


The Meaning of Verses on Parents-Children Relationship as Basis for Sandwich Generation Concept in Islam

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Abstract

*This article explores the interpretation of Quranic verses and Islamic teachings relevant to the modern concept of the sandwich generation, a demographic group simultaneously responsible for caring for aging parents and raising their own children. In the Indonesian context, where family ties and caregiving hold immense significance, understanding the intersection of Islamic principles with challenges faced by the sandwich generation is paramount. This article delves into the perspective of Indonesian scholars who analyze Quranic verses to provide insights into how Islamic teachings align with the responsibilities of the sandwich generation. Scholars' interpretations highlight the importance of honoring parents, as commanded in the Quran, while nurturing children. They emphasize the concept of *birr al-walidayn* (kindness to parents), shedding light on the moral duty of children to care for aging parents, and fostering a balanced approach. Furthermore, the article discusses how Indonesian scholars emphasize the significance of self-care and seek support from the family and community. This aligns with Islamic values of moderation and collective responsibility. Scholars' viewpoints underscore the rewards of patience and perseverance, assuring the sandwich generation that their efforts are acts of worship and have spiritual significance. Ultimately, this article provides a nuanced understanding of the sandwich generation phenomenon within the Indonesian Islamic context. It contributes to the broader discourse on family dynamics, caregiving, and the harmonization of modern challenges with timeless Islamic principles.*

Keywords: Kindness to Parents; Parents-Children Relationship; Quranic Verses; Sandwich Generation



INTRODUCTION

The phrase "sandwich generation" is employed to denote individuals who bear the dual responsibility of providing care for their elderly parents while simultaneously attending to the needs of their own children. In essence, these individuals find themselves situated between two cohorts that need their temporal, cognitive, and material investments (Brody, 1981; Miller, 1981; Makhijani, 2022; Oliver, 2023). This scenario has the potential to induce considerable strain on those who endeavor to manage the obligations of providing care alongside their professional commitments, personal relationships, and financial obligations. The sandwich generation may encounter emotional difficulties due to the potential conflict between their responsibilities for their parents and their children (Halpern, 1994; Chisholm, 1999; Riley & Bowen, 2005).

The prevalence of the sandwich generation is increasing due to the elongation of life expectancy and the trend of delayed parenthood (Lundholm & Malmberg, 2009; Burke, 2017; Albertini et al., 2022). It is imperative for individuals situated in this context to actively pursue assistance and access available resources in order to effectively navigate their caring obligations while simultaneously preserving their personal welfare. The sandwich generation, a widely observed phenomena, is shaped by various factors including demographic transitions, cultural practices, economic circumstances, and societal transformations. Although there may be variations in unique situations across different countries, a comprehensive analysis of the sandwich generation phenomenon globally reveals certain prevailing tendencies.

The phenomenon of aging populations is being observed in numerous countries as a result of advancements in healthcare and increased life expectancy. With the increasing longevity of humans, there is a corresponding rise in the probability of requiring care and

assistance during old age. Consequently, a greater number of individuals find themselves in the situation of being part of the sandwich generation (Hämäläinen & Tanskanen, 2021; Synowiec-Pilat et al., 2022).

Delayed childbearing is a prevailing phenomenon observed in various regions across the globe, whereby individuals are opting to have children at a more advanced age. This trend may be attributed to a multitude of variables, including the pursuit of higher education, the desire for job progression, and the evolving societal standards. This can lead to a scenario in which individuals find themselves simultaneously responsible for the upbringing of their own children and the provision of care for their elderly parents (Spillman & Pezzin, 2000; Wassel, 2006; Zhang & Goza, 2006).

The phenomenon of urbanization and migration can have a significant impact on the dynamics of the sandwich generation. The phenomenon of younger generations frequently relocating to metropolitan areas in search of improved economic prospects, so leaving behind their elderly parents in rural or underdeveloped locations, is a common occurrence. The provision of care and support from a remote location can present many obstacles (Lam, 2006; Alburez-Gutierrez et al., 2021; Liang et al., 2023).

The sandwich generation encounters various obstacles that might have a significant impact on their mental and emotional well-being at a worldwide level. The prevalence of stress, burnout, and mental health concerns is frequently observed in those who are endeavoring to manage the dual tasks of caregiving and parenting (Remennick, 1999; Abramson, 2015; Noor & Isa, 2020; Brenna, 2021). Policy considerations are an important aspect to take into account while making decisions or formulating strategies. These considerations involve the evaluation of several factors by

acknowledging the distinct difficulties faced by the sandwich generation and are enacting legislation aimed at providing assistance.

