

Date Received : October 2025  
Date Accepted : November 2025  
Date Published : November 2025

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## THE PSYCHOLOGICAL BASIS OF BIRR AL-WALIDAYN (A Thematic Analysis of Quranic Verse 14–15 In Surah Luqman)

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**Kata Kunci:**

Psikologi Ibu, *Birrul  
Walidain*, Surah  
Luqman

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**ABSTRAK**

Hadis tentang Jahimah yang meminta izin kepada Nabi Muhammad untuk ikut berperang, namun diperintahkan untuk tetap bersama ibunya karena “surga berada di bawah telapak kakinya”, menegaskan nilai luhur bakti kepada ibu. Prinsip moral ini juga tercermin dalam Surah Luqman ayat 14–15, ketika Allah menggambarkan beratnya perjuangan seorang ibu selama kehamilan dan penyapihan sebagai *wahnun ‘alā wahnin* (“lemah di atas kelemahan”) serta memerintahkan anak untuk bersyukur kepada kedua orang tua. Penelitian ini bertujuan menelaah landasan psikologis perintah Qur’ani tentang *birrul wâlidain* (berbakti kepada kedua orang tua) dalam Surah Luqman ayat 14–15 melalui perspektif psikologi maternal dan psikologi humanistik. Dengan menggunakan metode studi kepustakaan dan pendekatan deskriptif-analitis, penelitian ini mengkaji dua aspek utama: pertama, perspektif psikologi maternal yang menyoroti tantangan emosional dan fisik yang dialami ibu selama masa kehamilan, persalinan, dan penyusuan sebagai faktor pembentuk empati dan perkembangan moral anak; dan kedua, perspektif psikologi humanistik yang menekankan kesadaran, empati, serta cinta tanpa syarat sebagai esensi dari tindakan berbakti kepada orang tua. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa perintah Qur’ani untuk menghormati orang tua—terutama ibu—tidak hanya merupakan kewajiban moral, tetapi juga pengakuan terhadap ketahanan psikologis seorang ibu sebagai dasar terciptanya hubungan harmonis antara orang tua dan anak. Dengan demikian, pesan moral Surah Luqman ayat 14–15 tidak sekadar bersifat etis, tetapi juga mencerminkan hubungan timbal balik emosional dan spiritual antara ibu dan anak, sekaligus menegaskan relevansi *birrul wâlidain* dalam menumbuhkan kasih sayang keluarga dan pembentukan akhlak mulia..

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**Keywords:**

Maternal psychology,  
*Birr al-walidayn*,  
Surah Luqman

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**ABSTRACTS**

The Hadith about Jahimah, who sought the Prophet Muhammad's permission to participate in battle but was instructed instead to stay with his mother because "Paradise lies beneath her feet," underscores the noble value of devotion to one's mother. This virtue is also reflected in Surah Luqman (31:14-15), where God describes the mother's struggle during pregnancy and weaning as *wahnun 'alā wahnin* ("weakness upon weakness") and commands children to show gratitude to their parents. This study aims to examine the psychological foundation of the Qur'anic injunction of *birrul wâlidain* (devotion to parents) in Surah Luqman 31:14-15 through the perspectives of maternal psychology and humanistic psychology. Employing a library research method and a descriptive-analytical approach, the study explores two main aspects: first, the maternal psychological perspective, which highlights the emotional and physical challenges experienced by mothers during pregnancy, childbirth, and breastfeeding as formative factors in developing empathy and moral awareness in children; and second, the humanistic perspective, which emphasizes consciousness, empathy, and unconditional love as the essence of filial devotion. The findings reveal that the Qur'anic command to honor one's parents—particularly the mother—constitutes not only a moral obligation but also an acknowledgment of maternal psychological resilience as the foundation for a harmonious parent-child relationship. Consequently, the moral message of Surah Luqman 31:14-15 transcends ethical instruction, reflecting an emotional and spiritual reciprocity between mother and child and reaffirming the relevance of *birrul wâlidain* in fostering familial affection and the cultivation of virtuous character.

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## A. INTRODUCTION

In the era of globalisation, children tend to be more open to information from outside sources, especially through social media. However, because their reasoning skills are not yet fully developed, they are easily influenced by negative things, as they do not yet have the ability to properly filter information. One example of this phenomenon is the spread of the term toxic parenting, which refers to parenting styles that are accused of failing to meet children's physical, psychological, and emotional needs, thereby negatively impacting their development (Padilah & Septiani, 2023). In practice, this term is often overused (over-labelling). As explained by Psychology Today, the word 'toxic' is now often used loosely to describe any form of emotional discomfort between children and parents, not just situations that are truly destructive (Streep, 2023). As a result, many teenagers tend to label their parents as toxic parents simply because of normal conflicts or differences of opinion, leading to rebellious and disrespectful behaviour. They even hide behind this label to justify their behaviour.

