



Sandwich Generation in the Quran: A Maqasidi Perspective on Family Welfare

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Abstract

The sandwich generation refers to individuals of productive age who simultaneously bear responsibilities toward their parents and immediate families, often facing economic, social, and psychological challenges. This article aims to analyze the concept of *birr al walidayn*, or filial piety toward parents, in the Quran and reconstruct the understanding of the sandwich generation from a *maqasid* perspective. This study employs a qualitative approach using content analysis and thematic interpretation. The primary data consist of Quranic verses related to filial piety, financial support, human capacity, and family protection, while secondary data are drawn from classical and contemporary exegetical works and relevant academic literature. The data are analyzed using the framework of *maqasid al shariah* to identify the objectives of Islamic law, values of public benefit, and dimensions of well-being reflected in these verses. The findings indicate that children responsibilities toward their parents are not limited to financial support but also encompass spiritual, moral, emotional, social, and economic dimensions. However, the fulfillment of these responsibilities should be based on the principles of capacity, justice, proportionality, and family protection to prevent harm to oneself or other family members. From a *maqasid* perspective, maintaining a balance between filial piety and family well-being constitutes an effort to preserve life, wealth, and progeny, represented by *hifz al nafs*, *hifz al mal*, and *hifz al nasl*. This study contributes to the discourse on the sandwich generation by offering an integrative Quranic framework for strengthening family resilience and social well-being in the contemporary era.

Article Information:

Received November 15, 2023

Revised December 28, 2023

Accepted January 19, 2024

Keywords: *The sandwich generation, Birr al-Walidayn, maqasid exegesis, family welfare*

INTRODUCTION

The sandwich generation has become an important issue in contemporary family studies because it reflects a shift in intergenerational economic responsibility toward individuals of productive age. A survey conducted by Palma (2019) reported that approximately 67 percent, or 56 million people of productive age in Indonesia, belong to the sandwich generation, with nearly half coming from lower-middle-

How to cite:

Abdurahman, S., Lilirtika, I. R., Mustaqimah, M., Daud, I., Burhanuddin, B. (2024). Sandwich Generation in the Quran: A Maqasidi Perspective on Family Welfare. *Al-Fanar: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Tafsir*, 7(1), 37-49.

E-ISSN:

2622-4658

Published by:

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income groups. This condition describes a situation in which individuals are required to meet the needs of their parents while simultaneously supporting their immediate families. The transfer of economic responsibility from parents to children often occurs when individuals are still building their careers and have not yet achieved adequate financial stability, resulting in complex economic and psychological pressures. [Asrida et al \(2023\)](#) found that economic pressure experienced by the sandwich generation affects stress levels and financial decision-making. Consequently, role conflicts, decision-making dilemmas, stress, and psychological distress may intensify when family demands exceed individual capacity.

In the Islamic context, responsibility toward parents cannot be reduced to an economic matter alone because it is closely associated with the concept of filial piety, or *birr al walidayn*. The Quran places the command to honor parents immediately after the command to worship Allah alone (Quran 17:23), demonstrating the high ethical status of the parent-child relationship in Islam. Therefore, supporting parents among members of the sandwich generation should be understood not only as a social responsibility but also as an expression of religious values. However, the high moral status of filial piety does not imply that individuals should disregard their physical, economic, or psychological limitations. The central issue, therefore, is not whether children have an obligation to honor and support their parents, but how this obligation can be fulfilled proportionally without causing harm to themselves or their families.

Psychological perspectives provide an important basis for understanding these boundaries. [Fauziah \(2023\)](#) explain that individuals aged 20 to 35 are particularly vulnerable to experiencing a quarter-life crisis because they are in the emerging adulthood stage, which is characterized by uncertainty regarding career, identity, and the future. When this developmental stage overlaps with the responsibilities of being part of the sandwich generation, the risk of psychological distress may become greater. This finding is supported by [Yunarti et al \(2025\)](#), who demonstrated that self-acceptance and social support play important roles in helping members of the sandwich generation cope with family pressures and maintain psychological well-being.

