



The Implementation of Learning Optimization for the Stunting Program

Filipi Epraperas Surbakti^{1*}, Iriani Ismail²

¹ Faculty of Economic and Business, Universitas Trunojoyo Madura

² Faculty of Economic and Business, Universitas Trunojoyo Madura

Corresponding Author. E-mail: pfiliph23@gmail.com

Receive: 10/06/2023

Accepted: 10/07/2023

Published: 01/10/2023

Abstrak

Stunting merupakan kejadian gagal tumbuh anak yang terjadi karena kurangnya gizi yang mampu membantu pertumbuhan anak. Dalam menanggulangi kejadian tersebut perlu dilakukan optimalisasi program penurunan stunting. Program-program stunting memiliki tujuan yang krusial dalam mengatasi masalah pertumbuhan dan perkembangan anak yang tidak optimal. Untuk mencapai efektivitas maksimal, perlu dipahami hal-hal yang dapat memengaruhi pelaksanaan program stunting yang dilakukan oleh Dinas Kesehatan Sampang. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis optimalisasi pelaksanaan program stunting dengan fokus pada integrasi lintas sektor, termasuk kesehatan, pendidikan, infrastruktur, dan pemberdayaan masyarakat. Penelitian mengenai Optimalisasi pelaksanaan program stunting menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi kasus. Pendekatan kualitatif dipilih karena mampu memberikan pemahaman mendalam tentang kompleksitas faktor-faktor yang memengaruhi pelaksanaan program stunting. Melalui tinjauan literatur, kegiatan wawancara, observasi yang komprehensif, penelitian ini mengidentifikasi hubungan antara berbagai faktor dan keberhasilan program stunting dalam jangka panjang yang ada di Kabupaten Sampang. Integrasi lintas sektor dianggap sebagai pendekatan strategis untuk meningkatkan efisiensi dan efektivitas program stunting. Beberapa temuan utama meliputi: peran pendidikan gizi dalam meningkatkan kesadaran ibu-ibu tentang pentingnya nutrisi anak, dampak sanitasi yang memadai terhadap penurunan prevalensi stunting, kolaborasi yang diperlukan untuk mengatasi hambatan struktural yang melintasi sektor, dan pemberdayaan masyarakat dalam merancang dan melaksanakan program-program stunting. Meskipun tantangan koordinasi dan perbedaan prioritas dapat muncul, manfaat jangka panjang dari pendekatan ini sangat berpotensi dalam menciptakan lingkungan yang mendukung pertumbuhan optimal anak-anak dan mencegah stunting di masa depan.

Kata kunci: Optimalisasi, Program Stunting, Lintas Sektor

Abstract

Stunting is a failure to grow in children that occurs due to a lack of nutrition that can help children grow. In dealing with this incident, it is necessary to optimize the stunting reduction program. Stunting programs have a crucial aim in overcoming the problem of suboptimal child growth and development. To achieve maximum effectiveness, it is necessary to understand the things that can influence the implementation of the stunting program carried out by the Sampang Health Service. This research aims to analyze the optimization of stunting program implementation with a focus on cross-sector integration, including health, education, infrastructure and community empowerment. Research on optimizing the implementation of the stunting program uses a qualitative approach with a case study method. A qualitative approach was chosen because it is able to provide an in-depth understanding of the complexity of factors that influence the implementation of stunting programs. Through literature reviews, interviews, comprehensive observations, this research identifies the relationship between various factors and the long-term success of stunting programs in Sampang Regency. Cross-sector integration is considered a strategic approach to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of stunting programs. Some of the main findings include: the role of nutrition education in increasing mothers' awareness of the importance of child nutrition, the impact of adequate sanitation on reducing stunting prevalence, the collaboration needed to overcome structural barriers that cut across sectors, and community empowerment in designing and implementing stunting programs. Although coordination challenges and differences in priorities may arise, the long-term benefits of this approach have the potential to be in creating an environment that supports children's optimal growth and preventing future stunting..

Keywords: Optimization, Stunting Program, Cross-Sector

INTRODUCTION

A healthy child is the aspiration of every parent, and intelligent parents are those who consistently monitor the growth and development process of their child, with a focus on ensuring good nutritional status. This nutritional status is obtained through food consumption, and it can be achieved when the body receives essential nutrients from the diet. These nutrients are crucial for physical growth, the ability to function optimally, and to attain good health. A child's nutritional status can significantly influence their well-being; the better their nutritional status, the healthier they are, and the less prone to illnesses, and vice versa.

