



RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Relationship between Feeding and Maternal Knowledge Level and the Incidence of Stunting In Children 24-59 Months

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ABSTRACT

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Feeding children and the level of maternal knowledge are one of the factors that affect the occurrence of stunting in children. The prevalence of stunting in children under five in South Sulawesi based on the results of the Ministry of Health's Indonesia Nutrition Status Survey (SSGI) reached 27.2% in 2022. A total of 14 districts have the highest prevalence of toddlers that reach above average. Maros Regency is the 8th highest prevalence of stunting in 2022 in South Sulawesi, reaching 30.1% This study aims to determine the relationship between feeding and the level of maternal knowledge with the incidence of stunting in children 24-59 months in Moncongloe Village, Bulu, Maros Regency. This study is a quantitative research with an analytical survey method using a Cross Sectional design. The sample was stunted children aged 24-59 months in Moncongloe Bulu Village, Maros Regency, as many as 49 children were randomly taken. The instruments used were a feeding pattern questionnaire, namely the FFQ form and a questionnaire about maternal knowledge. The data analysis used was a Chi-Square statistical test with a confidence degree of 95% ($\alpha = 0.05$). The results of this study showed that the sample that had insufficient feeding was 28 people (57.1%) and the sample that had good feeding was 21 people (42.9%). There were 36 mothers (73.5%) who had a low level of knowledge and 13 mothers who had good knowledge (26.5%). The results of the chi-square test analysis showed that there was no significant relationship between feeding ($p = 0.638 > \alpha 0.05$) and maternal knowledge level ($p = 0.247 > \alpha 0.05$) with stunting incidence. It is recommended for further researchers, judging from the limitations of researchers in terms of independent variables, it is hoped that more variables will be involved to get better results and add a wider number of samples and regions.

INTRODUCTION

The number of children under five who experienced stunting in 2018 was 22.2% or around 150.8 million globally. Stunting is one of the problems experienced by toddlers in the world and Indonesia is included in the fifth country with the highest number of stunted children under five in the world. Stunting is a condition where a person's height turns out to be shorter than the height of other people at their age. Indonesia's Nutrition Status Survey (SSGI) in 2022 shows prevalence *stunting* nationally 21.6%. Although the number of *stunting* decreased compared to the previous year which was 24.4%. This figure is still categorized as high, considering that the WHO standard prevalence target is below 20% plus a decrease of 3.8% in 2023 is needed so that Indonesia's target in 2024 can be achieved with prevalence *stunting* which is 14%.

Prevalence *stunting* in toddlers in South Sulawesi based on the results of the Ministry of Health's Indonesia Nutrition Status Survey (SSGI) reached 27.2% in 2022. South Sulawesi Province is ranked 10th in terms of prevalence *stunting* the highest in Indonesia. In 2022, as many as 14 districts in South Sulawesi have the highest prevalence of children under five who reach above the average prevalence rate of provisions. Maros Regency is a prevalence area for toddlers *stunting* the 8th highest in 2022 in South Sulawesi, which reached 30.1%.

Prevailing under five years *stunting* in the Moncongloe Health Center work area reached 19.80% in February 2023. The working area of the Moncongloe Health Center consists of 5 villages/sub-districts, among which the village/sub-district is the village of Moncongloe Bulu which has a case *stunting* in children aged 24-59 months, the highest in the work area of the Moncongloe Health Center, which is 24.01%.

The incidence of *stunting* itself can be influenced by two factors, namely indirect factors and direct factors. Indirect factors that affect *stunting* such as parental parenting, income, maternal knowledge, and consumption patterns. Meanwhile, the direct influencing factors are genetics, nutrient intake and infectious diseases.

The diet of toddlers plays an important role in the growth process of toddlers, because food contains a lot of nutrients. Nutrition is a very important part of growth. Nutrition is closely related to health and intelligence. If you are malnourished, the child will be susceptible to infection. If the diet in toddlers is not achieved properly, then the growth of toddlers will also be disturbed, the body is thin, malnutrition and even short toddlers (*stunting*) can occur, as a result a good diet also needs to be developed to avoid lack of nutrients.

In addition, maternal knowledge was more or less found in stunted toddlers at 68.6%, compared to the normal toddler group at 37.1%. Based on the description of previous research, toddlers are very vulnerable to nutritional problems and mothers have an important role in providing good parenting. The importance of identifying the factors that cause *stunting* in toddlers is the reason why researchers conducted a literature review to find out the relationship between feeding patterns and maternal knowledge and *stunting* incidence in toddlers.

