

Factors that influence the Interpersonal Communication of Family Planning Educators Workers in Reducing Stunting Rates in Maros Regency

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Abstract. This study aims to determine the forms of Interpersonal communication of Family Planning Educators as well as factors that become obstacles in preventing stunting in Maros Regency. This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach, with a total 16 informants consist of 8 internal informants from the Office of Women's Empowerment, Child Protection, Population Control and Family Planning (DP3ADALDUKKB) of Maros Regency and 8 external informants who were activity supporters. Data collection was carried out using non-participant observation methods, in-depth interviews and other supporting documents. The study was conducted in two sub-districts in Maros Regency. Furthermore, analyze the data with three steps, namely data condensation, data display and conclusion drawing and verification. The results of this study illustrate that the factors that influence the decrease in stunting rates in Maros Regency include community perceptions/responses about stunting and the time of counseling. The approach used is predominantly interpersonal communication in the form of coordination, home visits and education / counseling.

Keywords: Interpersonal Communication; Stunting Counseling; Family Planning Educators Workers

1. Introduction

Stunting is a condition of growth and development failure in children under five years old due to malnutrition, especially during the first 1000 days of life. As stated by the World Health Organization, 2014 stunting in question is a disorder of child growth and development due to chronic malnutrition and recurrent infections, characterized by below-standard length or height. Children who experience stunting will have an impact on children's health. Stunting will affect children's intelligence below average, the immune system in stunted children is also not good so that children will get sick more easily and will be at higher risk of diabetes, heart disease, hypertension, obesity and cancer (1).

Stunting is basically incurable, when children have been stunted in 1000 days of life, their brain development and health will not be optimal at their productive age later so prevention is very appropriate so that the adverse effects on children's health can be avoided. The stunting problem is immediately resolved properly if there is an effective solution in improving nutrition and adequate health services during the 1000 HPK period.

Stunting measurement standards in Indonesia are stipulated in the Regulation of the Minister of Health of the Republic of Indonesia Number 2 of 2020 concerning Children's

Anthropometry Standards explained in article 2 that Children's Anthropometric Standards are based on the parameters of body weight and length/height covering 4 (four) indicators, including:

1. Body Weight According to Age (BB/U);
2. Length/Height for Age (PB/U or TB/U)
3. Body Weight according to Length/Height (BB/PB or BB/TB);
4. Growth Mass Index by Age (IMT/U)

Stunting is often considered a result of genetic diseases so many parents do nothing to prevent it. In fact, a child's height can be influenced by many other factors, including behavior, nutritional intake, a healthy environment, and health care. So it can be said that stunting is a preventable problem.

The problem of stunting is important to solve, because it has the potential to disrupt the potential of human resources and is related to the level of health, even child mortality. BKKBN stated that according to World Bank data, the workforce whose infants were stunted reached 54 percent. This means that 54 percent of the current workforce are stunting survivors [2] This is what makes stunting a serious concern for the government. For this reason, when babies are born up to 2 years, intervention and prevention can still be done so that they do not become stunted.

The stunting rate in South Sulawesi Province in 2018 reached 35.6 percent [3], while in 2019 the stunting rate decreased to 30.5 percent [4]. Meanwhile, data from the Electronic Community-Based Nutrition Recording and Reporting (ePPGBM) data in 2020 decreased by 12.3 percent in February and 11 percent in August. In 2021 in February it decreased to 9.6 percent and in August it decreased to 9.08 percent. This is not much different from the problems in Maros Regency, based on 2019 data there were 4,015 cases of stunting or 22.17 percent of stunting occurred in Maros Regency. Furthermore, there was a decrease in 2020, namely 3,812 cases of stunting or around 13.04 percent and in 2021 it decreased again to 2,892 cases or 9.47 percent.

