ramadan's thought demonstrates that reconstructing Muslim identity must involve an integrated approach that unites intellect, heart, and faith.

The research opens avenues for further studies to explore the concept of tolerance from the perspectives of other Muslim thinkers, both classical and contemporary. Moreover, empirical

applications of this concept—for instance, through case studies of Muslim minority communities—would be highly valuable in testing its practical relevance. Comparative studies with non-Muslim thinkers on tolerance could also enrich the scholarly repertoire and foster constructive cross-cultural dialogue.

References

- al-Attas, S. M. N. (Director). (2024, December). *Seyyid Muhammed Naquib el-Attas—1.Uluslararası Stratejik Müzakereler Forumu* [Video recording]. Gaziantep İslam Bilim ve Teknoloji Üniversitesi. <https://youtu.be/mJ5JOCmVUdQ?si=aelhPBBByYIn7IHS>
- al-Qarḍāwī, Y. (n.d.). *Ghayr al-Muslimīn fī al-Mujtamaʿ al-Islāmī*. Maktabah Wahbah.
- Anwar, S., Fauzi, M., Yani, A., & Siswoyo. (2023). Toleransi Dalam Pandangan Imam Mazhab Dan Ulama Kontemporer Perspektif Hukum Islam. *Hutanasyah: Jurnal Hukum Tata Negara*, 1(1), 117–134. <https://doi.org/10.37092>
- Arif Amrollah, M. W. (2022). *Al-İslāh al-Jadhrī ‘inda Tāriq Ramaḍān (Dirāsah Wasfīyyah Tahlīliyyah)* [Thesis]. University of Darussalam Gontor.
- Armeyanto, H. (2024). Membangun Kerukunan dalam Bingkai Pluralisme Agama: Analisis Gagasan Pemikir Muslim Kontemporer. *Jurnal Sosiologi Agama Indonesia (JSAl)*, 5(1), 48–73. <https://doi.org/10.22373/jsai.v5i1.4254>
- Arroisi, J. (2015). ALIRAN KEPERCAYAAN & KEBATINAN: Membaca Tradisi dan Budaya Sinkretis Masyarakat Jawa. *AL-Hikmah: Jurnal Studi Agama-Agama*, 1(1).
- Arroisi, J., Atiqahwati, A. I., Haq, A. Z., Mustopa, R. H. B. C., & Amrullah, M. F. (2021). PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS OF MODERN SOCIETY (The Analysis of Mental Disorders Based on Islamic Spiritual Tradition Perspective). *Akademika: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam*, 26(2), 203. <https://doi.org/10.32332/akademika.v26i2.3728>
- Arroisi, J., & Badi, S. (2022). Konsep Harga Diri: Studi Komparasi Perspektif Psikologi Modern dan Islam. *Psikologika: Jurnal Pemikiran dan Penelitian Psikologi*, 27(1), 89–106. <https://doi.org/10.20885/psikologika.vol27.iss1.art7>
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2020). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (5th edn). SAGE Publications.
- Denzin, N. K. (2022). *The Research Act: A Theoretical Introduction to Sociological Methods*. Routledge.
- Fathiyaturrahmah, Ashfiya, Z., & Umiana, C. W. (2022). *Laporan Penelitian Dasar Interdisipliner: Eksklusivitas Keberagamaan Komunitas Hijrah di Kabupaten Jember (Studi tentang Pandangan Anggota Komunitas Hijrah Jember terhadap Kelompok Muslim Liyan (Muslim Others))*. Universitas Islam Negeri Kiai Haji Achmad Siddiq Jember.
- Fikri, M. A. (2024). Pendidikan Islam dan Pembentukan Identitas Muslim di Era Globalisasi. *Sasana: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam*, 3(1), 149–156. <https://doi.org/10.56854/sasana.v3i1.382>
- Hafidzi, A. (2019). KONSEP TOLERANSI DAN KEMATANGAN AGAMA DALAM KONFLIK BERAGAMA DI MASYARAKAT INDONESIA. *Potret Pemikiran*, 23(2), 51–61. <http://dx.doi.org/10.30984/pp.v23i2.1003>

