



Dedicated:

Journal of Community Services (Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat)

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Stunting socialization program as an effort to disseminate information

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ABSTRACT

Stunting is a serious problem that is often found in toddlers and school-age children. One of the factors that influence this is parental knowledge about stunting. Stunting socialization is carried out as an effort to increase public understanding regarding nutritional intake, growth and development, prevention, and handling of stunting. This article aims to disseminate information related to stunting to the Bojong Village Community, Karangtengah District, Cianjur Regency. The implementation of socialization is delivered using the lecture method through direct presentations. Pamphlets were provided during the socialization to facilitate material delivery to participants. The results of the community services showed that there was enthusiasm from participants towards the socialization activities, which was marked by the many questions asked and the creation of active discussions between participants. The support of the local government was also a factor in the implementation of this socialization activity effectively.

ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received: 8 Sep 2024

Revised: 14 Dec 2024

Accepted: 17 Dec 2024

Available online: 27 Dec 2024

Publish: 27 Dec 2024

Keywords:

causes of stunting; socialization program; stunting

Open access

Dedicated: Journal of Community Services (Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat) is a peer-reviewed open-access journal.

ABSTRAK

Stunting merupakan masalah berat yang sering kali ditemui pada anak-anak usia balita dan usia masuk sekolah. Faktor yang mempengaruhi hal tersebut salah satunya pengetahuan orang tua mengenai stunting. Sosialisasi stunting dilakukan sebagai upaya untuk meningkatkan pemahaman masyarakat terkait asupan gizi, tumbuh kembang, pencegahan, dan penanganan stunting. Artikel ini bertujuan untuk mensosialisasikan informasi terkait stunting kepada Masyarakat Desa Bojong, Kecamatan Karangtengah, Kabupaten Cianjur. Pelaksanaan sosialisasi disampaikan dengan metode ceramah melalui presentasi secara langsung. Pemberian pamflet pada saat sosialisasi dilakukan untuk memudahkan penyampaian materi kepada peserta. Hasil pengabdian menunjukkan terdapat antusiasme peserta terhadap kegiatan sosialisasi yang ditandai dengan banyaknya pertanyaan yang diajukan, dan terciptanya diskusi aktif antar peserta. Dukungan pemerintah setempat juga menjadi faktor dalam terselenggaranya kegiatan sosialisasi ini secara efektif.

Kata Kunci: Mahasiswa; Penyebab Stunting; Program Sosialisasi

How to cite (APA 7)

Winarti, N. E., Apriliani, R., & Arroja, H. F. (2024). Stunting socialization program as an effort to disseminate information. *Dedicated: Journal of Community Services (Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat)*, 2(2), 397-408.

Peer review

This article has been peer-reviewed through the journal's standard double-blind peer review, where both the reviewers and authors are anonymised during review.



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INTRODUCTION

Stunting has become one of the issues of special concern in Indonesia, even becoming a national priority issue. This is evidenced by the Indonesian government's target to reduce the stunting rate to 14% by 2024. This target is included in the National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN). According to the results of the Indonesian Nutritional Status Survey (SSGI) conducted by the Indonesian Ministry of Health, the prevalence rate of stunted toddlers in Indonesia in 2022 reached 21.6%. This figure represents a decrease of 2.8% from the SSGI results in 2021, which was 24.4%. Therefore, an additional 7.6% reduction is still needed to achieve the target reduction in stunting in Indonesia.

As part of the efforts to reduce stunting rates in Indonesia, the Indonesian government has initiated various programs. The government involves university students as partners to support prevention and accelerate the reduction of stunting. This initiative is called *Mahasiswa Peduli Stunting*. The *Mahasiswa Peduli Stunting* program is a student initiative established to support the acceleration of stunting reduction, based on the *Tri Dharma* of Higher Education. This program can be implemented through various student activities, one of which is Kuliah Kerja Nyata (KKN) Thematic for Stunting.

As part of the implementation of the *Mahasiswa Peduli Stunting* program, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, as one of the state universities in Indonesia, adopted the *KKN Thematic Mahasiswa Peduli Stunting (Si Penting)* as one of the KKN themes for the 2023 period. One of the designated locations for the *KKN Thematic "Si Penting"* by Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia was Bojong Village, Karangtengah Subdistrict, Cianjur Regency. Through this KKN activity, participating students played a role in delivering information about stunting, particularly as a form of concern for the stunting prevalence rate and as part of their obligation in implementing the *KKN Thematic "Si Penting"* (Nugraha, 2024).