One viral case that recently shocked Indonesia in November 2024 was that of a teenager who killed his father and grandmother in the Cilandak area of South Jakarta (Noroyono, 2024). This incident indicates moral degradation among some young people in Indonesia. Therefore, efforts are needed to build character and strengthen moral values, particularly those related to *birrul walidain* (being dutiful to both parents).

Based on these conditions, the author considers it necessary to conduct research that examines in depth the importance of *birrul walidain* from the perspective of the Qur'an. Indonesia, as a country with a Muslim majority, should make the values of the Qur'an the moral foundation of family life. However, the implementation of the teachings of *birrul walidain* in society still faces various challenges, especially in the context of social and psychological changes among the younger generation. On the other hand, studies that specifically examine the correlation between the psychological condition of parents—especially mothers—and the obligation of *birrul walidain* as stated in QS. Luqman is still limited. This is the basis for further research on this topic.

Based on the above background, the research question in this study stems from the main question of how QS. Luqman: 14 describes the biological and psychological struggles of a mother as the basis for the command of *birrul walidain*. In this case, it is important to examine the relevance of the maternal psychology approach in understanding the meaning of the expression *wahnān 'ala wahnin* used in the verse. In addition, it is necessary to examine how humanistic psychology can explain the relationships among empathy, unconditional love, and the obligation to be devoted to parents, especially mothers, in shaping children's values and emotional relationships with their mothers.

This study aims to explore the meaning of QS. Luqman: 14-15 through a thematic interpretation approach combined with a psychological perspective, particularly humanistic psychology. This approach is interdisciplinary, integrating Islamic studies (Quranic interpretation) with psychology to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the value of *birrul walidain*. This study also aims to analyse the relationship between the psychological condition of mothers during pregnancy, childbirth, and breastfeeding with the obligation of *birrul walidain*. In addition, the discussion explains how children's awareness and empathy for their mothers' struggles can serve as a moral foundation for the obligation to be devoted to parents within the framework of humanistic psychology.

## B. METHOD

This study uses a literature review research method with a descriptive-analytical approach. The literature review was conducted by collecting data and information from various primary and secondary sources, such as books, journals, documents, archives, photographs, manuscripts, historical records, encyclopaedias, and biographies. According to Nashruddin Baidan and Erwati Aziz, an important thing to note in literature research is that all materials used must be directly related to the Qur'an and its interpretation (Faruq & Suharjianto, 2019). Meanwhile, the descriptive approach involves describing primary ideas objectively (as they are), and the analytical approach involves systematically thinking step by step according to a certain train of thought (logic). Descriptive analysis means analysing data to describe, display and summarise data clearly (Hakim et al., 2025).

In addition, the author also uses the *maudhu'i* (thematic) method in the study of verse interpretation, which according to Ziyad Khalil Muhammad Ad-Daghawin is a method of interpreting the Qur'an by collecting verses that have similar meanings or themes of discussion (Junaedi, 2016). According to Musthafa Muslim, thematic interpretation is the science of studying one or more surahs to understand a matter based on the perspective of *maqashid al-Qur'an* (Sari, 2022).

From the above definitions of thematic interpretation, it can be concluded that the thematic interpretation method is an effort to understand and explain the contents of the Qur'an by collecting verses from various related chapters into the topic to be discussed, then analysing the contents of those verses (Cahyono et al., 2024).

In his thematic interpretation, Musthafa Muslim divides it into three forms, namely: thematic words, thematic Al-Qur'an, and thematic Surah (Prastiwi, 2022). Given the thematic diversity above, this study employs a thematic interpretation of the surah.

In addition, this study also uses a psychological approach. Psychology comes from the Greek words 'psyche,' meaning soul, and 'logos,' meaning science. In terms of terminology, psychology is the science that studies aspects related to the human soul, including symptoms, processes, and the background that influences them (Rahman & Azizah, 2023). Thus, the psychological approach is a perspective in psychology that focuses on the analysis of aspects of the human psyche. In religious studies, this approach aims to understand the inner condition of individuals in practising their religious teachings and to examine the relationship between the psychological dimensions of humans and religion as objects of study (Hartono & Suharjianto, 2024).