The problem of stunted children or stunted growth due to malnutrition is currently not only experienced by poor families. Many factors hinder the provision of nutrition to children, one of which is the lack of parental attention. This happens because modern families now entrust the care of their children to domestic helpers or to grandparents without caring about child nutrition because they are busy working. Another problem is the lack of sanitation, which forces children to consume unhealthy drinking water and the amount of nutrients does not meet the normal needs of the body, resulting in infections that cause fever and decreased nutrition in the child's body when the child is sick and has difficulty eating.

To protect the Indonesian people, especially Maros Regency, from the threat of stunting toddlers, Family Planning Educators in carrying out their duties and functions communicate with families at risk of stunting. Communication is carried out to provide information about stunting and understanding to parents to pay more attention to the development of their children in 1000 days of life.

Communication is the process by which an idea is transferred from a source to one or more recipients, with the intention of changing their behaviour. Cangara (2011). Furthermore, according to Hafied Cangara in the book Introduction to Communication Studies (2016) [4], Interpersonal Communication is a communication process that occurs between two or more people face to face. For example, a conversation between two people who know each other,

and accidentally meet. In line with in his book entitled *The Science of Communication An Introduction* (2010), Dedy Mulyana writes that interpersonal communication is face to face communication between humans, which allows participants to capture other people's reactions directly, both verbally and nonverbally.[5]

All daily communication activities unstructured, so the roles of communicators overlap. That is the problem and affects the meaning of communication that is done. From some of the descriptions above, according to Joseph A. Devito, Interpersonal communication can run effectively, if there are several things that are needed carried out by Family Planning Educators Workers, including understanding, empathy, support, positivity and equity.

Maros Regency has an important role in the development of Makassar City as the capital of South Sulawesi province, as a buffer district which is the gateway to the northern Mamminasata region, which offers enormous development potential, in addition, Maros Regency also has enormous economic potential because Sultan Hasanuddin International Airport is located in this Regency. Other natural resources in the form of agricultural land, fisheries, forestry and mining are some of the potential economic sectors that further emphasize its position as a strategic area rich in natural resources. Maros Regency has the fastest growth achievement in South Sulawesi Province with an average of 77, 97% in the last 10 (ten) years [6]. With all its economic resources, it is not surprising that Maros Regency has very high stunting cases in South Sulawesi Province.

The Office of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, Population Control and Family Planning (DP3ADALDUKKB) of Maros Regency has conducted various ways to succeed in this stunting prevention program. Starting with using various media in the form of posters and pamphlets and also through public service messages on local radio. In addition to using the media, family planning educators workers also conduct socialization both in counseling events held according to the family planning Program and through face-to-face visits to families who have not participated in the program so that information can be conveyed properly.

In the management of the Family Planning Program at the Field Line, Family Planning Instructors are the spearhead and one of the important components in efforts to prevent stunting in an area. Family planning educators workers in every socialization of stunting prevention will be in direct contact with the community, so it really requires proper communication so that the information conveyed can be received and understood by the community.

2. Research Methods

The research that this researcher conducted departs from the growing issue of stunting in society, which is closely related to the future of the family. For this reason, the delivery of information must be conveyed by understanding the audience's point of view. So that they will realize that they are Families at Risk of Stunting. After awareness from within, it is hoped that interest will arise through the delivery of messages from family planning extension workers. With messages that are easy to understand, both from brochures and

educational information communication will attract people to realize quality families so that stunting will be prevented.

Basically, stunting includes clinical, nutritional and environmental health problems, but problems arise due to lack of good communication. So an interdisciplinary approach is needed in stunting prevention efforts. So it can be said that the main problem in handling stunting prevention is the lack of awareness of families at risk of stunting. For this reason, family planning educators approach the community through interpersonal communication so that the community is more open and trusts the information conveyed. While the purpose of this study is to analyze the factors that become obstacles in the interpersonal communication process between family planning educators workers and families at risk of stunting.