One of the causes of stunting is the lack of effective access to information on stunting that is available to the public (Anggaraeni et al., 2023; Bagasraga et al., 2023). Digital literacy skills in today's technological era are quite helpful in learning new things, including accessing information (Hakim & Nusantara, 2023). The lack of information was a key issue addressed by students during the *KKN Thematic "Si Penting"*. One of the work programs carried out to support the fulfillment of information and address the limited access to stunting-related knowledge was organizing a stunting awareness campaign. The campaign was carried out in line with the objectives of the *KKN Thematic "Si Penting"*, namely 1) To help students improve their ability to serve the community, particularly in relation to stunting prevention and reduction; 2) To act as a stimulus in achieving the targets of stunting reduction programs for field program managers; 3) To improve community knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors regarding the prevention and treatment of stunting; and 4) To foster commitment, awareness, and collaboration among various parties to accelerate stunting reduction efforts. Thus, this activity was carried out to describe the implementation of the stunting awareness program in Bojong Village, Karangtengah Subdistrict, Cianjur Regency.

Literature Review

Stunting

Stunting is a type of syndrome caused by a failure in linear growth, serving as an indicator of various pathological disorders associated with increased morbidity and mortality, loss of physical growth potential, reduced neural development and cognitive function, and a higher risk of chronic diseases in adulthood (De Onis & Branca, 2016). Stunting can be defined as a nutritional condition in young children who have a height or length that is not appropriate for their age (Nirmalasari, 2020). This definition aligns with that of the WHO, which defines stunting as a condition where a child's height for age is more than two standard

deviations below the WHO Child Growth Standards median. Stunting can be identified by measuring a child's height or length and interpreting the results by comparing them to established standard values (De Onis & Branca, 2016). A common sign of stunting in children is a noticeable slowdown in growth velocity during early childhood, which is often difficult to reverse and may persist into adulthood (Hasanah et al., 2023). Stunting is a key indicator of poor child development outcomes (Darnis, 2022).

Stunting also affects cognitive and mental development, hindering a child's potential to learn effectively (Lesmana et al., 2023). Children with stunting tend to have lower levels of intelligence, which can ultimately impact the quality of human resources (Wuringsih et al., 2021). Furthermore, stunting has both short-term and long-term impacts (Rusliani et al., 2022). Short-term effects of stunting include increased illness and mortality rates among toddlers, suboptimal cognitive, motor, and verbal development, as well as higher healthcare costs. Meanwhile, long-term effects include non-optimal adult height, reduced reproductive health, decreased performance, learning capacity, productivity, and work capability, along with a higher risk of obesity and other non-communicable diseases. Beyond individual losses, stunting also imposes a heavy burden on the government, particularly in rising healthcare expenditures associated with non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, stroke, heart disease, and kidney failure (Puspitasari et al., 2021).

Causes of Stunting

Stunting is generally caused by factors that hinder a child's growth and development. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the key contributing factors include poor maternal health and nutrition, inadequate infant and young child feeding practices, and the presence of infections. Stunting is a form of chronic malnutrition that results from inadequate nutritional intake that fails to meet the body's needs, beginning in the womb and becoming apparent when the child reaches two years of age (Sugianto, 2021). Stunting reflects impaired growth due to poor nutrition and health both before and after birth (Fitriahadi et al., 2023). In Indonesia, stunting in children is linked to several key determinants: 1) being male, 2) being born prematurely, 3) having a short birth length, 4) not receiving exclusive breastfeeding during the first six months, 5) having a mother of short stature, 6) having a mother with a low level of education, 7) coming from a low socioeconomic background, 8) living in a household with poor sanitation facilities, 9) poor access to healthcare services, and 10) living in a rural area (Beal et al., 2018). Children between 12–32 months old are particularly at risk for stunting, especially during the weaning period as they transition from breastfeeding to complementary foods (Yuana et al., 2021).