This study discusses the correlation between the psychological condition of mothers from pregnancy to weaning, with an emphasis on the value of *birrul walidain*, especially as stated in Surah Luqman, towards mothers. This study uses the theoretical foundations of humanistic psychology and maternity psychology. Humanistic psychology is used to interpret the human values in the verse, especially regarding awareness, empathy, and children's self-actualisation as a form of appreciation for the obligation to be devoted to parents. Meanwhile, maternity psychology is used to analyse the emotional and psychological dynamics experienced by mothers during pregnancy, childbirth, and breastfeeding, which form the empirical basis for understanding the meaning of a mother's struggle as mentioned in QS. Luqman: 14-15. By combining these two theories, this study aims to establish a conceptual link between mothers' psychological experiences and the moral guidance of *birrul walidain*, as understood through the Qur'an.

## C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Islam pays great attention to the relationship between children and parents. One form of this attention is the command of *birrul walidain*, which is mentioned in one of the wisdom verses in Surah Luqman, verses 14-15. In this section, the author describes the results of research obtained through a thematic interpretation of Surah Luqman, verses 14-15, which was then analysed from a maternal and humanistic psychological perspective. This discussion aims to explain the relationship between the meaning of *birrul walidain* and the psychological condition of mothers as described in the verse, and its relevance to the character-building of children in the context of Islamic education.

### Study of QS. Luqman and Thematic Keywords

#### 1. Context and Relevance of QS. Luqman in Research

QS. Luqman is the 31st surah in the order of the *Mushaf Al-Qur'an*. This surah is classified as Makkiyah, except for verses 27, 28, and 29, which according to some accounts are classified as Madaniyah verses (Asyur, 1984), and consists of 34 verses. This surah is named Luqman because it contains the story and advice of Luqman to his son, which is full of moral and spiritual values. Information about the character and context of the revelation of this surah is important in research because it helps to understand the moral and theological background of the message of *birrul walidain* contained in verse 14 and 15. By understanding its Makkiyah context, researchers can interpret the call to devote oneself to parents as not only a social matter but also part of the formation of faith and personality in tawhid, the foundation of Islamic teachings. Therefore, understanding the structure, theme, and context of QS. Luqman is an important basis for linking theological and psychological aspects in the discussion of *birrul walidain*.

Luqman was a wise man. Qatadah said, 'It is said that he was once given the choice between prophethood or wisdom, so he chose wisdom.' Luqman lived for a thousand years and met Prophet Dawud *alaihissalam* and gained knowledge from him (Al-Qurthubi, 1964). His wisdom was immortalised by Allah in a surah named after him, Surah Luqman.

*Asbabun nuzul* (the reason for the revelation) of verse 14, as narrated by Sa'ad bin Malik, is that this verse was revealed about him. He said he was a man truly devoted to his mother. When Sa'd bin Abi Waqqash embraced Islam, his mother strongly opposed him. She said to Sa'd: 'O Sa'd, what has made you turn away from the religion of your forefathers? You must abandon your new religion. If not, I will stop eating and drinking until I die, so that people will call you a murderer of your mother.' Hearing this threat, Sa'd remained steadfast and replied: "O Mother, do not do that. I will never abandon my religion, no matter what happens."

His mother then carried out her intention, not eating or drinking for a day and a night, until her body became weak. She continued her action for three days, and every morning her condition worsened. Seeing his mother's condition, Sa'd said firmly: "O Mother, know this, by Allah, even if you had a hundred lives, and those lives were taken one by one, I would still not abandon this religion." After hearing her son's resolve, the mother finally agreed to eat again (Katsir, 1431 H).

As with most Makkah surahs, Surah Luqman contains commands to worship Allah alone, prohibitions against polytheism, and exhortations to good character. In

verses 14-15, Allah explains the rights of parents after explaining the rights of Allah in the form of the prohibition of polytheism (associating anything with Him) in verse 13. Scholars note that the command to be dutiful to both parents is often mentioned together with the command to believe in the Oneness of Allah in many verses, such as in Surah An-Nisa' verse 36, where Allah says: 'Worship Allah and do not associate anything with Him. Be dutiful to your parents.' This shows how important it is to be dutiful to both parents (Baz, n.d.). Furthermore, at the end of the verse, Allah clarifies the urgency of being devoted to both of them with the command, 'Be grateful to Me and to your parents.' Ibn Jarir al-Tabari interprets the command to be grateful in this verse as a form of recognition of the two types of blessings received by humans: first, blessings from Allah that are direct, and second, blessings through the intermediary of both parents. According to him, Allah commands humans to be grateful for His blessings and for the services of their parents who have raised their children with patience and compassion, despite various difficulties, until the children reach maturity and strength in their lives (At-Tabari, n.d.).

The general purpose or *maqashid* of this letter is to explain the wisdom or prudence inherent in Sharia law, citing Luqman as an example when explaining advice to his son (Team, 2016). This surah also calls for faith in Allah and avoidance of polytheism, commands good morals and forbids evil (Syarafuddin, n.d.).

As-Syairazi categorises the content of Surah Luqman into five main themes, interconnected and forming a complete message structure.

