The dynamics of flourishing Indonesian Muslim families: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

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Abstract: Human flourishing entails a state of complete, intrinsic self-fulfillment; however, the concept also embraces interpersonal interaction through social connection. This research aims to explore the concept and dynamics of flourishing Muslim families. The data collection involved 45 to 120 minutes of in-depth interviews with five participant families. A qualitative approach was taken, with Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) and MAXQDA 2020 techniques used to organize the data. We utilized the Ephocé and member-checking and adopted workflow protocol management tools (i.e., MAXQDA 2020) to ensure data credibility. Four superordinate themes emerged, namely compassionate love in collaboration; the adaptation process; relatedness to the larger circle beyond nuclear family members; and the role of religious and local wisdom teachings. All the themes were related to establishing the nature of a flourishing family. It is concluded that the meaning of "flourishing family" for the Indonesian Muslim Families participants emphasized shared relational well-being, which is more complex than the simple "human flourishing" concept. The findings contribute to developing the concept of a flourishing family through evidence based on empirical data regarding efforts to maintain positive potential in the family.

Keywords: flourishing family; interpretative phenomenological analysis; MAXQDA; Muslim families; well-being

Abstrak: Manusia yang bertumbuh-kembang (*human flourishing*) memerlukan keadaan pemenuhan diri yang lengkap. Konsep tumbuh-kembang manusia juga mencakup interaksi antarpribadi melalui hubungan sosial. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengeksplorasi konsep dan dinamika keluarga Muslim yang bertumbuh-kembang. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan teknik *Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis* (IPA) dan MAXQDA 2020 untuk mengorganisikan data. Pengumpulan data melibatkan wawancara mendalam selama 45 hingga 120 menit dengan lima keluarga peserta. Kami menggunakan Ephocé, pemeriksaan anggota, menggunakan aplikasi MAXQDA, dan mengadopsi alat manajemen protokol alur kerja untuk memastikan kredibilitas data. Hasil penelitian memunculkan empat tema superordinat, yaitu cinta kasih dalam kolaborasi, proses adaptasi, peran ajaran agama-kearifan lokal, dan keterkaitan dengan lingkaran yang lebih besar di luar anggota keluarga inti. Semua tema terkait satu sama lain dalam membangun keluarga yang bertumbuh-kembang. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa makna keluarga yang bertumbuh-kembang dalam pengalaman keluarga Muslim Indonesia yang menekankan pada kesejahteraan relasional bersama, lebih kompleks daripada konsep sederhana "manusia berkembang." Temuan penelitian ini memberikan bukti ilmiah untuk mendukung upaya-upaya pengembangan keluarga Muslim Indonesia yang bertumbuh-kembang.

Kata Kunci: keluarga bertumbuh-kembang; analisis fenomenologi interpretatif; MAXQDA; keluarga Muslim; kesejahteraan

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Introduction

Indonesia has an estimated 231 million Muslims, approximately 13 percent of the world's Muslim population (World Population Review, 2021). In the Muslim community, marriage is the strongest of bonds, in which God unites those who come together based on love. Marriage should provide stability and allow family members to find tranquillity (Hashimi, 2005a, 2005b). Ironically, divorce cases, violence against children, and domestic violence in Indonesia continue to increase (Komisi Nasional Perempuan Republik Indonesia, 2021). The increase in divorces in the Religious Courts is due to the relatively loose sanctity of marriage in Islamic rules. Divorce is more likely than in non-Muslim religions, such as Catholicism and Protestant Christianity (Suryani, 2015). Furthermore, technoference (i.e., brief interruptions in family relations due to digital devices) poses a challenge for family members in maintaining effective communication (McDaniel & Coyne, 2016; McDaniel & Radesky, 2018). These are the empirical problems faced by the Muslim community in Indonesia.

The concept of human flourishing is fairly well-established. In contrast, relational flourishing in the family has still received little attention from researchers, especially in the context of Muslim families in Indonesia. The concept of human flourishing has long attracted the attention of theologians and philosophers, but science has just begun to uncover the meaning, underlying causes, and optimal strategies for promoting a flourishing life (Ekman & Simon-Thomas, 2021). Human flourishing combines the factors of positive emotion, engagement, positive relationships, meaning and accomplishment (PERMA) (Arikhah et al., 2022; Seligman, 2011; Umucu et al., 2019; Uysal, 2015; Yildirim, 2019). A flourishing person has optimal emotional, psychological, and social well-being without any concomitant mental illness; they display significant interaction with their environment and higher productivity and engagement at work. They also adopt adaptive coping skills, with high self-esteem, good emotion regulation, and high levels of optimism (Fuller-Thomson & Jensen, 2020; Keyes, 2002; Martin et al., 2021; Snyder & Lopez, 2007). Conversely, a languishing condition is when an individual does not have a particular mental illness but has a low level of well-being (Snyder & Lopez, 2007).

