



The Urgency of Stunting Policy Management Based on Local Knowledge in Malang Regency

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ABSTRACT

In the Malang Regency region, the issue of stunting is pressing. According to statistics showing the high rate of stunting in Malang Regency, a stunting management strategy must be put into place right away. To date, the issue has been whether policies at the upstream level address all the factors necessary to combat stunting. This study talks about how urgent municipal policies are, particularly for managing stunting. It should be mentioned that government policies currently in place are focused on improving and regulating food security, food quality, and program socialization. Additionally, both targeted and delicate treatments are a manifestation of the prevention of stunting. The health industry performs specific interventions. The phenomenology of Malang Regency's stunting prevention strategies is revealed by this study. According to the study's findings, there are a number of issues that require immediate attention, particularly those that are local in nature, like local education on the marriage readiness index, particularly in areas with a high incidence of young marriage, like Tajinan sub-district. The health sector, as well as other connected sectors, must be involved in the regional follow-up to the village level of policies and regulations that are in place at the federal level. Due to the community's increased knowledge of the value of a balanced diet and the readiness of parents at marriageable age, the community-based coping system needs to be improved once more. Localized coping strategies will undoubtedly.

Article Info :

Article history :

Received : April 01, 2023
Revised : Oktober 11, 2023
Accepted : March 27, 2024

Keywords :

local knowledge;
prevention;
stunting policy management

INTRODUCTION

Stunting is a topic that is hotly debated in many scientific fields, particularly in relation to coping mechanisms (Alfani et al., 2019; Himaz, 2018; Rukiko et al., 2023; Saleh et al., 2021; Suciyaniti et al., 2021a; Tanaka et al., 2019). When it comes to prevention strategies, stunting is a particular emergency that must be prioritized (Adriany & Newberry, 2022; Aguayo & Menon, 2016; Beal et al., 2018; Krishna et al., 2018; M'Kaibi et al., 2017; Miranda et al., 2023; Montenegro et al., 2022; Nuñez et al., 2020). According

Please cite this article as: Kurniawan, F., Maksum, A., Anas, M., & Yusainy, C. (2024). The Urgency of Stunting Policy Management Based on Local Knowledge in Malang Regency. *Journal of Local Government Issues*, 7(1), 100–110. <https://doi.org/10.22219/logos.v7i1.25669>

to the findings of his study ([Saputri & Tumangger, 2019](#)), additional research is still needed on the government policies that have already been put into place. Stunting prevention must be executed optimally at the policy level to meet the public's expectations of these decision-makers.

Stunting typically refers to the impaired growth and development of children due to poor nutrition, repeated infection, and inadequate psychosocial stimulation. It often manifests as low height-for-age compared to standard growth charts. Stunting can have long-term consequences on physical and cognitive development, potentially affecting a child's health, education, and economic productivity later in life. It's a significant public health concern, particularly in low- and middle-income countries with limited access to nutritious food, clean water, and healthcare services

Stunting is a severe issue in Indonesia, and it is a significant nutritional issue. If this issue persists, it will affect cognitive function, particularly low intelligence, and the caliber of human resources. The issue of stunting has quite a serious effect, including short-term effects on morbidity and mortality in infants and toddlers, medium-term effects on low intelligence and cognitive abilities, and long-term effects on the quality of human resources and issues with degenerative diseases.

Many believe that policies to avoid stunting, particularly in Indonesia, are still ineffective ([Atamou et al., 2023](#); [Krosby et al., 2024](#); [Latifa, 2018](#); [Maharanii et al., 2020](#)). And if the advantages are not experienced, the ensuing policy development will not be successful. The success of health development is heavily influenced by the continuity between program efforts in various sectors as well as continuity with the efforts that have been implemented by the previous period, as demonstrated by several studies related to coping policies, particularly those related to health ([Sahroji et al., 2022](#)). Support from the National Health System (SKN) is necessary to guarantee the accomplishment of health development goals. As a major source of information for creating the Law on Health, SKN also performs a significant role. Numerous policies, rules, and instructions for health development were also created.

