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RELATIONSHIP OF KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDE TOWARDS STUNTING PREVENTION BEHAVIOR IN ADOLESCENT GIRLS

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ABSTRACT
Stunting is a serious public health problem that affects children's physical growth and cognitive development. Adolescent girls have an important role in preventing stunting through their knowledge and attitudes. This study aims to determine the relationship between the knowledge and attitudes of adolescent girls towards stunting prevention behavior at SMA Mekar Arum. The research method used is a quantitative correlation. The research sample was taken using a total sampling method which amounted to 130 adolescent girls who attend SMA Mekar Arum. The research instrument was a questionnaire that included aspects of knowledge about stunting, attitudes towards stunting prevention, and stunting prevention behavior. The data obtained were analyzed using univariate and bivariate analysis with the Spearman Rank statistical test obtained a p-value of 0.061 (p-value > 0.05) for the knowledge variable and a p-value of 0.000 (p-value < 0.05) for the attitude variable. There was no significant relationship between knowledge and stunting prevention behavior, but there was a significant relationship between attitudes and stunting prevention behavior at SMA Mekar Arum.

Keywords: adolescent; attitude; behavior; knowledge; stunting prevention

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INTRODUCTION

Nutrition remains a major health problem in Indonesia in 2022 with a prevalence of stunting at 21.6%, wasting at 7.7%, underweight at 17.1%, and overweight at 3.5% (Munira, 2023). Malnutrition over a long time can cause children to suffer from stunting, this occurs due to prolonged malnutrition since the fetus is in the womb which can cause organ development failure (UNICEF, 2023). Stunted or stunting according to the Minister of Health Regulation No. 2 of 2020 concerning Child Anthropometry Standards is a condition that indicates chronic nutritional problems caused by malnutrition and infection that lasts for a long time (Kemen PPPA, 2023). There are several factors that underlie stunting. These factors include maternal factors and poor parenting (especially in the way of feeding which causes children's nutritional intake to be lacking), mothers who experience malnutrition during adolescence, even during pregnancy, and breastfeeding will greatly affect the body growth and brain development of children (P2PTM Kemenkes RI, 2018). The impact of stunting in addition to stunted child growth, is often associated with suboptimal brain development. In addition, there are long-term impacts caused by stunting and poor nutrition, which are often considered risk factors for diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, obesity, and death from infection (Kementerian Kesehatan RI, 2022).

Prevention of stunting should start as early as possible since adolescence. Based on the 2018 Riskesdas data, 25.7% of adolescents aged 13-15 years had short and very short nutritional status, while 26.9% were found in adolescents aged 16-18 years. The data indicates the need to improve nutritional conditions in adolescents in Indonesia, the lack of understanding of adolescents about stunting makes adolescents not care about it. Adolescents are a potential age group that can be involved in various stunting prevention programs from an early age, there are still many who think that the issue of stunting is only for parents and married couples, when in fact stunting is a cycle. If prospective mothers are malnourished since adolescence, then when they give birth, they have the risk of giving birth to children with low birth weight, children born with low birth weight are at risk for stunting. Likewise, mothers who are stunted, and the children who are born are at risk of stunting. So the problem of stunting must be a concern by building adolescent awareness so that adolescents maintain their nutritional intake to prepare themselves as prospective mother (Mitra et al., 2022).

The knowledge possessed by adolescents plays an important role in shaping their attitudes toward early stunting prevention efforts. A strong understanding based on knowledge can produce a positive attitude in implementing stunting prevention steps (Admasari et al., 2023). Notoatmodjo (2014) explains that there is a relationship between knowledge and attitude. If someone has a positive attitude towards something, then adequate knowledge is important. Conversely, if knowledge is lacking, then the attitude formed tends to be negative (Notoatmodjo, 2014). Attitude is considered a predisposing factor that influences the decision to perform or not perform a certain behavior (Murnariswari et al., 2021a)