In the context of marriage and family ties, the term "flourishing family" first appears in a study of Padilla-Walker et al. (2011) on the role of family processes and structures. The concept emerged from a non-Indonesian context and has the following characteristics: 1) an atmosphere characterized by warmth and a sense of congeniality; 2) collaborative problem-solving and conflict resolution; 3) orientation to the wider community; 4) support for individual development; 5) effective communication and relationship skills; 6) nurturing behaviors and enriching time together; 7) clear family structures, and legitimate authorities; 8) a congruent family story; 9) the creation of "we-ness" as mutuality of concern; 10) the creation of supportive and celebratory rituals; and 11) strong meaning, purpose, and values, with room for the transcendent (AIPC, 2017; Becvar, 2007).

In addition, the term human flourishing is also often used interchangeably with other concepts (e.g., happiness, well-being, thriving, and resilience). There is no consensus on what is meant by "flourishing" because it overlaps with various dimensions that refer to different well-being frameworks, such as psychological (eudaimonic) well-being, subjective (hedonic) well-being, and social well-being (Whitaker et al., 2022). For example, resilience is a personality trait that can change over time and affect flourishing by improving psychological health with high social competence, problem-solving, autonomy, and a sense of goals (Martin et al., 2021; Snyder & Lopez,

2007). Ekman and Simon-Thomas (2021) state that resilience (R) is one of the three pillars that underlies human flourishing, along with connection (C) and positivity (P); this is known as the CPR Model. However, human flourishing is not the same as resilience because the two concepts have different elements, with resilience being only part of one's overall flourishing. As a new definition of happiness and well-being, human flourishing involves positive emotions, relationships, achievement, purpose and meaning in life; it can include aspects such as voluntarily participating in community service or overcoming difficulties or trauma (Kim et al., 2020; Sorrell, 2017). Although scholars consider human flourishing to be associated with the concept of happiness due to its combination of subjective (hedonic) and psychological (eudaemonic) well-being (Ekman & Simon-Thomas, 2021; Yildirim, 2019), Grant (2012) considers the two concepts to be inappropriate as synonyms. Grant (2012) emphasizes that "happiness" is too narrow to describe the scope and complexity of personal flourishing. In addition, in contrast to human flourishing (i.e., highlighting the importance of the individual's well-being experience), "thriving" refers to a change that occurs following an individual's interaction with many systems in their surrounding environment (King & Baer, 2022). Therefore, the term thriving is more suitable for explaining changes in personal growth that involve the macro effects of a social system.

How psychosocial factors are related to human flourishing remains imprecise. A clear association has not been found between flourishing and mental health in predicting health behaviors (e.g., whether positive emotions can strengthen and negative emotions inhibit protective health behaviors) (Leibow et al., 2021). Flourishing is associated with adequate psychological conditions in the family; however, the extent to which individual, family and social factors can facilitate or hinder flourishing remains only partly understood (Ignacio et al., 2022). The results of previous studies have shown that human flourishing is also related to aspects of religiosity (Bukhori et al., 2022). Among Christians, spiritual practices promote commitment to social flourishing (Perkins, 2021; Santos, 2017; Setran, 2018). Individuals with a higher level of religiosity tend to have a higher level of flourishing compared to those with a low level of religiosity (Abdollahi et al., 2018). Besides religiosity, family involvement in traditional activities positively affects mental health in Native American Indian ethnicities (Kading et al., 2015).

Human flourishing is related to the pursuit of intrinsically satisfying goals, such as overcoming adversity or immersing oneself in activities and relationships (e.g., serving in one's community) (Kim et al., 2020; Paz et al., 2022). Intrinsic personal growth may be necessary for human flourishing, but it is not sufficient; people also need a sense of belonging, connection, and meaningful contributions outside themselves to achieve personal growth (Ekman & Simon-Thomas, 2021). Flourishing can never be experienced in isolation but always relates to concern for the welfare of others (Santos, 2017). Someone who flourishes will foster personal well-being and build a sense of empathy, compassion, solidarity and connectedness with those around them (Bunkers, 2010). Consequently, the concept of flourishing necessarily involves interpersonal interaction; for example, the way individuals interact with partners through connectedness; relationship maintenance; growth in romantic (LeBaron-Black et al., 2021) and close social relationships (VanderWeele, 2017); and quality of marriage and family ties (Ryff & Singer, 2000). The concept of relational flourishing may be a more useful contribution to positive psychology than human flourishing because family relationships are a long-lasting source of individual well-being (Scabini, 2016).

