

A Critical Hadith Analysis of Halal Provision and Child Piety: Perspectives on Islamic Child Education

Sabila Azmi Syahira ^{a,1,*}, Suparta ^{a,2}, Romlah Abubakar Askar ^{a,3},

^a UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, Indonesia

¹ sabila.azmi25@mhs.uinjkt.ac.id; ² suparta@uinjkt.ac.id; ³ abubakar.askar@uinjkt.ac.id

*Correspondent Author

Received: 13-04-2026

Revised: 26-05-2026

Accepted: 06-06-2026

KEYWORDS

Halal provision; rejected supplication; hadith analysis; child piety; parental responsibility.

ABSTRACT

This study critically examines the theological and ethical implications of illicit (haram) income on the acceptance of supplication, with particular attention to its consequences for child piety and spiritual development. Employing a qualitative approach grounded in hadith analysis, the research investigates the prophetic tradition narrated by Abu Hurairah in *Sahih Muslim* concerning the rejected supplication of a traveler whose sustenance derives from forbidden sources. The analysis reveals a strong correlation between the halal status of provision and the efficacy of worship, extending this principle to contemporary cases of parents who pursue unlawful income under the justification of providing for their children. Drawing upon classical jurisprudential sources, modern scholarly interpretations, and empirical data on economic behavior in Muslim-majority societies, the study argues that the pursuit of haram income undermines both the spiritual standing of the provider and the religious formation of dependents. The findings highlight the need to reassess prevalent economic practices within Muslim communities and emphasize that genuine parental responsibility entails not only material provision but also the sanctification of such provision through adherence to Islamic ethical standards. This research contributes to ongoing discourse on Islamic economic ethics and family law by demonstrating that the hadith's theological warning retains immediate relevance for contemporary Muslim families navigating tensions between economic pressures and religious obligations.

This is an open-access article under the [CC-BY-SA](#) license.



Introduction

The question of sustenance (*rizq*) occupies a central position within Islamic theological and ethical discourse, representing not merely an economic concern but a fundamental spiritual obligation that intersects with nearly every dimension of Muslim religious practice (Muhammad ibn Ismail al-Bukhari, 1997). The Qur'anic injunction to consume that which is "halal and tayyib" (lawful and wholesome) appears repeatedly throughout the sacred text, establishing a clear divine mandate that extends beyond ritual dietary restrictions to

encompass the entire spectrum of economic activity (Yusuf alQaradawi, 1999). This comprehensive understanding of halal provision necessarily implicates the means by which wealth is acquired, the purposes to which it is directed, and the spiritual consequences that attend both lawful and unlawful economic engagement (Kahf, 2003). Contemporary Muslim societies, however, increasingly confront circumstances in which the pursuit of halal income appears to conflict with the pressing demands of family provision, creating ethical dilemmas often resolved through pragmatic compromises with religious principle. The justification frequently offered, that providing for one's children supersedes concerns about the permissibility of income sources, reflects a fundamental misunderstanding of Islamic teachings regarding the relationship between material provision and spiritual welfare (Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, 1996).

The hadith literature provides abundant evidence that the Prophet Muhammad devoted considerable attention to the question of lawful sustenance, consistently emphasizing its connection to the acceptance of worship and the efficacy of supplication (Imam Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, 2002). Among the most significant of these teachings is the hadith narrated by Abu Hurairah in *Sahih Muslim*, which presents the striking image of a traveler whose supplication is rejected despite the presence of multiple factors traditionally associated with the acceptance of prayer (Imam Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, 2002). The traveler's extended journey, disheveled appearance, raised hands, and repeated invocation of the divine name all constitute recognized means of drawing near to Allah and securing divine response, yet his prayer remains unanswered due to a single disqualifying factor: the unlawful nature of his sustenance. This hadith thus establishes a direct causal relationship between the lawfulness of one's provision and one's capacity to engage effectively in the most fundamental act of worship, communication with God through supplication (Ibn Rajab al-Hanbali, 2001).

The contemporary relevance of this prophetic teaching is of critical importance, particularly in light of economic data revealing concerning patterns of illicit economic activity within Muslim-majority populations. Transparency International's *Corruption Perceptions Index* (2025) shows that numerous Muslim-majority countries rank among those with the highest levels of perceived corruption, suggesting widespread engagement in practices that Islamic law would classify as haram (Transparency International, 2025). The Global Financial Integrity report on Trade-Related Illicit Financial Flows in Developing Asia (2013–2022) indicates that trade misinvoicing alone reached an estimated US\$1.69 trillion in 2022, reflecting systemic risks of illicit cross-border financial activities. These flows, while measured as indicators of misinvoicing risk rather than exact illegal proceeds, are closely associated with corruption, tax evasion, and capital flight, all of which undermine domestic resource mobilization and economic development (Global Financial Integrity, 2026). Survey data further confirm that significant percentages of Muslim respondents acknowledge engaging in or tolerating practices that contradict explicit religious prohibitions, often citing family financial pressures as justification (Pew Research Center, 2013).

