

## Educating People to Prevent Children Living with Stunting in Punggur Kecil Village

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### Abstract

The growth and development of children are influenced by whether proper nutrition is provided. Stunting is a type of nutritional disorder or malnutrition that is still a problem in our society. Educational activities are one way to help prevent stunting by providing adequate information to mothers about stunting and its prevention. A community service activity was carried out in Punggur Kecil Village by involving women and cadres through health education activities. This educational activity included the provision of materials on stunting, its prevention, and the treatment of stunting. The participants who are the mothers attended to receive health education preceded by the spelling of the pre-test questions. After education, participants were also asked to answer post-test questions. There is a real difference between the results of the pre-test and post-test. This shows the importance of education given to mothers to increase understanding of stunting and its prevention. The role of health workers through the Puskesmas is urgently needed by involving cadres to assist health workers in identifying people who are at risk of having children with stunting so that stunting prevention and treatment can be taken from an early age.

**Keywords:** Malnutrition, Stunting, Knowledge, Education, Community Service

### INTRODUCTION

Malnutrition is one of the nutritional problems in children that can have undesirable impacts on children's growth and development. The World Health Organization divides several types of malnutrition into undernutrition, micronutrient-related malnutrition, and overweight. Stunting is one of the nutritional problems where children having low height for their age are classified as undernutrition. Children with undernutrition, including stunting, may develop some problems, including death, and be at risk for several diseases. WHO emphasized the factors that cause children to have recurrent nutritional issues. These factors include illness, provision of inappropriate feeding during their early period, poor health and nutrition status, and social and economic problems in the household.

Stunting is a category of malnutrition that is still a big problem for some people in West Kalimantan. If not handled properly, stunting can cause various diseases and even death. According to WHO, stunting is included in the category of malnutrition. Malnutrition is divided into three types, namely undernutrition, micronutrient-related malnutrition, and overweight. Both malnutrition and groups of nutritional disorders can negatively impact children's growth and development.

Stunted children tend to get illnesses easily. In addition, children with stunting can experience obstacles in their physical and cognitive development (World Health Organization, 2021). WHO continues to explain that if stunting is not handled correctly, it is estimated that more than 125 million children will live with it worldwide. Several factors experienced by the community influence the occurrence of stunting in children. These factors include financial problems to meet the household's daily needs, including nutritious food. According to a study (Muldiasman et al., 2018), delayed breastfeeding is also one factor contributing to stunting in a community, especially in low-income families (Sirajuddin et al., 2020). In addition, the aspect of families feeding their children improperly may increase the risk of stunting. Additionally, the

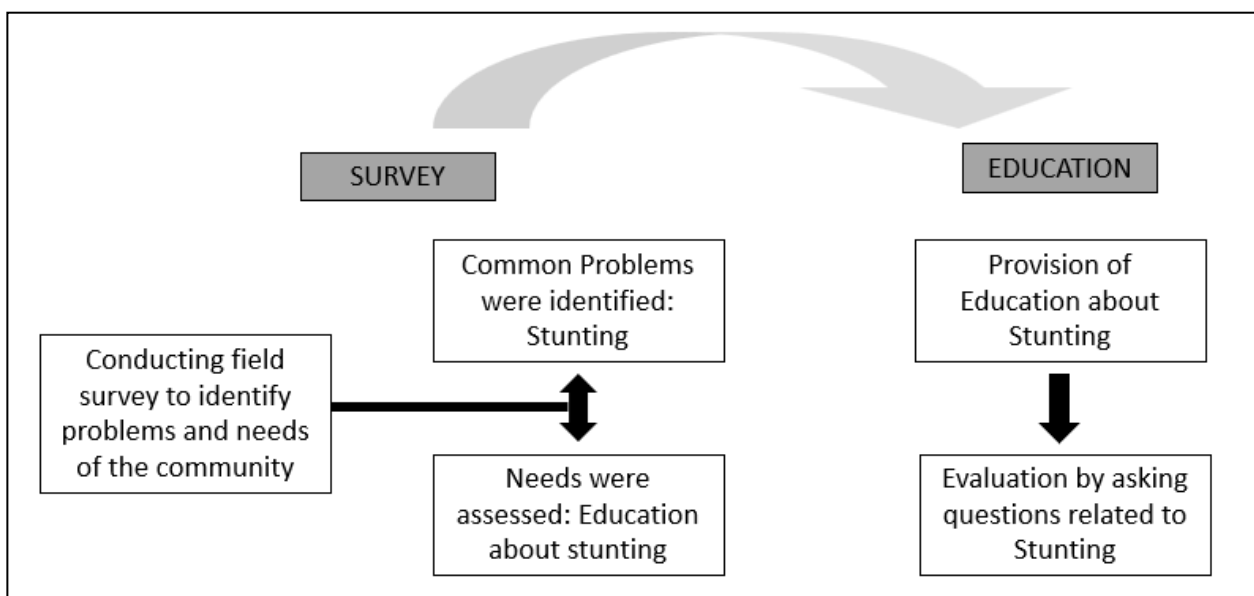
household's social and economic problems affect the mother's health and nutritional status during pregnancy. If this malnutrition occurs repeatedly and continuously, children are more prone to stunting and are more susceptible to disease.

