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**Isi Piringku on the prevention of stunting in pregnant women**

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**ABSTRACT**

Isi Piringku emphasizes the importance of balance between staple foods, vegetables, side dishes, and fruits, with specific measurements to ensure optimal nutritional intake. This community service aims to evaluate the influence of nutrition, represented by the Isi Piringku concept, on pregnant women's health and their fetuses' development. In this context, the community service conducted assesses how the implementation of a diet based on Isi Piringku can contribute to fetal health and the prevention of stunting, a form of chronic malnutrition that occurs in the first 1000 days of life, starting from when the fetus is in the womb. The method used in this community service is qualitative-participatory. This method elaborates the learning process with instructors acting as researchers and observers working with target subjects. Learning uses a group discussion and quiz model. The results of the community service show that pregnant women who follow the Isi Piringku guide tend to have a more balanced nutritional intake, which contributes to more optimal fetal growth and development and reduces the risk of stunting. These findings emphasize the importance of nutritional education and implementing the Isi Piringku concept for pregnant women to promote a healthier and better quality generation.

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**ABSTRAK**

*Isi Piringku menekankan pentingnya keseimbangan antara makanan pokok, sayur, lauk pauk, dan buah, dengan takaran yang spesifik untuk memastikan asupan nutrisi yang optimal. Pengabdian ini bertujuan untuk mengevaluasi pengaruh gizi yang diwakili oleh konsep Isi Piringku terhadap kesehatan ibu hamil dan perkembangan janinnya. Dalam konteks ini, pengabdian yang dilakukan menilai bagaimana penerapan pola makan berdasarkan Isi Piringku dapat berkontribusi pada kesehatan janin dan pencegahan stunting, suatu bentuk malnutrisi kronis yang terjadi dalam 1000 hari pertama kehidupan, dimulai sejak janin berada di kandungan. Metode yang digunakan pada pengabdian ini yaitu kualitatif-partisipatoris. Metode ini mengelaborasi proses belajar aktual dengan instruktur bertindak sebagai peneliti dan observator bekerja sama dengan subjek sasaran. Pembelajaran menggunakan model diskusi grup dan quiz. Hasil pengabdian menunjukkan hasil bahwa ibu hamil yang mengikuti panduan Isi Piringku cenderung memiliki asupan nutrisi yang lebih seimbang, yang berkontribusi pada pertumbuhan dan perkembangan janin yang lebih optimal, serta mengurangi risiko terjadinya stunting. Temuan ini menegaskan pentingnya edukasi gizi dan penerapan konsep Isi Piringku bagi ibu hamil demi generasi yang lebih sehat dan berkualitas.*

**Kata Kunci:** *gizi; ibu hamil; isi piringku; stunting*

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## INTRODUCTION

Nutrition is something that everyone needs, as it is the primary source for maintaining a healthy body and having sufficient energy. Each person has different nutritional needs, which can be influenced by physical activity, illnesses, medications, and specific physical conditions such as pregnancy and breastfeeding. Food is defined as nutrition (Aisyah et al., 2023). In reality, nutrition refers to what enters a person's body, although it generally comes from the food they consume. Therefore, the food one eats must be carefully considered to meet daily nutritional requirements. As a basic guideline for healthy living, good nutrition consists of eating adequately and in a balanced way, combined with regular exercise. This is crucial for survival, maintaining health, physical growth, mental development, performance, productivity, and overall well-being. Nutrition plays a vital role in both human development and the development of a nation (Aisyah et al., 2023).

A problem that arises when a person does not receive adequate nutrition is malnutrition or health issues, such as stunting. This highlights how crucial nutrition is for an individual. Malnutrition is a condition of nutritional imbalance caused by an excess or deficiency of calories, protein, or other nutrients. It affects bodily functions, body composition, shape, and size, as well as clinical effects and consequences (Fariqy & Graharti, 2024). Malnutrition is closely linked to the nutrition that enters the body primarily through food. In other words, if a person does not adjust their nutritional intake according to their level of activity, malnutrition may occur.

