

Indonesian Migrant Workers' Understanding of Stunting: The Impact and Dangers It Causes

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ABSTRACT The problem of stunting and the presence of Indonesian migrant workers, whose numbers are increasingly significant, are mostly women. This is an interesting matter and deserves special attention, especially from the government where the existence of migrant workers, the majority of whom are women, is the key to alleviating and reducing stunting rates worldwide, especially in Indonesia, where this research aims to evaluate the understanding of Indonesian migrant workers regarding stunting which should not be underestimated and factors that influence this understanding itself. The method used is descriptive qualitative, where data is taken through surveys and interviews with migrant workers from Indonesia who are working abroad, especially in Malaysia. Data analysis was carried out to identify their level of understanding and the factors that contributed to their understanding of stunting. The research results show that Indonesian migrant workers really need to provide effective education and information to gain understanding and insight about stunting, including threats and dangers. This is necessary that the government can formulate programs related to the efforts of reducing stunting rates in a sustainable, directionally, and in programmed manner, especially for migrant workers whose numbers and existence cannot be looked down upon.

Keywords: Stunting; Migrants; Education Programme; Information

1. INTRODUCTION

Stunting is one of the problems faced by developing countries, Indonesia included, where stunting is a public health problem throughout the world, and in 2020 the World Health Organization (WHO) recorded that around 149 million of children under the age of five experienced stunting, where this figure is equivalent to 1 in 4 children worldwide. The cause of stunting itself is not immediate and not the only cause of health factors, but stunting is a complex problem where the causes are also social, economic, and psychological factors of pregnant women. Stunting is related to the child's growth and development both physically and mentally as well as the growth of the child's brain, where the growth does not proceed normally but is stunted, both physically, cognitively, and mentally caused by a lack of nutrition during the golden period of the child's growth, starting from the fetus at birth. The mother's womb as well as psychological factors,

namely the mother's mental readiness during pregnancy, as well as socio-economic factors which cannot be ignored for economic conditions will be able to support them so that they are able to give their best. In Indonesia, the stunting rate still reaches 27.7 percent (data taken from the Central Statistics Agency in 2020). This is seen from the long-term impact on Children's lives, including impaired physical and mental development, decreased thinking power and chronic disease in the future.

Communities in developing countries still have limited understanding, including in Indonesia, for this reason, providing understanding to the community by providing intensive education, especially to Indonesian migrant workers, the number of female migrants is much greater than the numbers of male migrant workers.. Education can be provided by providing an understanding of stunting itself along with its dangers and future impact on children's growth and development. An effective and well-targeted education program can be a solution to increase understanding of the dangers of stunting, which is expected to reduce the number of stunting reductions, with preventive steps that can be taken.

2. METHOD

Using a qualitative descriptive research design. Data was collected through surveys and in-depth interviews using interview guides, then the data was analysed using thematic analysis based on a qualitative approach to identify themes, patterns and main ideas resulting from the interviews. The research participants consisted of dozens of migrant workers from Indonesia who were working in Malaysia. The resulting data analysis is an understanding of stunting, the factors that influence it, the dangers and impacts of stunting on children as well as the nutrition consumed by Indonesian migrant workers, then this qualitative data is organized, categorized and compiled into a narrative that describes the understanding of Indonesian migrant workers about stunting and its impacts.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Participants in the research were all female. They work as household assistants (PRT) The average age of participants is between 20-35 years. The average participant's education level is elementary school and a small number of junior high school and high school equivalents. The length of work is between 3 and 10 years, and some of them are pregnant and have children from marriages between male migrants, both from Indonesia and other migrant countries.

The results show varying levels of understanding, with the majority of migrant workers having a low understanding of the dangers of stunting. Almost all of them don't understand the meaning of stunting. They don't understand what stunting is and what factors causing it. Low

economic conditions, lack of education, mental and psychological readiness to accept pregnancy amidst heavy work demands and being in a country far from family, especially for young people, as well as lack of access to information, are the reasons why they do not understand stunting and the things that causing it, related issues and their impacts .

The analysis shows that the level of education, education and access to information contribute positively to the understanding of Indonesian migrant workers regarding the dangers of stunting, prevention and the dangers it causes if this happens, while the role of the family does not have a significant contribution, because the insight and knowledge of family members starts from education level and family socio-economic status.

Discussion

The results of interviews and research results can be explained in discussions regarding the understanding of stunting for Indonesian migrant workers, namely that the majority of Indonesian migrant workers have a limited understanding of matters relating to stunting. Many of them think that stunting is only a problem related to the problems and obstacles of low weight and height growth in children. Knowledge about other aspects of stunting, such as nutritional factors, babies getting breast milk, healthy lifestyles for children and the importance of adequate nutritional intake in the first 1000 days of a child's life, where these 1000 days are the golden period for the child's growth and development both physically and brain power. This is very poorly understood by Indonesian migrant workers.