In another research, policies for preventing stunting were explained. [Maulana et al., \(2022\)](#) stated that despite the emergence of several regulations assisting the technical implementation of Public Health Center (Puskesmas) and Integrated Services Post (Posyandu) activities, field application of these regulations will undoubtedly produce various outcomes. In light of Regent Regulation Number 33 of 2018 concerning Stunting Prevention Efforts, the authors are interested in undertaking more in-depth research on applying specific nutritional interventions to prevent Stunting in Malang Regency.

The upcoming year will see Indonesian growth impacted by the lack of handling. According to the claim ([Sujai, 2020](#)), investments in social capital, such as those in the health and anti-poverty sectors, will immediately lower Indonesia's overall poverty rate, particularly in urban areas. This is because employment in urban areas will increasingly require employees with more education and ability than in rural areas. Even when children start their education at the early childhood stage, the health and education sectors play a part in the quality of human resources. Therefore, it follows from the numerous studies mentioned above that research on policies to prevent stunting will decide the course of future medical care.

The failure to localize policies that a number of related agencies have enacted is one of the reasons why stunting management policies have not been put into practice. For instance, it is localizing the term “stunting” so that people can comprehend it and using medical terminology in the community’s socialization process to prevent stunting. As an illustration, Rembuk’s action plan to expedite stunting reduction stunting is a crucial step that the district or city government must take to make sure that the OPD in charge of services, non-governmental sectors or institutions, and the community work together to execute the stunting prevention and reduction intervention plan.

The main information presented in the stunting discussion activities is the commitment of the local government and Local Government Organization (OPD) regarding the stunting reduction programs or activities that will be included in the Regional Device Work Plan (RKPD)/OPD work plan for the following year, as well as the programs/activities to be carried out this year. The Government of Malang Regency is implementing a stunt consultation named “Action Actions to Accelerate the Reduction of Stunting in Malang Regency in 2022” as part of its dedication to preventing and reducing stunting in Malang Regency as quickly as possible. This action has not yet affected the countermeasures that have reached the local level. The same is true of policy levels.

Local knowledge is currently a hot subject of debate because it is regarded as a crucial component of development programs and management efforts (Anderson & Anderson, 2023; Mascarini et al., 2023; Mbah, 2019; Pukkalla & Rama Mohan, 2020). Because it is the outcome of “learning” from local communities to react to the dynamics of changes in their environment, local knowledge derived from community culture is thought to offer many development solutions. Existing local knowledge suggests that local communities exert control over their use because they have a stake in the resources. Local taboos or bans are frequently used to manage food procurement resources and promote healthy childcare practices. Both have various metaphysical underpinnings.

Contrary to bans, abstinence follows a pattern of religious and magical behavior. Prohibitions are connected to customary law norms, while abstinence has a pattern based on religion and magic, albeit on a distinct foundation. Both support maintaining the harmony of the environment and ensuring the community’s residents’ right to life.

The community’s oral transmission of the inheritance system, which determines the presence of local knowledge, is prevalent. Knowledge exchanged with others can advance existing knowledge or produce new knowledge. Then, because the oral tradition system stresses interactions carried out by local communities, the knowledge that has been packaged and trusted will spread to other communities. This then serves as the main impetus for how information changes in society. Information that has been digested, or the outcomes of human thought, experience, and learning that have been internalized as one’s own, is known as knowledge. Due to a distinct and historical shift in orientation, knowledge is transformed. Knowledge transformation refers to a change in the outcomes of human reasoning brought on by experience and other external variables, such as additions, subtractions, modifications, and changes in knowledge content. Due to this, this study will examine the communication and part.

