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Submission date: 15-Apr-2022 12:02PM (UTC+0800)

Submission ID: 1811181751

File name: I_Oct-Dec_2021_Ecological_Relationship_between_Poverty_ljmft.pdf (1,019.81K)

Word count: 2931

Character count: 16054

Ecological Relationship between Poverty and Nutritional Status of Toddler in Indonesia in 2018

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Abstract

Data in the world states that 462 million are underweight, 47 million children under the age of 5 are wasting, 14.3 million are very thin, and 144 million are stunting. Previous study reports about 45% of child deaths <5 years are related to malnutrition—the study aim to analyzing the relationship between poverty and nutritional status of the toddler in Indonesia ecologically. The study used secondary data from the official report of the Indonesia Ministry of Health. The study takes all provinces as samples. Moreover, the study used the percentage of poor people as an independent variable. On the other hand, the researchers analyzed three other variables as dependent variables: the proportion of underweight toddlers, the proportion of stunting toddlers, and the proportion of wasting toddlers. The study examined the data using a scatter plot to determine the relationship. The results show that the greater the percentage of an underweight toddler in a country, the higher the proportion of underweight toddler in that region. Meanwhile, the more significant the proportion of the deprived population in an area, the more considerable proportion of stunting in that area. Moreover, the higher the poor people in the province, the higher the proportion of wasting in that province. The study concluded that poverty has a relationship with nutrition status of the toddler in Indonesia.

Keywords: poverty, underweight, stunting, wasting, ecological analysis, public health.

Introduction

Malnutrition can include wasting, stunting, and underweight. Data in the world states that 462 million are underweight, 47 million children under the age of 5 are wasting, 14.3 million are very thin, and 144 million are stunting. About 45% of child deaths <5 years are related to malnutrition¹. Therefore, reducing child stunting is the first goal in the global nutrition target by 2025². Despite social and economic developments,

the worldwide burden of malnutrition remains too high.

There is an important relationship between nutritional status, human resources, and financial status. Poor nutrition causes a decrease in individuals' physiological, mental capacities, hinders productivity levels, and is vulnerable to poverty. There is a two-way relationship between malnutrition and poverty. Malnutrition results in conditions of poverty by reducing the economic potential of the population³. Discussion on nutritional status is crucial because it is an indicator of the growth of children under five.

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We can measure toddler growth through body weight, height, and body mass index. Impaired growth of children under five is a sign of an obstacle to nutritional status. Malnutrition can cause various losses, including

developmental delays in children aged 3-6 years, quality of life of children, physical function, emotional function, social function, communication, fine motor skills, and problem-solving. The overall prevalence of developmental delay was 35.4%⁴⁻⁷.

¹ The prevalence of child stunting in Indonesia has remained high over the last decade. At the national level, child stunting is around 37%². Another study states that the prevalence of stunting, wasting, and very thin is 9.1; 3.8; and 3.8%⁶. The prevalence of stunting was 39.4%, while the percentage of households consuming foods high in protein and calcium was 41%⁸. This phenomenon shows that nutritional status is still a significant problem in achieving the global nutrition target in 2025. Several factors supporting stunting and wasting rates in Indonesia require a deeper study.¹³

Previous studies have suggested that the percentage of poor people is positively related to the prevalence of stunting⁹. Households that occupy a livable house and have completed basic education negatively correlate with the prevalence of stunting in Indonesia. The situation means that this variable is a protective factor for province to have short children under five. Meanwhile, non-exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months, low socioeconomic status of the family, premature birth, short birth length, short mothers, low maternal education are determining factors for child stunting in Indonesia². Education and income reduce the likelihood of being underweight by 10-30%¹⁰. It is estimated that 90 percent of children, especially girls and young women, experience some form of poverty¹¹. Physical, economic, demographic, social, and environmental factors are the main contributors to food insecurity¹².

²² In contrast to other studies, it is stated that there is no correlation between short-term changes between measures of income and overall height¹³. Similarly, a study was found that found positive deviations of feeding with the nutritional status of children under five in low-income families¹⁴. Overall, the factors that represent the ecology of internal and external nutrition need to be considered to reduce stunting rates¹²—the

study aim to analyzing the relationship between poverty and the nutritional status of the toddler in Indonesia ecologically.

Materials and Methods

Study Design

The author used an ecological interpretation method in the research. Environmental research relies on collective comparisons rather than human comparisons. The data examined in the ecological analysis is aggregate data at a given community or level; in this case, it is at the provincial level. Aggregate measures, environmental measurements, and global measures should also be used as factors in an ecological survey. In epidemiology, ecological research aims to make biological inferences about individual risk effects or ecological inferences about group effects^{15,16}.