Indonesia, as the country with the world's largest Muslim population, also faces the problem of the sandwich generation. In the next few years, Indonesia will have a demographic bonus, namely a large number of working age residents nationally. However, this demographic bonus also has the opportunity to become a problem for the sandwich generation. A number of studies have been conducted focusing on the problems surrounding the sandwich generation in Indonesia. Previous studies have addressed psychological issues related to sandwich generation such as stress management (Putro & Riyanto, 2020), coping strategy (Sudarji et al., 2022), caregiver burden (Tyas & Kusumaningrum, 2022), subjective wellbeing (Khairunnisa & Hartini, 2022), happiness (Rahman & Wongkaren, 2023), general challenges (Irawaty & Gayatri, 2023), and others.

Several studies regarding the sandwich generation have also focused on Islamic aspects, such as parenting (Dewi et al., 2022), dakwah (Khasanah & Rubini, 2023), philanthropy (Mutiah et al., 2023), and legal issues on caring responsibility (Syufa'at et al., 2023). In contrast to a number of previous studies, this research focuses on efforts to explore Islamic values in the Koran related to the sandwich generation. It is hoped that this research will be able to provide a theoretical contribution to the study of the sandwich generation from an Islamic perspective in Indonesia.

METHOD

The research method employed in this study is descriptive-analysis, presenting various theories related to the discussed theme of the sandwich generation found in several Indonesian-language tafsir books. This research falls under the qualitative category, involving the analysis of content within tafsir books. The method used is library

research, primarily focusing on the examination and analysis of textual material.

Data sources for this research are obtained from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data is derived from tafsir books *Tafsir Al-Azhar* by HAMKA and *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* by M. Quraish Shihab. These two tafsir books are selected as the primary sources for this study due to their popularity among the Indonesian and ASEAN Muslim community, historically referred to as Al-Jawwi. These books have been used in many previous works (Darmadji, 2014; Rikza & Islam, 2019; Messy & Charles, 2022) on various aspects of Islamic teachings which indicate the significance of its usages among scholars in Indonesia.

The specific verses under investigation are identified using the Al-Husni's (2012) *Fath al-Rahman li thalibi ayat al-Qur'an* and Musfah's (2007) *Practical Al-Quran index*. The verses chosen as references for analyzing the parent-child relationship in this study are Surah Al-Isra verses 23-24, Surah Luqman verses 12-19, and Surah Al-Ahqaf verse 15. Subsequently, the explanations of these verses in *Tafsir Al-Azhar* and *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* are analyzed comparatively. Secondary data serves as complementary information that strengthens the research's context. This data encompasses relevant studies from both national and international journals.

RESULTS

The Meaning of Surah Al-Isra Verses 23-24

٢٣- وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا ۚ إِمَّا يَبْلُغَنَّ عِنْدَكَ الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا أُفٍّ وَلَا تَنْهَرْهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا

٢٤- وَاحْفَظْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ الذُّلِّ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ وَقُلْ رَبِّ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيْتَنِي صَغِيرًا

23. Thy Lord hath decreed that ye worship none but Him, and that ye be kind to parents. Whether one or both of them attain old age in thy life, say not to them a word of contempt, nor repel them, but address them in terms of honour.

24. And, out of kindness, lower to them the wing of humility, and say : “ My Lord! Bestow on them Thy Mercy even as they cherished me in childhood.”

According to HAMKA in Tafsir Al-Azhar, Volume 6

Surah Al-Isra, verse 23 emphasizes that showing kindness to both parents, as a cause for a child's worldly well-being, is a duty second only to worshipping Allah ([Hamka, 1989a, p. 4031](#)). The subsequent part of this verse prohibits speaking words of annoyance or irritation when an adult child takes care of their elderly parents.

In essence, if their age, or one of them, the mother and father, reaches old age to the extent that they can no longer live independently and become highly dependent on the compassion of their child, then they must bear this responsibility with patience and humility (Hamka, 1989a, p. 4031).

Furthermore, showing kindness to parents involves refraining from scolding them and using respectful language when addressing them. The prohibition against scolding parents in this verse involves *qiyas auliya*, which indicates that even expressing impatience, let alone scolding, is not allowed. This highlights the importance of a child's patience when taking care of their parents ([Hamka, 1989a, p. 4032](#)).

Imagine the feelings of a parent who has raised and cared for their child for years, investing all their energy to ensure the child becomes a significant person. Then, when the parent is old, the child starts scolding them, questioning where they should go, even though all the vigor of their youth has been transferred to their offspring. Parents realize that their age is approaching the grave, and they wonder why their child cannot patiently bear the responsibility of taking care of them (Hamka, 1989a, p. 4032).