The findings of quantitative research conducted by Admasari et al. (2023) showed that the attitude of adolescent girls to prevent stunting requires good knowledge about the 1000 HPK (1000 Hari Pertama Kehidupan). In this study, it was also proven that there was a significant relationship between the knowledge and attitudes of adolescent girls related to 1000 HPK in the MSAN of Palu City Region which showed a strong relationship between the two variables, where good knowledge would significantly increase positive attitudes compared to lack of knowledge (Admasari et al., 2023). Research conducted by Andiani et al. (2023) found that the level of knowledge of adolescents about stunting was in the poor category (49.3%) and only a small proportion were in the good category (17.3%), this occurred due to the lack of information about stunting obtained by adolescents both at school and in the living environment (Andiani et al., 2023). The findings of research conducted by Setyaningsih (2023) showed that the behavior that the majority of adolescents did not do was taking blood supplement tablets (83.3%). This is said to occur because the social environment of adolescents does not support the behavior of adolescent girls in preventing stunting (Setyaningsih, 2023).

SMA Mekar Arum is a private high school located in Cinunuk Village, Cileunyi District, Bandung Regency. According to findings from a preliminary study conducted at the Cinunuk Health Center, data on the results of anemia screening in 2023 were obtained for 79 adolescents at SMA Mekar Arum with 28 people having mild anemia and 17 people having severe anemia. Based on the data and phenomena above as well as the results of preliminary studies, researchers are interested in seeing the relationship between knowledge and attitudes towards stunting prevention behavior in adolescent girls at SMA Mekar Arum. The findings of this study can be used as evaluation material to gauge female students' knowledge and attitudes about stunting prevention behaviors, helping to raise their awareness in preventing stunting.

METHOD

The research method used is quantitative correlation, which looks at the relationship between knowledge and attitudes toward stunting prevention behavior. This study uses independent and dependent variables collected at the same time. The research took place at SMA Mekar Arum in Cinunuk Village, Cileunyi District, Bandung Regency. The research population consisted of 141 female students from grades 10 and 11. The sampling technique used was total sampling. The number of samples who were present at school and willing to become respondents in this research totaled 130 people. Data were collected using questionnaires. Validity test on the knowledge variable of 20 statements there are 15 valid statements, on the attitude variable of 20 statements there are 16 valid statements, on the behavior variable of 10 statements there are 10 valid statements. After testing the reliability of the statements that were declared valid, all statements from the knowledge, attitude, and behavior variables were declared reliable ($\alpha > 0.6$). The scores obtained will be summed up from all statements to find out the overall results for each variable. The data analysis results for the knowledge variable were categorized into three categories based on the percentage of the answers obtained: good 76-100%, sufficient 56-75%, and not enough < 56%. The results for the attitude variable and behavior variable were categorized into two categories based on T-score: favorable/positive if T-score ≥ T-score mean and unfavorable/negative if T-score < T-score mean. This analysis used univariate and bivariate analysis with Spearman Rank correlation test with a significant level of p-value < 0.05.

RESULTS

Table 1.
Respondent characteristics (n= 130)

Respondent characteristics	f	%
Grade		
10	45	34.6
11	85	65.4
Age		
15	9	6.9
16	53	40.8
17	64	49.2
18	3	2.3
20	1	0.8
Participate in Counseling		
Have attended counseling	32	24.6
Have not attended counseling	98	75.4

Table 1, According to the characteristics of the respondents in this study, most of the respondents came from grade 11 (65.4%). It can be seen that the age of most respondents is 17 years old (49.2%). Then, based on participation in counseling, most respondents have not attended counseling (75.4%).

Table 2.
Respondent's Knowledge (n= 130)

Knowledge	f	%
Good	29	22.3
Sufficient	85	65.4
Not Enough	16	12.3

Table 2, most of the respondents in this study demonstrated sufficient knowledge about stunting (65.4%).