Several studies on stunting have been conducted in Indonesia, with two main focuses. First, related to the factors that cause stunting, which is dominated by family social and economic issues (Supadmi et al., 2024; Muchlis et al., 2023; Maulidiana &

Sutjiati, 2021; Rahayuwati et al., 2023; Rizal & van Doorslaer, 2019), parental knowledge (Chapman et al., 2024; Mediani et al., 2022). Second, ineffective government policy strategies such as in East Nusa Tenggara (NTT) (Daniel et al., 2023; Suciyaniti et al., 2021b), East Java (Permatasari et al., 2023), Karanganyar District, Central Java Province, (Astuti et al., 2024), and Bandung City (Cheshmehzangi et al., 2024). This study fills the gap of those studies that have not emphasized the importance of local wisdom values in handling stunting.

METHOD

Case studies are used in this study's methodology. Analysis of policy papers and archives, in-depth interviews, and facilitated group talks involving stakeholders from the regions up to program implementers at the community level were all used to gather data. Interviews with the parents of several toddlers who had stunting, particularly in Malang Regency, were performed. Along with parents, health professionals were interviewed in several Malang Regency health facilities, including the Tambak Asri Health Center, Ketangi Health Center, Tajinan Health Center, and Lawang Health Center. Interviews with the Malang Regency's health office employees were also performed in addition to these health workers.

Data translation is used in this study's data verification procedure. A Focus Group Discussion is also used to carry out this data verification procedure. The data mentioned in Table 1 will be used later in the FGD process to guarantee that the data obtained can be comprehensive.

Table 1. Distribution of Data Processing

Data	Policy Level Type	Implementing Unit
Presidential Regulation Number 72 of 2021 concerning Accelerating the Reduction of Stunting	Regulation	Central government
Mitigation Policy Act	Regent Decree	District government
The Technical Implementation Law on Toddler Examination	Health Center level	Public health center
Data on the Number of Stunted Sufferers	Health Center level	Public health center

Source: Prosesed by Author (2023)

The FGD activity, which 70 people attended, involved all elements of the village, from regents, village chiefs, and heads of Puskesmas to the Family Welfare Movement (PKK) participants who are members of Poshandu. In the FGD, it was agreed that there must be a link between the methods traditionally used by governments and the local knowledge available in the community. FGD also discussed the results of interviews with 120 of his previously interviewed parents.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

According to the study's findings, Malang Regency continued to have a high stunting incidence as of September 2022. Based on data gathering in several villages in the Malang Regency, information on the nutritional knowledge of typical toddler mothers

was obtained. The majority, or 29 people (65%), fell into the adequate category, and the least, or 5 people (11%), fell into the less category. When it came to the nutritional knowledge of mothers who were stunting, the majority, 17 people (38%) were in the adequate category, and the least, 14 people (31%), were in the good category and lacking. These findings show no discernible variation in the nutritional knowledge of mothers of healthy children at the study location.

This data summary was gathered at specific locations in Malang Regency (Table 2). The information was obtained from the Malang Regency Health Office, which has a strategy at the upstream level for managing stunting.

Table 2. Stunting Data in Malang Regency

No	Village	Sub-District	Number of Children	Prevalence
1	Sidoluhur	Lawang	99	56,57
2	Banjarsari	Ngajum	83	52,20
3	Wiyurejo	Pujon	112	51,38
4	Babadan	Ngajum	139	41,87
5	Baturetno	Singosari	78	37,68
6	Jabung	Jabung	115	35,60
7	Senggreng	Sumber Pucung	171	32,33
8	Sukorejo	Gondang Legi	83	32,39

Source: Proccesed by Author (2023)

According to these data, Sidoluhur village has the highest prevalence percentage, at 56.57%. Ngajum sub-district came in second with an incidence rate of 52.20 percent, followed by Banjarsari sub-district. Following that came Wiyurejo Village and the Pujon subdistrict, both with 51%. With a more than 50% prevalence rate, these three communities represent the urgency of addressing stunting in Malang Regency. However, there is still a pressing need to address stunting in the other five communities.