The phenomenon of pursuing haram income specifically for the purpose of providing for one's children represents a particularly troubling manifestation of this broader pattern, as it invokes the sacred responsibility of parental provision to justify the violation of equally sacred religious prohibitions (Kamali, 2003). This rationalization typically involves a form of consequentialist reasoning foreign to traditional Islamic ethics, whereby the perceived good of child welfare is considered to outweigh the prohibition against unlawful acquisition. Such reasoning is fundamentally at odds with Islamic moral theology, which insists upon an intrinsic connection between the means of provision and the spiritual benefit derived from it. This connection is made explicit in the hadith under examination through its rhetorical question: "How, then, could his supplication be answered?" (Imam Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, 2002).

This study proceeds from the conviction that proper understanding of this hadith and its implications requires both rigorous textual analysis and sustained engagement with contemporary economic realities (Brown, 2009). The methodology combines classical hadith authentication and interpretation techniques with contextual analysis informed by modern approaches to Islamic economic ethics (Hallaq, 1997). By examining the hadith within its

broader scriptural context, tracing its interpretation through major classical commentaries, and applying its principles to contemporary circumstances, this research demonstrates that the prophetic warning against unlawful sustenance possesses direct and immediate relevance for Muslim parents confronting the economic challenges of the present age. The ultimate purpose of this investigation is not merely academic but practical: to contribute to the reassessment of economic attitudes and practices that compromise both individual spiritual standing and the religious formation of future generations.

Research Methods

This study employs a qualitative research design grounded in classical hadith analysis methodology while incorporating contemporary hermeneutical approaches appropriate to the application of traditional texts to modern circumstances (Brown, 2009). The primary methodological framework derives from the established sciences of hadith criticism (*‘ulum al-hadith*), which provide systematic procedures for assessing the authenticity, proper understanding, and normative implications of prophetic traditions. The hadith under examination, narrated by Abu Hurairah and recorded in *Sahih Muslim*, does not require independent authentication given its inclusion in the most authoritative hadith collection according to Sunni scholarly consensus. The methodological task therefore concerns interpretation and application rather than verification. The interpretive approach follows the principles articulated in classical *usul al-fiqh* (principles of jurisprudence), which provide rules for deriving legal and ethical guidance from textual sources (Hallaq, 1997).

The analysis proceeds through several distinct phases. The first phase involves linguistic examination of the hadith text to establish precise understanding of key terms and their semantic ranges. This philological analysis draws upon classical Arabic lexicographical sources including Ibn Manzur's *Lisan al-‘Arab* and al-Fayruzabadi's *al-Qamus al-Muhit*, as well as technical dictionaries of hadith terminology. Particular attention is devoted to terms bearing ethical and legal significance, including *haram* (prohibited), *tayyib* (wholesome), and *ghuddhiya* (nourished), whose precise implications determine the scope of the hadith's normative teaching (Muhammad Fu'ad 'Abd al-Baqi, 1994). The linguistic analysis also addresses the rhetorical structure of the hadith, noting that the concluding rhetorical question (*anna yustajib li-dhalika*) functions as emphatic negation, establishing not mere improbability but categorical impossibility of divine response to such supplication (Tammam Adi, 2008).

The second phase situates the hadith within its broader scriptural context through examination of related Qur'anic verses and prophetic traditions. This contextual approach, termed *tafsir al-hadith bi al-hadith* and *tafsir al-hadith bi al-Qur'an* in classical methodology, recognizes that individual textual units derive meaning from their relationship to the larger corpus of Islamic revelation. The Qur'anic verses cited within the hadith itself (al-Mu'minun 51 and al-Baqarah 172) provide essential context, establishing that the same divine command to consume lawful and wholesome sustenance was addressed both to prophets and to ordinary believers. Additional hadith addressing the relationship between lawful provision and accepted worship are examined to establish the consistency and comprehensiveness of prophetic teaching on this theme (Al-Mundhiri, 1986).

The third phase engages with the classical commentarial tradition, examining how authoritative scholars across generations understood and applied the hadith. This phase draws upon major hadith commentaries including al-Nawawi's *Sharh Sahih Muslim*, Ibn Rajab's *Jami' al-'Ulum wa al-Hikam*, and al-Mubarakfuri's *Tuhfat al-Ahwadhi*, as well as jurisprudential works that derive legal rulings from the hadith. The purpose of this engagement is not merely historical but interpretive. Classical scholarly consensus provides authoritative guidance for proper understanding that contemporary analysis must respect (Khaled Abou El Fadl, 2001). At the same time, the methodology recognizes that classical scholars addressed the circumstances of their own contexts, requiring contemporary analysis to extend their principles to new situations they could not have anticipated.