Table 3.
Respondent's Attitude (n= 130)

Attitude	f	%
Favorable	62	47.7
Unfavorable	68	52.3

Table 3, most of the respondents in this study had unfavorable attitudes towards stunting prevention (52.3%).

Table 4.
Respondent's Behavior (n= 130)

Behavior	f	%
Positive	68	52.3
Negative	62	47.7

Table 4, most of the respondents in this study had positive behavior towards stunting prevention (52.3%).

Table 5.
Relationship of Knowledge and Stunting Prevention Behavior (n= 153)

Knowledge	Behavior				Total		p-value	r
	Positive		Negative					
	f	%	f	%	f	%		
Good	19	14.6	10	7.7	29	22.3		
Sufficient	43	33.1	42	32.3	85	65.4	0.061	0.165
Not Enough	6	4.6	10	7.7	16	12.3		
Total	68	52.3	62	47.7	130	100		

Table 5, the respondents with good knowledge and negative behavior towards stunting prevention as many as 19 people (14.6%), respondents with sufficient knowledge and positive behavior towards stunting prevention as many as 43 people (33.1%), and respondents with less knowledge and negative behavior towards stunting prevention as many as 10 people (7.7%). According to the results of the Spearman Rank statistical test, with a p-value of 0.061 (p-value > 0.05), there is no significant relationship between knowledge and stunting prevention behavior.

Table 6.
Relationship of Attitudes and Stunting Prevention Behavior (n= 153)

Attitude	Behavior				Total		p-value	r
	Positive		Negative					
	f	%	f	%	f	%		
Favorable	45	34.6	17	13.1	62	47.7	0.000	0.388
Unfavorable	23	17.7	45	34.6	68	52.3		

Table 6, the respondents with favorable attitudes and positive behavior towards stunting prevention as many as 45 people (34.6%), and respondents with unfavorable attitudes and negative behavior towards stunting prevention as many as 45 people (34.6%). According to the results of the Spearman Rank statistical test, with a p-value of 0.000 (p-value < 0.05, there is a significant relationship between knowledge and stunting prevention behavior.

DISCUSSION

Demographic Characteristics of the Adolescents Girls

The adolescent girls who were respondents in this study were mostly 17 years old (49.2%). The results of this study align with research conducted by Rizkiana (2022) which shows that the majority of respondents are adolescents aged 15-17 years old (55%) and high school education level (65%) (Rizkiana, 2022). According to research conducted by Natanael et al. (2022) at this age, there are many changes both biologically, socially, and psychologically. The adolescent group is included in a group that is vulnerable to nutritional problems (Natanael, Putri, & Adhi, 2022). Adolescence is a transitional phase from childhood to adulthood, characterized by rapid physical, mental and emotional growth. Changes in body

composition, such as an increase in height and weight have an impact on health and nutritional status, so the nutritional intake and lifestyle of adolescents need to be considered. Adolescents require high levels of nutrition to support their growth and development, not meeting their nutritional needs can hinder physical growth, and lead to micronutrient deficiencies and anemia (Matahari & Suryani, 2022).

Knowledge towards Stunting

The findings of this research indicated that most of the respondents (65.4%) had sufficient knowledge about stunting, while 50.8% of them had never attended or received counseling about stunting. The findings of research conducted by Wasaraka (2021) on 55 adolescents at the Marthen Indey Hospital Nursing Academy who were at level 1 (one), showing that most of the respondents (49%) had poor knowledge about stunting, 45% had sufficient knowledge, and 5% had good knowledge. Wasaraka (2021) suggests that after giving education about stunting for 60 minutes, respondents' knowledge increased (Wasaraka, 2021). This means that the level of knowledge of adolescent girls can be increased by providing education about stunting.