Previous studies have examined the sandwich generation from various perspectives. [Khasanah & Rubini \(2023\)](#) examined the sandwich generation through the jurisprudential perspective of *birr al walidayn* and highlighted the importance of internalizing religious values and developing psychological readiness to fulfill filial responsibilities amid economic limitations. [Tanuri \(2025\)](#) discussed financial obligations from the perspective of Islamic law and their relationship to family harmony. [Salamuddin et al \(2024\)](#) examined the sandwich generation among university students from the perspective of contemporary Islamic jurisprudence, emphasizing the balance between the obligation to pursue education and the responsibility to contribute to family economic needs within the limits of individual capacity. Meanwhile, [Kusumaningrum \(2023\)](#) analyzed the sandwich generation through a thematic interpretation of the Quran, focusing on financial support and family responsibilities. These studies have made important contributions to understanding the legal, economic, psychological, and religious dimensions underlying the sandwich generation phenomenon.

Nevertheless, previous studies tend to examine the sandwich generation from separate perspectives. Studies of Islamic jurisprudence and Islamic law have primarily emphasized the normative dimension of children's obligations toward their parents [Akbar et al \(2023\)](#), whereas psychological studies have focused more on stress, resilience, and self-acceptance [Nurwahidin et al \(2019\)](#). Meanwhile, Quranic studies have largely employed thematic approaches without explicitly connecting the interpretation of relevant verses to the objectives of Islamic law, or *maqasid al*

shariah, and the psychological well-being of the sandwich generation (Saifuddeen et al., 2014). This situation reveals a research gap, namely the limited integration of Quranic interpretations of filial piety with a maqasidi approach and psychological perspectives in understanding the sandwich generation phenomenon.

Addressing this gap, the novelty of this study lies in integrating maqasidi Quranic interpretation with a psychological perspective to examine the sandwich generation phenomenon. The study employs the principles of *hifz al nafs*, *hifz al mal*, and *hifz al nasl* as an analytical framework for understanding the balance between filial responsibilities, economic capacity, mental health, and family well-being. Accordingly, the sandwich generation is not viewed merely as a moral obligation or an economic burden but as a matter of public benefit that requires comprehensive consideration of individual and family well-being.

Based on this discussion, this study aims to explain the concept of children's responsibilities toward their parents in the Quran and analyze the sandwich generation phenomenon from a maqasidi interpretive perspective. Theoretically, this study is expected to contribute to the development of contemporary Quranic interpretation and maqasid al shariah studies in addressing modern family challenges. Practically, the findings are expected to provide a reference for academics, family counselors, religious practitioners, and policymakers in developing strategies to strengthen family resilience, mental health, and social well-being. Thus, this study seeks to offer a more integrative Quranic framework for understanding and addressing the sandwich generation phenomenon amid the dynamics of contemporary society.

METHODS

This study is designed to analyze the sandwich generation phenomenon from a Quranic perspective using a *maqasidi* interpretation approach, which focuses on uncovering the objectives and public benefits underlying religious texts. A qualitative approach was employed because the study focuses on understanding the meanings, values, and interpretive constructions contained in Quranic verses concerning children's responsibilities toward their parents, family well-being, and psychological health. The analysis examines verses related to filial piety, financial support, human capacity, and family protection to develop a contextual understanding of the sandwich generation phenomenon in contemporary society. Through this approach, the study seeks to explain the relationship between filial responsibilities, family well-being, and the objectives of Islamic law within the context of modern life.

Method and Approach

This study employs a qualitative approach using content analysis and *maqasidi* Quranic interpretation. The qualitative approach is used to examine the meanings and messages embedded in the texts in depth, while content analysis is employed to systematically identify, categorize, and interpret themes emerging from the research data (Langputeh et al., 2023; Renz et al., 2018; Selvi, 2019). *Maqasidi* interpretation is then used as the analytical framework to uncover the objectives of Islamic law, or *maqasid al shariah*, underlying the relevant Quranic verses, particularly those concerning the preservation of life, wealth, and progeny, represented by *hifz al nafs*, *hifz al mal*, and *hifz al nasl* (Aziz et al., 2024).

Data Sources

The research data consist of primary and secondary sources. The primary data comprise Quranic verses related to filial piety, financial support, human capacity, family responsibilities, the protection of progeny, and family well-being, together with their interpretations in relevant exegetical works. Secondary data were obtained from academic books, journal articles, conference proceedings, and previous studies addressing the sandwich generation, family psychology, mental health, filial piety, and

maqasid al shariah. The use of primary and secondary sources in combination aims to provide a comprehensive understanding through source triangulation, thereby enhancing the depth and credibility of the qualitative analysis (Monaro et al., 2022; Pohontsch, 2019; Yusnia, 2018).