Malnutrition occurs in every country, especially those with low economic levels, like Indonesia, with malnutrition directly affecting pregnant women and infants. The government, through the Ministry of Health (2024), states that the results of the Survei Status Gizi Indonesia (SSGI) in 2022 show that the stunting rate in Indonesia is still quite high at 21.6%. However, it has decreased from the previous year, which was 24.4% in 2021. However, significant efforts are required to achieve the target stunting reduction of 14% by 2024. This is evident from the prevalence of stunting among different age groups based on the 2022 SSGI results, which show that 18.5% of infants are born with stunting before birth. These results illustrate how cases of stunting among infants and pregnant women are very real in Indonesia, and the government needs to pay direct attention to how to address the rising stunting rates.

One of the efforts made to address this issue in Indonesia is the implementation of the Isi Piringku nutrition guideline introduced by the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia (*Kementerian Kesehatan Republik Indonesia*) in 2014. This concept was designed to provide the public with an easy guide on how to create a nutritionally balanced plate. However, in reality, the government has not yet been able to fully resolve the issue of stunting, as malnutrition and stunting continue to occur, especially among infants and pregnant women. There is also a lack of knowledge among some elementary school students regarding the Isi Piringku concept (Intan et al., 2024).

The aforementioned issue is not only the responsibility of the government but also of all levels of society, including university students. Students can contribute by engaging in community service in villages where people have not yet been introduced to the Isi Piringku concept. This particular community service activity involved students from Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia. The outreach focused on educating pregnant women, local residents, and members of the Family Welfare Movement (PKK) about the Isi Piringku concept. Unlike previous studies that focused on educating elementary school students, this outreach was conducted in Cibereum Hilir, Sukabumi. In Sukabumi itself, as of October 19, 2022, the Mayor and the Health Department of Sukabumi City held another meeting to discuss ways to prevent stunting in the area. According to Rita Fitrianiingsih, the results from the August 2022 Toddler Weighing Month showed that 806 toddlers, or 4.03% of 20,017, were affected by stunting, a decrease from 1,180 toddlers (5.9%)

recorded in August 2021. Efforts to prevent stunting must be optimized through strengthened nutrition monitoring.

Based on the existing issues, this community service aims to help residents of Cibereum Hilir, Sukabumi, especially pregnant women, local residents, and members of the Family Welfare Movement (PKK) understand how to provide balanced nutrition for their babies as well as for expecting mothers. This is evidenced by efforts to meet nutritional needs through balanced meals and the utilization of local food ingredients available in their surrounding environment.

## **Literature Review**

### **Balanced Nutrition**

Nutrition is something that must be paid attention to by everyone, as it plays a crucial role in determining whether a person has good health or not. Good nutrition must start with healthy food intake to support a person's well-being. Moreover, to prevent health problems, proper nutrition must begin from infancy. Poor food intake and overall health condition are two factors that influence a child's nutrition and health. Indirect factors include household food insecurity, inadequate caregiving practices, substandard environmental sanitation, and socio-economic and cultural influences (Nuzula et al., 2023). These factors indicate that nutrition is essential for a child's growth, and a balanced intake of nutrients will help minimize malnutrition in children.

Everyone should understand health through balanced nutrition, as it is one of the most important aspects of a person's life. This understanding should also be recognized by the government so that continued education can be provided to prevent malnutrition in individuals. One of the key factors affecting a person's nutritional status in Indonesia is nutritional knowledge. A lack of knowledge reduces the ability to implement a daily balanced diet (Lestari et al., 2023; Nurfiriani & Kurniasari, 2023). Knowledge about balanced nutrition should be accessible to all groups of people, as nutritional intake needs will continue to increase with age and as individuals expend more energy (Mardiana et al., 2021).

Knowledge about balanced nutrition needs to be expanded not only to children and teenagers, but also to the elderly, pregnant women, and others. Awareness of the importance of balanced nutrition became especially crucial during the COVID-19 pandemic (Erista Nai, 2024). Effective interventions are needed to maintain health awareness and attitudes during the COVID-19 pandemic. Age, health awareness, and attitudes related to COVID-19 show a positive correlation with balanced nutrition behavior, but there is no positive correlation between income and balanced nutrition behavior.