The noble words mentioned in this verse include the prohibition of calling parents by their given names. A child should address their parents with terms like "father" or "mother," which signify affection (Hamka, 1989a, p. 4033). This aligns with the subsequent verse, Surah Al-Isra, verse 24, which emphasizes that no matter how high a child's status, achievements, or wealth may be, they should always humble themselves before their parents. Regardless of their accomplishments, a child must dutifully serve their parents with love and sincerity (Hamka, 1989a, p. 4033).

The closing part of Surah Al-Isra, verse 24, underscores that a child should pray for both their parents because of their significant role in giving birth, raising, and educating them (Hamka, 1989a, p. 4036).

Therefore, at the end of this verse, the act of praying for our parents is taught – a prayer that Allah may show them the same love they showed us when we were little. This prayer is one we continue to recite when our parents are still alive, especially after they have passed away (Hamka, 1989a, p. 4037).

According to M. Quraish Shibah in Tafsir Al-Mishbah, Volume 7

Surah Al-Isra, verse 23, begins by emphasizing Allah's decree regarding the prohibition of worshipping anyone other than Him. Belief in Allah's Oneness serves as the foundation for all activities of a Muslim. It is only after this fundamental belief that a Muslim is required to show kindness to their parents (Shihab, 2005a, pp. 443–444).

...ihsan (kindness) to parents, as instructed by Islamic teachings, entails treating them with respect in both words and actions, following the customs of society. This ensures they feel pleased with us and that we fulfill their legitimate and reasonable needs according to our capacity (as children) (Shihab, 2005a, p. 445).

This verse also underscores a child's obligation to care for their parents when they become elderly, whether both parents are alive or one of them remains. The verse forbids children from being indifferent

to their parents for any reason (Shihab, 2005a, p. 445). Furthermore, it emphasizes that when speaking to and addressing one's parents, a child should use polite and appropriate language in accordance with societal norms. Ideally, the language used should be even better. Additionally, if parents make a mistake, it should be treated as if it never happened, or forgiveness should be extended because fundamentally, parents have no ill intentions toward their children (Shihab, 2005a, p. 446).

Surah Al-Isra, verse 24, is a continuation of the guidance on showing kindness to both parents. The guidance in this verse goes beyond the previous verse because a child is asked to humble themselves before their parents as a sign of respect for their parents' services and to avoid wronging them (Shihab, 2005a, pp. 446–447). Furthermore, this verse teaches a child to pray for their parents because their parents raised them during their childhood (Shihab, 2005a, p. 447). However, this prayer is limited to the case where the parents are also Muslims, whether they are alive or have passed away (Shihab, 2005a, p. 448). The kindness and prayers of a child toward their parents are not merely a means to teach a Muslim gratitude for the blessings provided by Allah SWT through others, especially parents. More profoundly, it is one of the means to foster harmonious relationships within a family (Shihab, 2005a, p. 449).

Surah Al-Isra, verses 23-24, depict the stages a child goes through in showing kindness to their parents. It begins with the prohibition of displaying boredom or irritation, followed by the command to use noble words in speech. It then continues with instructions to behave in a manner that reflects love for one's parents, marked by humility, and concludes with the command to pray for both parents, especially when they are alive, and even more so when they have passed away (Shihab, 2005a, p. 450).

The Meaning of Surah Luqman Verses 12-19

١٢- وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا لُقْمَانَ الْحِكْمَةَ أَنْ اشْكُرْ لِلَّهِ ۚ وَمَنْ يَشْكُرْ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ لِنَفْسِهِ ۗ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ

١٣- وَإِذْ قَالَ لُقْمَانُ لِابْنِهِ وَهُوَ يَعِظُهُ يَا بُنَيَّ لَا تُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ

١٤- وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ وَهْنًا عَلَىٰ وَهْنٍ وَفِصَالُهُ فِي عَامَيْنِ أَنِ اشْكُرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيْكَ إِلَيَّ الْمَصِيرُ

١٥- وَإِنْ جَاهَدَاكَ عَلَىٰ أَنْ تُشْرِكَ بِي مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا ۗ وَصَاحِبُهُمَا فِي الدُّنْيَا مَعْرُوفًا وَاتَّبِعْ سَبِيلَ مَنْ أَنَابَ إِلَيَّ ۚ ثُمَّ إِلَيَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

١٦- يَا بُنَيَّ إِنَّمَا إِنْ تَأْتِي مِتَّكَ مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِنْ حَرْدَلٍ فَتَكُنْ فِي صَحْرَةٍ أَوْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ أَوْ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَأْتِ بِهَا اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَطِيفٌ خَبِيرٌ