First, the surah begins with the mention of the *muqatha'ah* letters, which are a sign of the Qur'an's glory and majesty. These letters indicate that the Qur'an is a miracle from Allah, as guidance and special mercy for believers.

Second, Surah Luqman explains the various signs of Allah's greatness that are evident in the creation of the universe. Among the manifestations of His power are the creation of the heavens without pillars, the creation of mountains that stabilise the earth, the diversity of living creatures, the descent of rain from the sky, and the growth of various types of plants as a source of life for humans and animals.

Third, this surah contains Luqman's advice to his son, which contains messages of monotheism and the formation of noble character. This advice teaches the fundamental values of Islam, from faith in Allah to ethical conduct in daily life.

Fourth, there is an affirmation of the importance of worshipping Allah alone and a strict prohibition against shirk. Tawhid is the main principle in religion, and associating partners with Allah is considered a great injustice that destroys the relationship between humans and their Lord.

Fifth, Surah Luqman raises the theme of the Last Day as a reminder for humans not to be deceived by the glamour of the world and to always prepare themselves for eternal life. By remembering the hereafter, a person will be wiser in dealing with the world and more motivated to do good deeds. All of these themes illustrate that Surah Luqman is not only rich in teachings of faith and morals, but also contains profound reflections on life in this world and the hereafter (As-Syairazi, 2013).

## **2. *Birrul Walidain* in Surah Luqman**

From the entire surah Luqman, verses 14 and 15 discuss *birrul walidain*. Allah *Subhanahu wata'ala* says:

وَصَبَّأْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ وَهْنًا عَلَى وَهْنٍ وَفِصَالَهُ فِي سِنَيْنِ إِلَى سِنٍ مُّكْتَمًا لِئَلَّا يَتَّبِعَ مَذَاهِبَ الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ ۚ إِنَّكَ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ لَعَلِيمٌ ۚ 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.

Which means: “And We have enjoined upon man (to be good) to his parents. His mother carried him in weakness upon weakness, and weaned him in two years. (Our command is,) ‘Be grateful to Me and to your parents.’ To Me is your return.”

“If both of them compel you to associate with Me something about which you have no knowledge, do not obey them, but treat them kindly in this world and follow the path of those who return to Me. Then, to Me you will return, and I will inform you of what you used to do.” (Team, 2022)

The keywords discussing this theme in QS. Luqman is:

a. Wahnan ‘ala wahnin.

*Al-Wahnu* means weakness in work or a matter, as well as weakness in bones and so on. In the Qur'an, Allah mentions *وَهْنًا عَلَى وَهْنٍ*, This means weakness upon weakness, namely that her condition deteriorated over time due to her pregnancy. It also means effort upon effort (Ibn Manzbur, 1414 H).

b. Al-Fishal.

*Al-Fishal* is *Al-Fitham*, which means weaning. Allah *Ta'ala* says: ‘The period of pregnancy and weaning is thirty months.’

This means that the period of a woman's pregnancy until the child is weaned from breastfeeding is thirty months. The phrase *faṣalat al-mar'ah waladaha* means ‘a woman has weaned her child (Ibn Manzbur, 1414 H).’ Ibn Kathir said when interpreting the sentence *وَفِصَالَهُ فِي سِنَيْنِ*: That is, raising them (educating them) and breastfeeding them for two years after giving birth (Katsir, 1431 H).

c. Syukur.

According to the Lisanul Arab dictionary, gratitude is acknowledging the kindness of others and spreading it (Ibn Manzbur, 1414 H). In the study of Qur'anic exegesis, exegetes often highlight the concept of gratitude as a central theme that is not only understood as an expression of thanks to Allah, but also as a form of deep awareness, acceptance of His provisions, and wise use of blessings (Asmoro & Nurrohim, 2025). As-Sa'di states in his commentary that being grateful to Allah in verse 14 means worshipping only Allah, fulfilling His rights, and not using the blessings He has given to commit sins. As for being grateful to one's parents, this is shown by treating them well with gentle words, polite speech, kind deeds, a humble attitude, and by honouring and respecting them both. This also includes fulfilling their needs and avoiding any words or actions that may hurt their feelings (As-Sa'di, 2000).

### **Maternal and Humanistic Psychological Approaches to the Concept of *Birrul Walidain***

Verses 14-15 in Surah Luqman present an important message about the obligation of *birrul walidain* (being dutiful to both parents) in a very powerful form that touches on the psychological aspects of human beings. In the midst of Luqman's series of advice to his son, Allah inserts His words directly, shifting from Luqman's narrative in verses 12-13 to divine revelation (spoken by Allah) in verses 14-15, and then the verses that follow return to Luqman's narrative. This shift in narrative is not unrelated; rather, it has a clear correlation and great wisdom.