Awareness of the importance of balanced nutrition must be instilled in everyone, including children. Providing healthy food to children needs to be encouraged early on, as they require additional energy and a balanced nutritional intake. Supplying healthy supplementary food not only helps children stay healthy, but also helps them develop healthy lifestyle habits from an early age. The food given to children must meet their nutritional needs and overall requirements. Providing supplementary food means offering children snacks, treats, or full meals while they engage in physical activities, such as exercise. In this context, the quality and safety of food ingredients must be taken into consideration (Fauziah, 2023).

### **Stunting**

Stunting is a problem that still often occurs in several countries with low economic levels. In some cases, stunting is often associated with a lack of nutritional intake, especially during infancy or for mothers who are pregnant. The discrepancy between nutritional needs and intake causes stunting, a chronic malnutrition issue that begins at conception or during the first 1000 days of life (HPK). Therefore, it is

important for toddlers to receive optimal nutrition during the first 1000 HPK (Likhar & Patil, 2022). The effects of stunting will only become apparent when a child reaches 24 months if there is a balanced nutritional deficiency (Saleh et al., 2023). Nutritional deficiencies that occur through food intake can lead to stunting, especially in infants; this is a problem that requires significant attention.

Stunting commonly occurs in toddlers and infants, primarily due to an unbalanced and insufficient nutritional intake. Many factors contribute to stunting. Exclusive energy intake, birth weight, mother's education level, family income, parenting style, and food diversity are some of the factors that influence stunting in early childhood (Susilawati & Ginting, 2023). These contributing factors indirectly have a significant impact on a child's growth and development. As children grow older, noticeable health differences can be observed between those who experienced stunting and those who did not. One of the efforts to prevent stunting is by providing children with nutritious food, as well as ensuring pregnant women consume food that meets the nutritional needs of the fetus.

Characteristics of toddlers experiencing stunting include abnormal height growth as they age. This condition can actually be addressed during early childhood through proper and balanced nutrition. By measuring a toddler's height and comparing it with standard height benchmarks, children who fall into the stunting category can be easily identified. If their Z-score is less than -2 SD or even -3 SD, the child is also considered to be in the severely short category (Dekasari & Gunawan, 2024). Other signs of stunting in toddlers include impaired cognitive development, such as emotional instability and intellectual performance below that of their peers. A common indicator is a slowdown in growth rate, especially in toddlers. Stunting not only affects physical growth but also disrupts a child's mental, cognitive, and intellectual development. Children identified as stunted during early childhood often face challenges that persist into adulthood, and the condition is difficult to reverse (Hasanah et al., 2023).

Preventing stunting is essential to ensure that children can grow and develop properly. Prevention starts with making sure that the food children consume meets their nutritional needs. However, many children still struggle with eating, which can lead to stunting. It is the responsibility of parents, as the providers of their children's nutrition, to learn the best ways to prevent stunting. One recommended approach is responsive feeding, which involves giving positive responses to children aged 6–36 months through eye contact, words, and smiling. Children need a variety of foods, flavors, and textures. Mothers should not force their children to stop eating, but instead wait and offer food again later. They should also provide finger foods that children can hold and eat on their own (Purwanti et al., 2023).

### **The Isi Piringku concept**

Efforts to prevent stunting cases in Indonesia are carried out through the Isi Piringku concept, a government initiative designed to educate people about proper nutrition, especially for those in growth stages. The Isi Piringku program aims to provide guidance on the types of food and beverages that should be consumed during each meal (such as breakfast, lunch, and dinner). The My Dinner Plate graphic illustrates recommendations for healthy eating, where staple foods and side dishes make up half (or 50%) of the total intake at every meal (Suprayitno et al., 2023). This concept provides a clear picture of how individuals can meet their nutritional needs for growth. It is essential for everyone to understand this Isi Piringku concept so they can identify which ingredients can be used to prepare nutritious meals.

