

Transforming the Role of Cadres through Infant Massage Training: An Empowerment Innovation for Infant Health in Kadujaya Village

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ABSTRACT

Infant massage training is a community-based intervention that aims to improve infant health through empowering village cadres. Infant massage has been shown to have many benefits, such as improving infant sleep quality, accelerating weight gain, reducing stress, and strengthening emotional bonds between infants and parents. However, community understanding of correct infant massage techniques is still limited, especially in rural areas. Village cadres as public health agents have an important role in disseminating this information and skills to mothers in their communities. Therefore, infant massage training for Kadujaya village cadres is a strategic step to improve their competence in performing and teaching infant massage with safe and effective methods. This study used a participatory-based training method that included theory and practice sessions. The theory session covered the benefits of infant massage, basic massage techniques, and safety and contraindication aspects, while the practice session was conducted with direct demonstrations by experienced instructors, followed by independent practice by participants with instructor guidance. The results showed a significant increase in the knowledge and skills of cadres after training, with knowledge scores increasing from an average of 60% before training to 90% after training. In addition, observations showed that 85% of participants were able to perform infant massage with the correct technique after attending the training. With this training, village cadres are expected to be able to implement and disseminate the benefits of infant massage to the community, so that they can contribute to improving infant health as a whole. In the future, periodic monitoring and evaluation are needed to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of this training program.

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INTRODUCTION

Geographically, the Kadujaya Village area is located in Jatigede District, Sumedang Regency. Administratively, Kadujaya Village is divided into four hamlets, namely Hamlet I, Hamlet II, Hamlet III, and Hamlet IV. Meanwhile, the number of Rukun Warga and Rukun Tetangga is four RW and 12 RT respectively. With the construction of the Jatigede dam which functions as a power plant, some of the land in Kadujaya Village is used as land for the construction of the power plant. So in addition to the Parakankondang Hydroelectric Power Plant, in Kadujaya Village, there will be an additional hydroelectric power plant that utilizes the water flow from the Jatigede dam. The population of Kadujaya Village is 1,368. The prevalence of stunting in Sumedang Regency has decreased by 13.2%. In 2024, Jatigede District had a stunting rate of 11.37%, the highest in Sumedang Regency. Kadujaya Village has around 6 stunted children who come from the prevalence of stunting in Jatigede District. Strategic steps in overcoming stunting need to be taken, one of which has been carried out by the Indonesian government related to reducing the risk factors above is nutritional intervention in the form of sensitive nutritional intervention steps and specific nutritional interventions (UNICEF et al., 2023)

The Indonesian government has carried out specific nutritional interventions aimed at addressing the direct causes of stunting in the form of nutritional intake and infection, as well as sensitive nutritional interventions aimed at addressing indirect causes such as food security, access to health services, environmental health, and parental care (Handayani et al., 2020). In addition to these interventions, as health workers, we can prevent stunting through holistic interventions. One holistic intervention that can be given and is useful in preventing stunting is massage therapy, namely baby massage.

Baby massage is a stimulus that stimulates the growth and development of babies (Putri et al., 2024). One of the benefits of baby massage is increasing appetite. This increase in appetite is accompanied by increased activity of the vagus nerve/wandering nerve (the brain's nervous system that works from the neck to the chest and abdominal cavity) in moving peristaltic cells (cells in the digestive tract) that move in the digestive tract so that the baby quickly gets hungry or wants to eat because his digestion is getting smoother (Siti Haryani et al., 2024)

Infant massage is one method of stimulation that has been proven to improve the physical and emotional development of babies (Rahmawati et al., 2023). Various studies have shown that infant massage can help improve sleep quality, increase body weight, and strengthen emotional bonds between babies and parents (J et al., 2022). However, public understanding of the benefits and techniques of infant massage is still limited, especially in rural areas.

Cadres have an important role in disseminating health information to the community (Sudarmi et al., 2022). Therefore, infant massage training for Kadujaya village cadres is important to improve their skills in providing education to mothers in their community. This training aims to improve the knowledge and skills of cadres in performing safe and effective baby massage.

METHOD

This study employs a participatory training method. The training was conducted for one day, including theoretical and practical sessions. The training took place on January 31, 2025, from 09:00 AM to 01:00 PM. The theoretical session covered the benefits of infant massage, basic massage techniques, as well as safety aspects, and contraindications. The practical session consisted of direct demonstrations by experienced instructors, followed by independent practice by participants under the instructors' supervision. Data was collected through pre-test and post-test assessments to measure the improvement

in cadres' knowledge before and after the training. Additionally, observations were conducted to assess cadres' skills in performing infant massage after the training.



FIGURE 1. Activity Methode Flow

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study showed that infant massage training was effective in improving the knowledge and skills of Kadujaya village cadres. Before the training, the average cadre knowledge score was 60%, while after the training it increased to 90%. Observations showed that 85% of participants were able to perform infant massage with the correct technique after participating in the training. This is in line with research conducted by (Diego, 2020), which showed that infant massage training contributed to improving cadre skills and had a positive impact on infant growth.

In addition, research (UNICEF et al., 2023) shows that early stimulation, including infant massage, can improve infant motor and cognitive development. Research from (Wallerstein et al., 2021) also emphasizes the importance of community-based interventions in improving infant health and reducing neonatal morbidity. Community-based training as implemented in this study (Anif, 2025) can strengthen the role of cadres in educating the community about proper infant massage practices (Atmojo et al., 2020).

Another study by (J et al., 2022) showed that community-based interventions carried out consistently can provide long-term benefits to infant health. In this context, Kadujaya village cadres are expected to be able to become facilitators in implementing and disseminating infant massage practices to the community. Overall, this study supports previous findings that participatory-based training is effective in improving cadres' skills and confidence in teaching infant massage (Atmojo et al., 2020). To increase the effectiveness of the program, periodic monitoring and evaluation are needed to ensure that cadres can apply the skills they have learned in the long term.



FIGURE 2. (a) expert presenting information;(b) experts performing massage followed by cadres;(c) presentation of plaque to experts Practise;(d) partisipan taking group photo

CONCLUSION

Infant massage training for health cadres in Kadujaya Village has proven effective in improving their knowledge and skills. With increased cadre competence, infant massage practices can be more widely implemented in the community, ultimately contributing to overall infant health improvement. Moving forward, periodic monitoring and evaluation are recommended to ensure the sustainability of this program.

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