Inadequate nutritional intake can lead to growth disturbances in children, which is referred to as stunting. Stunting is a condition where the height-for-age index falls below the standard deviation or is below the average height of children of the same age, as defined by Uman (2022). Nutritional deficiencies or stunting can significantly harm a child's brain development and performance. This can be observed in the standard height-for-age table for children.

Table 1.1.1 Children's Height According to Age

Age	Boys' Height According to Age	Girls' Height According to Age
1-2 y.o	75,7 cm – 87,8 cm	74 cm – 86 cm
2-3 y.o	87,8 cm – 96,1 cm	85,7 cm – 95,1 cm
3-4 y.o	96,1 cm – 103,3 cm	95,1 cm – 102,7 cm
4-5 y.o	103,3 cm – 110 cm	102,7 cm – 109,4 cm

Source: Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, 2018

Based on data from the World Health Organization (WHO), Indonesia ranks among the top three countries in the Southeast Asian region with the highest prevalence of stunting. From 2005 to 2017, Indonesia recorded a 36.4% prevalence of stunting according to the Ministry of Health (2018). Data from Bappenas reveals that during 2018-2019, East Java Province was designated as one of the priority areas for addressing the issue of stunting. Even local governments, including Sampang Regency, have taken proactive measures to reduce stunting prevalence.

The Sampang Regency government is deeply committed to addressing the issue of stunting in the region. This commitment is evident through the issuance of Sampang Regent Regulation No. 2 of 2018, which focuses on reducing stunting. The regulation has been effectively implemented, as evidenced by a reduction in stunting

prevalence from 34.3% in 2019 to 17.2% in 2021 and further to 6.8% in 2022. The decline in stunting prevalence can be attributed to the successful programs developed by the local government, particularly the Sampang Regency Health and Family Planning Office and the Acceleration Team for Stunting Reduction (TPPS). As a result, Sampang Regency has one of the lowest stunting rates among the districts in Madura and is ranked second in East Java.

As of now, the Regent of Sampang continues to make efforts to combat stunting, as Sampang has set a specific target for 2024, aiming to achieve a stunting prevalence below 6%.

Beal (2018) examined the determinants of stunting in Indonesia. While research on this topic has been published, there remains a lack of comprehensive understanding regarding how education, communities and culture, agriculture and food systems, and water, sanitation, and the environment contribute to child stunting. A comprehensive synthesis of existing evidence on the determinants of child stunting in Indonesia outlines who is most vulnerable to stunting, which interventions are most effective, and what new research is needed to fill knowledge gaps. Sari's study (2021) on the role of dedicated stunting workers highlights the importance of cross-sectoral collaboration and direct community support for the continuity of programs and assistance to mothers, especially those with infants.

A study by Siswati (2022) investigated the drivers of declining stunting rates in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. The research found that poor access to clean water and sanitation significantly contributes to the prevalence of stunting. These factors affect child nutrition through disease transmission and decreased nutrient absorption. The study results suggest the need for specific and sensitive nutritional improvements to reduce stunting. Martony's research (2023) explores the challenges of stunting in modern-day Indonesia. This study demonstrates that stunting in Indonesia remains a complex issue that requires coordinated cross-sectoral collaboration. To address these challenges in the modern era, holistic and sustainable intervention strategies are needed to reduce stunting prevalence and ensure optimal growth and development of children in Indonesia. Riyadi's study (2023) on the community's contribution to reducing stunting rates emphasizes that community perceptions may lead to neglect of stunting conditions and hinder participation in government stunting programs. Therefore, addressing stunting requires consideration of the social, cultural, and religious characteristics of the local population.

Through these studies, we can see various factors that contribute to the success of stunting program implementation, including nutritional education, the physical environment, and community participation. The

integration of these factors is crucial in designing a holistic strategy to address childhood stunting.

The primary objective of research on optimizing the implementation of stunting programs is to identify critical elements that can influence the success and effectiveness of stunting programs in addressing the issue of child stunting in Sampang Regency. By gaining a deep understanding of these factors, the goal of this research is to provide better guidance to decision-makers, the government, and stakeholders in designing, implementing, and managing stunting programs. Consequently, it is hoped that this research can help minimize the prevalence of stunting, enhance the quality of children's nutrition, and create an environment that supports the long-term growth and optimal development of children. With a better understanding of the contributing factors, more effective and targeted measures can be taken to achieve the ultimate goal of preventing stunting and improving the well-being of future generations.