The main target of this concept is mostly pregnant women. This is because pregnant women require proper nutrition to support the healthy development of their fetus. In an effort to inform pregnant women about appropriate meal portions, the government launched the balanced nutrition program Isi Piringku, designed by the Ministry of Health to encourage people to consume healthy foods (Ulsafitri et al., 2024). The food portions in a pregnant woman's diet must be nutritionally balanced. While some regions may find it difficult to access the staple foods recommended in the Isi Piringku concept, there are alternative ingredients that

also provide balanced nutrition. Understanding the *Isi Piringku* concept can significantly change the mindset of mothers with toddlers, helping them to prioritize nutritious food intake for their children (Ramadhani et al., 2023).

## METHODS

The explanation of the issues presented in the introduction provides a foundation for the method used in this community service project, namely the qualitative-participatory approach. This method elaborates the actual learning process with the instructor acting as both researcher and observer, working together with the target participants. The learning model involved group discussions and quizzes (Basri et al., 2023). Education on the importance of balanced nutrition for pregnant women used a participatory approach, particularly through the Participatory Decision-Making Process concept. Two critical steps in management processes used by organizations or individuals to achieve specific goals are planning and decision-making. Both are closely interconnected and mutually supportive processes that guide activities and resources to be used effectively and efficiently (Rijal, 2023). Within this participatory method, several activities were carried out, including educational sessions. These sessions aligned with programs from the Ministry of Health, specifically focusing on the *Isi Piringku* concept. The discussions based on this concept were part of the government's efforts to address the ongoing issue of stunting in infants.

The outreach program was carried out by delivering several presentations on the *Isi Piringku* concept, such as providing knowledge about nutritious food as well as the ingredients needed to prepare healthy meals. In addition, the sessions also aimed to educate participants on how to find alternatives when certain food ingredients are not available in the village, encouraging them to make use of locally available resources. Students delivered the educational sessions from Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, who had previously received training and guidance on the material and delivery methods from the Cibereum Hilir Public Health Center in Sukabumi. The target audience included pregnant women visiting the health center, local child and youth *posyandu* (integrated health post) volunteers, and members of the local Family Welfare Empowerment group (PKK). The success of the outreach program was reflected in the participants' ability to utilize local food ingredients to prepare nutritious meals, which are suitable for preventing stunting, particularly among infants in the Cibereum Hilir, Sukabumi area.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This community service project explores the impact and implications of implementing the *Isi Piringku* concept on the health of pregnant women and fetal development in the context of stunting prevention efforts. The main focus of this initiative is to provide education on how pregnant women and their developing babies can receive balanced nutrition during pregnancy, in order to prevent stunting in both fetal and infant growth.

### Balanced Nutrition in the *Isi Piringku* Concept

The *Isi Piringku* concept plays a vital role in meeting essential nutritional needs during pregnancy. This principle is based on strict nutritional guidelines that divide the plate into several essential components, including vegetables, protein, carbohydrates, and fruits (Fitri et al., 2024). In the context of pregnancy, a balanced and high-quality nutrient intake becomes especially important, as it directly supports optimal fetal development. Vegetables, as sources of fiber, vitamins, and minerals, help maintain the health of pregnant women and support fetal growth. Protein contributes to the formation of fetal tissues and organs, while carbohydrates provide the energy needed throughout the physically demanding stages of pregnancy.

Fruits offer essential vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants that support the health of both the mother and the baby.

To ensure balanced nutrition for pregnant women, high-quality ingredients are also necessary. This is conveyed in the Isi Piringku concept through educational efforts that inform pregnant women about the essential ingredients needed to meet balanced nutritional needs. Scientifically, the Isi Piringku concept aligns with meeting critical nutritional standards during pregnancy, ensuring that expectant mothers receive the necessary nutrients to support healthy fetal development and reduce the risk of complications. This concept emphasizes the importance of combining various food components to achieve essential nutritional balance during this crucial period, helping to optimize maternal health and fetal growth. The Isi Piringku campaign encourages pregnant women to take early preventive measures against stunting in their children (Adelia et al., 2022).

