



An Exegetical Study of Qur'anic Verses on the Creation and Uniqueness of Individuals with Special Needs: A Case Study of Children with Down Syndrome

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Abstract

Children with Down Syndrome are part of a special needs group that requires integrated medical, social, and spiritual attention. From the Islamic perspective, they are not a disgrace but rather unique creations of Allah, full of wisdom and purpose. This study aims to examine Qur'anic verses related to the process of human creation and the uniqueness of children with special needs particularly those with Down Syndrome and to explore Qur'anic values that can serve as preventive, educational, and social foundations in responding to this condition. This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach using library research and thematic (maudhu'i) interpretation methods. Primary data are derived from Qur'anic verses such as Surah Al-Mu'minin [23]: 12–14, Al-Insan [76]: 2, At-Thariq [86]: 6–7, and 'Abasa [80]: 1–10, analyzed through classical and contemporary tafsir literature. Secondary data come from scientific literature discussing Down Syndrome from medical and social perspectives. Thematic analysis is applied to integrate the understanding of Qur'anic texts with the real-life conditions of children with Down Syndrome in society. The findings reveal that the Qur'an views the process of human creation as meaningful and purposeful, including for children born with special conditions. It also offers moral and educational foundations for supporting, accepting, and empowering children with Down Syndrome so they may live with dignity, grow optimally, and participate fairly in society. Therefore, an integrative approach that bridges divine values and medical science is essential in building an inclusive and just community.

Keywords: *Al-Qur'an, Children with Special Needs, Down Syndrome, Genetic Prevention, Human Creation, Inclusive Education.*

PRELIMINARY

Children are an extraordinary gift and the dream of every married couple. However, not all children are born equal; some have special needs, such as those with Down Syndrome, who are physically and psychologically different from other children. In Islam, children with special needs are not a disgrace or a failed product, but rather a special gift from God and must be cared for with love and care. The Quran emphasizes that God does not burden a person beyond his or her capacity (Quran 2: 286), so children with special needs have equal rights in education and social life, as well as special privileges before God.

However, attention to children with special needs, especially in terms of learning and understanding the Qur'an, is still less than optimal. Appropriate learning media and competent teachers are needed so that these children can receive a good religious education. The Qur'an provides a clear perspective on children with special needs, as in QS. Abasa verses 1-10, which show how the Prophet

Muhammad treated children with special needs with respect and care. Therefore, this study aims to review the verses of the Qur'an that discuss the creation and special nature of children with special needs, especially children with Down Syndrome, as an effort to understand and appreciate their existence from an Islamic perspective and provide a foundation for appropriate education and treatment for them (Nurhalisa, et.al., 2023).

This study is also important as a contribution in strengthening the understanding that children with special needs are part of God's creation who have potential and special characteristics, as well as a reflection for society to provide proper support and affection to them (Kamil, et.al., 2023).

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with library research (Assingkily, 2021) and thematic interpretation (*maudhu'i*) to explore the Qur'an's perspective on human creation and the special status of children with special needs, particularly children with Down syndrome. This approach was chosen because it aims to analyze religious texts and scientific sources to comprehensively understand the phenomenon of human creation from an Islamic perspective and its implications for the reality of children with special needs.

Types of research

This research is a descriptive qualitative study, focusing on analyzing the text and meaning of Quranic verses, as well as the interpretations of classical and contemporary commentators regarding the themes of human creation and the special status of children with special needs. This research is also interpretative-normative, namely understanding the meaning of the verses within the context of Islamic ethics and values.

Data source

Primary Data: Verses of the Qur'an relating to the creation of humans (such as QS. Al-Mu'minin: 12–14, Al-Insan: 2, At-Thariq: 6–7), as well as verses relating to equality and respect for humans, including Q.S. 'Abasa: 1–10 and Al-Baqarah: 286. Secondary Data: Classical tafsir books (Tafsir al-Thabari, Tafsir al-Qurthubi, Tafsir Ibn Kathir) and contemporary tafsir (Tafsir al-Mishbah by Quraish Shihab, Tafsir al-Azhar by HAMKA).

Scientific literature about Down Syndrome, both from medical and social aspects. Journal articles, books and academic documents relevant to the education of children with special needs and Islamic values.

Method of collecting data

Data collection was carried out through documentation studies, namely reviewing and analyzing the texts of the Qur'an, interpretation books, journals, articles, and scientific books that discuss the topics of human creation, children with special needs, and Down Syndrome comprehensively.

Data Analysis Methods

The data were analyzed using the thematic interpretation method (*maudhu'i*), namely by collecting relevant verses of the Qur'an, then classified based on major themes such as: (1) The process of human creation; (2) Equality and specialness of humans; (3) Social responsibility towards individuals with special needs; and (4) Prevention and education in Islam. The analysis was carried out by examining the context of the verses, *asbabun nuzul* (if available), and interpretations of the mufassirs to then be connected with the medical and social realities of Down Syndrome children. The author also uses an integrative approach between Islamic values and scientific knowledge as an interpretative framework.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Medical and Social Concept of Down Syndrome

Medically, Down Syndrome is a genetic disorder caused by the presence of an additional chromosome on chromosome number 21, so that the total chromosomes become 47, instead of 46 as normal. This condition is also known as trisomy 21. This disorder occurs due to abnormal cell division during embryonic development, called nondisjunction, resulting in three copies of chromosome 21. There

are three types of Down Syndrome, namely trisomy 21 (the most common), mosaic (only some cells have an extra chromosome), and translocation (an extra chromosome attached to another chromosome) (Makarim, 2025).