The fourth phase applies the hadith's principles to contemporary circumstances, drawing upon empirical data regarding Muslim economic practices and family provision patterns. This

application phase employs the jurisprudential concept of *tahqiq al-manat* (verification of the effective cause), which permits the extension of textual rulings to new situations that share the relevant characteristics addressed by the original text (Muhammad Hashim Kamali, 1996). The contemporary phenomenon of pursuing haram income for the purpose of providing for children is analyzed through this framework, examining whether and how the hadith's warning applies to such circumstances. Data from economic surveys, corruption indices, and studies of religious practice provide the empirical foundation for this analysis, ensuring that the application addresses actual rather than hypothetical conditions (Global Financial Integrity, 2026).

The fifth phase synthesizes the preceding analyses to generate conclusions regarding both the theological principles at stake and their practical implications for contemporary Muslim families. This synthesis follows the principle that Islamic legal and ethical reasoning moves from textual evidence through interpretive analysis to practical application, maintaining fidelity to sources while addressing present circumstances (Bernard Weiss, 1998). The conclusions address both the general principle established by the hadith regarding haram sustenance and supplication, and the specific application of this principle to parents who pursue unlawful income under the justification of family provision. Throughout, the methodology maintains commitment to scholarly objectivity while acknowledging that the subject matter ultimately concerns normative religious guidance with practical spiritual consequences (Mohammad Fadel, 2008).

Results and Discussion

1. Textual Analysis of the Hadith: Structure, Language, and Meaning

وَحَدَّثَنِي أَبُو كُرَيْبٍ، مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْعَلَاءِ حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو أَسَامَةَ، حَدَّثَنَا فُضَيْلُ بْنُ مَرْزُوقٍ، حَدَّثَنِي عَدِيُّ بْنُ ثَابِتٍ، عَنْ أَبِي حَارِمٍ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ " أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ طَيِّبٌ لَا يَقْبَلُ إِلَّا يَأْيُّهَا الرُّسُلُ كُلُّوا مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَاعْمَلُوا صَالِحًا إِنِّي بِمَا طَيَّبْتُهَا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ أَمَرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ بِمَا أَمَرَ بِهِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ فَقَالَ " . ثُمَّ ذَكَرَ الرَّجُلُ يُطِيلُ السَّفَرَ أَشْعَثَ { يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُلُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ } وَقَالَ { تَعْمَلُونَ عَلِيمٌ } أَغْبَرَ يَمُدُّ يَدَيْهِ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ يَا رَبِّ يَا رَبِّ وَمَطْعَمُهُ حَرَامٌ وَمَشْرَبُهُ حَرَامٌ وَمَلْبَسُهُ حَرَامٌ وَغُذِيَ بِالْحَرَامِ فَأَنَّى يُسْتَجَابَ لِذَلِكَ " .

Abu Huraira reported Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) as saying: "O people, Allah is Good and He therefore, accepts only that which is good. And Allah commanded the believers as He commanded the Messengers by saying: "O Messengers, eat of the good things, and do good deeds; verily I am aware of what you do". And He said: "O those who believe, eat of the good things that We gave you". He then made a mention of a person who travels widely, his hair disheveled and covered with dust. He lifts his hand towards the sky (and thus makes the supplication): "O Lord, O Lord," whereas his diet is unlawful, his drink is unlawful, and his clothes are unlawful and his nourishment is unlawful. How can then his supplication be accepted?"

The hadith narrated by Abu Hurairah in Sahih Muslim presents a carefully constructed prophetic statement whose rhetorical architecture reinforces its theological content and amplifies its spiritual warning (Imam Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, 2002). The complete text situates the specific narrative of the rejected traveler within a broader theological framework established through citation of Qur'anic verses and general statements regarding divine nature: "Indeed, Allah is good (*tayyib*) and does not accept except that which is good." This opening establishes the fundamental principle from which the specific teaching derives, that divine acceptance of human worship depends upon

qualitative correspondence between the nature of the offering and the nature of the One to whom it is offered (Imam Nawawi, n.d.). The attribute "*tayyib*" applied to Allah encompasses purity, wholesomeness, and freedom from defect, establishing that the Divine possesses intrinsic qualities that necessarily exclude reception of that which contradicts those qualities.

The structural movement of the hadith proceeds from general theological principle to specific prophetic commands to concrete illustrative narrative, creating a pedagogical sequence that ensures comprehensive understanding. The citation of Qur'anic verses commanding both prophets and believers to consume lawful and wholesome sustenance (al-Mu'minun 51 and al-Baqarah 172) serves multiple functions: it establishes the scriptural foundation for the teaching, it demonstrates that the obligation extends across all categories of believers from the most honored to the most ordinary, and it implicitly places concern with lawful provision among the shared characteristics of prophetic and general Muslim identity (Al-Tabari, 1968). The parallel structure of the cited verses establishes consumption and worship as interconnected rather than independent domains of religious life.

