



## **Coping Strategy in Fulfilling the Role of the Sandwich Generation**

*Yuyun HA Tika SE, Fatma Azmi Andriani, Afifah Komariyah, Bella Arini Haq, Elita Widiyanti*

Faculty of Psychology, University of Muhammadiyah Malang, Indonesia

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.55248/gengpi.4.623.44294>

---

### **ABSTRACT**

The sandwich generation is one of the generations found in Indonesia, this generation is where those in midlife have an obligation to provide large resources and care for their family members. This research will explore and interpret the life experiences of the sandwich generation who are in midlife, for this reason this research uses a qualitative phenomenological approach, which seeks to uncover the experiences of these informants. There are 4 informants selected by purposive sampling technique, the data collected were analyzed using the analysis method of the model of miles and Huberman (1984). The results showed the depiction of the daily life of the sandwich generation and also the efforts made in managing time and also maintaining mental health for the sandwich generation.

Keywords: Sandwich generation, coping strategies, time management

---

### **1. Introduction**

Here introduce the paper, and put a nome-nclature if necessary, in a box with the same font size as the rest of the paper. The paragraphs continue from here and are only separated by headings, subheadings, images and formulae. The section headings are arranged by numbers, bold and 9.5 pt. Here follows further instructions for authors.

Everyone will go through stages in life, namely becoming an adult. Of course it has more tasks than before, bearing in mind the level being lived is also getting higher and different. Someone in adulthood will do marriage as one of the life processes undertaken to create a new family with a partner. Entering the marriage life cycle, of course there is a phase where every family has children and that person becomes a parent. In Indonesian society, it is not common for adults to be parents to their children and also to be children to their parents. Many couples choose to stay with their parents after marriage. Various reasons are the basis for couples to stay with their parents. One of them is so that they can be close to their parents and can help their parents, while another reason is so that parents can help care for their children, and another reason that is chosen by the couple.

This adult couple has a midlife or middle life between their parents and their children. Currently, this middle life has been experienced by Generation X and Generation Y, who are aged 25-55 years who have to support Generation Z (children), who are currently aged 8 to 24 years and the elderly aged 56 years. up to age  $\geq 75$  years. Of course this is not something easy, these adults must be able to meet the needs of families across generations. A social worker named Dorothy Miller gives an analogy that those who are a squeezed generation and are in midlife are analogous to sandwiches. They are thought of as a ham or bread filling sandwiched between two rye buns. The bread in question is their children as well as their parents. Those who are in this midlife have an obligation to provide great resources and care to their family members without being offset by rewards for the effort that has been given (Miller, 1981). The reason is called the sandwich generation, usually they belong to the second generation of the family, having the responsibility of elderly parents (first generation in the family) and responsibility for young children (third generation in the family).

Those who are in midlife or The squeezed generation is someone who has multiple duties and obligations. In addition to providing care and care to elderly parents and small children, they must be able to complete the work tasks they have. The care provided also includes physical and emotional care, financial resources, legal assistance, moral support, and also taking the time to support psychologically and emotionally. Especially for the elderly and young children, providing time as assistance is also important in the developmental period of children and spending time in old age with elderly parents.

Someone who lives in midlife or this squeezed generation is a person who is vulnerable to experiencing pressure that interferes with his mental health. However, they are still rarely glimpsed as someone who is vulnerable. Unlike the case with children and the elderly, who should be given more attention. Someone living on midlife or This squeezed generation often experiences conflicts that occur in a family. Conflicts can occur when a person has intimacy with another person. Based on the results of initial observations, the conflicts that occur are in terms of the economy, where those who live in midlife or stuck generation must continue to meet the needs of his family with income that can be said to be minimal. Then there is interference in their marriage relationship from family or relatives, so it doesn't give them enough space to be free. Then there are differences in the way of raising children, how to take care of the house, the pressure of their work and so on. However, they are required to continue to be able to carry out their role as children who are devoted to their parents and become parents with the children they care for. This would make them living midlife or The squeezed generation easily feels stressed, feels easily sad, and disappointed so that they experience palpitations and experience sleep disturbances. But besides that, those who are in

midlife or the squeezed generation must still have stable mental health in order to meet their needs, the needs of children and also the needs of their parents.