Typical medical symptoms include physical features such as a short neck, small head, slightly flat face, distinctive eye shape, short stature, and short fingers. Furthermore, sufferers often experience delayed physical and intellectual development, as well as a risk of congenital diseases such as heart and digestive disorders, hearing impairment, and thyroid problems. Intelligence levels are usually low, with a range from mild to moderate (Pondok Indah Hospital, 2025).

Socially, Down syndrome has significant consequences for both sufferers and their families. Children with Down syndrome often experience limitations in intellectual and social functioning, such as difficulties with learning, communication, and social interactions. They require extra support in education and daily care. Furthermore, stigma and a lack of societal understanding can lead to families becoming isolated and experiencing heavy physical, social, economic, and emotional burdens. Social support and appropriate parenting are crucial to helping children with Down syndrome thrive and live as independently as possible (Metavia & Widyana, 2022).

In short, the medical concept of Down syndrome is a genetic disorder called trisomy 21 that affects physical and mental development, while socially, this condition requires attention, support, and understanding so that sufferers can participate and live with dignity in society.

The Qur'an's View on Human Creation

The Qur'an's view of human creation describes a very detailed and meaningful creation process, starting from the origins of humans from the essence of the earth until they became perfect creatures. In Surah Al-Mu'minun verses 12-14, it is explained that humans were created from the essence of the earth (sulalah min teen), then became a drop of semen which was stored in a sturdy place (womb), then developed into a clot of blood that adhered (alaghah), then became a lump of flesh (mudghah), bones, and finally wrapped in flesh, then Allah breathed the soul into it so that it became another and the best of His creations (Yulianti, 2025).

In addition, Surah Al-Insan verse 2 emphasizes that humans were created from a drop of mixed semen (nutfah amshaj), namely a mixture of male sperm and female ovum, which Allah then tested with commands and prohibitions so that humans become creatures who hear and see, indicating the existence of moral and spiritual responsibility in the creation of humans.

Surah At-Thariq verses 6-7 also confirms that humans were created from "water emitted" that came out from between the male coccyx and the female sternum, symbolically depicting the initial biological aspect of human creation.

Overall, the Qur'an views human creation as a process that begins from simple materials (soil and semen) that go through various stages of biological and spiritual development, with the aim of making humans perfect, rational and responsible creatures in the world (Fauzi, 2025).

Correlation between Quranic Verses and the Reality of Children with Down Syndrome

The correlation between Quranic verses and the reality of children with Down syndrome can be seen from an integrative perspective that combines medical and spiritual aspects in treating and understanding this condition. The Quran provides comprehensive guidance that can serve as the basis for preventive and educational efforts to reduce the risk of having a child with Down syndrome, while also providing a spiritual foundation for families and communities to accept and support children with the condition.

Specifically, thematic interpretation studies show that the Quran emphasizes the importance of Islamic family and youth character education, reproductive health and genetic disease education, and the concept of ideal marriage in accordance with Quranic values as a preventive measure before the birth of a child with Down Syndrome. Furthermore, premarital reproductive health and genetic examinations, parenting education, avoiding promiscuity, drugs, and adultery, as well as regular pregnancy checkups and genetic screening are medical procedures aligned with Quranic principles. Prayer and good deeds during pregnancy are also emphasized as spiritual efforts that support fetal health (Febriani & Abdurahman, 2021).

On the social and educational front, the Quran affirms that all humans, including children with Down syndrome, have equal rights to education and spiritual development. Children with special needs, such as those with Down syndrome, have the potential to learn and develop faith and morals like other children, although they require a tailored learning approach. This aligns with the Quranic principle that individuals with physical limitations or special conditions should not be neglected or shunned in society, but rather given equal opportunities to develop and participate.

Thus, the verses of the Qur'an and Islamic values provide a holistic framework that integrates medical, educational, and spiritual aspects in facing the reality of Down Syndrome children, prioritizing prevention, acceptance, and empowerment as a whole (Amalia, 2025).

CONCLUSION

Children with Down syndrome are part of God's creation and should be accepted with love and valued as individuals with potential. The Quran does not view physical or mental disabilities as flaws, but rather as tests and mandates that must be carried out with patience and responsibility. Verses about human creation emphasize that every human being is created by God's will and decree through a wise process, including those born with special conditions such as Down syndrome.

The Quran also provides a preventive basis for reducing the risk of having a child with Down Syndrome, such as the importance of maintaining reproductive health, Islamic marriage education, and strengthening moral and spiritual values within the family. Furthermore, the principles of justice, compassion, and respect for others taught in the Quran require society to provide support, proper education, and opportunities for participation for children with special needs so they can live with dignity and develop optimally.

Thus, the Qur'an's perspective on children with Down Syndrome includes aspects of creation, acceptance, prevention, and empowerment, all of which are important foundations in building an inclusive, caring, and just society.

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