### **Implementation of the Isi Piringku Concept**

The implementation of the Isi Piringku concept involves a series of educational activities that focus on deep, meaningful interaction. From participants' experiences, this interaction has proven to be a key element in effectively conveying the importance of meeting the body's nutritional needs, especially during pregnancy. Through discussions, questions, and the exchange of information with educational facilitators, participants gained a clearer understanding of how crucial balanced food intake is. Over time, these interactions also increased participants' awareness of the positive impact of proper eating habits, which in turn helped them make healthier food choices and better support optimal fetal development. As a result, there has been a significant increase in nutritional awareness within the community that adopted the Isi Piringku concept.

However, despite efforts to implement the Isi Piringku concept, several challenges must be addressed. One of the main obstacles is the accessibility of healthy and balanced food. In participant surveys, some respondents reported difficulties in obtaining the types of food recommended in the "Isi Piringku" guidelines, particularly in rural areas where food variety is often limited. In some cases, healthy foods may not be readily available or are priced too high. Additionally, managing portion sizes and meal frequency poses a challenge for some pregnant women who face time constraints and limited resources, especially those with demanding schedules or financial difficulties. Therefore, to effectively implement the Isi Piringku concept, solutions must be found to improve access to healthy food and provide support to pregnant women in managing their diets according to the recommended guidelines.

To address the challenges in implementing the Isi Piringku concept, a set of comprehensive solutions is needed. One of the main issues is the accessibility of healthy and balanced food, especially in rural areas where food variety is often limited. The first solution is to enhance nutrition education for pregnant women and local communities so that they have a better understanding of the types of food required and how to incorporate them into their daily diets. Additionally, developing local agriculture focused on producing vegetables and fruits can help increase the availability of fresh food. Subsidy programs or aid for pregnant women can also assist in making nutritious food more affordable. Health centers that are aware of the specific needs of pregnant women and provide nutrition counseling and appropriate food recommendations are also essential. Social support and guidance on how to manage time and resources, along with strong collaboration between the government, non-governmental organizations, and local communities, are all necessary to create sustainable solutions to overcome the problem of food accessibility. Through these efforts, it is hoped that pregnant women will have greater opportunities to adopt a balanced diet in accordance with the Isi Piringku guidelines, thereby reducing the risk of malnutrition and its negative impacts on fetal development.

The results of this community service clearly demonstrate that a nutrition education approach based on knowledge holds significant potential in improving pregnant women's nutritional understanding and behavior. However, it is important to note that such programs should not stand alone. They must be part of a more comprehensive strategy to combat nutrition-related problems and stunting in children. Beyond increasing knowledge, additional measures are also crucial. Improving access to healthy foods is a key step, especially in areas facing difficulties in obtaining nutritious food. Moreover, support from families and communities must be strengthened. The family and social environment of pregnant women play a critical role in supporting healthier eating behavior. Therefore, programs should include components that promote family involvement in understanding and implementing a balanced diet. This collaborative approach ensures that the impact of nutrition education is sustained and contributes meaningfully to better maternal and child health outcomes.

The importance of collaboration cannot be overlooked. The government and all relevant stakeholders, including non-governmental organizations and the private sector, must work together to create an environment that supports and facilitates changes in nutritional behavior. This may include efforts to make healthy food more affordable and accessible across different regions, as well as educating communities about the importance of proper nutrition. With a holistic approach and strong collaboration from all involved parties, we can bring about positive changes in the nutritional behavior of pregnant women and effectively prevent stunting in children, resulting in significant benefits for the health of future generations. In addition, this community engagement activity highlights the importance of involving pregnant women in the dissemination of the nutritional information they receive. Through their active participation in sharing messages about balanced nutrition with fellow pregnant women and the broader local community, these messages can become more impactful and more readily accepted by society. In this context, the *Isi Piringku* concept serves not only as a guideline but also as a tool for mobilizing communities toward achieving better nutritional outcomes, thus enabling the prevention of stunting in a more effective and efficient manner.