١٧- يَا بُنَيَّ أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَانْهَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأَصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا أَصَابَكَ ۚ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ

١٨- وَلَا تُصَعِّرْ خَدَّكَ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَمْشِ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرْحًا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ

١٩- وَأَقْصِدْ فِي مَشْيِكَ وَاغْضُضْ مِنْ صَوْتِكَ ۚ إِنَّ أَنْكَرَ الْأَصْوَاتِ لَصَوْتُ الْحَمِيرِ

12. We bestowed (in the past) wisdom on Luqmān : “ Show (thy) gratitude to God.” Any who is (so) grateful does so to the profit of his own soul : But if any is ungrateful, verily God is free of all wants, worthy of all praise.

13. Behold, Luqmān said to his son by way of instruction : “ O my son ! Join not in worship (others) with God : for false worship is indeed the highest wrong-doing.”

14. And We have enjoined on man (to be good) to his parents : In travail upon travail did his mother bear him, and in years twain was his weaning : (hear the command), “ Show gratitude to Me and to thy parents : To Me is (thy final) goal.

15. “ But if they strive to make the join in worship with Me things of which thou hast no knowledge, obey them not ; Yet bear them company in this life with justice (and consideration), and follow the way of those who turn to Me (in love) : In the end the return of you all is to Me, And I will tell you the truth (and meaning) of all that ye did.”

16. “ O my son ! ” (said Luqmān), “ If there be (but) the weight of a mustard-seed and it were (hidden) in a rock, or (anywhere) in the heavens or on earth, God will bring it forth : for God understands the finest mysteries, (and) is well-acquainted (with them).

17. “ O my son ! Establish regular prayer enjoin what is just, and forbid what is wrong : And bear with patient constancy whate’er betide thee ; for this is firmness (of purpose) in (the conduct of) affairs.

18. “ And swell not thy cheek (for pride) at men, nor walk in insolence through the earth ; For God loveth not any arrogant boaster.

19. “ And be moderate in thy pace, and lower thy voice ; for the harshest of sounds without doubt is the braying of the ass.”

According to HAMKA in Tafsir Al-Azhar, Volume 7

Surah Luqman, verses 12-19, narrate the story of Luqman, who gained wisdom, which is the alignment of actions with knowledge. This wisdom led Luqman to become a person who was grateful to Allah SWT and avoided disbelief. By being grateful, a servant fundamentally does good to themselves. As for those who disbelieve, their disbelief does not diminish Allah SWT's richness ([Hamka, 1989b, p. 5565](#)).

The subsequent verses contain Luqman's advice to his son. Surah Luqman, verse 13, advises Luqman's son not to associate anything with Allah SWT. Associating partners with Allah SWT is an injustice to oneself. In the midst of technological advancements, the potential for humans to associate partners with Allah SWT has grown, even

though scientific discoveries increasingly affirm the Oneness of Allah SWT (Hamka, 1989b, p. 5566).

Surah Luqman, verse 14, reiterates the recommendation to do good to both parents (Hamka, 1989b, p. 5566).

When the recommendation comes from Allah, it takes the form of a command. The command is clear: God orders humans to respect and honor their parents because through their parents, humans are brought into this world. Thus, it is only right that both parents are honored (Hamka, 1989b, p. 5566).

This verse also illustrates the weight of the burden carried by a mother, from pregnancy to childbirth, and then raising a child. Furthermore, the verse instructs us to be grateful to Allah SWT and our parents (Hamka, 1989b, p. 5567).

Surah Luqman, verse 15, sets a limit on a child's obedience to their parents when it comes to matters of faith. If parents have a different religion than their child and instruct the child to do something contrary to their faith, the child should refrain from following their parents' instructions. However, even if there is a difference in beliefs, a child is still obligated to treat both parents kindly (Hamka, 1989b, p. 5568).

This means that both parents should always be respected, loved, and cared for appropriately and in good manners. They should not be insulted or disgraced; rather, you should simply show that, in terms of faith, there is a difference between your faith and theirs. If they are old, take care of them well (Hamka, 1989b, p. 5568).

Surah Luqman, verse 15, explains the command to follow the path of those who believe and return to Allah SWT. In the Hereafter, Allah SWT will disclose everything that humans have done (Hamka, 1989b, p. 5569).

It is Allah who will judge the goodness or badness of what you have done in this world. Therefore, it is necessary from now on to accept God's guidance by following the path of the believers. Do not tread the path alone (Hamka, 1989b, p. 5569).