Stunting is also caused by limited access to healthcare services, clean water, and sanitation (Afifah et al., 2024; Hastuti & Dulame, 2024). Several other factors also contribute to stunting, including babies born with low birth weight (LBW), the mother's nutritional status during pregnancy, the mother's level of education which relates to her knowledge in child-rearing and whether the child was exclusively breastfed. This indicates that stunting is not caused by a single factor. Instead, it results from a combination of multiple factors that begin during pregnancy and continue through the child's first 1000 days of life.

Children aged 0–2 years are in a vulnerable period for growth failure, both in terms of weight and height, making regular and continuous monitoring by healthcare workers essential. To prevent the causes of stunting, three key factors must be prioritized: proper feeding practices, proper parenting, and ensuring clean sanitation and water pathways (Fentiana et al., 2022). Furthermore, preventing stunting requires a holistic nutritional intervention (specific, sensitive, and essential), such as ensuring pregnant women receive optimal nutrition, guaranteeing children receive exclusive breastfeeding, regularly monitoring toddler development, and providing nutritious complementary feeding (Dekasari et al., 2024).

Stunting Awareness Program

Program effectiveness refers to the effort, methods, or procedures used to assess the extent to which a program is implemented in accordance with its predetermined goals or objectives (Maleke et al., 2022). There are three measurable aspects used to evaluate effectiveness, first is the achievement of goals which includes the implementation time and target objectives, the two integrations include procedures, activities, and processes in socialization, and the third adaptation includes the development of performance and infrastructure. Program effectiveness can also be defined as the extent to which the planned efforts align with the actual results or the comparison between planned outcomes and realized outcomes (Aeda & Jannah, 2022).

The stunting awareness program does not only provide information but also encourages behavioral changes that lead to improved public health (Ginting & Zebua, 2024). Understanding the risk factors of stunting can offer insights into child growth and development (Aurima et al., 2021). One of the most effective ways to prevent stunting is by conducting educational outreach regarding stunting (Hukubun et al., 2024). Awareness programs have shown positive outcomes in increasing knowledge about stunting (Setyorini & Andriyani, 2023). Therefore, such initiatives are essential as they serve as the first step in promoting behavioral change, influenced by the information conveyed, which in turn shapes perceptions, belief systems, and individual attitudes (Yani et al., 2023).

METHODS

This outreach was conducted to provide the community with knowledge about stunting and is expected to improve public understanding of the issue. The stages carried out in the implementation of the stunting awareness activity can be outlined as follows:



Figure 1. The Flow of Stages of the Socialization Method
Source: Author Data Processing 2023

1. Planning Stage, the process began with coordination with the partner agency, namely the Village Government of Bojong, Karangtengah Subdistrict, Cianjur Regency. This coordination was conducted to determine the location and timing of the awareness activity.
2. Observation Stage, observations were made regarding the conditions, environment, and the rate of stunting cases in the service location. This observation was carried out in collaboration with *Posyandu* (Integrated Health Post) cadres. Through this process, the researchers were able to identify stunting-related issues. Based on the observations, two community units. RW 03 and RW 14 in Bojong Village, Karangtengah Subdistrict, Cianjur Regency were selected for the program.
3. Implementation Stage, the stunting awareness sessions were conducted on Friday, July 28, 2023, in RW 03 and on Wednesday, August 9, 2023, in RW 14, Bojong Village, Karangtengah Subdistrict, Cianjur Regency. The activity used a lecture method through in-person presentations. During the

sessions, participants received materials and information related to stunting, followed by a Q&A session between participants and the presenter.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Stunting is a chronic issue that requires immediate and comprehensive intervention. Raising awareness about stunting is one of the preventive efforts that can be implemented, especially considering the high number of stunting cases caused by a lack of knowledge and information particularly regarding proper feeding practices, parenting styles, and healthy behaviors. This lack of public information has been identified as one of the contributing factors to stunting. Educational information about stunting must be provided so that parents can respond quickly and appropriately when addressing stunting issues (Sari et al., 2023). As part of efforts to support the government in preventing stunting in Bojong Village, students from Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia participating in the KKN program conducted awareness sessions on stunting. These sessions were held twice once in RW 03 and once in RW 14 of Bojong Village, Karangtengah Subdistrict, Cianjur Regency.