The first lesson is that in verse 14, Allah highlights the biological and psychological sacrifices experienced by parents, especially mothers, in the process of conceiving, giving birth, breastfeeding, and raising children. Therefore, gratitude to parents is expressed through *birrul walidain*. Allah explicitly commands, 'Be grateful to Me and to your parents.' This statement indicates that, in addition to being grateful to Allah as the source of all blessings, a child is also obliged to be grateful to their parents, who are the intermediaries in bringing about these blessings through their struggles and sacrifices (Team, 2024).

The second lesson is that the mention of the will to do good to parents in Luqman's advice emphasises that, although parents have great rights that must be respected, obedience to them is not justified if it leads to polytheism. This is because polytheism is the greatest sin and is highly despicable (As-Shabuni, 1997).

Furthermore, the use of the term '*al-insan*' (human beings) in this verse indicates that the message conveyed is not only addressed to Luqman and his son, but applies universally. This is in line with the rule of interpretation '*al-'ibratu bi-'umum al-lafzh la bi-khusus al-sabab*', which states that the law or message in a verse is based on the generality of its wording, not on the specificity of the reason for its revelation. Thus, the command to be grateful and devoted to parents applies to all of humanity without exception, confirming that this is a divine command that transcends mere human advice.

In order to explore the deeper meaning of such verses, exegetes are required to master the rules of interpretation, which include an appreciation of the styles of the Qur'an, an understanding of its origins, an unveiling of its rhetorical secrets, and a mastery of the linguistic rules that compose it (AN, 2021).

Rules such as '*al-'ibratu bi-'umum al-lafzh...*' can only be properly understood and applied if an interpreter has a solid linguistic foundation and sensitivity to the implied and explicit meanings in the text.

This understanding is also important so that the noble values in this surah, such as respect for parents, are understood not only on a textual level but also in a comprehensive spiritual and psychological context.

This verse contains the value of humanity psychology, as theorised by Carl Rogers, that unconditional love is the foundation for the formation of a healthy personality (Zamzami & Putri, 2024). Allah acknowledges the sacrifices of mothers who endure weakness after weakness during pregnancy, then breastfeed for two years. This is a form of affection and emotional resilience that is at the core of maternal psychology (Chodorow, 2023). This love and sacrifice form the basis for commanding gratitude to Allah and to both parents. Even in extreme circumstances, when parents force their children to associate partners with Allah, children are not justified in being disobedient; rather, they are still commanded to treat them with kindness. This emphasises that *birrul walidain* is a universal human value that is not negated by differences in belief, but is still practised as long as it does not conflict with Allah's commands.

### **Integrative Analysis Thematic Interpretation and Psychology in QS. Luqman: 14-15**

The commandment of *birrul walidain* not only has a theological dimension but is also closely related to the psychological dynamics of a mother undergoing pregnancy, childbirth, and breastfeeding. This integrative analysis attempts to combine QS

interpretation results. Luqman verses 14–15 through maternal and humanistic psychological perspectives to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the meaning of *birrul walidain*. This approach not only examines the theological aspects of the verse but also relates it to mothers' psychological experiences and their implications for children's character formation.

### 1. Interpretation of QS. Luqman: 14-15

The Word of Allah:

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ

What this means is that We have made it obligatory upon him and We have made it a testament for him, for which We will hold him accountable, whether he keeps it or not. So We have made it a testament for him '(to do good) to his parents'.

The Word of Allah:

حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ وَهْنًا عَلَى وَهْنٍ

In this verse, Allah emphasises the psychological adaptation experienced by mothers during pregnancy, childbirth, and breastfeeding, which is described by the term *wahnan ala wahnin* or weakness upon weakness. As-Sa'di, when interpreting this verse, explains that 'the mother has carried him in a state of weakness upon weakness,' meaning in a state of misery and increasing misery. She continues to experience suffering starting from when the foetus is still in her womb, such as nausea, pain, weakness, heaviness, and changes in her condition. Then she experiences the extraordinary pain of childbirth (As-Sa'di, 2000).

The Word of Allah:

وَفِصَالُهُ فِي عَامَيْنِ

*Al-Fishal* is weaning. After going through a difficult and exhausting pregnancy and childbirth, his mother 'weaned him after (the child was) two years old,' during which time the child remained under his mother's care, education, and nursing. Is it not then only natural that a child should be encouraged to do good to his mother, who has endured suffering with love for his sake, and be advised to be truly devoted to her?