Instruments

In qualitative research, the researcher serves as the primary instrument or human instrument, responsible for identifying, selecting, interpreting, and analyzing the data. The researcher's role as the primary instrument enables direct engagement with the context, meanings, and relationships among the data under investigation (Bryniarska, 2024). Supporting materials used in the research include the Quran, classical and contemporary exegetical works, Quranic verse search tools, scholarly articles, reference books, and a data categorization framework for organizing themes according to the focus of the study (Takona, 2024).

Data Collection

Data were collected through documentation, involving the identification, selection, compilation, and organization of documents relevant to the research focus (Qureshi, 2022). The first stage involved identifying and cataloguing Quranic verses related to filial piety, financial support, human capacity, and family protection. The next stage involved collecting interpretations of these verses from various exegetical works. Supporting literature from psychology, family studies, and research on the sandwich generation was subsequently collected to broaden the analytical context and strengthen the interpretation of the findings.

Data Analysis Tools

The study employed content analysis and *maqasidi* Quranic interpretation as complementary analytical tools. Content analysis was used to identify themes, concepts, patterns of meaning, and relationships among concepts in the research data through systematic coding and categorization (Edwards-Jones, 2014; Mortelmans, 2019). *Maqasidi* interpretation was then applied to uncover the dimensions of public benefit and the objectives of Islamic law reflected in the analyzed verses, particularly those concerning *hifẓ al nafs*, *hifẓ al mal*, and *hifẓ al nasl* (Tohari et al., 2022). The combination of these analytical approaches enables the study to move beyond the textual meanings of the verses and examine the relevance of their underlying objectives to contemporary social realities.

Data Analysis Procedure

The data analysis was conducted through several stages. First, relevant Quranic verses were identified and classified according to the themes of the study. Second, the content and interpretations of the selected verses were analyzed using content analysis to identify major themes related to filial piety, financial responsibilities, individual capacity, and family well-being. Third, the findings were interpreted through a *maqasidi* perspective by examining the objectives, values, and dimensions of public benefit embedded in the verses. Fourth, the analytical findings were connected to the sandwich generation phenomenon and relevant findings from contemporary psychological and family studies. Finally, a conceptual synthesis was developed concerning the balance between filial piety, mental health protection, and family well-being as components of the broader objectives of Islamic law. The analysis followed the stages of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing outlined in the qualitative data analysis model developed by (Lungu, 2022; Miles, 2015).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Mapping Quranic Verses and the Position of *Maqasid* Exegesis as an Analytical Framework

The inventory of the research data indicates that the term sandwich generation is not explicitly mentioned in the Qur'an. However, its substantive dimensions are reflected in verses concerning parent-child relationships, financial responsibility, human capacity, family protection, and intergenerational continuity. Ten principal verses were identified as relevant to the issue: QS. Al-Isra [17]: 23–24, QS. Luqman [31]: 14–15, QS. Al-Ahqaf [46]: 15, QS. An-Nisa [4]: 36, QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 233, QS. At-Talaq [65]: 7, QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 286, and QS. An-Nisa [4]: 9. These verses demonstrate that family responsibility in the Quran is multidirectional. Children are expected to honor their parents while also maintaining their own well-being, caring for their spouses and children, and protecting future generations.

Maqasid exegesis is employed to connect these verses because it moves beyond literal meanings toward the objectives, values, and benefits underlying Quranic teachings (Millah et al., 2024). The framework is particularly relevant because *birr al-walidayn* may otherwise be understood as an absolute obligation without sufficient consideration of individual capacity, while the sandwich generation may conversely be reduced to a socioeconomic problem without recognizing its religious and ethical dimensions.

The verses were mapped according to the five principal objectives of *maqasid al-shariah*: *hifz al-din*, *hifz al-nafs*, *hifz al-aql*, *hifz al-mal*, and *hifz al-nasl*. These dimensions indicate that family responsibility involves religious devotion, psychological and physical well-being, rational decision-making, economic stability, and intergenerational protection. Thus, responsibility toward parents should be fulfilled relationally and proportionally rather than being placed entirely on one family member (Salman, 2025).

