



Abstract

TITLE

Assessing and Increasing Indonesian Mother's Knowledge of Stunting

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ABSTRACT

Background: Stunting etiology is multifactorial and includes caregiver perceptions and lack of stunting-related knowledge. Independent from barriers such as lack of food access, or inadequate variety or quality of food choices, caregivers with stunting knowledge may still make better choices within the parameters and constraints of their environment. This lack of stunting knowledge warrants further study in developing countries such as Indonesia, in order to bridge the gap between theory, application, and changes in caregiver behaviors. **Objectives:** This purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between information sources and stunting knowledge, and secondarily, to identify factors associated with increased stunting knowledge. In order to provide effective recommendations for health behavior interventions, an understanding of the local stunting paradigms is paramount. **Methodology:** This study used data from a larger IMA World Health-Indonesia initiative attempting to influence stunting-related attitudes and behaviors of caregivers in rural Indonesian provinces. The study sample consisted of 2,100 caregivers of children under two years of age. Women were interviewed in 5 regions of Indonesia, including Sumatera, Java, Kalimantan, Nusa Tenggara and Sulawesi. Factor analysis was used to summarize multiple measures of stunting knowledge into a single, composite variable. Chi-square test statistics were calculated to compare knowledge scores with the information source. Lastly, logistic regression analysis was used to explore factors associated with increases in stunting knowledge. **Results:** More than 1/3 of respondents had never heard of, read about, or been informed of stunting. Only 4.7% correctly identified stunting as height not corresponding to the child's age. Many caregivers reported that stunting is inherited (23.7%), or is caused by undernourishment (14.7%). When asked about the effects of stunting, 13.2% said nothing, and 11.2% said it interrupted growth. Most respondents got stunting information from a neighbor or a friend (15.3%), and 6.0% were informed by midwives. Doctors, nutritionists, or nurses (3.0%) were not common sources for information. Almost all caregivers (91.3%) reported visiting an integrated health post and 18.5% said they got stunting information there. Increased levels of education and family wealth were associated with increased stunting knowledge. **Discussion:** In this study sample of Indonesian caregivers, there was a general lack of stunting knowledge. Caregivers that don't know stunting has serious health effects and believe that it is inherited may be less likely to make lifestyle changes to prevent it. The Integrated Health Post, television, and radio were identified as the best platforms for the dissemination of stunting knowledge.