Meanwhile, study conducted by Nurhayati et al. (2023) with 495 respondents at North Jakarta MTSN found that 60% had good knowledge, 37.2% had sufficient knowledge, and 2.8% had poor knowledge. According to Nurhayati et al. (2023) he quantity of information adolescents receive is one of the factors that influencing their knowledge about stunting, Their study found that 50.3% of respondents had not received information about stunting, compared to 49.7% who had, indicating that a greater number of respondents had not been exposed to information about stunting (Nurhayati et al., 2023). The level of knowledge is a variable that determines the extent to which a person masters information, especially about stunting. So education about nutrition to prevent stunting is important to be given to adolescents to prevent an increase in the incidence of stunting (Nipa et al., 2024). Adolescent girls are one of the target groups through interventions with counseling methods in schools, education through this counseling is found to be effective in increasing adolescents' knowledge about stunting (Muchtar et al., 2023).

Attitudes towards Stunting Prevention

This research showed that adolescent girls at SMA Mekar Arum have an unfavorable attitude towards stunting prevention (52.3%). The findings of this research align with research conducted by Puspitasari et al. (2022) on 105 adolescent girls in Madiun City, it was found that a total of 49.5% of respondents had attitudes with negative categories and a total of 50.5% of respondents had attitudes with positive categories. Puspitasari et al. (2022) suggested that not all young women with positive attitudes have good intentions to prevent anemia. There are some young women who have negative attitudes but have sufficient and good intentions to prevent anemia. This is based on the low level of knowledge of adolescent girls about the signs and symptoms and how to prevent anemia (Puspitasari et al., 2022).

Meanwhile, the results of the research that have been conducted are inversely proportional to the research conducted by Situmeang et al. (2022) on 72 adolescent girls in Sirnagalih village, Bogor Regency. It was found that 45 respondents (62.5%) had a positive attitude, and 27 respondents (37.5%) had a negative attitude. Situmeang et al. (2022) concluded that young women who have a positive attitude have a better intention to prevent anemia compared to young women who have a negative attitude (Situmeang et al., 2022). Respondents' unfavorable attitudes can be influenced by other people who are considered important, personal experience, culture, mass media, education, and emotional factors (Murnariswari et

al., 2021).

Behavior towards Stunting Prevention

This research showed that the behavior of adolescent girls at SMA Mekar Arum related to stunting prevention is in a positive category (52.3%). The findings of this research align with research conducted by Situmeang et al. (2022) on 72 adolescent girls in Sirnagalih Village, Bogor Regency found that 38 respondents (52.8%) had good behavior and 34 respondents (47.2%) had poor behavior. Situmeang et al. (2022) concluded that the behavior of adolescent girls in preventing anemia is less than optimal due to the lack of knowledge of adolescent girls related to anemia, the more they understand the knowledge of anemia prevention, the more adolescent girls will know how to behave well in preventing anemia (Situmeang et al., 2022).

Behavior is an individual's response or reaction to stimuli from the external and internal environment. In the context of stunting prevention, nutritious food consumption behavior includes respondents' habits in managing a healthy diet, taking blood supplements, and implementing clean and healthy living behaviors (Setyaningsih, 2023). Lawrence Green's theory identifies three factors that impact an individual's health behavior, which include predisposing factors, namely attitudes, beliefs, knowledge, values, and norms. Supporting factors are health facilities, affordability of health facilities, health regulations, and health-related skills. Encouraging factors are family, teachers, peers, health workers, community leaders, and decision making. A person's behavior will be motivated to take an action if they know the benefits of that action (Pakpahan et al., 2021). According to research conducted by Roche et al. (2018) suggests that the behavior of adolescent girls who do not support efforts to prevent anemia is influenced by the level of knowledge, attitudes, perceptions, supporting environment, resources, and national policies. The better the support provided by the family, the more adaptive the health behavior carried out by adolescents (Febriana et al., 2020).