The narrative portion of the hadith presents a figure whose external characteristics would traditionally signify proximity to divine response, creating dramatic tension that the conclusion resolves through unexpected reversal. The traveler's extended journey (yutil al-safar) places him in a category the Prophet explicitly identified as among those whose supplications are not rejected, as indicated in multiple authentic traditions (Abu Dawud, n.d.). His disheveled appearance (ash'ath, with tangled hair, and agbar, covered with dust) signals both physical hardship and spiritual humility, qualities likewise associated with the acceptance of supplication. His extended hands toward the heaven (yamuddu yadayhi ila al-sama') represents the archetypal posture of entreaty, while his repeated invocation "*Ya Rabb, Ya Rabb*" employs the divine name most associated with intimate supplication and the relationship of creation to Allah. Every visible characteristic of this supplicant suggests someone whose prayer should receive immediate divine response.

The revelation of the disqualifying factor comes through a systematic enumeration that emphasizes the comprehensive nature of the contamination: *mat'amuhu haram* (his food is haram), *mashrabuhu haram* (his drink is haram), *malbasuhu haram* (his clothing is haram), *wa ghudhiya bil-haram* (and he was nourished with haram). The fourfold repetition creates rhetorical intensification while also ensuring that no aspect of material sustenance escapes attention: consumption, hydration, covering, and nutrition all derive from prohibited sources (Imam Nawawi, n.d.). The passive construction of the final element (*ghudhiya*, "he was nourished") is particularly significant, as it extends the principle beyond voluntary consumption to include sustenance received during periods of dependency, such as childhood. This grammatical detail establishes that the contamination of haram provision communicates across contexts where the recipient exercises no personal choice in its acquisition (Ibn Rajab al-Hanbali, 2001).

The concluding rhetorical question: *fa-anna yustajab li-dhalika* ("how could his supplication be answered?") functions as emphatic negation, a recognized Arabic rhetorical device indicating categorical impossibility rather than mere improbability. The interrogative form intensifies the negation by inviting the hearer to consider what response could possibly be expected under such circumstances, finding no answer possible. The demonstrative pronoun "*dhalika*" (that/that one) creates rhetorical distance, as if the Prophet were pointing to a figure whose spiritual condition disqualifies him from normal consideration. Classical commentators uniformly interpret this question as establishing an absolute principle rather than a statistical tendency: supplication from one whose sustenance is comprehensively haram cannot receive divine acceptance (Imam Nawawi, n.d.).

The theological implications of this textual analysis extend significantly beyond the immediate narrative context, establishing principles applicable to all worship performed

by those whose sustenance derives from unlawful sources (Al-Ghazali, 1982). The hadith's logic proceeds from the nature of Allah (*tayyib*) through the divine command (consume good things and perform righteous deeds) to the practical consequence (supplication from one nourished with haram cannot be accepted). This logical chain indicates that the rejection of the traveler's supplication reflects not arbitrary divine displeasure but necessary consequence of the structural incompatibility between haram provision and acceptable worship (Ibn Taymiyyah, 1991). The supplicant has placed himself outside the category of those whose prayers receive response by his own choices regarding sustenance, and no amount of external piety can compensate for this fundamental disqualification.

2. The Parental Justification: Contemporary Patterns and Their Critique

The phenomenon of pursuing haram income for the purpose of providing for children represents a contemporary manifestation of the pattern addressed in the hadith. It requires careful analysis of both its prevalence and its theological implications. Survey data from multiple Muslim-majority countries reveals that family provision consistently ranks among the most frequently cited justifications for engagement in economically prohibited practices. Respondents often frame such engagement as parental sacrifice rather than religious violation. The Islamic Research and Training Institute's 2019 study found that 34 percent of respondents in a multi-country survey acknowledged engaging in economic practices they recognized as religiously prohibited, with 67 percent of this subgroup citing family financial needs as their primary justification (Islamic Research and Training Institute, n.d.). This data indicates that the rationalization pattern under examination represents not marginal but mainstream economic behavior within significant segments of Muslim populations.

The cognitive structure of this justification typically involves implicit consequentialist reasoning that prioritizes perceived outcomes over procedural compliance with religious law. Parents who pursue haram income for their children's benefit implicitly argue that the good achieved, namely children's material welfare, outweighs the prohibition violated, namely unlawful acquisition. This form of moral calculation is foreign to traditional Islamic ethical reasoning. Classical Islamic jurisprudence recognizes limited circumstances in which prohibited actions become permissible through the principle of *darurah* (necessity). However, this principle applies under strict conditions that rarely obtain in cases of ordinary economic preference. It requires immediate threat to life or fundamental welfare, absence of lawful alternatives, limitation to the minimum necessary to address the threat, and cessation once the necessity passes (Al-Suyuti, 1983). Parents who pursue comfortable provision through haram means when halal provision remains possible, however difficult, cannot legitimately invoke necessity as justification.

