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Explaining Sandwich Generation Phenomena in the Modernity Dimension

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the community's view of the phenomenon of Sandwich Generation in the dimension of modernity. The increasing number of population in Indonesia also gives rise to a new phenomenon, namely the Sandwich Generation. The Sandwich Generation phenomenon has been introduced since the 90s, especially among women who work to maintain two generations simultaneously. Responding to this ongoing phenomenon by finding out how the public responds to sandwich generation by distributing questionnaires in the form of Google Forms to various groups of people to analyze the results of the community's responses to the current phenomenon. The results of the analysis show that there are still many misconceptions regarding this phenomenon, which is considered one of the forms of child exploitation. This happens because of a lack of knowledge about how a child is obliged to his parents, being the sandwich generation is not a disgrace but a good opportunity to be devoted to both parents and must live it sincerely so that what is obtained can be a blessing.

Keywords: Sandwich Generation, Children's Obligations, Exploitation, Sandwich Phenomenon.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan dalam rangka studi eksplorasi terhadap pandangan masyarakat terkait fenomena Sandwich Generation dalam dimensi modernitas. Peningkatan jumlah kependudukan di Indonesia juga menimbulkan adanya fenomena baru yaitu adanya Sandwich Generation. Fenomena Sandwich Generation ini sudah diperkenalkan sejak tahun 90-an terutama pada kalangan wanita yang bekerja untuk menjaga dua generasi secara bersamaan. Menyikapi fenomena yang sedang terjadi ini dengan mencari tahu bagaimana tanggapan masyarakat terkait sandwich generation dengan cara menyebar kuesioner berupa Google Formulir kepada berbagai kalangan masyarakat untuk dianalisis hasil dari tanggapan para masyarakat terkait fenomena yang sedang terjadi. Hasil analisis menunjukan bahwa masih banyak misskonsepsi mengenai fenomena ini, dinilai salah satu juga bentuk dari exploitasi anak. Hal ini terjadi karena kurangnya ilmu mengenai bagaimana kewajiban seorang anak terhadap kedua orang tuanya, menjadi generasi sandwich bukan sebuah aib melainkan sebuah kesempatan yang bagus untuk bisa berbakti kepada kedua orang tua dan harus menjalaninya dengan ikhlas agar apa yang didapatkan bisa menjadi barokah.

Kata kunci: Sandwich Generasi, Kewajiban Anak, Exploitasi, Fenomena Sandwich.

INTRODUCTION

The increasing mode of demography in the 21st century has caused one of the problems to arise, namely the increasing number of the Sandwich Generation phenomenon in Indonesia (Yusmarni, 2016). The sandwich generation is those who are middle-aged adults who are involved in caring for two generations, namely children and elderly parents. This demographic change causes a change in the value of the role of children in economic terms, thus causing the role of a woman in the family to give the impression of a lack of family support in economic terms. Indirectly a child, especially working women causes structural changes in the family(A & Nor'Aznin A, 2011; Alavi et al., 2015). The family structure of the sandwich generation is included in the extended family, which is a nuclear family plus at least one grandparent, uncle and/aunt who live together (Husain & Sartika, 2021; Puspitawati, 2012). His obligation to take care of two generations at once causes frequent conflicts in meeting their economic needs (Murphy, M., & Grundy, 2003; Norulhuda Sarnon et al., 2014). This situation causes the children of the sandwich generation to get two types of parenting from two different generations. The Sandwich Generation phenomenon has been introduced since the 90s, especially among women who work to maintain two generations simultaneously (Norzareen & Nobaya, 2010; Norulhuda Sarnon et al., 2014). One of the reasons for the emergence of the sandwich generation is the inability of parents to plan for old age. Therefore, parents fail to predict income and income received in old age (Muthia et al., 2021; Wiemers & Bianchi, 2015). The dual roles and responsibilities carried out by the sandwich generation cause several challenges and have negative impacts in terms of physical, psychological, emotional, and financial burdens (Kusumaningrum, 2018; Salmon et al., 2017).