"Be grateful to Me" by worshipping Me, fulfilling My rights, and not using My blessings to disobey Me. "And (be grateful) to your parents" with all good deeds and words (As-Sa'di, 2000). The words of gratitude to both parents are a testimony or proof of the command of *birrul walidain* in the verse. Linguistically, *Al-Birru* means kindness and generosity. The opposite of *Al-Birru* is *Al-Uquq* (disobedience). In terms of terminology, *birrul walidain* means to do good (*ihsan*) to both of them. Ibnul Atsir said: "*Al-Birru* with a *kasrah* is *Al-Ihsan*, which includes in its meaning the hadith about *birrul walidain*. *Birr* is the right of both parents and relatives, and its opposite is disobedience; that is, hurting them and not fulfilling their rights (Al-Qahthani, n.d.). The mention of *birrul walidain* with *ihsan* is also clearly stated in Allah's words in QS. Al-Ahqaf: 15:

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ إِحْسَانًا

Meaning: 'And We have enjoined upon man kindness to his parents.' The phrase 'And to Me is your return' indicates that if we fulfil the commandment of *birrul walidain* (kindness to parents) properly, Allah will reward us in the Hereafter.

The Word of Allah:

وَأِنْ جَاهَدَاكَ عَلَىٰ أَنْ تُشْرِكَ بِي مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا وَصَاحِبُهُمَا فِي الدُّنْيَا مَعْرُوفًا.

That is, if both your parents force you to follow their religion (if they are non-Muslims), do not obey them in that matter. However, your parents' disbelief does not

prevent you from fulfilling your duty of *birrul walidain* by accompanying them and treating them well while you are in this world (Katsir, 1431a).

## 2. The Position of Parents After the Position of *Tauhidullah*

The role and struggle of parents in educating and loving their children from the moment they are conceived, then giving birth, breastfeeding, and educating them, elevates their status in the sight of Allah, and He equates the law of being dutiful to them after being dutiful to Him in the Qur'an as a form of respect for them. In Surah Luqman, verse 13, Allah mentions the command to avoid polytheism, followed in verse 14 by mentioning the obligation to be dutiful to both parents: "We have enjoined upon man (to be good) to his parents. His mother carried him in weakness upon weakness, and weaned him in two years. (Our command is,) 'Be grateful to Me and to your parents.' Only to Me (you) will you return." This shows how noble parents are in the sight of Allah, and how they have a great right to be treated with *ihsan* or devotion.

## 3. *Birrul walidain* Obligations and Their Limits

After emphasising the special position of parents after the oneness of Allah, the discussion then focuses on the legal aspects of the command to be dutiful to them. This command is not merely a moral value, but has a strong legal basis in the principles of *usul*. Through a normative approach, it is important to understand that the obligation to be dutiful to parents stems from a divine command that carries certain legal consequences, while also having limitations so that its implementation does not exceed the rights of Allah as the Creator.

Based on the principle that 'in principle, a command means obligation, unless evidence indicates otherwise' (*al-amru lil-wujūb mā lam yarid qarīnah taṣrifuhu 'anhu*) (Anas Burhanuddin, 2020), Allah's command regarding *birrul walidain* (being dutiful to both parents) essentially indicates an obligation. Thus, respect and devotion to parents are not only ethically valuable, but also a religious obligation as long as there is no evidence to divert its meaning to a law other than obligation.

This command is reflected in two main expressions in Surah Luqman verses 14–15. First, the phrase '*an isykur li wa li-walidayka*' ('Be grateful to Me and to your parents') which emphasises the obligation to be grateful as a form of recognition of Allah's blessings and the services of both parents. Second, the phrase '*wa sahibhuma fi al-dunya ma'rūfa*' ('and treat them both with kindness') contains the command to treat them with the principle of *ihsan*, which is to do good sincerely in words and deeds as a form of affection and appreciation.

However, this obligation is not absolute and unlimited. Within the framework of Islamic law, the rights of creatures must not exceed the rights of the Creator. Therefore, if both parents invite their child to disbelief or sin, then the child is obliged to reject such invitations, as Allah says: 'If both of them compel you to associate with Me something about which you have no knowledge, then do not obey them.' (QS. Luqman [31]:15). This verse emphasises that obedience to parents is limited and must not conflict with obedience to Allah. This principle is in line with the words of the Prophet ﷺ: 'There is no obedience in disobedience to the Creator.' (HR. Bukhari and Muslim) (As-Sa'di, 2000).

Nevertheless, Islam still commands children to treat their parents well, even if they are not believers. Moreover, if both parents are believers, then respect and affection

must be increased even more. Thus, the commandment of *birrul walidain* reflects a balance between moral obligations towards parents and theological commitment to tawhid.