The hadith's teaching directly contradicts the parental justification by establishing that the spiritual harm inflicted through haram provision necessarily exceeds any material benefit achieved. The supplicant in the hadith presumably acquired his haram sustenance through some reasoning, perhaps economic pressure, perhaps perceived necessity, perhaps simple preference for prohibited sources over lawful alternatives. Yet the hadith treats his circumstances as irrelevant to the assessment of his supplication's status. The divine refusal to accept his prayer operates automatically, without consideration of his subjective intentions or justifications (Ibn Rajab al-Hanbali, 2001). This indicates that the relationship between haram provision and rejected supplication functions at an ontological rather than merely moral level. It is not that Allah chooses to punish the supplicant for his bad choices by refusing his prayer, but that haram sustenance structurally incapacitates the supplicant from effective communication with the Divine (Al-Ghazali, 1982).

The application of this principle to parents providing for children intensifies rather than mitigates the spiritual consequences, as the contamination extends beyond the provider to include the dependents who consume what is provided. Children nourished with haram provision suffer spiritual consequences despite their complete innocence of

any wrongdoing in acquiring such provision. This point is established through the passive construction *ghudhiya bil-haram* ("he was nourished with haram") (Imam Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, 2002). Parents who justify haram income by reference to their children's welfare thus achieve the opposite of their stated intention. Rather than securing their children's flourishing, they compromise their children's spiritual capacity through the very provision they offer. The prophetic teaching indicates that a child raised on haram sustenance faces the same obstacle to accepted supplication as the adult who knowingly acquires such sustenance. This places upon parents the grave responsibility of protecting their children's spiritual welfare through the maintenance of lawful provision.

Classical scholars explicitly addressed the question of parental responsibility for children's spiritual contamination through haram provision, consistently emphasizing that such responsibility constitutes one of the weightiest obligations parents bear. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, in his *Tuhfat al-Mawdud*, devotes substantial attention to the question of infant and child nurture. He argues that parents who provide haram sustenance to their children commit a form of spiritual abuse whose consequences extend throughout the child's lifetime. He cites the hadith under examination as establishing the principle that physical nourishment communicates spiritual quality, such that the child's religious capacity is formed not merely through instruction but through the material substances that build the child's body and sustain the child's life (Ibn al-Qayyim, 1998). This understanding transforms the question of halal provision from a matter of personal compliance to a matter of intergenerational responsibility.

Contemporary research on religious transmission within families provides empirical confirmation of the classical scholarly understanding. It demonstrates that children's religious formation depends substantially upon parental modeling of religious integrity. Bartkowski's longitudinal study found that discrepancy between parental religious teaching and parental religious practice significantly predicted children's religious disaffiliation. This suggests that parents who verbally emphasize Islamic economic ethics while violating those ethics in practice may undermine their children's religious identity (Bartkowski et al., 2008). This finding gains particular significance when combined with the hadith's teaching. It indicates that parents who pursue haram income for their children both contaminate their children's spiritual capacity through the provision itself and undermine their children's religious formation through the inconsistency between teaching and practice. The cumulative effect represents a comprehensive assault on children's religious welfare masked as parental care.

3. Economic Realities and Spiritual Obligations: Resolving the Tension

The contemporary Muslim who takes seriously both the hadith's warning and the genuine economic challenges facing families must navigate the tension between ideal religious compliance and practical material circumstances. This tension is not merely theoretical. Economic data reveals that significant percentages of employment opportunities in modern economies involve elements that traditional jurisprudence would classify as haram, creating genuine dilemmas for Muslims seeking to maintain religious integrity while providing for dependents (Ibrahim Warde, 2010). The Islamic finance industry has grown substantially in response to these concerns, reaching estimated global assets of \$2.88 trillion by 2024. This growth reflects both the demand for halal economic alternatives and the recognition that conventional economic participation often involves prohibited elements (Islamic Financial Services Board, 2024). Acknowledging the reality of these challenges provides necessary context for applying the hadith's teaching without dismissing it as impractical idealism.

Traditional Islamic jurisprudence provides resources for navigating economic complexity that neither ignore religious obligations nor demand impossible standards of compliance. The principle of *tayyib* (wholesomeness) that appears in the hadith itself acknowledges gradation in the quality of permissible things, recognizing categories between clearly halal, clearly haram, and doubtful matters requiring cautious evaluation

(Yusuf alQaradawi, 1999). The prophetic teaching to “leave that which makes you doubt for that which does not make you doubt” establishes a methodology for navigating uncertain situations that prioritizes caution without demanding certainty (Al-Nawawi, 1999). This framework permits Muslims to exercise reasonable judgment in complex economic circumstances while maintaining commitment to avoiding that which is clearly prohibited.

The distinction between unavoidable complexity and deliberate violation provides crucial guidance for contemporary application of the hadith. The supplicant in the hadith is described in terms indicating comprehensive and willful dependence on haram sources. His food, drink, clothing, and ongoing nourishment all derive from prohibited means, suggesting deliberate choice rather than inadvertent involvement in mixed circumstances (Imam Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, 2002). This comprehensiveness indicates that the hadith’s warning applies most directly to those who knowingly structure their economic lives around haram acquisition, not to those who exercise due diligence while navigating unavoidable complexity (Imam Nawawi, n.d.). Contemporary Muslims who actively seek halal provision while acknowledging the difficulty of perfect compliance occupy a different category than those who dismiss religious economic principles as impractical or outdated.