The task of being a dutiful child for parents and being a good parent for children must still be done, this also requires strategies that are carried out so that the mental health of those who are in midlife or the squeezed generation remains stable and its tasks are fulfilled. They need the ability to be able to make strategies and manage them so they can survive amidst the pressures that exist. This is known as a coping strategy. Coping strategies are behavioral responses that are used by a person to reduce stress. Coping itself has been explained by (Sarafino, 2002) that coping is an effort used to neutralize or reduce the stress that is happening. Coping itself is all forms of behavior and thoughts in a positive or negative form that can reduce conditions that burden individuals so as not to cause stress. The types of coping strategies have been described by (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), there are two types of coping strategies that are carried out by a person. First, a coping strategy that focuses on problems is an action directed at solving problems. Someone will have a tendency to use this behavior if he assesses the problems he faces can still be controlled and can be resolved. Some of those included in problem-focused coping strategies are: Planful problem solving; confrontative coping; and seeking social support. Meanwhile coping strategies that focus on emotions include: Positive reappraisal (giving a positive assessment); Accepting responsibility (emphasis on responsibility); Self controlling (self control); Distancing (keeping a distance); Escape avoidance (avoid yourself).

Coping strategies are a form of natural response by someone when experiencing unpleasant things. Likewise with the squeezed generation who have to survive with their double tasks. For this reason, this study will discuss the strategies of those who live in midlife or generations squeezed in order to fulfill their duties and roles amidst the pressures they experience. So the formulation of the problem in this study is "What are their coping strategies in midlife or the squeezed generation to continue fulfilling his social role and carrying out his responsibilities as a child and a parent simultaneously?"

---

## 2. Research methods

This research uses a type of qualitative research method because this research emphasizes the condition of natural objects in the field without testing hypotheses, but only uses the meaning of symptoms or events, describes facts and events in the field accurately (Sugiyono, 2017). The approach used in this research is phenomenology. The informant determination technique used is a purposive technique (Sugiyono, 2018). The criteria for informants are as follows: A wife who is aged 25 to 54 years; Having a child and parents or in-laws who must be cared for physically, materially, and emotionally; Living together with several generations in one house or one home environment. Based on the main informant criteria taken by the researcher there were 5 people. The informant's information is as follows:

No.	Informant	Work	Age
1.	US informant	HR staff	25
2.	R informant	civil servant	53
3.	NAH informants	Teacher	55
4.	HA informant	Businessman	24

Data collection is a systematic and standard procedure that has been established to obtain the data needed by researchers. (Sugiyono, 2013) The techniques used in this research are: observation; interview; and documentation. The analysis technique used uses the model from Miles and Huberman (1984) (Sugiyono, 2018) which includes: data collection, data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions.

---

## 3. Research result

As is known, some informants who are the sandwich generation have the task of ensuring the lives and needs of their entire family, from children, parents of informants and also grandparents who still live together in one residence. Based on the data that has been obtained, these informants, both informant AS, informant HA, informant R, and informant NAH, must fulfill materially and care, for example in the form of rice, groceries, and electricity bills, pocket money for younger siblings or children and grandparents, and also school fees or even prepare their daily needs. As a child trying to fulfill his needs at home, one of the informants experienced uncomfortable feelings, such as informant AS who often felt guilty about his gift because it was not sufficient for the family's needs. Meanwhile, informant HA, informant R, and informant NAH continue to try to make ends meet without thinking about feelings of worry that they will not be enough to meet their needs.

All informants in this study are women, some of whom in addition to being charged with having to meet material needs, informants also have an obligation to take care of all family members. Each informant has the ability to manage time in meeting their needs and obligations as a sandwich generation. Informant AS works with her husband to manage time and divide tasks so that each task can be completed together. Apart from her husband, informant R also works with her daughter who is tasked with completing housework, so that informant R's burden can also be resolved while she has to work outside the home. Informant HA and informant NAH prepare time management strategies in their daily lives, informants NAH and HA must be able to deal with time every day, so that in completing housework and taking care of work.