This approach is consistent with Kamali (2016) view that *maqasid al-shariah* emphasizes the objectives, principles, and fundamental values of Islamic law in addressing contemporary problems. It is also supported by Millah et al (2024) formulation of *Maqasid* exegesis as an interpretive orientation, methodology, and product of interpretation. Thematic exegesis (*tafsir mawdu'i*) further strengthens this approach by bringing related verses into dialogue rather than interpreting them in isolation (Syaifudin et al., 2025). Accordingly, the analysis focuses not only on what individual verses command but also on the broader objectives and forms of benefit emerging from their interrelationship.

The findings support the proposition that *birr al-walidayn* should not be understood as an unlimited financial obligation. Rather, respect for parents must be maintained alongside human limitations, the rights of the nuclear family, the protection of offspring, and the preservation of wealth and psychological well-being. In this qualitative study, this proposition is supported through interpretive consistency among Quranic data, exegetical interpretations, *maqasid* principles, and contemporary social realities.

Dimensions of Children's Responsibilities toward Parents in the Qur'an

The thematic analysis identifies five major dimensions of children's responsibilities toward their parents: spiritual, moral-ethical, emotional, social, and economic. This finding demonstrates that the Quranic conception of filial responsibility is broader than financial support alone.

Table 1. Mapping of Quranic Verses, Dimensions of Responsibility, and Their Relevance to the Sandwich generation

Verse	Dominant Dimension	Relevance to the Sandwich generation
QS. Al-Isra'	Spiritual, moral-	Maintaining respect and communication with

[17]: 23	ethical	parents even when children experience pressure
QS. Al-Isra' [17]: 24	Emotional, spiritual	Demonstrating compassion, humility, care, and prayer
QS. Luqman [31]: 14	Moral, emotional	Developing awareness of parental sacrifice as a foundation of filial devotion
QS. Luqman [31]: 15	Spiritual, social	Demonstrating that obedience to parents has normative limits
QS. Al-Ahqaf [46]: 15	Moral, emotional, spiritual	Connecting parental sacrifice with generational continuity
QS. An-Nisa' [4]: 36	Spiritual, social	Positioning filial devotion within a broader network of social responsibility
QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 233	Social, economic	Demonstrating that family obligations are related to one's capacity
QS. AT-Talaq [65]: 7	Economic, justice	Emphasizing that financial support should be proportionate to one's capacity
QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 286	Capacity, self-protection	Rejecting burdens that exceed an individual's capacity
QS. An-Nisa' [4]: 9	Family protection, <i>Hifz al-nasl</i>	Preventing future generations from inheriting vulnerability

QS. Al-Isra' [17]: 23–24

وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا إِمَّا يَبُلُغَنَّ عِنْدَكَ الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا أُفٍّ وَلَا تَنْهَرْهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا وَخَفِضْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ الذُّلِّ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ وَقُلْ رَبِّ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيْنِي صَغِيرًا

Meaning: *Your Lord has commanded that you worship none but Him and that you show kindness to your parents. If one or both of them reach old age in your care, never say to them even a word of annoyance, nor yell at them, but address them with words of honor. Lower to them the wing of humility, out of mercy, and pray, 'My Lord! Be merciful to them as they raised me when I was young. (QS. Al-Isra' [17]: 23–24).*

QS. Al-Isra' [17]: 23–24 provides the primary foundation for *birr al-walidayn*. The placement of kindness toward parents immediately after the command to worship Allah demonstrates its high moral status. The verses emphasize respectful communication, compassion, humility, and prayer, showing that filial devotion is not determined solely by financial contribution. Al-Qurtubi and Quraish Shihab similarly explain that *ihsan* toward parents encompasses various forms of goodness according to one's circumstances and capacity (Ajuba et al., 2025). Thus, members of the sandwich generation with limited financial resources may continue to express filial devotion through care, communication, attention, companionship, and prayer.

QS. Luqman [31]: 14–15

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ ۖ وَهَنَا عَلَىٰ وَهْنٍ وَفَصَّالَهُ ۖ فِي عَامَيْنِ أَنِ اشْكُرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيْكَ إِلَىٰ الْمَصِيرِ ۖ وَإِنْ جَاهَدَكَ عَلَىٰ أَنْ تُشْرِكَ بِي مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ ۖ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا وَصَاحِبْهُمَا فِي الدُّنْيَا مَعْرُوفًا وَاتَّبِعْ سَبِيلَ مَنْ أَنَابَ إِلَيَّ ثُمَّ إِلَيَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

Meaning: *We have commanded people to honor their parents. Their mother bore them through hardship upon hardship, and their weaning takes two years. So be grateful to Me and to your parents. To Me is the final return. But if they pressure you to associate with Me what you have no knowledge of, then do not obey them. Still, keep their company in this world courteously, and follow the way of those who turn*

to Me. Then to Me you will all return, and I will inform you of what you used to do.