Records for 2022 and comparisons made during the PSBB period between 2020 and 2021 were used to acquire this information. It must be acknowledged that the Pandemic period did not provide the best conditions for collecting Posyandu statistics on toddler growth and development. The Covid-19 epidemic started at the beginning of March 2020. The slow handling of and outreach to locals regarding the risks of toddler stunting has the most apparent effect. Stunting in upcoming babies is something that this socialization process tries to avoid. Several health professionals typically treat stunting with this socialization process, particularly in Arjowinangun. Several health professionals aided by PKK and community observers carried out this socialization process in each RW. Four socialization activities were observed during the abandonment due to widespread societal restrictions (PSBB) brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Additionally, one of the primary causes of the slowdown in the socialization process regarding the risks of stunting in infant development is parents' reluctance to seek information at the Puskesmas. This doubt is founded on the realistic supposition that if you go to a Puskesmas for treatment or information, you will be subject to requirements like a swab test, the anxiety of being thought to be positive for Covid-19, and so on. The consultation process with the health professionals at the puskesmas proceeded without a hitch before the pandemic.

Residents of Malang Regency only have a basic understanding of heredity when it comes to stunting. The idea is that parents’ and ancestors’ genes play a role in a child’s height. Short stature is influenced by environmental variables such as the mother’s nutritional condition, the amount of protein consumed as a percentage of total calories, children’s feeding habits, environmental hygiene, and the frequency of infections in young children. The growing fetus is also seriously endangered by cigarette smoke. In addition to environmental variables, genetic and hormonal factors may also contribute to it. Malnutrition, however, is the main reason for short stature.

Stunting prevention must be done more aggressively during this pandemic. According to the researchers’ findings, which the office quoted, “undernutrition in young children in the early stages of life due to the profound impact of the Covid-19 pandemic can create intergenerational consequences for children’s growth and development and lifelong impacts on education, risk of chronic disease, and overall human development. According to this modeling, the worst case for the coronavirus pandemic involves young children receiving only 50% of the nutrition and care they need, with a possible mortality rate of close to 180,000 this year.

According to the author, maximizing online media socialization and healthcare processes is the best way to stop stunting during a pandemic. According to the Ministry of Health’s advice, there are three ways to avoid stunting during a pandemic: 1. Promote breastfeeding; 2. Support breastfeeding; and 3. Campaigns for balanced diets and healthful lifestyles, 3. Media-based education and counseling, such as WhatsApp groups or Short Term Messages (SMS), 4. Giving toddler programs a higher priority through home visits and health services 5. Giving undernourished children and undernourished expectant mothers more food, and 6. Giving out dietary supplements.

Stunting-related public ignorance comes in a clear variation. For instance, there is a widespread understanding of stunting. The definition of stunting is not well known to the general population. Both parents and grandparents are aware of Toddlers’ height or shortness. The general population is still unaware that stunting is a disease that can be treated and avoided by taking preventative measures.

Use of Local Food

To combat stunting, the people of Malang Regency should make the most of the native foods available to them. Local food must be used to meet the nutritional requirements of infants with stunting, particularly in Malang Regency (Table 5). The high nutritional value of local food security knowledge supports providing extra food. Local food has a minimal sugar content, making it safe for nutrition—unlike the instant food that has been popular in Malang Regency.

Table 5. Types of local food used by the people of Malang Regency

No	Types of Local Food	Usage
1	Tofu	MP ASI
2	Tempeh	MP ASI
3	Freshwater fish	MP ASI
4	Corn	Rice Alternative
5	Soy milk	Formula Milk Alternative
6	Tiwul	Snack

7	Tajin water	Milk Alternative
8	Peanut Tempeh	Alternative Side Dishes

Source: Proccesed by Author (2023)

There is an extra domino impact in the case of food fulfillment in the completion of stunting, such as rising diabetes rates in children. The excessive consumption of instant foods is one of the causes of this degree of diabetes. We know the extremely high amounts of sugar and carbohydrates in foods prepared quickly, like instant noodles and drinks. It could be argued that this regional cuisine is a bastion for instant food, which is always detrimental to the growth and development of children.