The Relationship of Knowledge and Stunting Prevention Behavior

The Rank Spearman correlation test resluts between knowledge and behavior showed that the correlation coefficient value was 0.165 with a significance value of 0.061 (p-value > 0.05). Based on these findings, it can be concluded that there is no significant relationship between knowledge and stunting prevention behavior among adolescent girls at SMA Mekar Arum, indicating rejection of Ha and acceptence of H0. These results are align with research conducted by Mutingah & Rokhaidah (2021), which found that the knowledge of mothers with toddlers aged 6-59 months at Posyandu Tunas Mekar 1, Krukut Village, Depok does not significantly correlate with their behavior in preventing stunting with a significance value of 0.100 (p-value > 0.05) and a correlation coefficient of 0.193 (Mutingah & Rokhaidah, 2021). Similarly, Arnita et al. (2020) found no significant relationship between knowledge and behavior in preventing stunting among toddlers in the opperational area of Simpang Kawat Health Center in Jambi City with a significance value of 0.373 (p-value > 0.05) (Arnita et al., 2020). In contrast, Maslikhah (2024) was inversely proportional to show the results of a significant relationship between adolescents' nutrition knowledge and stunting prevention behavior with a correlation coefficient value of 0.741 (p-value < 0.05) (Maslikhah, 2024).

Knowledge is an important factor that influences a person's actions or behavior (Hasmi, 2016). However, in this study it was found that there was no significant relationship between the knowledge of adolescent girls at SMA Mekar Arum and their behavior in preventing stunting. Even though someone has good knowledge, it does not guarantee their attitude or behavior because knowledge alone does not determine how a person's lifestyle is (Harikatang

et al., 2020). Researchers assume that the lack of a correlation between the knowledge variable and stunting prevention behavior in this study may be attributed to other more influential factors. According to Lawrence Green's theory, there are other factors that contribute to an individual's behavior such as the availability of health facilities, family support factors, friends, and health workers.

The Relationship of Attitudes and Stunting Prevention Behavior

The research findings indicated a correlation coefficient value of 0.388 with a significance value of 0.000 (p-value < 0.05). Based on this value, it can be concluded that there is a one-way relationship between the attitude variable and the stunting prevention behavior variable among adolescent girls at SMA Mekar Arum. The test results mean that the behavior of adolescent girls will be more positive towards stunting prevention if their attitude is also more positive. The findings of this study align with research conducted by Mutingah & Rokhaidah (2021), which discovered a correlation between maternal attitudes and maternal behavior in preventing stunting among toddlers at Posyandu Tunas Mekar 1 Krukut Village with a correlation coefficient value of 0.374 (p-value < 0.05) (Mutingah & Rokhaidah, 2021). Similarly, Arnita et al. (2020) found a significant correlation between maternal attitudes and efforts to prevent stunting among toddlers in the opperational area of Simpang Kawat Health Center, Jambi City with a p-value of 0.030 (p < 0.05) (Arnita et al., 2020).

Attitude reflects an appropriate reaction to a stimulus that is influenced by a person's opinion and emotional factors. If someone has a negative attitude, then it is likely that their actions and behavior will also be negative (Nurlaila et al., 2018). Good behavior will be seen if the knowledge a person has is supported by a positive attitude (Arnita et al., 2020). The findings of this study align Lawrance Green's theory, which suggests that an individual's attitude is among the predisposing factors that can affect their health behavior (Asmuji & Zain, 2018). Researchers argue that there is a relationship between the attitudes of adolescent girls and stunting prevention behavior because adolescent girls who have unfavorable attitudes tend to show less effective prevention behavior. This may be due to a lack of knowledge, environmental support, and motivation to get used to healthy living.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to determine the correlation between adolescent girls' knowledge and their attitudes toward stunting prevention behavior at SMA Mekar Arum. The findings indicate no significant relationship between knowledge and stunting prevention behavior at SMA Mekar Arum (p-value = 0.061), but there was a significant relationship found between attitudes and stunting prevention behavior at SMA Mekar Arum (p-value = 0.000). These findings can be used by health workers to collaborate with educational institutions and non-governmental organizations engaged in the health sector to expand the reach of stunting prevention programs. Health workers can also provide information and tips on stunting prevention for the community by using social media which is currently widely used by everyone.

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