## **Discussion**

The *Isi Piringku* concept presented in this community engagement activity reflects the students' concern regarding the frequent cases of stunting in the Cibereum Hilir area, Sukabumi. This concept encourages the community to understand and easily identify nutritious foods available in their surroundings, as proper nutrition fundamentally represents a long-term investment in the growth and development of young children, particularly toddlers and unborn babies. Nutritional fulfillment for pregnant women must be considered before, during, and after pregnancy to help reduce the prevalence of stunting (Marshall et al., 2022; Nigrum et al., 2020). The nutritional status of toddlers is critical as it serves as the foundation for physical capacity in adulthood, often measured by weight for age indicators (Febria & Andriani, 2021). Given the importance of achieving proper nutritional status in toddlers, it is essential to introduce the *Isi Piringku* concept to the local community. Balanced nutrition is crucial not only for pregnant women but also for young children in the village, ensuring that both fetal and early childhood development are adequately supported.

The introduction of the *Isi Piringku* concept in the community service project conducted in Cibereum Hilir Village, Sukabumi, involved nutrition experts who educated local residents, particularly focusing on nutritious foods in line with the *Isi Piringku* guidelines. This initiative was part of a broader effort to educate pregnant women about maintaining proper nutritional intake during and after pregnancy (Dewi et al., 2021; Rengganis et al., 2023). The term *Isi Piringku* refers to a single-meal portion consisting of half carbohydrates and half protein, and half vegetables and half fruits. According to the *Piring Makanku*, the portion of vegetables should be larger than that of fruits, and staple foods should outweigh protein-based side dishes. The Indonesian Ministry of Health replaced the old dietary slogan "4 Sehat 5 Sempurna" with

Isi Piringku as the new standard for daily healthy eating (Suwandewi et al., 2021). This concept served as the core material in the nutrition education and counseling sessions delivered to the local community. One of the main challenges encountered during these sessions was the limited availability of recommended staple foods. However, this issue was addressed by identifying alternative local ingredients available within the community.

The fulfillment of balanced nutrition among residents in the region is essential and not without reason. The primary rationale for implementing balanced nutrition through the Isi Piringku concept is the persistently high rate of stunting in Sukabumi City. Stunting is a long-term nutritional deficiency problem caused by prolonged inadequate nutrient intake. This condition results in impaired growth, where a child's height is significantly shorter than the standard for their age (Hasriani et al., 2023). This stunting issue is critical and must be understood by the broader public, as its effects become more visible as the child grows older. A stunted child will not grow as optimally as their peers. The government recognizes that stunting rates in Indonesia remain alarmingly high. Consequently, campaigns to prevent and reduce stunting continue to be implemented through collaboration with various stakeholders, aiming to increase pregnant women's knowledge of stunting prevention through the application of balanced nutrition (Permatasari et al., 2021). The government also hopes that communities become more aware of the importance of adopting healthy lifestyles to prevent stunting. One of the current key initiatives promoted by the government is nutrition education through the Isi Piringku movement. The goal of this program is to guide individuals in managing their diet by understanding the types and portions of food they need to consume (Siahaya et al., 2021).

## **CONCLUSION**

The Isi Piringku concept serves as an essential guideline for maintaining balanced nutrition, particularly for pregnant women, to support optimal fetal development and reduce the risk of pregnancy complications. This concept emphasizes the importance of dietary diversity to achieve nutritional balance by proportionally dividing food portions among protein, carbohydrates, and vegetables. The success of this concept's implementation relies heavily on comprehensive nutrition education for pregnant women, enabling them to understand the significance of a healthy diet for both their own health and their baby's development. However, the application of Isi Piringku faces several challenges, such as limited access to healthy food in rural areas and financial constraints. To address these issues, several solutions are needed, including improved nutrition education, the development of local agriculture, subsidies for healthy food, nutritional counseling, and strong collaboration between the government, non-governmental organizations, and local communities.

In addition, this community engagement initiative demonstrates that a comprehensive nutrition education approach can effectively enhance nutritional awareness among pregnant women and the broader community. The program's success was supported by strong family and community involvement, as well as active government participation in ensuring access to affordable, healthy foods. The Isi Piringku concept proves beneficial for maintaining the health of pregnant women and their unborn children. It plays a critical role in preventing stunting among children, particularly in areas with high stunting rates such as Sukabumi. This program is expected to have a significant positive impact on the health of future generations through a nutrition education strategy that engages communities and fosters cross-sector collaboration.

## **AUTHOR'S NOTE**

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest related to 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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