Previous research has suggested that the study of flourishing requires a design beyond the quantitative approach (Ryff & Singer, 2000). Therefore, this study aims to explore the unique elements of interpersonal flourishing, and the resulting formation of a flourishing family, through a qualitative phenomenological approach. It is also necessary to explore the experiences of Indonesians within their collectivist society (Haar & Krahé, 1999; Magnis-Suseno, 2003). Considering the various cultural, religious and linguistic differences in the world, it is vital to explore how family participants in Indonesia live and interpret their lives, which may suggest different elements in the concept of family flourishing compared to simple human flourishing.

This study focuses on understanding the life experiences of flourishing families. Therefore, the following research questions were developed:

(RQ1) How do participants build meaning in their life experiences within a flourishing family?

(RQ2) What are the dynamics of flourishing families?

Methods

Since functioning in a flourishing family would be more appropriately seen as the process of an individual's interaction with contextual relations (Bundick et al., 2010). This study used a qualitative approach with a phenomenological design, namely Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). Because this technique is participant-oriented, it allows participants to express themselves and recount their life experiences as they wish, without distortion and or external demands (Alase, 2017; Smith et al., 2009).

Using purposive sampling, we selected four families involved in the first stage of the data collection to continue to the second, in line with the participant inclusion criteria in the eight stages of family development (Duvall, 1977; Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 2008). Such criteria were that the families were Muslim and facing relationship challenges (including couples in long-distance marriages, couples busy with studies, and dual-earners with babies/toddlers or family members with special needs), but they have kept their marriage intact. Five families participated in this study. Family 1 was a dual-earner couple in their final semesters at undergraduate college and had a toddler. At the same time, Family 2 was a husband and wife pursuing higher education with an infant child. Family 3 was in a long-distance marriage with a school-age child; Family 4 was in a long-distance marriage with an adolescent child; and Family 5 was a launching family in a long-distance marriage with a child with special needs. Table 1 shows the socio-demographic data of the participants. The interview protocol addressed their perceptions of the essential life principles applying to the family, memorable experiences with other family members, and strategies to manage daily obstacles. Various types of questions were used to capture the detailed experiences of the participants, such as: "When there are problems, how do you manage them?" and "Can you tell me about a memorable experience in your family?" The duration of each interview was 45 to 120 minutes.

Data collection was conducted in two phases, initial and inquiry. The data-collecting phases ran from April to September 2018, with two to four in-depth interview sessions per family (the F1 family interview on May 10, 2018 was canceled). After having the research design reviewed and approved by the ethics committee (Ethical Committee of the Faculty of Psychology, Universitas Gadjah Mada Yogyakarta, Indonesia; contract number: 2047/SD/PL.03.02/V/2018), the researchers conducted the first phase of the data collection, which involved eight groups of participants, each consisting of six to seven undergraduate students from the Qualitative

Research Methods course. They had consented and were willing to participate in the interview process. The first phase was initial data collection from key informants. The second was the data inquiry phase, which dug deeper and sought to reach data saturation on the four families from the first stage (F1, F2, F3, and F4) and one new participant family (F5). All the participants signed informed consent, and the names used to refer to individuals were pseudonyms.

The data generated from the interviews in the form of recordings was considered to be the main study data. The interview recordings were transcribed into Microsoft Word files. Data were processed using the stages of interpretative phenomenological analysis (La Kahija, 2018; Smith et al., 2009). In the first stage, we carefully read all of the verbatim transcripts and took initial notes (La Kahija, 2018; Smith et al., 2009). At this stage, we also recorded descriptive, linguistic, and conceptual exploratory comments by using the memo and paraphrase features in the MAXQDA application. Linguistic exploratory comments provided information about the repetition, metaphor or ambiguity of the participants' answers for each family, as recorded in the transcripts (Cooper et al., 2015; La Kahija, 2018; Smith et al., 2009). Conceptual exploratory comments assisted us in interpreting the participants' experiences into possible concepts, while descriptive comments noted paraphrasing.

We next transformed the initial notes to check for emergent themes (Cooper et al., 2015; La Kahija, 2018; Smith et al., 2009). Using the MAXQDA code system feature, we highlighted potential data segments according to the relevant theme. By differentiating the color codes, we grouped emergent themes into superordinate themes: for example, a collection of emergent themes labeled "gratitude," "forgiveness", and "patience" were grouped into the "religious and local wisdom" theme and labeled in yellow. The

final stage was pattern-finding between cases and participants to identify the themes shared by all the participants and distinctive themes that only belonged to certain families (La Kahija, 2018; Smith et al., 2009). To check compatibility between the code systems that built the emergent themes into superordinate themes, we provided a code book containing all the code phrases and themes in the study analysis. Research credibility was assessed by applying Ephocé (La Kahija, 2018; Smith et al., 2009) and member-checking.