Piling up work and demands can cause feelings of fatigue or boredom, this was also experienced by informant AS, informant R, informant HA, and also informant NAH. However, from some of these informants, it can be concluded that the efforts made by informants when experiencing heavy pressure

and then causing stress can be done as follows: First, asking for help, because so far it is not uncommon for the sandwich generation to do many things on their own. The purpose of seeking help to do some household chores, arrangements for managing children and parents, and so on. Asking for help is not a sign of weakness, but self-strength in terms of managing the tasks that need to be done. We also need to make time for ourselves. The busyness of taking care of two generations sometimes leaves a sandwich generation woman with no time for herself. Take special time to do things for yourself, such as working on your hobbies or simply relaxing and pampering yourself;

The second is to have a family meeting. Family meetings can be a place to pour out your heart and provide support to each other. Family meetings can also be used to discuss various problems faced and together focus on finding solutions. This can also increase the closeness between family members and strengthen social support for the sandwich generation. Third, maintain good communication within the environment. When tired and stressed, communication patterns can be greatly affected and tend to lead to more emotional communication patterns. When communication patterns are characterized by discomfort and conflict, stress levels tend to increase. Learn how to communicate assertively and well to maintain a calm and comfortable atmosphere in your role as a sandwich generation.

Fourth Every now and then, let go of the control of things. Perfectionism can lead to higher stress. Learn how not to micromanage everything in life. Delegate or hand over certain tasks to others, this aims to reduce stress, the sandwich generation also needs to let go of control sometimes. Fifth Enjoy the moment well. Try to be able to enjoy the moments you have right now. Enjoy the role in caring for children and seeing the growth and development of children, and enjoy the role in caring for parents as a form of love and devotion. Make every moment precious in the life of you and your family. Sixth, if you have done the above ways to relieve stress, but you still feel depressed or depressed, and are unable to carry out daily life functions properly, you should consult a mental health professional, such as a clinical psychologist or psychiatrist.

---

#### 4. Conclusion

Practically, we can carry out six strategies to balance the dual role as the sandwich generation, namely maintaining health and well-being, suppressing perfectionism, managing time and energy, relinquishing responsibility, maintaining social relationships and reciprocity. A strategy for balancing the roles of the sandwich generation is needed to keep stress levels down. Psychological pressure in the form of stress in the sandwich generation can cause disruption to work and family life as well as relationships. This specific condition in the form of being "squished" like a sandwich should not affect the children or their own families. So, it's very important to have friends from the sandwich generation so they can share with each other so you don't feel alone and stress for a long time. Be good at managing yourself physically and mentally to become a healthy sandwich generation. The sandwich generation who is physically and mentally healthy can optimize the health and well-being of three generations, namely his generation, as well as the other two generations he cares for.

---

#### References

- Acton, G. J. (2000). Health-promoting self-care in family caregivers. *Western Journal of Nursing Research*, 24(1), 73-86
- Almberg, Grafstrom, & Winbald. (1997). Caring for a Demented Elderly Person Burden and Burnout Among Caregiving Relatives. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 25, 109-115
- Lazarus, R., & Folkman, S. (1984). *Stress, Appraisal, and Coping*. Springer.
- Navaie, Aubrey, S., & Feldman. (2002). Informal Caregiving Differential Experiences by Gender. *Medical Care*, 40(12), 1249-1259
- Rozalinna, G. M., & Anwar, V. L. N. (2021). Rusunawa dan Sandwich Generation: Resiliensi Masa Pandemi di Ruang Perkotaan (Vol. 1, Issue 1). <https://doi.org/10.2>
- Sarafino, E. P. (2002). *Health psychology: Biopsychosocial interactions* (4th ed.). Wiley & Sons.
- Salmon, S. A. (2017). *The Generasi Sandwich: Effects of Caregiver Burden and Strategies for Assessment*. Utah: Westminster College
- Sugiyono. (2013). *METODE PENELITIAN KUALITATIF, KUANTITATIF, R&D* (1st ed., Vol. 2). ALFABETA, Cv.
- Sugiyono. (2017). *Metode Penelitian Pendidikan*. Alfabeta.
- Timmers, M., Lengeler, V., Rajahonka, M., Ciotucha, D. K., & Tim Gielens. (2022). How Do They Manage? Coping Strategies of the Working Sandwich Generation in Flanders (1st ed., Vol. 1). Howard House.