METHODS

The research on optimizing the implementation of the Stunting Program employs a qualitative approach with a case study method. The qualitative approach was chosen because it can provide in-depth understanding of the complexity of factors affecting the implementation of the stunting program.

According to Nur'aini (2020), a case study is an empirical investigation that examines contemporary phenomena in real-life contexts. The definition of a case study for architectural research is modified to refer to an empirical investigation of a phenomenon or arrangement. By removing the term "contemporary" and adding "arrangement," this definition accommodates the explicit inclusion of historical phenomena and historical arrangements. The key characteristics of a case study are: (1) a focus on one or more cases studied in real-life contexts; (2) an emphasis on explaining cause-and-effect relationships; (3) theory development in the research design phase; (4) reliance on various sources of evidence; and (5) the ability to generalize theory.

Data collection is done through purposive sampling, where selectively chosen respondents are individuals or groups with relevant and in-depth information about the implementation of the stunting program in the area, as described by Zikmund in Firmansyah (2022). According to Irawati (2019), sampling in this technique should not be done randomly; sample selection should meet the criteria relevant to the research topic. The data is collected through in-depth interviews and the analysis of documents related to the stunting program. The purposive sampling category includes individuals with the most

relevant information about the stunting reduction program in Sampang Regency and those directly involved in the program to ensure its optimal implementation.

The purposive sampling for this technique involves three individuals involved in the Stunting Reduction Program in Sampang Regency. These individuals are Roro Dyah Akarti Ayu Candra Midi, who serves as the Technical Assistant Team Coordinator for Sampang Regency and is responsible for assisting prospective brides, supporting pregnant and post-pregnant women, and auditing stunting cases as well as stunting surveillance in Sampang Regency. The second individual is Agus Mulyadi, who serves as the Head of Community Health Division, and the third is Zahruddin, who serves as the Head of Family Planning and Child Health Division.

Data validity checks in this research employ three techniques: prolongation of involvement, observer persistence, and triangulation in terms of technique, sources, and time. For triangulation in terms of technique, the researcher compares data available on the website with data from interviews and documentation. Additionally, triangulation of sources involves comparing data from multiple sources, and triangulation of time includes testing data credibility through observations at different times and different situations. Data analysis is conducted following the Miles and Huberman model, as stated by Sugiyono in Rizqiana (2020), which includes data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and data verification.

The data analysis process employs qualitative data analysis using the interactive model according to Miles and Huberman, as explained by Harfiani (2021). The interactive data analysis technique consists of four components in the analysis process: data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Stunting, or impaired physical growth in children, is a serious issue in the context of human development, particularly in East Java. This phenomenon arises due to the complex interaction of factors related to nutrition, health, sanitation, education, socio-economic status, and the environment. In East Java, stunting rates are still concerning, despite some progress in prevention efforts. Factors influencing the high prevalence of stunting in this region include a lack of knowledge about balanced nutrition and child care, limited access to quality healthcare services, and a lack of awareness regarding the importance of sanitation and environmental cleanliness in preventing stunting.

Furthermore, socio-economic issues play a crucial role in the stunting problem. High poverty rates in certain

areas of East Java limit access to nutritious food and adequate healthcare services. Cultural and traditional factors also affect children's dietary patterns and care, which can impact their physical growth. As a result, the government has initiated efforts to reduce stunting, which have been extended to each district in East Java. Stunting prevention efforts in Sampang Regency must also take into account the differing dynamics of urban and rural areas and variations in access to healthcare and education services.