METHOD

Type, Place, and Time of Research

This study uses quantitative research with *a cross sectional approach*. This research was conducted in Moncongloe Bulu Village, Maros Regency, from July 2023 to April 2024.

Number and Method of Sampling

The population of this study is all *stunted* children aged 24-59 months in Moncongloe Bulu Village, which is as many as 50 children. The sample was taken using *the Random Sampling* method with the number of samples being 49 *stunted children* who were randomly selected.

Types and Methods of Data Collection

The data used are primary data and secondary data. Primary data consisted of sample identity, feeding data obtained by means of interviews using a questionnaire that had been prepared, data on the level of knowledge of mothers obtained by means of interviews using a questionnaire that had been prepared, and height data obtained by taking measurements using microtoise. Secondary data is in the form of data on the number of stunted toddlers and an overview of the research location in Moncongloe Bulu Village, Maros Regency.

Data Processing and Analysis

Data on child feeding and the level of maternal knowledge were obtained through a questionnaire to respondents with good and poor criteria. The data obtained was analyzed using the chi square test to see the relationship between maternal diet and knowledge level with the incidence of stunting in children in the working area of the Moncongloe Health Center, Maros Regency.

RESULT

The distribution of samples in this study showed that the age categories of most subjects were 3 and 2 years old, namely 17 people with a percentage of 34.7%. The distribution of samples by gender showed that the gender of the subjects was mostly female, totaling 29 people, as much as 59.2%. The distribution of stunting status showed that the sample with the short category amounted to 31 people as much as 63.3%.

The analysis of the relationship between feeding and stunting incidence showed that 19 short children had poor feeding patterns (67.9%). The results of the chii-square test analysis of the relationship between feeding patterns and stunting incidence were obtained ($p = 0.633 > \alpha 0.05$), meaning that there was no relationship between feeding patterns and stunting incidence.

The analysis of the relationship between the level of maternal knowledge and the incidence of stunting showed that 25 children (69.4%) were short with a lack of maternal knowledge. The results of *the chii-square test analysis* showed that the relationship between the pattern of maternal knowledge level and the incidence of *stunting* was obtained ($p = 0.247 > \alpha 0.05$), meaning that there was no relationship between the level of maternal knowledge and the incidence of *stunting*.

DISCUSSION

Test analysis results *chi-square* Relationship between feeding and incidence *stunting* The value is obtained ($p = 0.638 > \alpha 0.05$) means that there is no relationship between feeding and the occurrence of *stunting*. This is in line with research Berliana and Umaroh (2023) which mentions The results of the statistical test showed a p-value of 0.081 ($p > 0.05$), meaning that there was no relationship between maternal parenting in feeding and incident cases *stunting* to toddlers in Village X, Sukoharjo Regency (Berliana & Umaroh, 2023). There is no relationship between feeding and the event *stunting* In this study, the quality of food intake of toddlers is already good and supported by the results that most of the toddlers aged 24-59 months in Moncongloe Bulu Village have food diversity scores in various categories so that feeding children is not the main factor in stunting incidence.

Test analysis results *chi-square* The relationship between the mother's level of knowledge and the occurrence *stunting* ($p = 0.247 > \alpha 0.05$) means that there is no relationship between the level of maternal knowledge and the occurrence of *stunting*. This is in line with Harikatang (2020) research which states that Test Results *Chi-Square* obtained a value of $p = 1,000$. This shows that there is no relationship between mothers' knowledge of toddlers *stunting* with the incidence of stunting of toddlers in one village in Tangerang (Harikatang et al., 2020). There is no relationship between the mother's level of knowledge and the occurrence *stunting* In this study, it is due to the mother's good knowledge and at the time of taking the child sample population at the age of 24-59 months

while the child is stunted at an early age as a result of the mother's food intake at the time of pregnancy and the first 1000 days of birth.

CONCLUSION

There was no relationship between feeding patterns and stunting incidence in children 24-59 months in Moncongloe Bulu Village, there was no relationship between the level of maternal knowledge and the incidence of stunting in children 24-59 months in Moncongloe Bulu Village.

SUGGESTION

Judging from the limitations of researchers in terms of independent variables, it is hoped that future researchers will involve more variables to get better results and add a wider number of samples and regions.

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