Data Source

¹⁷ Secondary data from the 2018 Indonesia Basic Health Survey and the 2018 Indonesia Health Profile report were included in this analysis. Both papers are official documents of the Republic of Indonesia's Ministry of Health. The province is the study's unit of research. The thesis looked at every part of Indonesia (34 provinces).

Data Analysis

²⁰ The dependent variable in this study is the nutrition status of the toddler. The nutritional status of a toddler consists of underweight, stunting, and wasting. Underweight is a classification of toddler nutritional status based on body weight index for age (Z-score < -2.0). Meanwhile, stunting is a classification of the nutritional status of children under five based on indicators of length/height per age (Z-score < -2.0). Moreover, wasting is a classification of the nutritional status of toddlers based on indicators of body weight per length/height (Z-score < -2.0)¹⁷.

In this analysis, poverty was used as an independent variable. The percentage of a province's impoverished

population was used to define poverty (September 2018). The data was evaluated bivariate using a scatter plot in the analysis. The linear fit line was used in the analysis to assess the association between toddler poverty and nutrition status. The author carried out the research with the assistance of the IBM SPSS 21.

and nutrition status of the toddler by the province in Indonesia. The results presented informs that the lowest percentage of the poor population is 3.55%, while the highest proportion of maternity care in health facilities is 27.43%. In Indonesia, the proportion of poor people varies widely between provinces.

Findings

Table 1 is a descriptive statistic of the poverty

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of the percentage of the poor people and nutrition status of the toddler by the province in Indonesia, 2018

Variable	N	Range	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Percentage of the poor population	34	23.88	3.55	27.43	10.6076	5.70346
Proportion of underweight	34	16.50	13.00	29.50	19.2088	4.53581
Proportion of stunting	34	25.10	17.60	42.70	30.2618	5.30260
Proportion of wasting	34	40.30	31.90	72.20	49.4706	9.20351

Source: The 2018 Indonesia Basic Health Survey and the 2018 Indonesia Health Profile

Figure 1 depicts a scatter plot of the number of impoverished citizens and the proportion of underweight toddlers by Indonesian province. The graph displays the two variables' penchant for a positive relationship. The more significant the poor people proportion in a region, the higher the underweight toddler percentage.

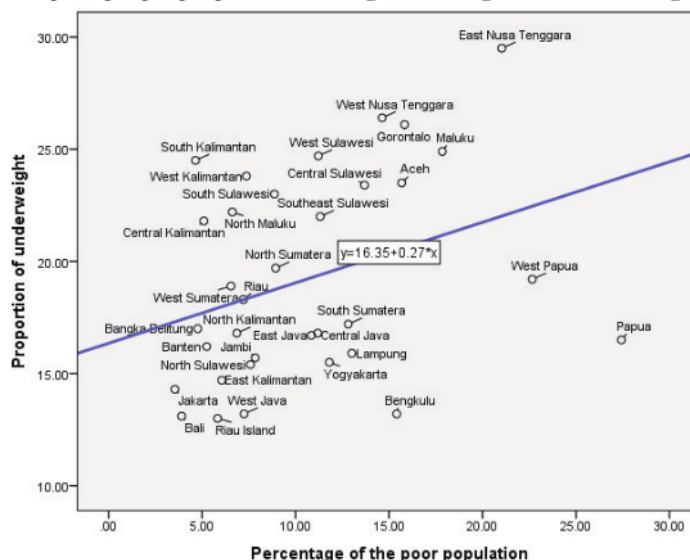


Figure 1. Scatter plot of the percentage of the poor people and the proportion of underweight by the province in Indonesia, 2018

Source: The 2018 Indonesia Basic Health Survey and The 2018 Indonesia Health Profile

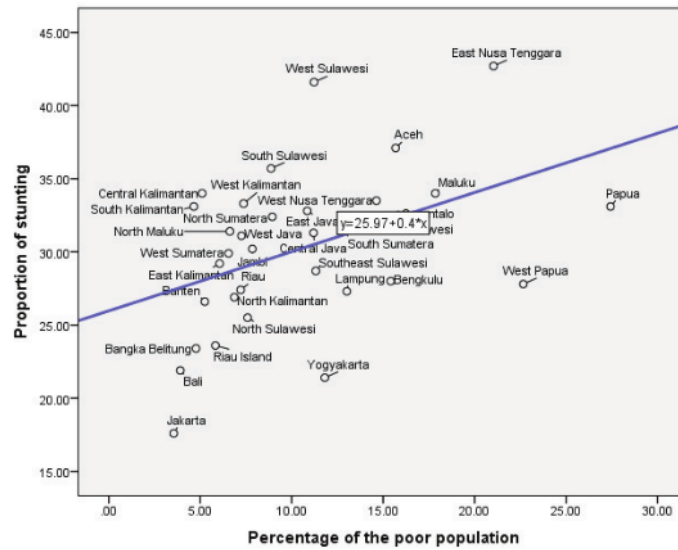


Figure 2. Scatter plot of the percentage of the poor people and the proportion of stunting by the province in Indonesia, 2018