QS. Luqman [31]: 14 highlights parental sacrifice, particularly the mother's hardship during pregnancy and breastfeeding, while QS. Luqman [31]: 15 establishes that obedience to parents has limits. Children must not obey parents in matters that contradict religious principles, but they must continue to treat them courteously. From a *Maqasid* perspective, this establishes an important distinction between respect and unconditional compliance. In the context of the sandwich generation, filial devotion must therefore remain within ethical boundaries and individual capacity (Dinata et al., 2025).

QS. Al-Ahqaf [46]: 15

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ إِحْسَانًا ۚ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ ۖ كُرْهًا وَوَضَعَتْهُ ۖ كُرْهًا ۚ وَفَصَّلَتْهُ ۖ 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

Meaning: *We have commanded people to be good to their parents. Their mothers bore them with hardship and delivered them with hardship, and their bearing and weaning lasted thirty months. When they reach maturity and the age of forty, they pray, 'My Lord! Inspire me to always be thankful for Your favors which You have blessed me and my parents with, and to do good deeds that please You, and make my offspring righteous. I truly repent to You, and I am one of those who submit to Your will.'*

QS. Al-Ahqaf [46]: 15 presents filial responsibility within an intergenerational cycle. A person begins as a child who receives parental care, becomes an adult responsible for parents, and simultaneously assumes responsibility for descendants. The verse therefore provides a strong basis for understanding the sandwich generation as an issue of intergenerational responsibility rather than merely financial dependency. QS. An-Nisa [4]: 36 further places responsibility toward parents within a broader network of social relations, including relatives, orphans, the poor, neighbors, and travelers. This suggests that responsibility can be distributed through family and social solidarity rather than being carried individually. Such a principle is particularly relevant to the distribution of caregiving responsibilities among siblings and other family members (Murdifin & Setyawan, 2019).

The Process of *Maqasid* Exegesis: A Dialogue between Classical Exegesis, Contemporary Interpretation, and Social Reality

The interpretation proceeds through four stages: identifying relevant Quranic verses, examining classical and contemporary exegesis, identifying their *maqasid* dimensions, and relating the findings to the social reality of the sandwich generation. This process enables the analysis to move from textual meaning to broader objectives and contemporary implications.

QS. Al-Isra [17]: 23 establishes the strong moral status of filial responsibility. Al-Qurtubi emphasizes that honoring parents may include care and assistance when they become dependent, while Shihab understands *ibsan* as various forms of goodness performed according to circumstances and capacity. However, this obligation must be read together with QS. At-Talaq [65]: 7:

لِيُنْفِقَ ذُو سَعَةٍ مِّن سَعَتِهِ ۖ وَمَن قُدِرَ عَلَيْهِ رِزْقُهُ ۖ فَلْيُنفِقْ مِمَّا آتَاهُ اللَّهُ ۚ لَا يَكْفُلُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا مَّا آتَاهَا سِجْلًا ۚ
اللَّهُ يَبْعَثُ غُصْرًا يُسْرًا

Meaning: *Let the wealthy spend according to their means, and those of limited means spend according to what Allah has granted them. Allah does not require of any soul beyond what He has given it. Allah will bring about ease after hardship.*

This verse introduces proportionality into the interpretation of financial responsibility. Al-Qurtubi associates expenditure with economic capacity, while

Shihab emphasizes justice and balance. Therefore, the relationship between QS. Al-Isra [17]: 23–24 and QS. At-Talaq [65]: 7 produces a complementary interpretation: filial responsibility is strong, but its material implementation remains dependent on individual capacity.

QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 286 reinforces this principle through the general statement that Allah does not burden a soul beyond its capacity. Within a *Maqasid* framework, this principle is relevant when excessive family demands threaten psychological well-being, economic stability, or the basic needs of other family members.