We used MAXQDA 2020 tools to organize the interview transcript data for interpretative phenomenological analysis (Kuckartz & Rädiker, 2019; MAXQDA, 2020). Following the workflows suggested by Gassin (2020), we (a) used memos marked with various colors to create conceptual, linguistic and descriptive comments on the participants' interviews; (b) created a report of memos on each participant's data for further analysis (e.g., using paraphrasing features to comment on the original interview transcript with coded conceptual, descriptive or linguistic comment report files); and (c) used document sets to create a report of all coded segments for each family participant (F1, F2, F3, F4, and F5), allowing for identification of emergent and superordinate themes.

Results

The participants interpreted the concept of a flourishing family as one involving interpersonal harmony, in which self-satisfaction was gained from providing for the welfare of other family members. F1 shared kitchen facilities and washing machines within their extended family; their nuclear family members found meaning in life by supporting each other to overcome challenges. Mr. RM (F2) optimistically fulfilled the expectations of his wife's family to gain more religious knowledge (i.e., leading *tarawih* prayers or serving as a Friday prayer preacher) and used it as motivation for his

personal growth, so that he could contribute to the religious community and not just the academic one. The same theme emerged from Mr. JN (F5), who actively participated in community service (e.g., *gotong royong* –mutual cooperation– among neighboring communities to help each other achieve the same goals) and became a mosque guard in his neighborhood.

Mr. ML (F4) believed that a leader should be able to analyze the reasons behind people's behavior and consider these to nurture others. When responding to differences of opinion in the family, Mr. ML used the analogy of a rainbow, with everyone having their unique color. Differences, disagreements, or problems within the family

were negotiated using effective communication and conflict resolution. In addition to his religious philosophy, Mr. ML shared the three keys to a happy life for his family: obeying social and state norms, being the best versions of themselves, and contributing to society.

In line with the views of family F4, family F3 considered a flourishing life to be a process of understanding other people. They believed that a flourishing person would try to comprehend others, no matter what. There must be a reason why someone acted a certain way or decided something in life. It was a flourishing person's task to grasp those reasons to maintain harmonious relationships.

Table 1

Family Socio-Demographics

	Family				
	F1 (DJ)	F2 (RM)	F3 (GN)	F4 (ML)	F5 (JN)
Age of husband	33	28	37	47	64
Age of wife	25	25	37	45	59
Age of 1st child	1	6 months	13	21	37
Age of 2nd child	-	-	-	17	35
Age of 3nd child	-	-	-	14	26
Length of marriage	3 years 2 months	1 year 6 months	13 years	22 years	39 years
Husband's occupation	Entrepreneur	Lecturer	Private business employee	Geologist	Retired geologist
Wive's occupation	Undergraduate student and entrepreneur	Graduate student	Employee	Housewife	Housewife
Family development stage	With toddler	With infant	With school-aged child	With teenaged child	Launching family
Challenges	Dual-earners; university students	Pursuing post-graduate degree	Dual-earners; long-distance marriage	Long-distance marriage	Long-distance marriage; a child with Down's Syndrome
Number of family members living in the same house	10	3	3	5	8

Note. The source of the data in the table is the verbatim transcript of the interview results

"[You] don't ask other people [to] understand you, but try [to] understand other people. Maybe [the other person] is doing something [because] other people are busy, or maybe they have a reason to do something." (F3GN, 539)

Personal egoism became a source of problems when family members were too concerned with personal satisfaction and ignored the welfare of other family members who required help or support. However, through adaptation, communication, and cooperation, personal egoism grew into the awareness necessary to understand and care for each other.

Q: "Was it difficult for mothers in the early days of marriage to build commitment?"

Mrs. ML: "Yes, it was difficult because [both husband and wife] have egos, even though it's not a big problem." (F4ML, 644-645)

Some of the superordinate themes between cases and participants emerged from all the family participants.

Compassionate love in collaboration between nuclear family members

Embracing this theme, the husband and wife worked together to create a commitment, mutual trust, integrity, and comfortable love and attachment within their flexible roles. The family members appreciated the loyalty and the importance of education and childcare. Based on love and care, family members worked to complement each other. They optimally fulfilled their roles as romantic couples or parents for their children. The husband led his family as the primary breadwinner and decision-maker, protecting the family members, providing support, affection, and attention, and initiating conflict resolution. Meanwhile, the wife led her family by managing the domestic household, acting as the primary caregiver for the children, and moderating communication by connecting all family members.

Q: "If, for example, you are facing problems in your family, both nuclear and extended family, what are the things that inspire you?... Maybe the things that motivate you specifically?"

Mr. RM: "Oh, always! I returned to religion [teachings] and knew little about religious knowledge. I know that when there is sacrifice, there will be love (repeat). The more I sacrifice [for my family], the more love appears. Whatever! Either material [sacrifice] [or just by] prayer, whatever. So, when [thinking like that], my motivation arises to solve problems." (F2RM, 115-120)

The wives were willing to quit their job to be full-time mothers for the family (F4) or to care for a child with Down's syndrome (F5). The fathers were involved in co-parenting the children, even though they faced the pressures of working outside the home (F1, F2, F3, F4), and the teenage daughter strived to achieve academic excellence to make her parents proud at the risk of less leisure time with her peers (F4).