Data on women working in the sandwich generation in Indonesia according to a demographic study states that 6.42% of the total 7,009 households studied are the sandwich generation and 10.9-

11.3% are working women (Kusumaningrum, 2018). Research on 18 women working in the sandwich generation suggests that there are several strategies for balancing the roles of parenting and parenting and the field of work. The interview results stated that maintaining health and well-being, suppressing a sense of perfectionism, managing time and energy, letting go of responsibilities a little, fostering social relationships, and helping parties/parties that can ease the domestic burden. Family and work conflicts are also a concern of working women in the sandwich generation (Aazami et al., 2018). The sandwich generation is closely related to parenting, where parenting demands come from parents and children. The burden of parenting can be experienced by working women of the sandwich generation. The study on the burden of caregiving showed that 68.02% of caregivers felt very burdened and 65% of caregivers showed symptoms of depression. 62% of caregivers accept some form of violence from the parents they care for. Caregivers have the potential for physical, social and emotional burdens, economic burdens for health care, decreased sexual activity with partners. Adults aged 21-44 more often experience conflict with the elderly because knowledge, emotional maturity and self-control are still low compared to middle adults 45-59 years. Based on the results of the author's interviews with respondents, the results showed that respondents complained of being physically tired, stressed, pressure from parenting as well as office work, prone to illness, feeling sad because they could not do good parenting, despair, often angry and other negative emotions. This is because after work, women work directly to carry out parenting duties not only to children but to elderly parents (Maryam et al., 2012).

There are several definitions of social support described by experts. Zimet, Dahlem, Zimet, and Farley (1988) state that social support is the support received by the people closest to the individual including family support, friendship support, and support from special people for the individual (Zimet et al., 1988). Meanwhile, according to Sarafino (2006) social support is a form of comfort, attention, appreciation, or assistance received by individuals from other people or a group. Forms of social support can be in the form of emotional support, appreciation support, instrumental support, information support, and group support. According to Zimet et al., (1988) social support consists of three aspects, namely: 1) Family Support, namely family support, namely support that comes from the family; 2) Special People Support, namely special people support is support that comes from people who are considered special; 3) Friends support, namely peer support is support that comes from peers (Zimet et al., 1988). The current productive age group is the Sandwich Generation, namely the productive young generation who must contribute to the economic needs of grandparents, parents, siblings and other families. With a high kinship culture, the extended family that must be borne is very broad. In everyday life, this can be seen from the portrait of the productive age where almost 70% of the productive age group lives in three generations. Based on this and coupled with the COVID-19 pandemic which has caused disparities in various aspects of life, especially in the economic field. Then many teenagers in productive age who feel the condition of the gap with the rise of posts related to the Sandwich Generation that re-emerged in 2020 in Indonesia. Many urban teenagers feel that they are a Sandwich Generation. Therefore, this study focuses more on the views of the general public which is devoted to the productive age group on the existence of this Sandwich Generation phenomenon. With this research, it is hoped that it will be able to find out how far the respondents' knowledge of the existence of this phenomenon is. It can also identify whether respondents have experienced this and how they deal with and overcome the gap conditions they experience.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research was conducted in a quantitative descriptive manner which was used to describe, explain, and summarize the conditions or phenomena that occurred according to the events that occurred as they were. This study aims to describe the phenomenon that is happening when the research takes place, carried out in accordance with a case study approach, where data analysis was carried out by examining the answers collected from research subjects who had filled out Google Forms as well as those who had been interviewed.

This research was conducted to find and find out how the opinion or views of the community regarding the "Sandwich Generation Phenomenon" that occurs in society, especially in the productive age. This research was conducted in a quantitative descriptive manner. This quantitative descriptive research is used to describe, explain, and summarize the conditions or phenomena that occur according to events that occur as they are. This study aims to describe the phenomenon that is happening when the research takes place. The researcher uses this research design because the researcher wants to know and give a true picture of the "Sandwich Generation Phenomenon" that occurs in society. This research was conducted using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. According to Sugiyono (2010) that the quantitative approach is research based on the philosophy of positivism to examine a particular population or sample and take random samples by collecting data using instruments, the data analysis is statistical. According to Sugiyono (2013) the qualitative approach is research based on the philosophy of postpositivism, used in natural object conditions, and the researcher is the key instrument. The sampling of data sources is carried out by purposive sampling, namely sampling by providing special characteristics that are suitable for the purpose study.

The data analysis technique was carried out in accordance with a case study approach, where data analysis was carried out by examining the answers collected from research subjects who had filled out Google Forms as well as those who had been interviewed. The answers and interviews from the research subjects were organized by identifying and grouping them according to the research objectives to be achieved. The intended research subjects are people of productive age. The sample in quantitative research based on survey results through Google Forms is students and also the general public of productive age. While the sample in qualitative research is based on the results of interviews conducted with the general public of productive age who are currently or have experienced the Sandwich Generation phenomenon which will be studied.