The next stage identifies the relevant *maqasid*. Multiple responsibilities relate to *hifẓ al-nafs* when they affect physical and psychological well-being; *hifẓ al-aql* when stress interferes with rational decision-making; *hifẓ al-mal* when income must be divided among several dependents; and *hifẓ al-nasl* when children's welfare and future opportunities are compromised. Thus, *Maqasid* exegesis does not eliminate *birr al-walidayn* but determines how it can be practiced without producing new forms of harm.

The Sandwich Generation as an Actualization of *Birr al-Walidayn*

The findings indicate that the sandwich generation can be understood as a contemporary actualization of *birr al-walidayn*. Working-age individuals may provide financial assistance, time, healthcare, and emotional support to aging parents while simultaneously fulfilling responsibilities toward spouses, children, employment, and their own future.

QS. Al-Isra [17]: 23–24 establishes the religious and ethical foundation of this responsibility. The prophetic tradition further emphasizes the high status of parents, as illustrated by the hadith in *Sahih al-Bukhari* in which the Prophet Muhammad mentions the mother three times before the father when asked who is most deserving of good treatment (Al-Bukhari, n.d., Hadith No. 5971). However, the hadith concerning individual guardianship also demonstrates that responsibility extends to other dependents (Al-Naysaburi, n.d., Hadith No. 1829). Consequently, honoring parents cannot be interpreted as eliminating responsibilities toward spouses and children.

From a *Maqasid* perspective, *birr al-walidayn* should therefore be evaluated according to its effects on human well-being. It protects religion when practiced as obedience to God, life when care does not destroy physical and psychological well-being, reason when decisions are made rationally, offspring when children continue to receive care and education, and wealth when parental support does not undermine the economic foundation of the nuclear family.

Contemporary studies also indicate that sandwich-generation responsibilities may involve stress, anxiety, guilt, and psychological burden (Adrivat et al., 2024; Dardas et al., 2016). Therefore, filial devotion may provide religious and emotional meaning while simultaneously creating pressure when responsibilities exceed available resources. This supports the finding that *birr al-walidayn* should be practiced within the boundaries of *ihsan*, capacity, proportionality, and public benefit.

Protection of Life and Wealth: *Hifẓ al-Nafs* and *Hifẓ al-Mal*

The analysis identifies psychological well-being and financial stability as major areas of vulnerability among the sandwich generation. Individuals must simultaneously manage parental needs, spouses, children, employment, education, and personal needs. Such multiple responsibilities may contribute to stress, anxiety, emotional exhaustion, and reduced well-being, particularly when social support is limited (Az-Zahra et al., 2025; Harun et al., 2026).

This condition makes *hifẓ al-nafs* relevant not only to physical safety but also to psychological well-being. The Prophetic principle *la darar wa la dirar*, which prohibits causing harm or responding to harm with further harm, reinforces this orientation (Ibn Majah, n.d., Hadith No. 2340). Accordingly, when caregiving produces severe

psychological distress, marital conflict, or neglect of children's basic needs, the form of assistance should be reconsidered. Assistance may take the form of communication, companionship, prayer, healthcare support, or material contribution according to capacity, while caregiving responsibilities may be shared among siblings and extended family.

The second dimension is *hifẓ al-mal*. Members of the sandwich generation must distribute income among parents, spouses, children, healthcare, education, housing, and personal needs. Financial pressure may therefore become a significant source of family vulnerability. The principle of proportionality in QS. At-Talaq [65]: 7 provides a basis for adjusting financial assistance to actual capacity.

This interpretation is also consistent with the Prophetic teaching that charity should begin with those under one's responsibility (Al-Bukhari, 1442 AH, Hadith No. 1426). In this context, supporting parents should not result in neglecting the basic needs of spouses and children. Financial assistance can therefore be adjusted to income, while responsibilities can be distributed among siblings and other capable family members.

The relationship between *hifẓ al-nafs* and *hifẓ al-mal* is particularly important. Financial pressure can increase psychological distress, while psychological exhaustion can reduce the capacity to work and manage resources. Thus, sustainable filial responsibility requires preservation of both the caregiver's economic and psychological capacity.

***Hifẓ al-Nasl* and the Balance between Moral Responsibility and Family Well-Being**

The sandwich generation is also an issue of intergenerational continuity. In this study, *hifẓ al-nasl* is understood not only as the preservation of offspring but also as the protection of family life, education, care, affection, and future well-being. Individuals in the sandwich generation occupy a position between responsibility toward aging parents and responsibility toward their own children.