The hadith’s teaching establishes priorities that should govern Muslim economic decision-making even when halal alternatives involve material sacrifice. The implicit logic of the prophetic warning indicates that accepted supplication, and by extension effective relationship with the Divine, possesses greater value than material comfort achieved through prohibited means (Al-Ghazali, 1982). Parents who sacrifice potential income by refusing haram opportunities thereby secure for their children what the hadith identifies as the most valuable provision: the capacity for communion with Allah through accepted prayer (Ibn al-Qayyim, 1998). This reframing challenges the assumption underlying the parental justification, suggesting that true parental provision prioritizes spiritual capacity over material abundance.

Economic research on Muslim communities maintaining strict halal compliance provides evidence that such compliance, while often requiring material sacrifice, does not condemn families to destitution. Studies of Muslim minority communities in Western countries demonstrate that families maintaining halal economic practice achieve comparable long-term outcomes to those who compromise religious principles. This suggests that the perceived trade-off between religious compliance and family welfare may be less stark than commonly assumed. Research by Hefner on Indonesian Muslim communities similarly found that commitment to religious economic principles did not predict economic failure. On the contrary, communities maintaining strong religious economic norms often demonstrated greater economic resilience due to enhanced social trust and cooperation. These findings challenge the empirical premise of the parental justification, suggesting that the choice between religious compliance and child welfare may represent a false dilemma (Robert W. Hefner, 2000).

The spiritual economy implied by the hadith inverts the material calculations that typically inform economic decision-making. It establishes that the currency of accepted supplication possesses value exceeding any material acquisition (Al-Ghazali, 1982). The traveler in the hadith may have accumulated substantial wealth through his haram economic activity, yet his spiritual poverty is absolute. He cannot secure divine response to his most urgent needs despite deploying every external means of approaching the Divine. Parents who sacrifice their children’s capacity for effective supplication while providing material abundance similarly achieve the opposite of their stated intention, leaving their children spiritually impoverished despite material comfort (Ibn al-Qayyim, 1998). The prophetic teaching thus challenges contemporary Muslim parents to reconsider what constitutes genuine provision for their children’s flourishing.

4. Implications for Child Piety and Religious Formation

The hadith’s teaching regarding the spiritual consequences of haram sustenance generates profound implications for understanding child piety and the processes through

which religious formation occurs. Traditional Islamic thought recognizes children as entering the world in a state of *fitra*, a natural disposition toward recognition of the Divine and receptivity to religious truth. Subsequent nurture either preserves and develops this disposition or corrupts and obstructs it. The hadith establishes that material nurture communicates spiritual quality, indicating that the *fitra* of children nourished with haram sustenance suffers corruption through the very process intended to sustain physical life. This understanding places the question of halal provision at the center of religious child-rearing, not as a peripheral concern but as a foundational prerequisite for all subsequent religious formation (Ibn al-Qayyim, 1998).

The concept of spiritual physiology implicit in the hadith finds elaboration throughout classical Islamic literature, where scholars developed a sophisticated understanding of the relationship between material consumption and spiritual capacity. Al-Ghazali's analysis in the *Ihya'* explains that the human heart (*qalb*), understood as the spiritual center of perception and response to divine guidance, requires material conditions for its proper function just as the physical organs require appropriate sustenance. Haram consumption darkens and hardens the heart, progressively diminishing its capacity to perceive divine reality and respond to divine address (Al-Ghazali, 1982). Children whose hearts are formed under these conditions of spiritual darkness face obstacles to religious perception and response that those nourished with halal sustenance do not encounter.

The obstruction of supplication identified in the hadith extends to all forms of worship performed by those nourished with haram, indicating comprehensive spiritual impairment (Imam Nawawi, n.d.). Classical commentators note that supplication represents the essence of worship, as the Prophet stated, "Supplication is worship." Inability to supplicate effectively therefore indicates inability to worship effectively more generally. Children raised on haram sustenance face obstacles not merely to answered prayer but to the entire range of religious practices that depend upon the heart's receptivity and responsiveness (Ibn Rajab al-Hanbali, 2001). The capacity for *khushu'* in prayer, for *tadabbur* upon the Qur'an, and for *muraqabah* all depend upon conditions that haram consumption corrupts (Al-Ghazali, 1982).

The implications for understanding religious formation challenge approaches that emphasize instruction and environment while neglecting the material foundations of spiritual development. Contemporary Muslim educational discourse frequently assumes that religious knowledge, positive peer influence, and mosque involvement constitute the primary determinants of child piety, with material provision treated as a neutral background condition. The hadith's teaching contradicts this assumption, establishing that the spiritual quality of material provision constitutes a precondition for the effectiveness of all other formative influences (Ibn al-Qayyim, 1998). Parents who provide excellent religious education while simultaneously providing haram sustenance may find their educational investments compromised by the very material foundations upon which those investments rest.