The method used by researchers to obtain data is by creating a Google Form which is then distributed through social media WhatsApp Group, Facebook and just a few samples to conducting interviews. Data collection techniques were carried out by distributing Google Forms containing questions and conducting interviews to directly ask about the events studied by the researchers. Before conducting the interview, the researcher first arranged an instrument for the interview in the form of questions by referring to the interview grid. The research instrument in the tradition of qualitative research is the researcher himself using tools in the form of notes and electronic media. The results of the data that appear in this study are in the form of words and there are also numbers as an indicator of the number. Quantitative data results from Google Forms responses are presented in statistical form. This study uses descriptive statistics, namely data analysis by describing or describing the data that has been collected as it is without intending to make conclusions that apply to the public. The data from the interviews were processed by means of data analysis through data reduction. Reducing data is summarizing, choosing the main things, focusing on the things that are important, looking for themes

and patterns and discarding unnecessary ones. Then, the data is presented in the form of a brief description. Furthermore, the results of the presentation of the data in the form of text are made conclusions based on the results of research that has been done.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of the questionnaire from Google Forms that have been distributed get 32 respondents, most of whom are students and the rest are the general public who are already working. This questionnaire has been distributed for two weeks. The following are the results of a questionnaire that has been filled out by 32 respondents.

Table 1. Results of Respondents' Answers

Items	Answer Choices	Number Of Answers	Percentage
	20-25	31	96.9%
Age	26-30	1	3,1%
	Student	27	84,4%
Profession	Other than Student	5	15,5%
	Bachelor	30	93,8%
Status	Married	2	6,3%
	Father	16	50%
That Backs The Economic Needs Of The Family	Father and Mother	9	28,1%
	Mother	3	9,4%
	Brother	2	6,3%
	Husband	2	6,3%
Number Of	1-5	31	97%
Responsibilities In The Family (Unmarried And Unworked)	6-10	1	3%
What does it include to cover the family's economic needs?	Yes	6	18,8%
	No	26	81,3%
	Yes	8	25%
Do you know the term	Only ever heard	13	40,6%
Sandwich Generation	Never	11 34,4%	
	are experiencing	2 5,2%	
Have you ever	Ever experienced	4	12,5%

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experienced	this Never experienced	26	81,3%				
condition?							

From the data from the results of filling out the google form, it can be seen that of the 32 respondents 31 people were on average around 20-25 years old with a percentage of 96.9%, while 1 respondent was 26-30 years old with a percentage of 3.1%. From these data it can be seen that as many as 27 respondents with a percentage of 84.4% are students. Meanwhile, the other 5 respondents, each with a percentage of 3.1%, already have a job. The occupations of each of the five respondents include businessmen, laborers, honorary teachers, educators, and housewives. From these data, it can be seen that as many as 30 respondents with a percentage of 93.8% are single, while the remaining 2 respondents with a percentage of 6.3% are married. Based on the answers of these respondents, most of the total respondents, as many as 16 respondents with a percentage of 50% answered that the father is the one who bears the economic needs of the family. A total of 9 respondents with a percentage of 28.1% answered father and mother and 3 respondents with a percentage of 9.4% answered mother. While the remaining 2 respondents with a percentage of 6.3% answered brother and the remaining 2 respondents answered husband as the person who bears the economic needs of the family.

From the table questions have various answers from each respondent. Most of the answers from respondents, namely 11 respondents with a percentage of 34.4% have 2 dependents in their family with the condition that they are unmarried family members and have not worked. A total of 7 respondents have 3 dependents, 6 respondents have a dependent family, 4 respondents have 5 dependents, 3 respondents have 4 dependents, and the remaining respondent has 9 dependents in his family. Based on the answers to these questions, most of the respondents were 26 respondents who did not cover the economic needs of their families, while the remaining 6 respondents with a percentage of 18.8% included those who covered the economic needs of their families. Based on the answers to the questions posed for research on the Sandwich Generation phenomenon, most of the respondents as many as 13 people had heard of the term but did not know further about the meaning of the term. A total of 11 respondents did not know the term at all. While the remaining 8 respondents know the term well. Based on the answers to these questions, most of the 26 respondents had never experienced any conditions related to the Sandwich Generation phenomenon. As many as 4 respondents with a percentage of 12.5% had experienced this condition, while the other 2 respondents were experiencing conditions related to the Sandwich Generation phenomenon.