Kubu Raya Regency is one of the closest districts to Tanjungpura University. The role of Tanjungpura University in overcoming problems in the surrounding community is urgently needed. Kubu Raya Regency has a maternal mortality rate of 14 and a neonatal mortality rate of 38. Increased maternal and child mortality rates are a poor indicator of success in the health sector. The negative impact that is not expected from stunting is death, so a strategy is needed to manage stunting properly to reduce child mortality. Meanwhile, in Kubu Raya Regency, 1.72% of children were malnourished, and 0.07% were underweight. Punggur Village, one of the villages in Kubu Raya Regency, has 28% of children who are stunted. For this reason, Nursing Department from Universitas Tanjungpura carried out several activities to assist stakeholder strategies to alleviate this stunting incident.

This community service activity targeted a group of mothers in Punggur Kecil Village. Mothers with children at high risk of experiencing stunting need to be given health education to increase knowledge about how to feed and care for children properly. The purpose of this community service activity was to increase mothers' understanding of the prevention and management of stunting, which was carried out through the provision of education on stunting and its prevention and management.

## METHOD

This community service activity began with a field survey in Punggur Kecil Village to identify the main problems and needs of the local community. Other activities carried out were providing education to mothers who have children under five in Punggur Kecil Village. The education provided was about stunting, prevention, and treatment at home. Before the education, the participants were given pre-test questions. During the provision of education, the participants actively asked questions to the team. They asked questions about identifying children with stunting and how to prevent stunting and overcome children who have decreased appetite. At the end of the activity, participants were asked to answer post-test questions. These activities can be seen in Figure 1



**Figure 1.** The Diagram of the Community Service activities in Punggur Kecil Village

## **RESULTS**

The total number of participants who attended the educational activity regarding stunting was 22 people. The average pre-test score was 5.5 out of 10 correct scores, with the lowest score being 3. At the same time, the post-test average score was 6.6 out of 10 valid scores, while the highest score was eight and the lowest score was 3. There was a significant difference in the knowledge level of education participants before and after being taught about stunting. After the provision of education, the average knowledge level was higher than before the instruction was provided (t-test,  $p < 0.01$ ).

## **DISCUSSION**

The role of parents, especially mothers, is vital for the growth and development of their children. Mothers' perceptions and level of knowledge about parenting, including feeding patterns, can affect how mothers perceive a condition that occurs in their children, including nutritional disorders. A study interviewing mothers about stunting where mothers consider stunting to be due to heredity, parasitic worm infections, or due to growth problems (Mardihani & Husain, 2021). For this reason, the role of health workers is essential in providing insight for mothers to recognize stunting so that they can prevent it. As carried out by this community service activity, one of the objectives is for mothers to understand what stunting is and what are the characteristics of children who are stunted. In the provision of education about stunting, mothers should not be educated with the concept of stunting but also the complementary food that is demonstrated along with an explanation of how to choose the proper food (Afriani et al., 2022; Yuliantia et al., 2022).

The real difference in the level of knowledge measured through pre-test and post-test shows the benefits of education provided to mothers. Based on the results of a study conducted by Salsabila et al. (2021), there is a relationship between the incidence of stunting and the level of maternal knowledge about nutrition. Meanwhile, based on a research study by Rahmandiani et al. (2019), the mother's level of knowledge about stunting is relatively low and there was a relationship between the level of knowledge and the sources of information that come from various health workers. For this reason, the role of providing education is very important in helping mothers understand the incidence of stunting, and preventing stunting in children by providing the best nutrition for their children. In addition, mothers need to understand the strategies that must be done if they find their children at risk of stunting. Therefore, regular examination for stunting may help the government prevent stunting in community children (Ruminem & Sukmana, 2021).

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Education about stunting is important to be given to mothers with toddlers so that they can have adequate information about preventing stunting in children. The role of health workers in providing information about the prevention and treatment of children with stunting needs to be supported by all parties, such as stakeholders and the community. The role of other health workers, especially those in the public health center working area, needs to educate cadres as an extension of their hands in identifying families at risk of having children with stunting so that the incidence of stunting in children can be prevented as early as possible.

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## APPENDIX



Figure 2. The Provision of Education



Figure 3. Community Service Team