The trajectory of children's religious development thus depends fundamentally upon the economic choices their parents make on their behalf. This establishes parental economic integrity as a form of religious nurture. It transforms the meaning of parental provision from merely material sustenance to comprehensive care for the child's complete welfare, body, mind, and spirit. Parents who provide halal sustenance despite the difficulty of doing so offer their children not merely physical nutrition but spiritual protection, preserving the conditions under which religious formation can proceed effectively (Al-Ghazali, 1982). The hadith's teaching reframes economic choices as religious choices with consequences extending across generations and affecting domains of life far beyond the immediate material context.

Research on religious resilience among Muslim youth provides empirical support for the importance of perceived parental religious integrity to children's religious formation. Studies consistently find that adolescents' continued religious practice correlates strongly with their perception of parental authenticity, the sense that parents practice what they

teach and maintain consistency between religious profession and actual conduct. While these studies do not specifically address economic behavior, their findings suggest that parents who compromise religious economic principles while verbally instructing children in Islamic ethics may generate precisely the perception of inauthenticity that predicts religious disaffiliation. The hadith's teaching thus finds confirmation in contemporary research: parental economic integrity contributes to children's religious formation not merely through the spiritual quality of provision but through the modeling of consistent religious commitment.

Conclusion

This critical hadith analysis has demonstrated the profound theological and practical significance of the prophetic teaching regarding rejected supplication due to haram sustenance, with particular attention to its implications for contemporary Muslim parents who justify unlawful income acquisition by reference to their children's welfare. The hadith narrated by Abu Hurairah in *Sahih Muslim* establishes an unambiguous principle: comprehensive dependence on haram sources renders supplication ineffective, regardless of the external circumstances of piety the supplicant may display. This teaching applies with particular force to the contemporary phenomenon of parental economic rationalization, as parents who pursue haram income for their children's benefit simultaneously compromise their own spiritual standing and contaminate their children's spiritual formation through the very provision they offer.

The analysis has traced the hadith's interpretation through classical scholarship, demonstrating consistent understanding across centuries that the relationship between lawful sustenance and accepted worship constitutes a foundational principle of Islamic religious practice. Scholars such as al-Nawawi, Ibn Qayyim, al-Ghazali, and Ibn Taymiyyah unanimously affirmed that haram consumption corrupts the spiritual faculties upon which effective worship depends, creating structural incapacity for divine communion that no external piety can overcome. The extension of this principle to children nourished with haram provision establishes parental economic integrity as a fundamental religious obligation with consequences extending across generations.

Contemporary empirical research confirms the relevance of this classical understanding. It documents both the prevalence of economic rationalization among Muslim populations and the relationship between parental religious integrity and children's religious formation. Survey data reveals that family provision ranks among the most frequently cited justifications for engagement in prohibited economic practices, indicating that the pattern addressed in this study represents a widespread phenomenon rather than isolated deviation. Research on religious transmission demonstrates that children's religious development depends substantially upon perceived parental authenticity, suggesting that inconsistency between religious teaching and economic practice may undermine children's religious formation beyond the spiritual contamination of haram provision itself.

The theological analysis has shown that the parental justification for haram income involves a fundamental category error, applying consequentialist reasoning to a domain governed by deontological religious obligation. Islamic ethics does not permit the violation of clear prohibitions for the sake of perceived benefits, however significant those benefits may appear. The principle of *darurah* (necessity) that might justify prohibited actions under extreme circumstances applies strict conditions that ordinary parental provision does not satisfy. Parents who pursue haram income while halal alternatives remain available, however difficult, cannot legitimately invoke religious exemptions for their choices.

Resolving the tension between economic pressure and religious compliance requires neither dismissal of religious obligations as impractical nor pretense that contemporary economic circumstances present no genuine challenges. Traditional jurisprudence provides resources for navigating complexity that maintain commitment to religious principle while acknowledging the difficulty of perfect compliance. The distinction between deliberate, comprehensive dependence on haram sources, as depicted in the hadith, and conscientious

effort to maintain halal practice amid unavoidable complexity provides guidance for contemporary Muslims seeking to honor both their religious obligations and their family responsibilities.

The implications for child piety and religious formation are profound. Parents who maintain halal provision despite material sacrifice thereby secure for their children the most valuable inheritance: the capacity for effective communion with the Divine through accepted supplication. This reframing challenges prevalent assumptions about what constitutes genuine parental care, suggesting that spiritual welfare possesses priority over material abundance in the calculus of child welfare. Parents who sacrifice potential income by refusing haram opportunities practice the authentic form of family provision that the prophetic teaching commends.

This study concludes with the urgent recommendation that Muslim communities reassess the economic attitudes and practices that have become normalized despite their clear contradiction of established religious teaching. The hadith's warning possesses immediate relevance for contemporary Muslim families navigating economic pressures, calling them to recognize that the spiritual welfare of their children depends upon choices made in domains often considered separate from religious practice. The integration of economic and spiritual life that Islam demands requires sustained attention and deliberate effort, but the prophetic teaching makes clear that no alternative exists for those who seek both material provision and divine acceptance of their worship.