#### **4. The Psychology of Pregnancy and Childbirth Has Three Times More Consequences for Mothers than Fathers**

During pregnancy, childbirth, and breastfeeding, women experience intense and profound physical and psychological changes. In the first trimester, pregnant women often experience nausea, fatigue, breast pain, and emotional sensitivity. Entering the second trimester, significant physical changes occur, such as skin pigmentation and abdominal enlargement, which can lower self-confidence, making family support very important. As labour approaches, pain and anxiety intensify. These changes are influenced by hormones and the mother's psychological state, which affect mood, behaviour, and eating patterns (G. Putri, 2022).

Then, during labour, mothers will experience tremendous pain. In addition, many women are not prepared to give birth due to the pain and anxiety they feel about labour. This anxiety will mobilise the individual's defences (Sandhi & Lestari, 2021). This often triggers emotional disorders such as baby blues syndrome and even postpartum depression if not handled properly (Mariani, 2021). This shows that a mother's struggle does not end at childbirth, but continues into a phase of emotional and physical adaptation that is extraordinarily difficult.

In maternal psychology, these phases are described as part of a specific psychological condition known as primary maternal preoccupation (Winnicott, 1956), which is when a mother experiences a high level of emotional attachment to her baby from the end of pregnancy through to the breastfeeding period.

In the perspective of humanistic psychology, as theorised by Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow, a mother's love for her child is the highest form of unconditional positive regard or unconditional love. This affection creates a stable, supportive psychological environment, which plays an important role in fostering a child's personality development.

Therefore, the act of *birrul walidain* commanded in QS Luqman: 14 is not only a moral obligation, but also a form of recognition and appreciation for the deep emotional sacrifice of mothers. Ibn Asyur said that the phrase 'His mother carried him in weakness upon weakness' explains that the reason behind *birrul walidain* is to emphasise the command, because there is a principle of *usul fiqh* that says '*Ta'lilu al-ahkam yufiduhu ta'kidan*', which means that explaining the reason for a law brings meaning to the law. This can also foster a child's enthusiasm to be devoted to their mother, followed by devotion to their father. Although the verse above mentions the command to be kind/devoted to both parents, it is only associated with mentioning the reason for devotion to one of them, namely the mother (weakness upon weakness and exhaustion during pregnancy and breastfeeding), it actually also represents the command to be kind to the father, because fathers also experience fatigue in earning a living and in supporting mothers so that they can take good care of their children during their upbringing, until the children are adults and no longer need help, as He says, 'And say, "O my Lord, have mercy on them as they raised me when I was small."' (QS. Al-Isra': 24).

Ibn Athiyyah said: "In this verse, Allah mentions the mother and father in terms of the command to be dutiful, then emphasises the duty of dutifulness towards the mother by mentioning the difficulties she experiences during pregnancy and breastfeeding, so that she is entitled to three parts of dutifulness while the father is entitled to one part. This is consistent with the saying of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, when one of his companions asked him, "Who is most deserving of kindness?" He replied, "Your mother." The question and answer were repeated three times, and on the fourth question, the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, replied, "Your father." (Asyur, 1984).

### **5. Radha'ah and Hadhanah in the Context of Mother and Child Psychology**

The concept of *radha'ah* (breastfeeding) mentioned in QS Luqman: 14 as 'and wean him within two years' reflects the Qur'an's concern for the importance of the early stages of a child's life. In maternal psychology, the breastfeeding period is a time of very strong attachment formation between mother and child. D.W. Winnicott refers to this phase as part of the facilitating environment, which is a psychological environment that supports the child's growth and emotional security (Winnicott, 2018).

The breastfeeding process is not merely about nutritional fulfilment, but also about forming emotional bonds, fostering a sense of security, and developing the child's personality. According to research (A. E. Putri et al., 2021), children who are breastfed for two years tend to have better emotional maturity and self-confidence. This is also supported by humanistic psychology, which holds that consistent maternal love during the breastfeeding period fosters a sense of being loved, which forms the basis of a child's self-worth.

Parenting (*hadhanah*) during the breastfeeding period is also very important. *Hadhanah* comes from the Arabic word *hadhana-yahdhunu-hadhanatun*, which means to nurture or embrace a child (Mahmudah et al., 2018). According to Sayyid Sabiq, *hadhanah* is the process of caring for and raising children, both boys and girls, who have not yet reached the age of discernment. This process includes fulfilling the child's basic needs, providing protection, and providing education that covers the child's physical, mental, and intellectual needs. The goal is for the child to grow into an independent individual who is capable of taking responsibility for their life. This form of care includes providing clothing, education, health services, protection from various forms of danger, and other important needs (Azmi & Khalid, 2023). As-Sa'di said when interpreting the phrase, 'And wean him after two years,' where the child remains in the care, protection, and nursing of his mother (As-Sa'di, 2000).