Adaptation process

All the research participants' families admitted that there were challenges. For example, F1 shared the same house as Mr. DJ's extended family of origin, with limited space, including sharing house facilities. F1 and F2 struggled through either undergraduate studies (husband and wife F1) or post-graduate studies (husband and wife F2). In addition, F3, F4, and F5 were in long-distance marriages. The challenges came from both the nuclear family and the larger circle of family outside it. However, when facing all these challenges, the family members supported each other through the adaptation process.

Q: "According to you, is it essential to have the criteria for an ideal partner?"

Mrs. RM: "Not [too] necessary. In the end, you can adjust [and accept] the blessings and weaknesses of [your partner]." (F2RM, 304-309)

Adaptation is a process of mutual support among family members that facilitates their personal growth through the practice of managing problems and accepting life events. The husband/father's role is transformational leadership, especially when they act as the source of family members' inspiration, provide financial support as a form of responsibility, and take risks to defend and protect their family members. The mothers, meanwhile, were thoughtful and full of gratitude for what life had given them while being the primary caregiver for their children under challenging conditions. Nevertheless, this quality did not necessarily replace the husband/fathers' role as the family leader. In fact, the wives admired and respected their husbands' leadership qualities (i.e., providing inspiration and upholding marriage commitments), and shared with their children the value of loving and respecting their fathers.

The family members adapted to understanding each other through consistent communication and appropriate conflict resolution. Quality time built emotional bonds and closeness through shared activities, such as casual to in-depth talks between husband and wife, in which they poured their hearts out to each other about plans, hopes, dreams, or parenting experiences (the fathers assisted the mothers with childcare). The participants revealed that the times when the fathers supervised their children was part of their quality time. For instance, the fathers helped their children repair their computers (F4); discussed education plans or hobbies (e.g., father/daughter F4's favorite books, father/son F3's favorite football team); or took the child to school (F4). F3's father paid attention to his son; for example, he returned home from mining sites in remote areas to keep his sick son company or help him study for school exams. Family members also manifested quality time through various shared activities such as eating, watching television, or going on vacation together.

Q: "Did you come home to solve the problems your children had?"

Mr. ML: "Well, it's like this: I'm [probably not] a superman who can do anything. However, at least… (pause) if I am still able to [help my child], then I will try [repairing the computer], but if I am no longer able [because I] am not really [an expert in] technology, we ask for computer repair services." (F4ML, 822-823)

This theme was also related to the theme of religious beliefs and local wisdom teachings. Family members applied such beliefs and wisdom to resolve conflicts or make peace in face of family problems (see the section on religious beliefs and local wisdom teachings). In Javanese, *ngemong* can be interpreted as looking after and caring for family members.

Q: "Have you ever had different opinions [from your husband]? How did you solve it?"

Mrs. ML: "There [have been] conflicts so far. My husband is a more *ngemong* person [than me]. [But] even if we have disagreements between ourselves, my husband and I never get into a protracted fight." (F4ML, 218-225)

Families in long-distance marriages, such as F3, F4 and F5, considered quality time to be in the form of routine or intense communication with their husbands/fathers through supportive communication technology, such as letters, fixed line telephones or smartphones. Even though new media could sometimes be constrained by poor signal connections, it perpetuated quality time within the family when the fathers could not regularly be physically present. Communication formed emotional bonds, warmth, and connectedness among family members through discussion and attention to one another. Husband and wife developed mutual faith through communication, allowing them to build commitment and a relationship of shared trust and trustworthiness.

Another important finding on the theme of adaptation was marital readiness. When the

couple felt in tune with one another in an initial relationship, it was easier to adapt to the commitment process. On the other hand, couples with various gaps in their initial relationship experienced more difficulty adjusting to the marriage. F3 and F4 shared similar experiences (i.e., long-distance marriages). However, family F3 explained that it was a prolonged process before they could reach a more stable state (such as trusting and taking care of each other, being patient, and trying to understand each other). Problems with their families of origin and their shotgun wedding prevented F3 from experiencing optimal growth within the adaptation process. Couple F4 experienced a smoother adaptation process because they had known each other for a long time and had become used to a long-distance friendship before marriage. They also had the support of each other's families of origin in their romantic relationship. They had both prepared ahead to face their long-distance household conditions due to the nature of the husband's work. However, although their adaptation process was not as smooth as that of Family F4, when Family F3 did manage to overcome serious problems, they were the most emphatic in expressing their shared beliefs about how important understanding each other (i.e., achieving a profound meaning of family ties) was.