In this context, cross-sector collaboration is essential in addressing the issue of stunting in Sampang Regency. Local government, healthcare institutions, educational institutions, communities, and the private sector need to work together to increase the knowledge of pregnant women and parents, provide access to quality healthcare services, and promote good nutrition practices and adequate sanitation. Educational programs and interventions should be designed while considering the local context, culture, and specific challenges at each primary healthcare center (puskesmas). With a comprehensive and coordinated approach, it is hoped that the issue of stunting in Sampang Regency can be gradually addressed, creating a healthier and well-developed younger generation for a better future. Data on the reduction in stunting rates in Sampang Regency can be seen in the following table:

Table 1.2: Stunting Data in Madura 2021-2022

Regency	2021	2022
Bangkalan	38,9%	26,2%
Sampang	17,2%	6,8%
Pamekasan	38,7%	8,1%
Sumenep	29%	21,6%

Source: Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, 2023

The data on stunting rates in Madura for the years 2021-2022 depict a significant downward trend in several districts. During this period, Bangkalan Regency recorded a drastic reduction from 38.9% to 26.2%, indicating an encouraging improvement in efforts to reduce stunting. Similarly, Sampang Regency also saw a significant decline from 17.2% to 6.8%, indicating substantial progress in stunting prevention. This achievement places Sampang Regency with the lowest prevalence of stunting on Madura Island. According to data from the East Java Health Department, Sampang Regency ranks second with the lowest stunting rates in East Java, after Surabaya. On the other hand, Pamekasan Regency also experienced a sharp decrease from 38.7% to 8.1%, demonstrating serious efforts to improve child nutrition.

In collecting interview data, as described by Irawati (2019), to meet the required standards, a purposive sampling approach was used to select individuals with the most relevant information regarding the optimization of the stunting program conducted by the Sampang Regency Health Department. Three individuals were selected for this purpose. The three individuals chosen for purposive sampling are as follows:

1. Roro Dyah Akarti Ayu Candra Midi, who serves as the Technical Assistant Team Coordinator for Sampang Regency. She is responsible for assisting prospective brides, supporting pregnant and post-pregnant women, and auditing stunting cases, as well as conducting stunting surveillance in Sampang Regency.

2. Agus Mulyadi, who holds the position of Head of the Community Health Division, which includes a focus on public health, including stunting.

3. Zahrudin, who serves as the Head of the Family Planning and Child Health Division, responsible for processing information related to stunting.

Interview with Roro Dyah Akarti Ayu Candra Midi

1. What are the causes of stunting in Sampang Regency?

- Answer: There are two factors causing stunting in Sampang Regency, namely the community's perception that stunting is not a disease and a lack of cross-sectoral coordination.

- Supporting Theory: Theory suggests that low understanding and awareness among the community regarding stunting, along with a lack of cross-sectoral coordination, can be factors contributing to the high prevalence of stunting. This is supported by the research of Riyadi (2023), which indicates that a lack of understanding and trust among the community about stunting is one of the factors contributing to high stunting rates in other areas.

- Field Evidence: Field data shows that several sub-districts in Sampang Regency have a high prevalence of stunting, which is related to the community's lack of understanding about stunting.

2. How does the government of Sampang Regency address the causes of stunting?

- Answer: The government of Sampang Regency has implemented a stunting reduction program that involves cadres to support pregnant women. The program also

collaborates with cross-sectoral partners, such as the Department of Education, for education in schools and villages.

- Supporting Theory: Stunting reduction programs involving cadres, as shown in the research by Sari (2021), play a significant role in reducing stunting. Cross-sectoral collaboration and cadre training support stunting reduction. Field evidence indicates the formation of TTPS teams in each village and collaboration with various sectors.

- Field Evidence: Field evidence includes cadre training, awareness-raising activities, and cross-sectoral collaboration for water supply and school-based nutritional supplementation in Sampang Regency.

3. What stunting reduction programs have been established by Sampang Regency's Health Department?

- Answer: Stunting reduction programs include the Human Development Cadre Program (KPM) involving activities such as providing stunting knowledge to adolescent girls before marriage, establishing district task force teams, conducting interpersonal communication (KAP) training, and various cross-sectoral activities.

- Supporting Theory: Research by Sari (2021) emphasizes the significant role of cadres in reducing stunting, and programs such as cadre training contribute to a reduction in the prevalence of stunting. These programs also encompass five stunting prevention pillars and eight stunting convergences.

- Field Evidence: Field evidence involves the formation of district task force teams, cadre training, and various cross-sectoral activities aimed at reducing stunting.

4. How does the Health Department optimize the programs it has implemented?

- Answer: The Health Department optimizes programs by collaborating with all sectors, including government and private entities.