The next question is to ask respondents' opinions regarding the Sandwich Generation phenomenon. Based on the answers from the respondents, most of them answered that this phenomenon was a bad thing and a heavy burden for those who experienced it because they had to work hard to sacrifice everything to meet the economic needs of the family. While some of the rest answered that this phenomenon is understandable because during this pandemic condition the economy is declining or the family does need additional income. The next question is about the respondents' views regarding the phenomenon of "Sandwich Generation" which is a bad thing or a normal thing. Based on respondents' answers, some respondents answered that this phenomenon is a bad thing because it can affect psychology and cause stress. While some answered that the phenomenon is normal or good or bad depending on the condition of the person who is experiencing it.

The next question relates to whether the phenomenon of "Sandwich Generation" can have a bad impact on the condition of that person or future generations. Based on the answers, most of the respondents answered that this phenomenon can have a bad impact on both people who experience it or even generations to come because it is a heavy burden and has an impact on psychological conditions that cause fatigue to stress. While some of the remaining respondents answered that the bad impact of this phenomenon depends on the person who experiences it, if you are sincere and can manage your time well, it will not be a burden. The last question is the respondent's opinion regarding the handling to overcome the phenomenon of "Sandwich Generation". Most respondents answered that the solution to this phenomenon is to prepare for financial needs from the start, which can be done by saving, having old-age insurance, or by managing finances well.

The results of interviews with 2 resource persons who have experienced and are currently experiencing the Sandwich Generation incident. According to the results of interviews with the first interviewees, those who have experienced being a Sandwich Generation to become a Sandwich Generation are not easy to do. There are challenges that must be faced at the beginning of living it. However, according to the first informant, if you carry out the role as Sandwich Generation sincerely, it will be easy to deal with. According to him, the solution to prevent the Sandwich Generation event from happening is to plan financially, both now and for the future. Adhering to religion is important to deal with the Sandwich Generation phenomenon, according to this first resource person, because sharing and being devoted to parents is not only an obligation, it can also lighten the burden on the family.

According to the results of interviews with the second interviewee, who is experiencing being a Sandwich Generation, he said that the Sandwich Generation phenomenon is not a bad thing but this condition is needed to train resilience and ability in dealing with problems. According to the second resource person, the solution in dealing with this phenomenon is to plan well financially in order to have reserve funds for the future. Just like the first informant, according to the second informant, adhering to religion is very important to deal with the Sandwich Generation phenomenon because a strong belief in His help is very important in carrying out the role of the Sandwich Generation so that they can carry out sincerely and full of blessings.

Based on the results of data from respondents and sources, it was found that the Sandwich Generation phenomenon can feel heavy to the point of disturbing the psychology of someone who runs it if the person does not carry it out sincerely. If someone who is experiencing being a Sandwich Generation carries out his role sincerely and knows that what he is doing is a form of filial piety to his parents, he will not feel burdened. To avoid this Sandwich Generation phenomenon, several things can also be done, such as preparing financially well and having savings for old age.

Based on the results of research that has been carried out from 32 respondents, most of whom are students and the rest are the general public who are already working. Also by conducting interviews with 2 people who have been and are currently experiencing conditions as a Sandwich Generation. Where in this study, researchers focus more on the public's view of the Sandwich Generation phenomenon. Therefore, this study aims to determine the knowledge and views of the general public on the existence of this phenomenon, how far the respondents are aware of the existence of this phenomenon and how the views and opinions after the respondent is presented with a general description of the conditions experienced by a Sandwich Generation, the respondent has experienced

or even experienced is in that condition. In general, based on the questionnaires that have been distributed, it shows that about 65.6% of the total respondents are familiar with the term Sandwich Generation. Then as many as 4 respondents had experienced this condition, and as many as 2 people were experiencing the condition as a Sandwich Generation. Regarding the view of the existence of the Sandwich Generation, most of the respondents stated that the existence of this condition is a bad thing and can lead to psychological, moral and material problems.