Source: The 2018 Indonesia Basic Health Survey and The 2018 Indonesia Health Profile

Figure 2 depicts a scatter plot of the number of disadvantaged people and the proportion of stunting in Indonesia by region. Figure 2 illustrates the two variables' propensity for a favorable interaction; as a result of the condition, the more significant the deprived population proportion of the region, the greater the stunting toddlers proportion in that region.

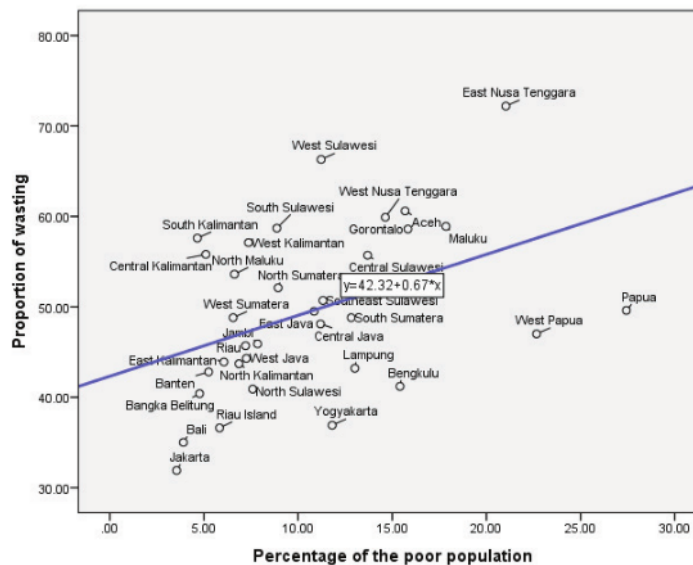


Figure 3. Scatter plot of the percentage of the poor people and the proportion of wasting by the province in Indonesia, 2018

Source: The 2018 Indonesia Basic Health Survey and The 2018 Indonesia Health Profile

Figure 3 shows the scatter plot of the percentage of poor people and the wasting of toddlers in Indonesia's province. The scatter plot shows the tendency for a positive relationship between the two variables. The situation means that the higher the poor population in the province, the higher the wasting toddlers proportion in that province.

Discussion

Several previous studies have informed that socioeconomic status is related to the nutritional status of children under five, both underweight, stunting, and wasting. Previous studies have found that poverty is closely related to the nutritional status of children under five¹⁸. Poverty is known to be closely associated with the ability of families to provide food needs in the family. Families with poor conditions for a long time will significantly affect the nutritional status of children under five to become worse^{19,20}. In general, better socioeconomics is a strong determinant of better health output²⁰⁻²².

Meanwhile, poverty in the family is also known to be related to the low level of education of family members, especially their parents' education²³. The intervention of maternal education situation makes them less aware of the nutritional status of children, both because of limited knowledge and because of financial limitations²⁴⁻²⁶.

On the other hand, poverty is also closely related to poor sanitation, especially in urban slum settlements. This situation worsens the low nutritional status of children under five due to the risk of infection and disease caused by poor sanitation. The low-income family lives, including diarrhea and worms^{27,28}.

Intervention by the government in this poor group of people is needed. This intervention ensures that there is no deterioration in the nutritional status of children under five due to food availability in inadequate families. In Indonesia, the government has issued several policies to strengthen food security for low-income

families. Among them is distributing rice to the poor and providing direct cash assistance, including subsidizing contribution assistance for National Health Insurance²⁹.

Study Limitation

Since the data used is statistical data at the regional level, this study, undertaken using the ecological analysis method, has drawbacks in its use as a policy basis. More research at the personal level is needed to collect more reliable knowledge before deciding on an intervention strategy³⁰.

Conclusion

This study concluded that poverty has a relationship with the nutritional status of the toddler in Indonesia. The higher the poor population in the province, the higher the proportion of underweight, stunting, and wasting in that province.

Conflict of Interests: Nil

Source of Funding: Self-funding

Ethical Clearance: The study was conducted by utilizing secondary data from published reports. For this reason, the study not required an ethical clearance in the implementation of this research.

Acknowledgments: The authors are grateful to the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia for providing a report as material for analysis in this study.

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