Figure 2. Stunting Socialization Activities in RW 03
Source: *Author's Documentation 2023*

The first stunting awareness session conducted by UPI KKN students took place at the Madrasah in RW 03, Bojong Village, on Friday, July 28, 2023. The session began with a Quranic study gathering, which is a routine event held every Friday in RW 03. After the religious session, the stunting awareness event was opened by a representative of the UPI KKN group serving as the MC, followed by the presentation delivered by two speakers: Muhammad Ridwan and Hasna Rania. The first speaker, Muhammad Ridwan, presented material on an introduction to stunting, its causes, solutions, and healthy foods. The second speaker, Hasna Rania, discussed parenting strategies. Additionally, a pamphlet about stunting created by the UPI KKN group was distributed to participants to support the presentation material. After the

presentation, the event continued with a Q&A session. The Q&A was warmly welcomed by the mothers who participated in the session. Most of the questions raised were related to effective solutions for overcoming stunting.



Figure 3. Stunting Socialization Activities in RW 14
Source: Author's Documentation 2023

The second stunting awareness session was held in RW 14. For this session, the presentation was delivered by one speaker from the group's representatives. The content of this session was slightly different from the first, as it focused more on stunting and healthy foods that support stunting prevention. Unlike the first session, this one did not cover parenting strategies, as the participants were already well-informed on that topic. The reason KKN "Si Penting" participants initially included parenting strategies in the first session was due to the high number of incorrect parenting practices observed among parents. These included providing unbalanced nutrition that does not follow health recommendations, or believing in myths about infant feeding such as giving honey to newborns or offering coffee to toddlers. By presenting this topic, it was hoped that parents would gain a better understanding of proper parenting practices based on health guidelines. Pamphlets about stunting were also distributed to participants before the event began. The session was well-received, as reflected in the enthusiasm of the attendees. After the presentation, there was an interactive Q&A session, with participants asking questions mostly related to parenting practices based on their own experiences.

As part of the activities carried out during the "Si Penting" Thematic KKN program, the stunting awareness sessions conducted by the "Si Penting" KKN student participants aligned with the overall goals of the program, which are as follows: 1) To help students improve their community service skills, particularly related to the prevention and reduction of stunting. This goal was realized through students' efforts to seek out information on stunting, as the "Si Penting" KKN participants stationed in Bojong Village did not come from health related academic backgrounds. Therefore, they needed to actively search for accurate and reliable information about stunting. In addition to gathering information, this objective also emphasized the importance of how students process and package the information so that the stunting-related content

shared with the local community is both accurate and useful. The ability to search for accurate information is also a vital skill that should be possessed by members of a community, ensuring that the information circulated is valid and sufficient to meet the public's informational needs (Halimah et al., 2023).

The material packaging prepared by the students participating in the "Si Penting" Thematic KKN for the stunting awareness sessions consisted of two forms: a presentation and a pamphlet on stunting. These materials explained what stunting is, its causes, impacts, and solutions, as well as parenting practices and healthy meal plans based on balanced nutrition guidelines. The pamphlet served as a supporting material for the awareness session, containing content that aligned with what was presented directly during the session.

In today's modern era, narrative-based socialization alone is no longer sufficient to deliver messages effectively; therefore, additional media are needed as tools to support message delivery (Winingsih et al., 2020). The use of supplementary media in outreach activities has shown that printed media can have a positive impact on increasing knowledge (Koch et al., 2024). Based on these findings, the use of pamphlets in the implementation of socialization programs helps facilitate the message delivery process and contributes to improving participants' knowledge.

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Kelompok KKN Tematik "Si Penting" Berbasis MBKM
Desa Bojong, Kecamatan Karangtengah, Kabupaten Cianjur
Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia
Semester Genap 2022/2023

APA ITU STUNTING?

Stunting adalah gangguan pertumbuhan dan perkembangan anak akibat kekurangan gizi kronis dan infeksi berulang, yang ditandai dengan adanya gangguan pertumbuhan pada anak yakni tinggi badan anak lebih rendah dari standar usianya.

Dampak Stunting

Jangka Pendek

- Terganggunya perkembangan otak
- Gangguan kemampuan fungsi kecerdasan anak
- Gangguan pertumbuhan fisik
- Gangguan perkembangan organ metabolik

Jangka Panjang

- Menurunnya kemampuan berpikir (kognitif)
- Mengalami hambatan pertumbuhan
- Menurunnya kekebalan tubuh sehingga anak mudah sakit
- Berisiko tinggi untuk terkena penyakit tidak menular dan kronis (seperti diabetes, morbiditas, dan mortalitas)

POLY ASUH

Proses interaksi antara ayah, ibu, dan anak-anak mereka serta lingkungan masyarakatnya.