DISCUSSION

Stunting fits the definition of being ill according to those knowledgeable about medicine. Knowing how to understand pain is an information issue because the community system has a distinct understanding of stunting. An individual's perception of their encounter with an illness is what they call their illness or illness. If a person has a chronic (chronic) illness or other health issues that limit their ability to engage in activities or employment, they are said to be sick. Even if someone has a cold or the flu, they are not deemed sick as long as they are not prevented from going about their daily activities. Naturalistic etymology's meaning of pain can be explained in terms of impersonal. According to naturalistic etymology, pain is defined as a condition or object caused by a disturbance to the human body system. This definition can be explained in terms of impersonal and systematic.

According to (Mendes-Lima *et al.*, 2020), "Sick behavior" typically refers to actions or behaviors that are indicative of someone experiencing illness or poor health, whether physical or mental. It can encompass a range of behaviors depending on the context and the type of illness involved. For physical illnesses, sick behavior might include symptoms such as fatigue, lethargy, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, fever, or physical discomfort. In the context of mental illness, sick behavior might include symptoms such as social withdrawal, mood swings, irritability, agitation, confusion, disorientation, hallucinations, or delusions.

The 1000 First Days of Life Program is just one of the community-based initiatives the government is undertaking to address and prevent issues with public health that lead to stunting. This initiative demonstrates the government's commitment to combating stunting by directly approaching recipients or the community. Brochures that are always distributed when performing outreach to families of children with stunting and not families of children with stunting in certain areas explain the data obtained from the National Population and Family Agency (BKKBN).

Max Weber was a sociologist who strongly emphasized the need for social activity in society. In George Ritzer (2009), Max Weber argues that every action a person takes has a personal, subjective significance for him and is intended for others. On the other hand, human action is not considered social if it is only aimed at inanimate or physical objects and is not connected to other people's actions. On the other hand, social action is a behavior that unmistakably interferes with thought processes and results in meaningful actions between a stimulus and the subsequent reaction. Simple human acts can have an

impact on members of society. In Weber's view, social action is rational behavior, which is classified into several types of rational action.

It is simpler to comprehend social behavior that is more logical (Ritzer, 2009). The various logical actions consist of rational action, which includes practical, rational action. This social action requires a tool because it is motivated by thoughts based on conscious or rational decisions regarding attaining objectives. This action is carried out with maturity and reason to accomplish specific objectives. Second, a value-driven action is taken based on an individual's hidden values and used to achieve a life objective.

Social values and religious values are given priority in this social activity. The third type of social action is affective rational action, which is more influenced by emotional connections or emotions without conscious planning. This behavior is more affected by impulsive, unpredictable, and unique emotional expressions. Fourth, this traditional logical action focuses more on doing, demonstrating, and upholding a habit based on principles drawn from ancient customs. We can be certain that the actions taken by society fit into one of Weber's four categories of social action.

CONCLUSION

There is still room for improvement in local knowledge-based stunting control research. Local expertise This is required so that community members and policymakers, particularly those working at the upstream to downstream level, can work together. Local people know about handling countermeasures to the nutritional requirements of toddlers, as evidenced by the practice of coping and seeking healing. This is because they have a clear stake in solving the stunting issue. This local information changes over time. The local community's dynamic understanding of fisheries and natural resource management exemplifies how culture is alive and well in people's daily lives. Regulations must reach the neighborhood level and affect the family, the final and smallest unit of society. It is also hoped that the study will inform measures to help government policymakers pay more attention to aspects of stunting that are well-known to local communities. The hope for other research is to complete this study so that we can delve deeper into local aspects, particularly how stunting is addressed.

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