Surah Luqman, verse 16, emphasizes Luqman's advice to his son that Allah SWT knows in great detail everything that humans do. This advice suggests that in doing good, one should not seek praise from people but should seek reward from Allah SWT (Hamka, 1989b, p. 5569).

This verse is essential in strengthening the spiritual relationship between individuals and their Lord, a balm for the toil and effort that sometimes go unrewarded by humans (Hamka, 1989b, p. 5569).

Surah Luqman, verse 17, underscores four pillars in religious and societal life: establishing prayer, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and enduring whatever befalls. This verse provides guidance that a Muslim should be able to maintain their prayers to maintain their relationship with Allah SWT. Furthermore, a Muslim should be a person who benefits society by encouraging beneficial actions and discouraging harmful ones. In this process, there may be those who do not agree, leading to rejection or even resistance. Therefore, patience is required in guiding the community toward the teachings of Islam (Hamka, 1989b, pp. 5570–5571).

Surah Luqman, verse 18, emphasizes the importance of good manners when interacting with society. This verse prohibits turning away from people, especially when speaking, as it may come across as arrogance. Furthermore, the verse explicitly discourages arrogance in worldly life because, in reality, arrogance stems from feelings of inferiority. It eventually returns to describe the importance of humility and respect in one's conduct (Hamka, 1989b, p. 5572).

Surah Luqman, verse 19, also relates to proper etiquette when speaking, emphasizing the use of a soft voice. A loud voice is not suitable, especially in public places, and is likened to the braying of a donkey (Hamka, 1989b, p. 5573).

Do not raise your voice above that of others, especially when in the company of others. What more if you are in a public place? People who lack etiquette

forget that in that place, they are not alone with their friends. Then they raise their voices (Hamka, 1989b, p. 5573).

According to M. Quraish Shibah in Tafsir Al-Mishbah, Volume 11

Surah Luqman, verses 12-19, is a series of verses that depict a man named Luqman, to whom Allah SWT granted wisdom. These verses also elucidate the nuggets of wisdom within Luqman's advice to his son (Shihab, 2005b, p. 120). The first wisdom presented in verse 12 is gratitude, which begins with a deep realization from the heart of how immense Allah's blessings and gifts are. It is accompanied by submission and awe, which give birth to love for Allah and the urge to praise Him through words while complying with what He has bestowed (Shihab, 2005b, p. 122).

A person who is grateful ultimately benefits themselves, while one who is ungrateful or refuses to be grateful harms themselves because Allah's omnipotence is not diminished by ingratitude (Shihab, 2005b, p. 120).

Surah Luqman, verse 13, shows how Luqman utilized the wisdom he gained by imparting it to his son continuously (Shihab, 2005b, p. 125). Luqman advises his son to avoid associating anything with Allah SWT, as it is the gravest sin. Luqman also lays the foundations of education infused with love when conveying his message to his son (Shihab, 2005b, p. 127).

Surah Luqman, verses 14 and 15, are seen by some scholars of tafsir as not part of Luqman's advice to his son but rather as Quranic injunctions to underscore the importance of honoring both parents after having faith in Allah SWT. Other scholars of tafsir maintain that these verses are still part of Luqman's advice to his son (Shihab, 2005b, p. 128). In verse 14, humans are admonished to do good to both parents because of the difficulties the mother faces, which increase and multiply from pregnancy to childbirth and breastfeeding (Shihab, 2005b, p. 129). This verse conveys a message supported by arguments,

providing a basis for a child's educational approach that emphasizes the importance of tangible evidence (Shihab, 2005b, p. 131).

Surah Luqman, verse 15, explains exceptions in showing obedience to parents when it comes to matters of faith. This verse emphasizes that following anyone who contradicts Allah's command is prohibited, even if it is one's parents. However, the verse also reaffirms that in worldly matters, a child still has a duty to do what is good to their parents. In this regard, "good" encompasses all actions deemed virtuous by society, as long as they do not contradict Islamic beliefs (Shihab, 2005b, p. 132).

Surah Luqman, verse 16, reinforces Luqman's advice to his son, this time concerning the depth of Allah's knowledge (Shihab, 2005b, p. 133). The profoundness of Allah's knowledge means that even the smallest of deeds are recorded and will be shown on the Day of Judgment (Shihab, 2005b, p. 134). This verse also demonstrates Allah's omnipotence in meticulously calculating human deeds in the Hereafter. This is a crucial aspect of Islamic faith that acknowledges the existence of a Day of Reckoning (Shihab, 2005b, p. 136).