The flourishing family was experienced as a meaningful entity when self-interest was voluntarily transformed by one family member for another based on affection and love. Family members interpreted support as being manifested in the form of sacrifice (e.g., sharing personal contentment, affection, compassion, sincerity and the desire to protect family members). Instead of spending resources (money, energy, time, priorities, risks) in a self-centered way, a member of a flourishing family willingly chooses to fulfill other family members' needs. For example, family

F5 was also in a long-distance marriage, and their youngest daughter had been diagnosed with Down's syndrome. Mrs. JN had known about the issue since she was pregnant with her daughter, and she and her husband had prepared parenting and education plans to meet the child's needs.

Q: "Ma'am, in your experience taking care of (your youngest daughter), what are the things that encourage you to be firm and patient?

Mrs. JN: "It's [because I feel] that the Almighty has given me a girl [child]. I already feel happy. [I] want to have a daughter, [so I am] already happy; even though [she has Down's syndrome], I accept her the way she is. She is a gift from God [laughs]."

Q: "A gift from Allah, ma'am?"

Mrs. JN: "Yes, [my family is] complete: a boy, a boy, then a girl who became my lifelong friend [laughs]." (F5JN, 152-155)

Religious beliefs and local wisdom teachings

Religious beliefs and local wisdom teachings bind together all the superordinate themes among the family participants. They interpreted life events from the Islamic perspective, with the husband/father as the transformational leader and the wife/mother as primary caregiver for the children, as a form of the marriage commitment. Maintaining their relationship with God, the family members shared gratitude, enjoyed reality, prayed, forgave each other, and faced life with optimism and patience. The sub-theme of gratitude to God appeared in all the family participants. Mr. GN (F3), for example, expressed the shared family value that it is essential to forgive each other so you can make peace with yourself.

Q: "Have you ever felt 'Why is [my] family like this compared to other families?'"

Mrs. ML: "[I] am grateful." (F4ML, 89-90)

Q: "Then what are your and your husband's hopes regarding your family's future?"

Mrs. ML: "What do I hope for more? (laughs) I have a lot to be thankful for in my family life. What else should I ask for more? I always said: 'O Allah [thank you because my family is already] perfect, such a great gift [from God]. I hope that my family will continue [happily] like this.'" (F4ML, 278-281)

In addition to religious beliefs, local wisdom teachings acted as the navigator for a flourishing family. Such teachings emerged frequently from participants; for instance, the concepts of *ngemong* (patience, gentleness, and responsibility for fostering other people's personal growth); *noto ati* and *noto roso* (self-regulation and emotion regulation, mindfulness, calmness in dealing with problems); and *meneng-menengan* (temporarily cutting off communication/using the "silent treatment" between partners as a process of self-introspection, aimed at avoiding confrontation). Through religious beliefs and the teachings of local wisdom, family members resolved misunderstandings and reduced anger when there was conflict among them.

"[My husband advised me] that I can also establish prayer whenever I encounter a problem. If I can't tell my problem [directly to my husband], I can cry in prayer. I prefer [to] *noto ati* [by establishing] prayer. [Besides, my husband also used to tell me that] sometimes, people need to forgive others a lot to calm their hearts. Well, it's things [like that] that make me feel: Oh yeah! [I] can do it." (F3GN, 525)

"[My husband is the one who] acts *ngemong*." (F4ML, 625)

Q: "What kind of person is your husband to you?"

Mrs. DJ: "He's very [patient] (thinking) and also very *ngemong*."

Q: "Among his positive vibes, such as kindness, apprehensiveness, forbearance, and *ngemong*, what is the one you most admire from him?"

Mrs. DJ: "His forbearance. He completed the rhythm [for both of us]; especially when [I am] angry, [he] will leave me alone at first. [He] also keeps reminding me that I have to complete my duties as an undergraduate student. Who doesn't need patience [to face me as a busy student, wife, and mother to my child]? [My husband] still wants to take me to college, [keep me company] when I am sick, [and when] he has to work overtime [he is patient with me]."

Q: "So [your husband] always accompanies you in what you do, is that so?"

Mrs. DJ: "Yes." (F1DJ, 597-598, 605-606, 608-610)

Mrs. JN: "Patience will enable all family members to face [challenges] well. If you cannot [be patient], you can only be angry [and] win alone. If so, you will not be able to perform *ngemong* as the Javanese local wisdom [prescribes]." (F5JN, 477-479)

The husbands/fathers were full of love and concern for their family members, reflecting self-introspection, suppressing destructive personal egos, sharing spiritual values, and maintaining family commitment and harmony.