Ayah dan ibu memiliki tanggung jawab yang sama meskipun menjalankan peran yang berbeda. Oleh karena itu, kehadiran ayah dalam pengasuhan dan pendidikan anak dapat mengoptimalkan tumbuh kembang anak.

Empat Tipe Pola Asuh

1. Pola Asuh Otoriter
2. Pola Asuh Permisif
3. Pola Asuh Diabaikan
4. Pola Asuh Demokratis

Penyebab dan Solusi

Penyebab Langsung

- Asupan zat gizi yang tidak cukup -> pemberian asupan gizi yang cukup dan seimbang (karbohidrat, protein dan lemak)
- Status kesehatan atau adanya riwayat penyakit -> memerlukan asupan energi yang lebih banyak untuk melawan bakteri ataupun virus penyebab penyakit

Penyebab Tidak Langsung

- Kurangnya ketersediaan pangan -> Terpenuhiinya ketersediaan, keterjangkauan, keamanan dan kualitas pangan
- Pola pengasuhan dan konsumsi rumah tangga yang kurang baik -> Proses pengasuhan yang baik dan konsumsi makanan yang baik untuk kesehatan
- Sanitasi lingkungan permukiman yang kurang bersih -> Menerapkan perilaku berdasarkan 5 pilar Sanitasi Total Berbasis Masyarakat (STBM) dalam keluarga.
- Pemanfaatan pelayanan kesehatan tidak dilakukan secara maksimal -> Memaksimalkan pemanfaatan pelayanan kesehatan

Makanan Sehat

- Makanan Kaya Protein
- Sayuran Hijau
- Buah-buahan
- Sumber Karbohidrat Utuh
- Ikan Berlemak
- Susu dan Produk Olahannya
- Suplemen Gizi

Figure 4. Stunting Socialization Pamphlet
Source: Author's Documentation 2023

The second objective of the "Si Penting" Thematic KKN is 2) To serve as a stimulus in achieving the targets of the stunting reduction acceleration program for field program implementers. The stunting awareness campaign conducted as part of the "Si Penting" Thematic KKN aims primarily to support the government in reducing stunting rates in the area where the student participants are assigned namely, Bojong Village, Karangtengah Subdistrict, Cianjur Regency. This activity is expected to serve as a stepping stone toward lowering stunting rates in the future.

The third objective is 3) To improve the community's knowledge, attitudes, and behavior regarding the prevention and management of stunting. As explained in the first point, the students packaged the stunting information into two forms: a direct presentation and a pamphlet distributed to the participants. Therefore, this approach is expected to enhance the community's knowledge, attitudes, and behavior particularly related to stunting prevention and management.

The final objective of the "Si Penting" Thematic KKN is 4) To foster commitment, awareness, and collaboration among various parties to accelerate the reduction of stunting. The socialization activities carried out by the student group participating in KKN 'Si Penting' in collaboration with the Bojong village authorities, RT and RW from the local area. In addition, during the presentation sessions, the "Si Penting" KKN students emphasized the important role of local *posyandu* (integrated health service posts) in accelerating stunting reduction. Children must be regularly monitored to prevent stunting-related conditions. Moreover, the awareness program included a follow-up activity in the form of health education and support for *posyandu* activities, conducted by the KKN students at several *posyandu* locations in Bojong Village.

The implementation of the awareness program was considered effective because the outcomes aligned with the initial plans. The program planning focused on delivering material and knowledge about stunting, and the program was deemed effective based on the participants' enthusiasm in asking questions and engaging in discussions during the event.

CONCLUSION

Participants showed great enthusiasm during the socialization activity, as evidenced by the numerous questions asked regarding the material presented. They were also actively engaged in discussions on how to prevent and address stunting. The socialization activities conducted received support from the Bojong Village Government, local RT and RW. Through this activity, participants gained valuable information about preventing and managing stunting not only related to children's nutritional intake but also concerning parental attitudes and parenting behaviors to help maintain children's health.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. The author also affirms that the data and content of the article are free from plagiarism.

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