These understandings are the determining factor in how Indonesian migrant workers finally become aware of the dangers of stunting and the consequences it causes. And so far, this understanding has obstacles, including lack of access to information regarding stunting, especially in their destination countries, low levels of education and limited knowledge. And the information obtained also greatly influences the understanding of migrant workers, also adding that factors such as beliefs and culture can influence migrant workers' understanding of stunting, its impacts and dangers for the next generation of children.

The research results show that Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) get stunting information from informal sources, which come from friends, family and social media. The formal sources obtained, such as from doctors or health workers and authorized officers, are less accessible to PMI, where in fact, these formal information sources can provide insight, knowledge and information to PMI about stunting, its impacts and dangers for children and families in the future. These PMIs actually really hope for sufficient information, knowledge and education to save their next generation.

From the results of the discussion above, it can be explained that an educational approach to provide an understanding of matters relating to stunting among Indonesian migrant workers is very necessary. Health education, campaigns and propaganda must be continuously provided in language and methods that are easy to understand and media access that is readily obtainable, so that it will be able to change the wrong mindset pattern and habits regarding child rearing in terms of providing nutrition and also mental psychological readiness in acceptance of child presence starting from pregnancy.

4. CONCLUSION

Indonesian migrant workers in Malaysia understand things related to stunting and its threat and dangers are still low, the cause is the level of education, socio-economics and access to information which is still minimal, while these three things are important factors in providing an understanding of stunting to migrant workers. To overcome this, it is necessary to design and provide programs in the form of effective and sustainable education to obtain and increase awareness to Indonesian workers about the dangers of stunting for the next generation of children, families and the country. The implementation of education and also the provision of information facilities will be more effective if there is a collaboration between the government, non-government organizations and related stakeholder.

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CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

Stunting is a serious global health problem, especially in developing countries. Stunting occurs when a child experiences stunted physical growth, so that their body size does not match their age or their height is below standard. Stunting usually occurs in the first 1000 days of life, starting from pregnancy until the child is two years old. Stunting can have a negative impact on children's healthy in both short and long term. .

Stunting is a condition where a child has a shorter height than the average for children their age. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines a child as being in the stunting category if the child has a height that is shorter than the average standard deviation. Stunting usually occurs due to a lack of adequate nutritional intake during the golden growth period and the mother's lack of mental readiness during pregnancy.

Indications of stunting can be diagnosed by measuring the child's height using WHO standards or by comparing the child's height with the child's age. If a child has a height below the average or stunting category according to WHO standards, then it can be said that the child is stunted. Stunting itself has a significant negative impact on children, both in the short and long term. The following are some of the impacts of stunting that need to be considered:

Short-Term Impact:

- Physical Development Disorders, including the development of muscles, bones and other body organs.
- Risk of Infectious Diseases:

Children who are stunted have a weaker immune system, making them susceptible to infections and infectious diseases such as diarrhea or respiratory infections.

Long-Term Impact:

- Low cognitive abilities: Children who experience stunting have a higher risk of experiencing impaired cognitive development, including learning problems, language development, and low IQ Abilities. (Victora, C.G., et al. (2010)
- Shorter height in adulthood: Stunting in childhood has the potential to cause short height in adulthood. This can influence social self-confidence and economic opportunities in adulthood.
- Chronic Diseases: Children who are stunted have a higher risk of developing chronic disease such as diabetes, heart disease and hypertension in adulthood. (WHO : 2021)

Thus, it can be said that stunting is a serious global health problem with significant short-term and long-term impacts on children. Understanding, indicating and understanding the impact of stunting is important in understanding and overcoming this problem. Preventive efforts and appropriate nutritional interventions must be carried out to reduce the risk of stunting and improve the health and development of our children. (Dewey, K.G., & Begum, K. (2011)

Migrant workers according to the International Labor Organization (ILO) are people who move to another country with the aim of working or becoming entrepreneurs in that country and who are not citizens of the country concerned. Meanwhile, the United Nations (UN) defines migrant workers as people who live in a country. A country that is not the country where they were born or

have citizenship but live in that country either permanently or temporarily and have a different legal regime.

The characteristics of migrants are geographical movements to work or live in different countries and they are not citizens of their destination country. These migrant workers often migrate to look for a better jobs or better economic opportunities in their destination countries. Migrant workers are synonymous with the issue of work, improving living standards, social and cultural interactions, where they will look for work in various sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, construction, domestic services, health services, and other informal sectors, but they work with low wages and with high risk protections and adequate legal protection.

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