Surah Luqman, verse 17, again contains Luqman's advice to his son, conveyed with tenderness through affectionate address. Luqman advises his son about the continuity of monotheism and the Divine presence within a child. The advice in this verse encompasses the perfection of prayer, the avoidance of evil, inviting others to do good, and preventing them from wrongdoing. Given the challenges involved in obeying Allah's command, patience and steadfastness must be instilled in the child (Shihab, 2005b, p. 136).

The advice from Luqman in the above verses relates to matters concerning righteous deeds, with prayer as the pinnacle, along with acts of kindness reflected in encouraging good deeds and discouraging wrongdoing. It also includes advice on using patience as a shield against failure (Shihab, 2005b, p. 137).

Surah Luqman, verses 18-19, contain Luqman's counsel to his son regarding ethics and etiquette in social life. Luqman interlaces advice on ethics after faith, signifying the importance of introducing variety in a child's education (Shihab, 2005b, pp. 138–139). Luqman advises his son not to turn away from people due to arrogance. Instead, a person should appear with a radiant face and humility toward anyone. When walking, one should not exhibit arrogance but should walk with gentleness and dignity. Regarding speech, one should soften their voice to avoid sounding harsh, akin to the braying of a donkey (Shihab, 2005b, p. 139).

In conclusion, Luqman al-Hakim imparts advice encompassing the core tenets of religious guidance. There is faith, sharia, and ethics, the three elements of Quranic teachings. There is morality towards Allah, towards others, and towards oneself. There is also the call for moderation, a hallmark of all virtues, and the command for patience, an absolute requirement for achieving success, both in this world and the Hereafter. Thus, Luqman al-Hakim educates his son and provides guidance to anyone seeking the path of goodness (Shihab, 2005b, p. 140).

The Meaning of Surah Al-Ahqaf Verse 15

١٥ - وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ إِحْسَانًا ۚ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ كُرْهًا وَوَضَعَتْهُ كُرْهًا ۚ وَحَمَلُهُ وَفِصَالُهُ ثَلَاثُونَ شَهْرًا ۚ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ وَبَلَغَ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً قَالَ رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَىٰ وَالِدَيَّ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَالِحًا تَرْضَاهُ وَأَصْلِحْ لِي فِي ذُرِّيَّتِي ۚ إِنِّي تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَإِنِّي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ

15. We have enjoined on man kindness to his parents : In pain did his mother bear him, and in pain did she give him birth. The carrying of the (child) to his weaning is (a period of) thirty months. At length, when he reaches the age of full strength and attains forty years, he says “ O my Lord! Grant me that I may be grateful for Thy favour which Thou hast bestowed upon me, and upon both my parents, and that I may work righteousness such as Thou mayest approve ; And be gracious to me in my issue. Truly have I turned to Thee and truly do I bow (to Thee) in Islam. ”

According to HAMKA in Tafsir Al-Azhar, Volume 9

Surah Al-Ahqaf, verse 15, delivers a command to humanity to be kind and dutiful to both parents. This command is placed alongside the command to have faith in Allah SWT (Hamka, 1989c, p. 6650). The directive to be kind to parents is accompanied by a reminder of the hardships a mother endures during pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding, and raising children. Despite these difficulties, a parent's love for their child only grows stronger, and their care and affection increase (Hamka, 1989c, p. 6651).

Furthermore, this verse explains that when a person reaches the age of forty, they have attained a sufficient level of maturity. At this age, individuals begin to recognize the significance of the contributions made by others, particularly their parents, throughout their lives (Hamka, 1989c, p. 6654). Therefore, a person who has reached the age of forty is expected to express gratitude for the blessings bestowed upon them by Allah and their parents (Hamka, 1989c, p. 6655).

This is because, when a child reaches the age of forty, they begin to feel and understand what their parents experienced – suffering, sacrifices, love, hardships, and the ease of life while raising their child. As a result, as people mature, their awareness and affection for their parents grow (Hamka, 1989c, p. 6655).

This verse also instructs a person who has reached the age of forty to pray that they continue to do good deeds or righteous actions that are pleasing to Allah SWT. It also implies that someone at this age should pray for the ability to continue the goodness initiated by their parents in the past (Hamka, 1989c, p. 6656). Furthermore, this verse teaches someone at the age of forty to pray for the well-being and righteousness of their own children so that the virtues and good deeds initiated by their parents can be continued and passed down through generations. Thus, all the acts of goodness that have been performed will continue as a legacy and a source of pride (Hamka, 1989c, p. 6656).

The verse concludes by imparting guidance to someone at the age of forty to acknowledge their past mistakes and sins, repent to Allah SWT, and declare their commitment to being a devout Muslim (Hamka, 1989c, p. 6656).