In addition to promoting physical growth and intellectual development, exclusive breastfeeding for up to 2 years also positively affects children's emotional development. Research conducted by Afrira and colleagues shows that children aged 5–6 years who were exclusively breastfed have a higher level of emotional maturity, with 69% reaching this level. The process of direct breastfeeding not only fulfils physiological needs but also strengthens the emotional bond between mother and child. This interaction creates social-affective experiences such as love and affection, which play a significant role in shaping the child's future behaviour, increasing social sensitivity, stimulating cognitive development, and strengthening self-confidence that grows from feelings of security and comfort during the breastfeeding process (A. E. Putri et al., 2021).

It is during this period of *radha'ah* that character education is built through *hadhanah*, or nurturing, and through good bonding between the child and the mother.

In Islam there is a custom of finding a righteous wet nurse. Imam Ahmad disliked breastfeeding by immoral and non-Muslim women, as stated by Umar bin Khatab and Umar bin Abdul Aziz, may Allah be pleased with them: "Breast milk can affect the baby. Therefore, do not breastfeed a baby with a Jewish, Christian, or adulterous woman. For it is feared that the child may resemble his immoral wet nurse or lean towards her religion. It is also disliked to breastfeed a child with an ignorant wet nurse so that the child does not become ignorant. For it is said that breastfeeding can alter a child's original character." (Team, 2010).

The two-year breastfeeding period falls within the golden age phase, which lasts from 0 to 5 years of age. This phase is a crucial stage in the early development of a child's life, during which physical and mental growth occurs very rapidly. Various studies indicate that approximately 50% of an individual's intellectual capacity in adulthood begins to develop before the child reaches age 4. Therefore, optimal attention and stimulation from parents are essential during this period to support the child's overall development (Dr. dr. Theresia Santi, SpA, 2025). Education is part of parenting, a child's right that parents must fulfill, as it greatly influences a child's character as he or she grows up. In a hadith, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: 'Every child is born in a state of *fitrah* (Islam), and it is their parents who make them Jewish, Christian, or Magian.' (HR. Baihaqi & Thabrani). This hadith emphasizes the vital role of parents in the growth and development of children, both in their religious and character development. Parents become role models or the first examples that children will follow. Children's basic behaviour and character are formed through interactions that occur in their early life, especially during the *radha'ah* and *hadhanah* periods (Nurfitriani, 2022).

One important aspect of character education for children is the formation of basic values during the golden age, a period of growth encompassing the phases of *radha'ah* (breastfeeding) and *hadhanah* (early care). It is during this period that moral and spiritual values can be strongly instilled through parents' example and education. In this context, Luqman's advice to his son as stated in Surah Luqman serves as a fundamental guideline in shaping a child's character from an early age, namely: Do not associate partners with Allah, for shirk is the greatest injustice; do not underestimate even the smallest of deeds; establish prayer and enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong; be patient in facing trials; and avoid arrogance and cultivate humility. These values form the spiritual and moral foundation for children from an early age, helping them become individuals of noble character.

#### D. CONCLUSION

This study reveals that the obligation of *birrul walidain* (being dutiful to both parents), especially to mothers, as stated in QS. Luqman verses 14–15 is not merely a normative and moral command, but a form of recognition of the biological and psychological sacrifices experienced by mothers during pregnancy, childbirth, and breastfeeding. Through a thematic interpretation approach and the integration of maternal and humanistic psychology theories, it is understood that the phrase *wahnun 'ala wahnin* represents the accumulation of physical burdens and emotional pressures

experienced by mothers, which should be reciprocated by children with gratitude, empathy, and kindness.

The maternal psychology approach explains how a mother's physical and emotional struggles shape a strong bond with her child, while humanistic psychology emphasises the importance of unconditional love and empathy in establishing this bond. Thus, the command to *birrul walidain* is not merely a moral obligation for children, but also a manifestation of affective awareness and universal human values emphasised by revelation.

Furthermore, this study highlights the importance of breastfeeding and early care as crucial periods in the formation of a child's character and emotional stability, during which the mother's role is particularly dominant. Therefore, this verse not only teaches personal ethics to children but also offers a conceptual basis for resolving moral crises and intergenerational relationships in modern society. Ultimately, *birrul walidain* becomes an important foundation for the creation of harmonious families and a civilised society.

**Acknowledgments:** The author expresses deep gratitude to the lecturers, scholars, and colleagues who have provided insights and academic guidance during the preparation of this article. The author also extends appreciation to the editorial board and reviewers of this journal for their constructive feedback and scholarly evaluation.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

**Disclaimer:** All statements, interpretations, and conclusions presented in this article represent the author's own scholarly perspective and do not reflect the official stance of any academic institution, organization, or sponsor.

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