- Supporting Theory: In the study by Sutraningsih (2021), cross-sectoral collaboration is considered crucial for stunting reduction, as it allows for the maximal resolution of all existing problems. Cross-sectoral collaboration supports the optimization of stunting reduction programs.

- Field Evidence: Field evidence includes collaboration from all sectors to accelerate stunting reduction, such as cooperation with the Public Works and Education Departments for water supply and school-based nutritional supplementation in Sampang Regency.

5. What are the results of the programs implemented by the Health Department?

- Answer: The results of the programs optimized by the government are reflected in the decreased prevalence of stunting in Sampang Regency.

- Supporting Theory: Norsanti (2021) states that a program is considered optimal when the achieved results align with expectations. Field evidence indicates that the stunting reduction program implemented by the government is optimal and aligns with the theory, as evidenced by annual reductions and alignment with expected outcomes. Programs to reduce stunting can be successful in various contexts and challenges, as shown in the research by Bhutan (2020).

- Field Evidence: Field evidence includes annual reductions and outcomes aligned with expectations from the government's stunting reduction program.

Interview with Mr. Agus Mulyadi

1. What are the barriers faced by the government in reducing the prevalence of stunting?

- Answer: The barriers faced include the community's lack of understanding and belief that stunting is not a problem.

- Supporting Theory: The theory suggests that a lack of understanding and trust in the community about stunting is one of the factors contributing to high stunting rates. This is supported by the research of Riyadi (2023), indicating that a lack of understanding and trust among the community is a factor contributing to high stunting rates in other areas.

- Contrary Theory: In the study by Norsanti (2021), there are four factors contributing to stunting reduction, including lack of funding, parental education, economic factors, and insufficient awareness of child-rearing practices. Damara (2023) also identifies early marriage and lack of administrative compliance as barriers to reducing stunting.

2. How does the government address these barriers?

- Answer: The government addresses these barriers by increasing community awareness through educational activities and family health monitoring. Additionally, they conduct cadre training, as communities tend to trust local cadres more than the government.

- Supporting Theory: Research by Herlina (2021) suggests that cadre training indirectly contributes to reducing stunting prevalence. Field evidence in Sampang Regency includes training for cadres and the formation of TTPS teams in each village for community engagement.

- Contrary Theory: No specific contrary theory was provided in this context.

3. What does the government do to optimize its programs?

- Answer: The government optimizes its programs by collaborating with all sectors, both government and private.

- Supporting Theory: In the study by Sutraningsih (2021), cross-sectoral collaboration is considered crucial for stunting reduction because it enables comprehensive problem-solving. Field evidence includes collaboration from various sectors to accelerate stunting reduction, such as cooperation with the Public Works Department for clean water supply and collaboration with the Education Department for school-based nutritional supplementation in Sampang Regency.

- Contrary Theory: No specific contrary theory was provided in this context.

4. Does the government optimize its programs in all areas?

- Answer: The government optimizes its programs in all areas but focuses on specific "locus" areas, which are considered most critical due to their higher prevalence.

- Supporting Theory: Nurbaya (2022) suggests that locus areas are crucial for stunting reduction as they facilitate more rapid progress. The government of Sampang Regency implements stunting reduction programs in all regions but designates locus areas. In 2022, there were eight locus villages in seven sub-districts, increasing to 12 locus villages in 2023.

- Contrary Theory: Fahmida (2022) suggests that, despite varying prevalence rates in different regions, stunting reduction activities should be carried out uniformly.

5. What are the results of the government's programs in these locus areas?

- Answer: The results of these programs have led to Sampang Regency having the lowest stunting rates in Madura Island, with reduced prevalence in each locus area.

- Supporting Theory: Norsanti (2021) mentions that a program is considered optimal when the results align with expectations. Field evidence indicates that the government's stunting reduction program is optimal, with annual reductions and outcomes aligned with expectations. Programs to reduce stunting can be successful in various contexts and challenges, as shown in the research by Bhutan (2020).

- Contrary Theory: No specific contrary theory was provided in this context.

Interview With Mr Zahruddin

1. In optimizing the stunting reduction program, what obstacles are encountered?

- Answer: The main obstacle is the community's perception that stunting is not a disease.

- Supporting Theory: Riyadi (2023) and field evidence indicate that low understanding and trust in the community regarding stunting contribute to its high prevalence. It's essential to address these perceptions to reduce stunting.