The informants in this study were family planning educators who were in charge of conducting interpersonal communication with families at risk of stunting in Mandai District and Maros Baru District, Maros Regency, then the researchers selected informants using the Purposive Sample method with criteria including: a. Informants are family planning counselors who conduct direct interpersonal communication with pregnant women and couples of childbearing age (PUS) who have toddlers at risk of stunting. b. Informants are Family Planning Instructors who have served at the Maros Regency Office of Women's Empowerment, Child Protection, Population Control and Family Planning (DP3ADALDUKKB) for at least three years, c. Family Planning Instructors who are assigned to the Research locus, namely Mandai District and Maros Baru District, d. The informant is a family planning counselor who is consciously able to re-explain his/her experiences in accordance with the topic of this research.

The data collection method used by researchers is in-depth interviews (indepth interviews) face-to-face interviews conducted by asking semi-structured questions in order to establish a closer relationship but still not separated from the research objectives so that informants can provide comprehensive information and become primary data. While secondary data researchers collect from the results of direct observation in the midst of family planning educators who are conducting interpersonal communication with families at risk of stunting.

In this study, researchers used a qualitative approach with a descriptive research type, where researchers will describe or construct mandala interviews with research subjects. This type of descriptive research aims to make a systematic description of the facts and phenomena of the object under study [7] Qualitative research is research that aims to explain a phenomenon as deeply as possible through the collection of the deepest data, thus not prioritizing the size of the population or sampling [8].

At the beginning of the research, the researcher met with the Coordinator at the Mandai and Maros Baru Subdistrict Loci to ask permission to conduct research and observe the activities of Family Planning educators Officers who have the criteria to be used as informants, namely being directly involved in interpersonal communication with families at risk of stunting in order to carry out their duties to provide information so that families at risk of stunting can take early prevention so that their children are free from stunting. After that, the researcher asked the Family Planning Educators Worker whether she was willing to take the time to be interviewed in the context of this research, then asked other questions to ensure that this informant was in accordance with the previously determined informant requirements.

Furthermore, 16 informants were obtained (9 from Mandai sub-district and 7 from Maros Baru sub-district) with the following data:

Table 1: Research informants

No	Name	Gender	Sub District			
1	HN	Female	Mandai			
2	NC	Female	Mandai			
3	AJ	Female	Mandai			
4	HH	Female	Mandai			
5	FT	Female	Mandai			
6	HH	Female	Mandai			
7	IW	Female	Mandai			
8	DW	Female	Mandai			
9	AR	Male	Mandai			
10	YN	Female	Maros Baru			
11	AMK	Male	Maros Baru			
12	AY	Female	Maros Baru			
13	RY	Female	Maros Baru			
14	FR	Female	Maros Baru			
15	AW	Male	Maros Baru			
16	CD	Male	Maros Baru			

Like Sugiyono's opinion, in 2019 the analysis process used the Miles and Huberman data analysis technique which illustrates that qualitative data analysis which illustrates that qualitative data analysis activities are carried out interactively or continuously until data saturation is complete, namely the condition of extracting data from new informants does not add new information to the analysis. Data analysis activities begin with collecting data from in-depth interviews and observations obtained from informants when conducting interviews with informants in the form of notes, videos and voice notes. Then the researcher selects the data obtained, namely data from interviews and participant observations will be collected if the data is relevant to the research objectives while irrelevant data will be separated. From the results of data selection, then researchers will present data on the factors that become obstacles in the interpersonal communication of family planning educators workers with families at risk of stunting, so that researchers will be able to draw conclusions obtained from a series of research processes carried out.

3. Results and Discussion

This research focuses on the factors that become obstacles in the interpersonal communication process carried out by family planning extension workers with families at risk of stunting in Maros Regency, these communication activities are analyzed using the AIDA theory (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action) which was first coined by Elias St. Elmo Lewis, 1899 who is a businessman from the United States.

