
**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MATERNAL KNOWLEDGE AND THE ROLE
OF HEALTH WORKERS ON STUNTING HANDLING IN THE UPT POLONIA
HEALTH CENTER AREA IN 2023**

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ABSTRACT

Background: Toddlers, namely the golden age period, are important periods in the process of human growth and development. According to the *World Health Organization (WHO)*, stunting is a chronic nutritional problem in toddlers characterized by shorter height compared to other children . One of the factors that can influence the incidence of stunting is the lack of knowledge of mothers about *stunting* which causes children to be at risk of failure to grow and develop.

Objective: This study aims to determine the picture of the level of knowledge of mothers about *stunting* in the UPT Polonia Health Center Area in 2023.

Method: This research is qualitative with descriptive method. The respondents in this study were mothers who had toddlers at the Posyandu of Madras Hulu sub-district

Results: The results of the study found that the average education of respondents was in the junior high school category and the most dominant level of knowledge was at the medium level of knowledge.

Keywords: *Knowledge Level, Stunting, Mothers of toddlers.*

INTRODUCTION

Toddlers, namely the golden age period, are important periods in the process of human

growth and development. According to the *World Health Organization (WHO)*, *stunting* is a chronic nutritional problem in toddlers characterized by shorter height compared to

other children . One of the factors that can influence the incidence of stunting is the lack of knowledge of mothers about *stunting* which causes children to be at risk of failure to grow and develop. According to a United Nations International Children's Fund (UNICEF) survey in 2018, nearly 3 in 10 children under five are stunted or short for toddlers, while 1 in 10 are underweight or too underweight. The incidence of *stunting* or failure to thrive in children under five in Indonesia is still high, which is 30.8% above the limit set by WHO, which is 20% (Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, 2018). According to the World Health Organization (WHO) puts Indonesia as the third country with the highest prevalence in the South-East Asia Regional (SEAR). The average prevalence of *stunting toddlers* in Indonesia in 2015-2018 was 36.4%. Data from the World Health Organization (WHO) 2018 states that the phenomenon of stunting in toddlers in the world reaches 30.8% or 154.8 million toddlers, the number of stunting incidents in Indonesia is included in the top five countries in the world. Based on data from the 2022 National Nutritional Status Survey (SSGI), the prevalence of *stunting* in Indonesia is 21.6%. This number decreased compared to the previous year which was 24.4%. Although declining, the figure is still high, considering the *stunting* prevalence target in 2024 is 14% and the WHO standard is below 20%.

Factors that affect *stunting* include maternal factors: nutritional status of mothers during pregnancy, mother's education level, mother's level of knowledge, breastfeeding factors, complementary feeding factors (MP-ASI), infection factors, family economic factors and environmental factors. Aobama & Purwito (2020). The mother's level of education and knowledge is also a factor that causes developmental delays. Mothers' lack of understanding of parenting patterns and lack of knowledge about fulfilling nutrition for themselves and their children can cause malnourished children and cause stunting (Ministry of Health RI, 2018). BSome *stunting* in children that mothers must be aware of, including: Bonegrowth in children who are delayed, Btight body low when compared to children their ageA, ,PBody portions that tend to be normal but appear younger / smaller for their age, have poor focusing and learning memory skills, and slow puberty. (UPK Kemenkes RI 2021).

Based on the results of a pre-survey researchers conducted in the UPT Polonia Health Center area in May 2023, researchers conducted interviews with 10 mothers at the Posyandu of Madrasah Hulu Village related to stunting, 8 of them revealed that they did not know what stunting is, and 2 (20%) mothers under five knew about *stunting* but don't know how to deal with it. So based on the above

problems, it is necessary to hold education or health promotion about early prevention of *stunting*

METHOD

The method used in this study is qualitative with a descriptive design through observations at the Posyandu Kelurahan Madrasah Hulu. Observations were made in May through direct field visits and monitoring the condition of *stunted* toddlers and there were still many mothers who refused to give their children Sub PIN Polio because of the deficit of maternal knowledge about the importance of immunization for child growth and development

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that health workers, especially the nursing profession, need to position themselves as educators by conducting counseling to increase knowledge about the dangers of *stunting* for toddlers and how to prevent it.

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RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In research results, knowledge is closely related to education and understanding. Mother's understanding is the main thing in household management, this will influence a mother's attitude when choosing food ingredients to be eaten by her family. The results of the study found that the average education of respondents was in the junior high school category and the most dominant level of knowledge was at a moderate level of knowledge, so that the increase in *stunting* rate still continues to be a problem. Therefore, it is necessary to carry out the role of health workers in providing information through counseling on *stunting* prevention.

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