- Contrary Theory: Beal (2018) suggests that optimizing stunting reduction in Indonesia should focus on communities and populations with limited access to healthcare and clean water.

2. How does the government address this issue?

- Answer: The government addresses this problem by conducting educational activities to increase community awareness about stunting, such as stunting awareness campaigns and engaging local cadres.

- Supporting Theory: Research by Sari (2021) highlights the critical role of cadres in stunting reduction, as they can promote the benefits of healthcare services and lower stunting prevalence. Herlina (2021) indicates that cadre training indirectly contributes to reducing stunting prevalence. Field evidence shows that the government forms TTPS teams in every village, comprising two cadres and a PKK (Family Welfare) mother. Collaboration between the Health Department and the Education Department in school and community education further enhances knowledge dissemination.

- Contrary Theory: Siswati (2022) emphasizes the government's commitment to stunting reduction through the application of five stunting prevention pillars and eight stunting convergences.

3. How does the government ensure that all programs run optimally?

- Answer: The government achieves optimal program performance by fostering collaboration among all segments of society, emphasizing that stunting is not solely the responsibility of the Health Department but requires cross-sectoral engagement, including local cadres.

- Supporting Theory: Sutraningsih (2021) underscores the importance of cross-sectoral collaboration in reducing stunting, as it allows comprehensive problem-solving. Field evidence in Sampang Regency demonstrates collaboration from various sectors to accelerate stunting reduction,

including cooperation with the Public Works Department for clean water supply and cooperation with the Education Department for school-based nutritional supplementation.

- Contrary Theory: No specific contrary theory was provided in this context.

4. What results have been achieved from the programs implemented by the Health Department, and are they optimal?

- Answer: The results include a reduction in the prevalence of stunting in Sampang Regency, indicating program effectiveness and optimal performance.

- Supporting Theory: Norsanti (2021) suggests that a program is considered optimal when the results align with expectations. Field evidence demonstrates an annual reduction and outcomes in line with expectations. Programs for reducing stunting can be effective in various contexts and challenges, as shown in Bhutan's (2020) research.

- Contrary Theory: No specific contrary theory was provided in this context.

The effectiveness of optimizing the implementation of the stunting program in Sampang Regency is also influenced by the good performance of each community health center (Puskesmas) in the regency. The data on the reduction of stunting in each Puskesmas in Sampang Regency can be seen in the following table:

Table 1.3: Stunting Data for Each Community Health Center (Puskesmas) in Sampang Regency 2020-2022

Puskesmas	2020	2021	2022
Sreseh	14,91	1,80	1,48
Torjun	12,99	6,13	2,56
Pangerangan	11,05	7,95	9,98
Komining	0,95	0,81	0,94
BanyuAnyar	12,29	7,71	7,21
Camplong	1,74	1,48	2,48
Tanjung	10,89	0,71	1,19
Omben	9,28	7,56	5,68
Jrengoan	11,72	5,42	21,51
Kedungdung	7,14	6,88	4,15
Banjar	8,10	5,69	5,26
Jrengik	19,29	15,47	14,24
Tambelangan	9,32	7,50	3,63
Banyuates	14,91	15,14	15,83
Bringkoning	10,07	10,19	6,89
Robatan	7,65	7,33	4,51

Karang Penan	2,17	1,84	1,31
Ketapang	1,49	0,98	0,72
Bunteng Barat	2,45	4,60	0,46
Batulenger	3,39	1,38	4,71
Tamberu Barat	8,85	11,70	4,93

Source: Sampang District Health Service, 2023

The effectiveness of optimizing the implementation of stunting programs in Sampang Regency is also influenced by the good performance of each community health center (Puskesmas) in the region. Data on the reduction of stunting in each Puskesmas in Sampang Regency during the period 2020-2022 provides a diverse picture of changes in child nutrition status across different areas.

Puskesmas Sreseh demonstrates a significant decrease from 14.91% in 2020 to 1.80% in 2021 and 1.48% in 2022, reflecting effective stunting prevention efforts. In contrast, Puskesmas Jrengoan experienced a drastic increase from 11.72% in 2020 to 21.51% in 2022, indicating a more serious issue that requires special attention.