a. Interpersonal Communication

There are several definitions of interpersonal communication, including those put forward by Interpersonal Communication is a process by which one person helps another in making decisions or finding ways to overcome problems, through an understanding of the facts and feelings involved in it so that behavior changes based on personal decisions (BKKBN, 2021). In interpersonal communication, communication that occurs is directly through the exchange of information with the most effective information sharing process, and can be done in a simple way. Interpersonal communication is not only effective, but also considered very important when the process occurs in an organization, community and family where everyone shares information. It can also be said that interpersonal communication is communication between communicators and communicants. According to Wiryanto, this kind of communication is most effective to influence a person's behavior, attitude and opinion [10]. Then Wiryanto also argues that interpersonal communication is communication that takes place in a face-to-face situation between two or more people, either in an organized manner or in a crowd [11]. According to [12] There are four approaches in interpersonal communication, namely first, the informative approach, namely the communicator only conveys information to the communicant with the aim that the communicant can obtain new information. Messages are delivered repeatedly and are one-way in order to disseminate information. Second, the dialogical approach is a way to influence and change the views and attitudes of others openly. It is said to be open because both parties are equally willing to accept the views of both communicators and communicants. The characteristic of the dialogical approach is that there is a dialog towards the process of sharing information, both parties are in an equal position. Third, the persuasive approach aims to change attitudes subtly by persuading without force and without violence. Persuasive is a complex communication process carried out by individuals using verbal and nonverbal messages in order to persuade or provide encouragement aimed at changing one's attitudes and behavior willingly. Fourth, the instructive approach emphasizes the communicator's higher bargaining position where he gains legitimacy to command, teach and even propose one kind of idea to the communicant. This approach is said to be coercive where the communicator can force and sanction the communicant.

b. AIDA Theory

The AIDA (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action) theory by Lewis was created when implementing marketing. This is done to attract attention in order to arouse interest and then a desire or desire arises which in turn arises action. Then formulated by Kotler and Keller, it is stated that the AIDA theory is the theory most often used to help plan an advertisement as a whole and the theory can be applied to an advertisement. So it can be said that the AIDA

theory will clarify the concepts of change, attitude and behavior in relation to a framework of action [13]. Family Planning Educators Counselors approach people who have families at risk of stunting in convincing communicators to join the stunting prevention program that will be delivered by the extension agent. A Family planning Educators must realize that the message presented has AIDA in it.

AIDA Theory Concept



Figure 1. Concept of AIDA Theory in interpersonal communication family planning educators workers on stunting prevention

The following is an explanation of the AIDA theory concept:

Attention is the first step that must be made by someone conducting counseling to the target audience. Attention here is focused on the information, education and ideas offered. A message that attracts attention is the first step for the Extension Officer where the message will be known and remembered by the target or family at risk of stunting in order to run the program delivered.

Interest is the emergence of interest in the target (audience) to participate in the program offered by the Extension Officer. This interest may arise because what is offered is something that has never been known before. In addition to the benefits, it can also be because what is offered is attractive so that it creates interest for the target to follow it.

Desire is a process that occurs after the attention of the target to the program offered. At this stage the target has the desire to run a stunting prevention program after considering the benefits or usefulness, family planning extension workers try to give an emotional (psychological) touch to the target in a more persuasive way, so that the desire to know more and follow the teachings if what is offered is an idea from an extension worker. After having the desire, it is expected that there will be actions taken by the target in the form of execution, namely deciding to follow the idea given by the instructor after weighing the benefits obtained. Here the decision-making is singularly carried out by the target after the awareness process will be useful.

Action is the treatment made by the target after carrying out the recommendations of the program offered by the Extension Officer. The target will do it with hope when he intends to do the recommendation with the thought that all of it will create satisfaction and goodness for him. This emphasizes that in effective communication, you must first try to raise the awareness of the communicant (target), so that attention will arise followed by a desire and decision making and action on what is communicated.

The efforts of family planning counselors in conducting interpersonal communication in preventing stunting in Maros Regency have obstacles, among others:

1. Community perceptions/responses about stunting.

People tend to have their own perceptions of stunting itself. If there are children or their families who experience things such as speech delays, underweight, besides that there are also people who do not know at all about stunting, especially the causes, what they know is that the incidence of stunting or short children is caused by heredity, which over time the child's height can adjust to his age.