Relatedness to the larger circle beyond the nuclear family

This theme included the sub-themes of providing support, potential sources of conflict, and independence/privacy between the nuclear family and parties outside it, including the involvement of the extended family (family of origin), friends at work, father or mother, domestic assistants, neighbors, friends, peers or colleagues, and the wider community. On the one hand, the nuclear family and the larger circle established harmonious interactions. Conversely, overly interconnected involvement held the potential for conflict due to the invasion of the nuclear family's privacy and autonomy. Therefore, the nuclear family members were committed to prioritizing

private problem-solving without interference from outsiders. This commitment to privacy and autonomy encouraged each nuclear family member to help the others' personal growth. Nuclear families who feel self-dependent tend to be more able to control their private environment through adaptation.

Discussion

The study findings highlight the experiences of the Indonesian Muslim family participants who face challenges but can still maintain their marriages. The themes identified have similarities with previous flourishing concepts, such as warmth, cooperation between family members,

orientation to the community, and having values from transcendence (Becvar, 2007). Nonetheless, the flourishing family in the context of the Indonesian Muslim participants is unique in two ways. First, in the previous concept of the flourishing family, aspects of the relationship with transcendent matters were only implicitly disclosed, whereas in the Muslim families in this study, faith in God (Allah) is expressed and practiced daily as a core value of life based on the Qur'an (the Islamic holy book). The Qur'an-inspired combination of various religious practices, social relationships, and personal experiences shapes Muslim life and sustains their religious community (Murphy et al., 2023).

Figure 1

Dynamics of a Flourishing Muslim Family
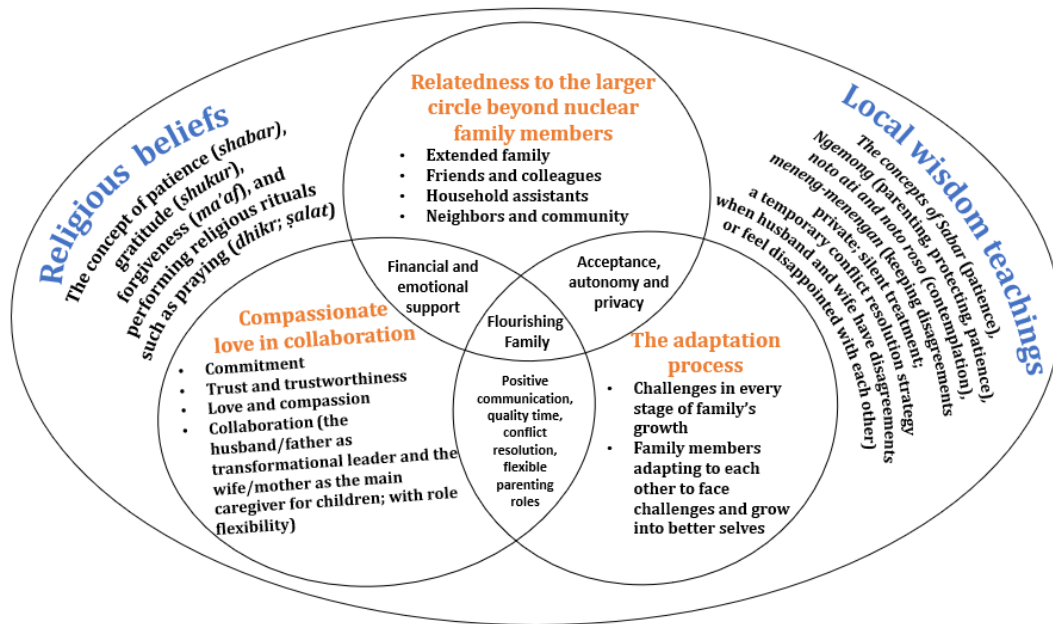
Note. *Meneng-menengan* is a Javanese term parallel to "temporary conflict management strategy." *Meneng-menengan* refers to conflict resolution methods used when a husband-and-wife face disagreements or feelings of disappointment with their partner, and the two parties take care of it privately (not directly visible to children or other family members). This strategy is also a form of "silent treatment" during which each party takes time to contemplate the problem(s).

Second, the previous characteristics of a flourishing family indicated a clear family structure and legitimate authority. In this case, the findings related to the theme "relatedness to the larger circle beyond the nuclear family" explain that even while developing their autonomy, the nuclear family continues to create harmonious relationships with their extended family. It aligns with previous findings on Sudanese Muslim families, showing that the nuclear family still needs support from their families of origin to form family resilience (Sari et al., 2020).

The themes that emerged in this study include compassionate love in collaboration. In the Indonesian indigenous context, it was found that individuals expressed their love through acts of sacrifice, spending time together, feeling comfortable with one another, or admiring their partner (Surijah et al., 2018). The flourishing families shared the value of altruism among members. This theme is in line with the previous concept in altruism studies (Huber & MacDonald, 2012; Valsala & Menon, 2023) regarding the transition from pseudo-altruism (the selfish self) to the purest form of altruism (self-transcendence) (Valsala & Menon, 2023).