Several Puskesmas, such as Torjun and Pangerangan, also experienced fluctuations in stunting figures. Puskesmas Torjun saw an increase from 12.99% in 2020 to 6.13% in 2021, but then decreased to 2.56% in 2022. Meanwhile, Puskesmas Pangerangan increased from 11.05% in 2020 to 7.95% in 2021 but rose again to 9.98% in 2022. Although some Puskesmas showed a decrease in stunting rates, like Komining, Tanjung, and Tambelangan, others like Jrengik, Banyuates, and Bringkoning showed an upward trend in stunting rates in 2022.

Interviews with the Sampang Regency Health Office revealed several factors that may influence these fluctuations and changes. Interventions and stunting prevention programs at each Puskesmas, access to healthcare and nutritional education services, and the socio-economic dynamics of each area can contribute to changes in stunting figures. This data provides vital information about stunting trends in various Puskesmas in Sampang Regency. To address the issue of stunting effectively, a more in-depth analysis is needed to understand the specific factors contributing to changes in stunting rates in each region. Stunting prevention efforts must be targeted and involve collaboration between the government, healthcare institutions, and the community to achieve better outcomes in ensuring optimal physical growth for children in Sampang Regency.

Based on interview results, the optimization of stunting program implementation is significantly influenced by cross-sectoral integration. Cross-sectoral integration is a highly relevant approach to improving the efficiency and effectiveness of long-term stunting programs. By combining various aspects such as health, education, infrastructure, and community empowerment, a strong synergy can be created to address the problem of stunting in a more comprehensive and sustainable manner.

Firstly, cross-sectoral integration allows for a holistic approach to the problem of stunting. Stunting is not only related to nutritional and health aspects but is also influenced by the physical environment, access to education, and social factors. By integrating these various sectors, stunting programs can design more complex and informed strategies, enabling broader interventions that cover various dimensions affecting child growth and development.

Secondly, cross-sectoral integration can optimize resource utilization. In many cases, various sectors have limited resources. By working together, these sectors can share resources and work synergistically to achieve greater results. Public health programs designed by the Health Office can collaborate with schools to provide nutritional education to children and parents, while infrastructure programs can ensure access to clean water and proper sanitation in school environments.

Thirdly, cross-sectoral integration encourages better collaboration and coordination among various institutions and stakeholders. In efforts to address stunting, many parties are involved, including the government, healthcare institutions, educational institutions, community organizations, and others. Cross-sectoral integration provides a better platform for communication, knowledge sharing, and coordination of efforts, avoiding the overlap of existing programs and leading to more coordinated implementation.

Fourthly, cross-sectoral integration can help address structural barriers that cut across various sectors. Some stunting issues, such as gender inequality in education or lack of access to healthcare services, are related to structural factors that cannot be addressed by a single sector alone. By working together, these sectors can design more comprehensive solutions to address the structural issues underlying stunting.

Fifthly, cross-sectoral integration can empower the community more effectively. Stunting programs that involve the community in planning, implementation, and monitoring have a much greater impact. Integration with community empowerment sectors ensures that this approach is well-integrated. For example, involving mothers in support groups can not only increase their nutritional knowledge but also provide crucial social support.

Cross-sectoral integration does come with challenges that need to be addressed. The main challenges include complex coordination among various institutions and sectors, differing priorities, and variations in perspectives and languages that may exist among them. High commitment from all parties involved is required to work together in overcoming these challenges.

In conclusion, cross-sectoral integration is a powerful approach to improving the efficiency and effectiveness of stunting programs in the long term. By combining the strengths of health, education, infrastructure, and community empowerment, stunting programs can design more holistic, sustainable, and comprehensive solutions. While challenges in coordination and communication may arise, the long-term benefits of this approach can bring significant change in addressing stunting and creating a better future for future generations.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of optimizing the implementation of stunting programs in the Sampang Regency Health Office is that the success of this program is highly influenced by a set of interconnected variables. Proper nutritional education for pregnant and lactating mothers, access to quality healthcare services, adequate sanitation infrastructure, and active community participation are fundamental elements in achieving positive outcomes. The importance of a holistic approach that considers these various factors emphasizes the need for comprehensive policy integration and cross-sector collaboration in the effort to combat stunting. In this context, interventions should go beyond the medical aspects and include educational efforts, community empowerment, and infrastructure improvements. By understanding and integrating these factors, stunting programs have a greater opportunity to achieve stunting prevention targets and contribute to the development of a healthier and higher-quality generation in the future.

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