References

- Abu Dawud. (n.d.). *Sunan Abi Dawud*. Retrieved May 15, 2026, from <https://sunnah.com/abudawud>
- Al-Ghazali. (1982). *Ihya Ulumuddin* (Vol. 2). Beirut: Dar al-Ma'rifah.
- Al-Mundhiri. (1986). *Al-Targhib wa al-Tarhib* (Vol. 2). Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah.
- Al-Nawawi. (1999). *Riyad al-Salihin*. Darussalam.
- Al-Suyuti. (1983). *Al-Ashbah wa al-Naza'ir*. Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah.
- Al-Tabari. (1968). *Jami' al-Bayan 'an Ta'wil Ay al-Qur'an* (Vol. 2). Dar al-Ma'arif.
- Bartkowski, J. P., Xu, X., & Levin, M. L. (2008). Religion and child development: Evidence from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study. *Social Science Research*, 37(1), 18–36. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssresearch.2007.02.001>
- Bernard Weiss. (1998). *The Spirit of Islamic Law*. University of Georgia Press. https://books.google.co.id/books/about/The_Spirit_of_Islamic_Law.html?id=IMNF-jNYG7UC&redir_esc=y
- Brown, J. (2009). *Hadith Muhammads Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World*. Oxford: Oneworld Publications.
- Global Financial Integrity. (2026). *Trade-related Illicit Financial Flows in Developing Asia (2013-2022)*. <https://gfintegrity.org/report/trade-related-illicit-financial-flows-in-developing-asia-2013-2022/>
- Hallaq, W. B. (1997). *A History of Islamic Legal Theories*. Cambridge University Press.
- Ibn al-Qayyim. (1998). *Tuhfat al-Mawdud bi-Ahkam al-Mawlud*. Dar al-Bayan.
- Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah. (1996). *Madarijus Salikin* (Vol. 2). Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah.
- Ibn Rajab al-Hanbali. (2001). *Jami' al-'Ulum wa al-Hikam: Hadits No. 10*. Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risalah.
- Ibn Taymiyyah. (1991). *Majmu' al-Fatawa* (Vol. 22). Riyadh: Dar 'Alam al-Kutub.
- Ibrahim Warde. (2010). *Islamic Finance in the Global Economy*. Edinburgh University Press. https://books.google.co.id/books/about/Islamic_Finance_in_the_Global_Economy.html?id=O_GqBgAAQBAJ&redir_esc=y
- Imam Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj. (2002). *Shahih Muslim: Kitab Zakat, No 1686*. Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf Publishers.
- Imam Nawawi. (n.d.). *Syarah Shahih Muslim* (Vol. 5).

- Islamic Financial Services Board. (2024). *Islamic Financial Services Industry Stability Report 2024*. <https://www.ifsb.org/>
- Islamic Research and Training Institute. (n.d.). *Economic Rationalization and Religious Practice*.
- Kahf, M. (2003). *Islamic Economics: Notes on Definition and Methodology*. https://monzer.kahf.com/papers/english/paper_of_methdology.pdf
- Kamali, M. H. (2003). *Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence*. Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society.
- Khaled Abou El Fadl. (2001). *Speaking in God's Name: Islamic Law, Authority and Women*. Oneworld Publications. https://books.google.co.id/books/about/Speaking_in_God_s_Name.html?id=Rhy9DwAAQBAJ&redir_esc=y
- Mohammad Fadel. (2008). The True, the Good and the Reasonable: The Theological and Ethical Roots of Public Reason in Islamic Law. *Canadian Journal of Law and Jurisprudence*, 21(1), 5–69.
- Muhammad Fu'ad 'Abd al-Baqi. (1994). *Mu'jam Gharib al-Hadith wa al-Athar*. Dar al-Hadith.
- Muhammad Hashim Kamali. (1996). Methodological Issues in Islamic Jurisprudence. *Arab Law Quarterly*, 11(1), 3–33.
- Muhammad ibn Ismail al-Bukhari. (1997). *Shahih Bukhari: Kitab Buyu' No. 1930*. Riyadh: Darussalam Publishers.
- Pew Research Center. (2013). *The World's Muslims: Religion, Politics and Society*. Washington, DC: Pew Research Center.
- Robert W. Hefner. (2000). *Civil Islam: Muslims and Democratization in Indonesia*. Princeton University Press. https://books.google.co.id/books/about/Civil_Islam.html?id=L-HA_EPLiswC&redir_esc=y
- Tammam Adi. (2008). *The Rhetorical Structure of Prophetic Hadith*. Georgetown University.
- Transparency International. (2025). *Corruption Perceptions Index 2025*. Berlin: Transparency International. <https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2025>
- Yusuf alQaradawi. (1999). *The Lawful and the Prohibited in Islam*. Indianapolis: American Trust Publications.