Many residents think that their family members are not included in the stunting category. They assume that there are many underlying factors including heredity, children/family members who have been sick and so on. Most people after data collection and factual verification in the field regarding stunting criteria, many families are included in the criteria.

Sumanto states that perception consists of understanding or understanding information about a stimulus. Stimulus resulting from the detection of objects, events, or relationships between symptoms is then processed by the brain. Perception usually involves a person's experience of interpreting something. Perception is divided into two, namely perception of objects (physical environment) and perception of people or society. Human perception is more difficult and complex because humans are very dynamic.

Most people after data collection and factual verification in the field regarding stunting criteria, many families are included in the criteria. Human or social perception is capturing the meaning of social objects and events that we experience in the social environment. everyone has their own picture of the reactions around them.

According to Mulyana, there are several principles of social perception [15]:

1. Perception based on experience, namely human perception based on a person, object, or event of things based on past experiences and learning related to similar people, objects or events.
2. Perception is selective. Every human being often gets sensory stimuli.
3. Perception is conjectural. Due to the incomplete data obtained, it is possible to interpret an object completely from any point of view.
4. Perception is evaluative. Most consider perception to be real but sometimes the five senses and perception deceive us, making us doubt the true reality.
5. Perception is contextual. Context is one of the most powerful influences. When we see a person, an object or an event, the context of the stimulus greatly influences the cognitive structure, expectations by our perception.

According to the Regulation of the Head of the National Population and Family Planning Agency of the Republic of Indonesia Number 12 of 2021 concerning the National Action Plan for Accelerating the Reduction of Stunting Rates in Indonesia for 2021-2024, it is stated that Families at Risk of Stunting are families who have one or more risk factors for stunting consisting of families who have adolescent daughters / brides / pregnant women / children aged 0 (zero) -23 (twenty-three) months / children aged 24 (twenty-four) -59 (fifty-nine) months from poor families, low parental education, poor environmental sanitation, and inadequate drinking water.

Messages or information are basically not always received easily by the recipient due to the presence of inhibiting factors such as culture and education that are not in line with the target group. Not all who are given information immediately accept it. Various methods are

carried out by extension workers and the stunting control team including extension workers from DP3ADALDUK-KB and community leaders and other formal figures who are considered influential to be able to change behavior and change the perception of the community itself about stunting.

2. Counseling Schedule

Communication that is right on target, right on time and right on message or in other terms it is said to be effective communication, is the key to the success of family planning educators from the past until now. Thus, the inaccuracy of these three things in communication will result in the failure of the goals we will achieve.

Not on target, for example, when busy working elsewhere being asked to hear family planning and stunting educators will clearly cause counseling to not be able to bring the expected results. Or the target family cannot attend due to their busy schedules. However, communication not only relies on the delivery of the message as expected by the messenger, but also relies on the accuracy of reading the atmosphere and who is targeted in the communication.

The follow-up for the Family Planning Educators Workers and the Assistance Team is to be diligent and intensive in conducting home visits by:

1. monitoring and measuring nutritional status;
2. providing interpersonal counseling.

4. Conclusion

Based on the results of the research that has been conducted, several conclusions can be drawn as a form of answer to the objectives of the research submitted by the researcher, interpersonal communication of Family Planning Educators is very effective in approaching the target families of stunting. Providing understanding and information to the community about stunting if done formally does not provide a positive response, because of feelings of shame and laziness to attend an activity. In the implementation of interpersonal communication, there are still obstacles that hinder the communication process. Factors that become obstacles / obstacles to Interpersonal Communication of Extension Officers in Stunting Prevention in Maros Regency are people's perceptions of stunting and the time of counseling / meeting with stunting family targets.

5. Acknowledgments

This research is supported by the Ministry of Communication and Informatics of the Republic of Indonesia. We would like to thank the Office of Women's Empowerment, Child Protection, Population Control and Family Planning in Maros Regency, which has helped a lot during the research.

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