The majority of respondents do not accept this Sandwich Generation phenomenon. The sandwich generation has a higher level of stress because it is required to balance the role of caring for children and their parents (Tashandra, 2021). The stress level experienced by the sandwich generation not only affects personal relationships with partners, children and families, but also affects their own well-being. Mental health problems experienced by the sandwich generation include physical and mental fatigue, sleep disturbances, feelings of guilt, constant worry, loss of interest in activities they enjoy, to anxiety and depression (Yanuar et al., 2021). This is natural because the respondents come from various ages and circles, so the results obtained can vary. This also happens because of the lack of in-depth information about the role of parents and the obligations of children to their parents, so this view of the sandwich generation tends to corner the exploitation of children, even though if we examine more deeply about the obligations of children to both parents, the phenomenon of sandwich generation this will be more acceptable among the general public.

Being a Sandwich Generation is also not a disgrace or a shameful thing. Precisely with this condition, it is very good to increase one's enthusiasm in earning a halal living and blessing to be shared with our parents and siblings. This is in line with the research conducted by Sarnon et al (2014) which revealed that a sandwich generation with relatively small income considers that experiencing the condition of being a sandwich generation is a mandate from God and the responsibility of children to their parents (N Sarnon et al., 2014). This perception causes most of the sandwich generation to not feel burdened from the aspect of responsibility they are living even though they do not have freedom from the psychological aspect of freedom.

In this study, more emphasis is placed on how the general public responds to the sandwich generation phenomenon that is currently happening, especially during a pandemic like this. In contrast to several previous studies, the researchers put more emphasis on something very specific, such as the sandwich generation research: the burden of parenting and social support for working women, how the psychological state of the sandwich generation actors, which are not only young people and adults, even adults. Even old people are still the generation of this sandwich. One of them is a study conducted by Kusumaningrum in 2018, where the research aims to find a relationship between social support and the burden of parenting on women working in the sandwich generation which shows that the higher the perception of social support, the lower the care burden on the respondents.

The solution to address the sandwich generation phenomenon is to provide more optimal education regarding the role of parents, the role of children, then the obligations of a child to parents which have been regulated in the Qur'an and hadith are emphasized again, so that when we become the perpetrators of the Sandwich Generation there will be no ashamed or depressed, but sincere in living everything we are obliged to do as human beings. And the need to spread research on the Sandwich Generation so that more articles can be read so that it can increase our knowledge of this Sandwich Generation. The existence of the Sandwich Generation does not only have detrimental

aspects for the victims or those who are experiencing the Sandwich Generation phenomenon, such as mental health and heavy life pressures. If this is seen from a religious perspective, especially in the Islamic perspective, it shows that this phenomenon is an opportunity for a Sandwich Generation to be devoted to both parents or this practice is called *birrul walidain* (Al-Adawi, 1998; Al-Qardhawi, 2004; Islahuddin et al., 2021; Setiawan, 2021). Bearing the burden of the family including parents, children and wife is actually called giving charity and has a very big virtue in the sight of Allah SWT. Al Qadhi Abu Syuja in Tuasikal (2018) explains that a child is obliged to provide for his parents if the conditions are met that his parents are in poor condition and are no longer able to earn a living. Or the parents are poor and have lost their minds, while living for the child becomes obligatory if it meets the requirements if the child is still small (not yet mature) and poor; poor and not yet strong enough to work; and poor and out of his mind. Then in a hadith it states that "The best of humans are those who are most beneficial to other humans" (HR. Ahmad, ath-Tabrani, ad-daraquthni), because giving benefits is a personality that a Muslim must have and in fact the benefits return to him. alone. So the term sandwich generation is not used by Muslims but the Anfuahum Linnas generation (a generation that is beneficial for other humans).

CONCLUSION

The phenomenon of sandwich generation is one of the problems faced by Indonesian society today. The flow of globalization and the acceleration of technology has also become one of the triggering factors for the development of this kind of thinking among the people. The majority of respondents think that the sandwich generation has a significant impact on their psychological burden, which is caused by the economic burden they face when they have to support several people including elderly parents. But even so, from an Islamic point of view, we see that the sandwich generation phenomenon is actually considered noble, especially as a child, it is proper to be devoted to both parents with all their endeavors. Islam teaches that honoring both parents is a bridge to reach the pleasure of Allah SWT. however, Islam still teaches the principle of at-tawazun, meaning that there must be a balance both individually and collectively.

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