QS. An-Nisa [4]: 9 provides an important orientation:

وَلْيَحْشَ الَّذِينَ لَوْ تَرَكَوْا مِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّةً ضِعَفًا خَافُوا عَلَيْهِمْ فَلْيَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْيَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا

Meaning: *Let those who would fear for vulnerable offspring if they were to die behind them show the same concern for others. So let them be mindful of Allah and speak words of justice.*"

When read together with QS. Al-Ahqaf [46]: 15, which connects gratitude toward parents with concern for one's offspring, the verses establish a forward and backward orientation of family responsibility. Individuals are encouraged to honor the previous generation while ensuring that the next generation is not left vulnerable. From the perspective of *hifẓ al-nasl*, therefore, allocating all available resources to parents at the expense of children may create new forms of vulnerability. Protecting children's education, health, emotional well-being, and future opportunities is not contrary to filial devotion; rather, it represents another dimension of responsible family stewardship. The findings also indicate that filial devotion should not be measured solely by financial contribution. Individuals with limited resources may fulfill *birr al-walidayn* through respect, communication, prayer, emotional support, healthcare assistance, and contributions within their capacity. Those with greater financial capacity may provide greater material assistance while continuing to protect the rights of their immediate family.

Overall, the analysis demonstrates that balance emerges from the interconnected Quranic principles of filial devotion, human capacity, financial proportionality, and intergenerational protection. *Maqasid* exegesis therefore positions the sandwich generation not as a competition between the rights of parents and children, but as a multidimensional responsibility requiring the simultaneous protection of religion, life, intellect, wealth, offspring, and family well-being. In this

framework, *birr al-walidayn* retains its normative force while its implementation is directed toward sustainable family resilience and the prevention of *mafsadah*.

CONCLUSION

This study has addressed its objective of explaining children's responsibilities toward their parents in the Qur'an and analyzing the sandwich generation phenomenon through a *Maqasid* exegesis perspective. The findings demonstrate that filial responsibilities extend beyond financial support to include spiritual, moral, emotional, social, and economic dimensions. Qur'anic teachings on *birr al-walidayn* establish filial devotion as a fundamental Islamic value while also emphasizing individual capacity, proportionality, justice, and family protection. Thus, the sandwich generation can be understood as a contemporary manifestation of *birr al-walidayn*, but its fulfillment should not be understood as unlimited. Rather, filial responsibilities should be carried out in ways that maintain a balance between devotion to parents and the well-being of spouses, children, and oneself.

The novelty of this study lies in integrating *Maqasid* exegesis with the psychological dimensions of the sandwich generation. The analysis shows that *hifẓ al-nafs*, *hifẓ al-mal*, and *hifẓ al-nasl* provide a normative framework for balancing filial responsibilities with psychological well-being, economic stability, and family sustainability. This perspective extends previous discussions that have largely focused on financial, legal, or psychological dimensions by demonstrating the interconnectedness of religious obligations, individual well-being, and family welfare. The study contributes to contemporary Qur'anic and *Maqasid* studies by offering an integrative framework for understanding intergenerational responsibility and provides a conceptual basis for families, counselors, religious practitioners, and policymakers to strengthen family resilience without compromising individual well-being and social welfare.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to express our deepest gratitude to everyone who contributed to the success of this research.

DECLARATIONS

Author contribution

Samat Abdurahman: writing-original draft preparation and visualization, **Indana Rahmatika Lilirtika:** data curation, and editing, **Mustaqimah:** analysis, **Ilyas Daud:** conceptualization, **Burhanuddin:** methodology.

AI Statement

The data and the grammatical structure in this article have been validated and verified by English language experts and no AI-generated sentences are included in this article.

Funding statement

The author(s) declare that no financial support was received for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that this research was conducted without any conflict of interest in the research.

Ethical clearance

The research company has agreed to carry out the research and is willing if the results

of this research are published.

Publisher's and Journal's Note

Department of Qur'anic and Tafsir Studies, Faculty of Ushuluddin and Dakwah, Institut Ilmu Al-Qur'an (IIQ) Jakarta in collaboration with Asosiasi Ilmu al-Quran dan Tafsir (AIAT) as the publisher and Editor of Al-Fanar: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Quran dan Tafsir state that there is no conflict of interest towards this article publication.

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