This study also revealed that the families underwent an adaptation process. In a flourishing family, the members' roles became more flexible (e.g., complementing each other in childcare and domestic tasks, washing clothes and dishes, and cleaning the house). Even though the husbands/ fathers were the family leaders, sometimes they acted *ngemong*; likewise, the wives/mothers became formidable leaders of the family when the husbands were not at home. This theme was similar to the results of previous studies regarding the idea that *ngemong* can be interpreted more broadly as "the protective nature of a husband who patiently leads the family" (Subandi, 1997; Subandi, 2011). The fathers/husbands reflected the expansion of transformational leadership theory (Bass & Avolio, 1994) applied in the family context (Morton et al., 2010). A transformational leader is a benevolent paternalist leader who seems distant but is full of tenderness in establishing close relationships with the members of their group (Karakitapoğlu-Aygün & Gumusluoglu, 2013). Parents also need to adopt transformational parenting behaviors as a healthy way of rearing their children, specifically to support the formation of adolescent autonomy (Morton et al., 2010; Perreault et al., 2016). Economic (Bradley & Connors, 2013; Hanum & Safuridar, 2018; Stevens & Heckman, 2021) and educational factors (Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation, 2019; Kim et al., 2020; Patria, 2022) are human capital that have a positive effect on the flourishing family.

The study findings also highlighted the role of Islamic religious and local wisdom teachings. Following these, all family members committed to quality education and positive parenting for their children. The families likewise embraced local philosophies, such as conflict management (e.g., *noto ati* and *noto roso*, *meneng-menengan*, patience, and forgiveness). By scrutinizing the optimal resolution of family conflicts, the children adopted optimal problem-solving strategies and self-esteem. The teachings of gratitude and forgiveness were similar to the concept of Amor fati Stoicism. Amor fati described a state of acceptance of an individual's life circumstances and open acknowledgement of their shortcomings as part of human nature. Selflessness is not a source of vulnerability, but rather a basis of strength with which humans can survive when facing challenges (Armstrong, 2013).

The theme of relatedness to the larger circle beyond nuclear family members explains the other unique findings of this study. The development of the nuclear family's privacy and autonomy from outside parties is similar to the concept of parallelism in the theory of human relatedness

(Hagerty et al., 1993). The establishment of family autonomy and privacy were manifestations of how family members maintained a safe distance from outsiders (reduced involvement with certain parties). Parallelism guaranteed comfortable interactions, but did not weaken ties between nuclear family members and the larger circle beyond. The separation was rather viewed as "a time-out moment" used to restore all parties' personal physical and emotional well-being before re-establishing collectivist ties.

Even though the data in this study refers to the results of interviews conducted five years ago (2018), we are certain that the truth revealed in the study findings is still relevant to the current condition of Indonesian Muslim families. Communication within the family and religiosity contribute to increasing family resilience (Latifa et al., 2020). Forgiveness and gratitude have been proven to predict the flourishing level in the context of emerging adulthood (Tessy et al., 2022). In facing the COVID-19 pandemic, togetherness and partnership between husband and wife are the essential factors for a resilient millennial family (Kasdi & Saifudin, 2020). At a policy level, the results of this research support the government's efforts (e.g., through the creative economy program) to rebuild families' economic resilience (Rosyadi et al., 2022).

This research was conducted using qualitative methods and the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) technique and involved in-depth interviews with nuclear families (father, mother, and child). It aimed to reveal the meaning of a flourishing family within the Muslim, Javanese, and Bugis communities. Therefore, the study was limited to exploring the homogeneous experience of nuclear family members regarding the meaning of a flourishing family. We also encountered obstacles in the initial data analysis due to the assistant interviewer's lack of experience in qualitative studies. Nonetheless, the themes and dynamics that emerged in the study contribute to the field of positive psychology, with empirical evidence of efforts to develop a flourishing family. The flourishing Muslim family needs to develop aspects of family relationships, especially compassion in collaboration, to provide support for the adaptation of each family member, and to maintain connectedness with the larger circle beyond the nuclear family. The core theme that emerged in the study is the important role of religious and local wisdom teachings.

Conclusion

Family flourishing consists of compassionate love in collaboration, the adaptation process, the role of religious and local wisdom teachings, and relatedness to the larger circle beyond nuclear family members. All these themes were related to each other in establishing the target concept. The meaning of a "flourishing family" for the Muslim Indonesian participants emphasizes shared relational well-being, which is more complex than the simple "human flourishing" concept. The study contributes to developing the concept of the flourishing family through evidence based on empirical data regarding efforts to maintain positive potential in the family. We suggest that further research could also consider the experience of extended family members (e.g., uncles/aunts, brother or sister in-law, grandfathers, and grandmothers).[]

Author Contribution Statement

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