In the journey of this complex life, filled with ups and downs, joys and sorrows, successes and failures, I openly admit that I am not free from errors and lapses. There is truth, and there are mistakes. Yet, O Allah, I have never forgotten (Hamka, 1989c, p. 6656).

According to M. Quraish Shibah in Tafsir Al-Mishbah, Volume 13

Surah Al-Ahqaf, verse 15, emphasizes the rights of parents over their children, following the previous verses that discuss Allah's rights over His servants. These two aspects are often juxtaposed in the Quran (Shihab, 2005c, p. 86). This verse advises all of humanity, regardless of their religion, to show kindness and dutifulness to their parents because of the hardships their parents endured in raising them. A mother goes through the arduous process of pregnancy, childbirth, and breastfeeding, which typically spans thirty months (Shihab, 2005c, p. 87). As an individual grows into adulthood, they are expected to reciprocate their parents' care. When they reach the age of forty, signifying full maturity, they should offer a prayer to Allah SWT (Shihab, 2005c, p. 87).

This verse further explains the prayers that someone who has reached the age of forty should offer. These prayers include expressions of gratitude for the blessings Allah SWT has bestowed upon them and their parents (Shihab, 2005c, p. 87). They also pray for the strength to engage in righteous deeds and for Allah SWT to bestow goodness upon their descendants (Shihab, 2005c, p. 88). The verse concludes with a prayer that signifies the individual's recognition of their past transgressions and their commitment to repentance and submission to Allah SWT, both outwardly and inwardly (Shihab, 2005c, p. 88).

After making various requests, the supplicant realizes the extent of their past wrongdoings and proceeds to say, "Truly, I acknowledge that I have committed many wrongs in the past. I now repent and resolve not to repeat them, and I submit to You, both outwardly and inwardly" (Shihab, 2005c, p. 88).

DISCUSSION

The Quran places significant emphasis on the significance of exhibiting love, respect, and care towards one's parents. Although there is no one verse that comprehensively delineates the obligations of parents towards their children or vice versa, other verses exist that address the fundamental principles of fostering positive relationships and expressing appreciation towards parents. The aforementioned verses underscore the obligation of offspring to exhibit reverence and benevolence towards their parents, while also implying the parental duty to nurture and guide their children with attentiveness and direction. It is noteworthy to acknowledge that the Quran also promotes the responsibility of parents to impart appropriate nurturing, education, and ethical direction to their children, even though these dimensions are not expressly delineated in individual verses.

The Quran also places significant emphasis on the obligation of children to exhibit respect, obedience, and compassion towards their parents. The following excerpts from the Quran elucidate the obligations incumbent upon offspring in regard to their parents. The previously explained verses emphasize the significance of demonstrating compassion, respect, and obedience towards one's parents. It is recommended that children refrain from displaying any signs of frustration or impatience in their interactions with their parents, and instead communicate with them in a manner that is characterized by gentleness and respect. It is imperative to embrace these lessons with the comprehension that they embody a wider

framework of reverence and consideration towards parents. Islamic teachings place significant emphasis on the notion that loyalty to parents is both appropriate and aligned with the overarching values of Islam.

Islamic teachings place significant emphasis on the imperative of providing care for both parents and children. The concept of the sandwich generation, which refers to individuals who find themselves responsible for the well-being of both their aging parents and their own children, resonates with these fundamental principles. Within the Islamic faith, there exists a recognition of the fundamental significance of completing one's obligations towards both parents and children. These responsibilities are not only advocated as acts of benevolence and empathy, but also as a means of discharging one's familial duties. Several Islamic perspectives can be considered in relation to the sandwich generation.

A comprehensive examination shows Islam lay a significant focus on the veneration and provision of support for parents, particularly throughout their advanced years. The Quran and Hadiths place significant emphasis on the significance of demonstrating acts of kindness, respect, and support towards parents, especially in situations that may necessitate personal sacrifice. The sandwich generation is commonly advised to assume responsibility for the physical, mental, and financial well-being of their elderly parents, all the while upholding a demeanor of respectfulness.

Islam places significant emphasis on the obligation of parents to fulfill the material and emotional needs of their children. Creating a nurturing and affirming atmosphere, giving a comprehensive educational experience, and instilling Islamic principles are crucial facets of effective parenting. Juggling these obligations while providing care for one's parents presents a challenge that requires both faith and patience.

The act of prioritizing self-care is regarded as desirable, as it acknowledges the significance of attending to one's own well-being in addition to the responsibilities of caring for both parents and children. This notion aligns with the emphasis placed on self-care throughout the Islamic tradition. Ensuring the maintenance of one's mental, bodily, and spiritual well-being is vital for the effective fulfillment of other obligations. Islam promotes the principles of moderation and equilibrium across several domains of human existence.