- Khairanis, R., & Aldi, M. (2025). Peran Tafsir Bil-Ma'tsur dalam Pembentukan Identitas Muslim Kontemporer di Era Globalisasi. *Iqra Bhisma: Jurnal Studi Ilmu Keagamaan Islam*, 1(1), 19–28.
- Khirzul Haq, F., Shulthonib, M., & Mukhlisc, F. (2022). Tariq Ramadan's View on Western Muslims Identity Between Nation and God's Revelation. *PROGRESIVA: Jurnal Pemikiran Dan Pendidikan Islam*, 11(1), 55–68. <https://doi.org/10.22219/progresiva.v11i01.20496>
- Maxwell, J. A. (2021). *Qualitative Research Design: An Interactive Approach* (3rd edn). SAGE Publications.
- Mayring, P. (2020). Qualitative Content Analysis: Theoretical Foundation and Basic Procedures. *Qualitative Social Research*, 21(2), Art. 15. <https://doi.org/10.17169/fqs-21.2.3453>
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2020). *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook* (4th edn). SAGE Publications.
- Nabi, D., & Parray, T. A. (2025). Prophetic Ethics of Inclusion and Conflict Resolution: A Neo-Traditionalist Interpretation of the Sirah. *Jurnal THEOLOGIA*, 36(1). <https://doi.org/10.21580/teo.2025.36.1.26623>
- Nabil Amir, A. (2022). TARIQ RAMADAN DAN FAHAM BUDAYA ISLAM YANG TOLERAN DAN INKLUSIF. *MUKADDIMAH: Jurnal Studi Islam*, 4(2 (2019)), 226–248. <https://doi.org/10.35961/perada.v4i1.292>
- Nabil Amir, A., & Abdul Rahman, T. (2022). Tariq Ramadan: Inclusive and Plural Value in Islamic Intellectual Tradition. *Al-Risalah*, 13(1), 50–73. <https://doi.org/10.34005/alrisalah.v13i1.1550>
- Nugraha, M. F. (2022). Conceptualization of the Qalb as an Effort to Form a Scale of Measurement in Islamic Psychology. *Psikis: Jurnal Psikologi Islami*, 8(2), 251–262. <https://doi.org/10.19109/psikis.v8i2.6854>
- Oxford Learner's Dictionaries. (2025). <https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/tolerance?q=tolerance>
- Palmer, R. E. (2021). *Hermeneutics: Interpretation Theory in Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Heidegger, and Gadamer*. Northwestern University Press.
- QS. Al-Maidah: 48. (n.d.).
- Ramadan, T. (2004). *Western Muslims and the Future of Islam*. Oxford University Press.
- Ramadan, T. (2009). *Islam, the West and the Challenges of Modernity*. Kube Publishing Ltd.
- Ramadan, T. (2010a). *The Quest For Meaning: Developing a Philosophy of Pluralism*. Penguin Group. www.penguin.com
- Ramadan, T. (2010b). *To Be a European Muslim: A Study of Islamic Sources in the European Context*. The Islamic Foundation.
- Ramadan, T. (2012). *Islam and the Arab awakening*. Oxford University Press.
- Sarbini, M. (2021). Teknik Penelusuran Literatur Ilmiah di Era Digital. *Jurnal Perpustakaan Dan Informasi*, 5(2). <https://doi.org/10.17509/jpi.v5i2.34527>
- Shalahuddin, H., Fadhil, F. D., & Hidayat, M. S. (2023). Peta dan Problematika Konsep Moderasi Beragama di Indonesia. 9(2).

- Trisnani, A., Awaludin, A., & Fadhillah, M. (2022). *Scientific-Cum-Doctrinaire dalam Studi Islam Menurut Mukti Ali (Studi Analisis Perspektif Worldview Islam)*. 13(2).
- Wahid, A., Arroisi, J., Rahayu, E. M., Yasin, F., & Amrulloh, M. W. A. (2022). Dialektika konsep dasar Psikologi Islam dan Barat. *Journal of Islamic Education and Innovation*, 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.26555/jiei.v3i1.6026>
- Widiyaningtyas, E., Christi, A., Nicolaides, A., & Ming, D. (2025). Philosophical Theology as a Catalyst for Inclusive Interreligious Dialogue in Plural Societies. *Jurnal THEOLOGIA*, 36(1). <https://doi.org/10.21580/teo.2025.36.1.26004>