Within the Islamic faith, there exists a positive encouragement towards requesting assistance and support from one's extended family, friends, and the broader community. The phenomenon known as the sandwich generation may entail the inclusion of additional family members in the provision of caregiving duties, hence facilitating the distribution of the associated responsibilities. Islam advocates for the cultivation of collaboration and solidarity within familial relationships. In previous works ([Miller, 1981](#); [Burke, 2017](#); [Silverstein et al., 2020](#); [Albertini et al., 2022](#)), social support has contributed to sandwich generation in many form of their life challenges.

It is advocated within the Islamic faith for adherents to engage in supplication to Allah, seeking strength, patience, and wisdom to effectively accomplish their respective obligations through dua (supplication). Engaging in the act of supplication for the welfare and facilitation of coping with the multifaceted responsibilities faced by individuals in the sandwich generation can offer a source of spiritual comfort. Dua or prayer has played significant role among sandwich generation in dealing with circumstances they faced ([Roots, 1998](#); [Marss, 2011](#); [Irawaty & Gayatri, 2023](#)).

The concept of patience as a virtue is emphasized in Islam, where adherents are encouraged to confront difficulties and trials with fortitude and steadfastness, as it is believed that such behavior is met

with divine rewards from Allah. The sandwich generation can derive comfort from the understanding that their endeavors to provide care for both their parents and children can be regarded as acts of devotion and have the potential to foster spiritual development. Patience have been source of positive energy for sandwich generation in dealing with challenges in daily life (Miller, 1981; Chisholm, 1999; Do et al., 2014; Evans et al., 2016).

In the context of Islamic teachings, the principles of compassion, empathy, and balance are underscored as crucial elements in effectively discharging the obligations associated with the sandwich generation. This notion was also in line with previous findings related sandwich generation (Johnson, 1994; Butler, 2020; Frack & Chapman, 2021).

CONCLUSION

This research shows how Indonesian scholars or *mufassir* who analyze Quranic verses related to parents-children have contributed to better understanding of Islamic teachings regarding sandwich generation. The meaning of Surah Al-Isra Verses 23-24, Surah Luqman Verses 12-19, and Surah Al-Ahqaf Verse 15 as interpreted by Indonesian scholars highlights the importance of honoring parents, as commanded in the Quran, while nurturing children. They emphasize the concept of *birr al-walidayn* (kindness to parents), shedding light on the moral duty of children to care for aging parents, and fostering a balanced approach.

Furthermore, Indonesian scholars also emphasize the significance of self-care and seek support from the family and community. This aligns with Islamic values of moderation and collective responsibility. Indonesian scholars' viewpoints also underscore the rewards of patience and perseverance, assuring the sandwich generation that their efforts are acts of worship and have

spiritual significance. Ultimately, this research provides a nuanced understanding of the sandwich generation phenomenon within the Indonesian Islamic context. It contributes to the broader discourse on family dynamics, caregiving, and the harmonization of modern challenges with timeless Islamic principles.

In conclusion, the research emphasizes the substantial impact of Islamic teachings in providing guidance to persons navigating the complexities associated with the sandwich generation. The scholarly perspectives offered by Indonesian scholars offer valuable insights into the process of reconciling Quranic verses with the contemporary notion of concurrently tending to elderly parents and raising children.

In contemporary society, there is a noticeable increase in the sandwich generation, a cohort faced with the dual responsibility of caring for both aging parents and dependent children. Within this context, the insights derived from Islamic teachings, as interpreted by Indonesian academics, offer a significant conceptual framework for effectively managing the many challenges associated with caregiving and parenting. The paper highlights the significance of Islam in addressing the emotional, moral, and practical dimensions of this problem, providing comfort and guidance to individuals who find themselves torn between the obligations of two generations.

Author Contributions

Conceptualization: F.A.K.; Data curation: F.A.K.; Formal analysis: F.A.K.; Funding acquisition: F.A.K.; Investigation: F.A.K.; Methodology: F.A.K.; Project administration: F.A.K.; Resources: F.A.K.; Software: F.A.K.; Supervision: F.A.K.; Validation: F.A.K.; Visualization: F.A.K.; Writing – original draft: F.A.K.; Writing – review & editing: F.A.K.

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Informed Consent Statement

Informed consent is not required for this study.

Data Availability Statement

The primary data presented in this study are available at tafsir books *Tafsir Al-Azhar* and *Tafsir Al-Mishbah*.

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Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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