

**Experience of Integrated Health Post (Posyandu) Cadres in Addressing Stunting in Toddlers  
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## ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** *Stunting is a condition in which children under the age of five experience growth failure due to long-term malnutrition so they are too short for their age. In 2023, the prevalence of stunting in Indonesia will be 21.5%, this condition only decreased by 0.1% from the 2022 data of 21.6%. Optimizing the role of integrated health post cadres is one of the government's efforts to accelerate the reduction in stunting incidence.*

**Objectives:** *This study aims to investigate the experiences of integrated health post cadres in addressing stunted children.*

**Methods:** *This study uses a qualitative phenomenological research design. The research sample was selected using the purposive sampling method, comprising four informants. Data analysis using Colaizzi's (1978) thematic technique analysis.*

**Results:** *This research produced four main themes, including cadres as growth and development monitors and the preventive role of toddler nutritional problems, this study produced four main themes including cadres as growth and development monitors and the preventive role of toddler nutritional problems, cadre differentiation perspectives on stunting, high prevalence of stunting, cadres as responsive agents in overcoming stunting.*

**Keyword:** *Cadres, Experience, Stunting, Toddler*

## Introduction

*Stunting* is a condition in which children under five grow too slowly compared to their peers due to chronic malnutrition (Aurima et al., 2021). According to the World Health Organization (WHO), *stunting* is a short or very short group in children based on size, height or height according to age, -2 standard deviation (SD) on the WHO growth curve (Fadhliana & Hidayatullah, 2024). According to the Global Nutrition Report (2018), there are 150.8 million (22.2%) children who are *stunted* worldwide (Aurima et al., 2021). In 2023, the prevalence of stunting in Indonesia is 21.5%, down only 0.1% from 2022 data of 21.6%. The highest stunting rate was found in East Nusa Tenggara with 35.30%, followed by West Sulawesi with 35.40%, Papua with 34.40%, and West Nusa Tenggara (NTB) with 32% (Mediakom, 2024). NTB Province is included as one of 12 provinces in Indonesia with priority categories in efforts to accelerate *stunting reduction*. According to SSGI 2022 data, The highest prevalence of *stunting* in the NTB region is in Central Lombok at 37% (PemprovNTB, 2024). Short child nutrition is a contributing factor to 2.2 million of all causes of child death worldwide (Hidayani, 2020). According to Kemenkes RI (2022) Stunting is the result of components related to poverty, such as nutrition, especially diet, health, sanitation and the environment. Low cognitive impairment is more likely to occur in children who *are stunting* at less than two years of age (Sumartini, 2020).

Stunting prevention is an effective step that can be taken at 1000 HPK. The implementation of preventive measures such as diet, parenting, meeting nutritional needs for pregnant women and access to health services is urgently needed to reduce the incidence of *stunting* in children. By using efficient prevention techniques, children who have survived the crucial first 1000 days of life, get adequate nutrition, and maintain good hygiene can lower the risk of *stunting*. (Nisa et al., 2020).

In an effort to accelerate *stunting reduction*, one of them is through optimizing the role of posyandu cadres. The Posyandu cadre empowerment event, which includes lectures, role-plays,

discussions, and practical training, will increase cadres' understanding of how to prevent and treat stunting in children (Afifa et al., 2023). Posyandu cadres can act as a liaison between the community and medical personnel, assisting the latter in dealing with health problems and obtaining essential medical care. In addition, it is hoped that posyandu cadres will motivate parents to attend more posyandu events to monitor their children's growth and development and manage their diet and welfare better (Faiqah et al., 2022).

The results of interviews that have been conducted with the staff of the Teruwai Health Center, in October 2024, cumulative case data for the month of October with a *stunting prevalence* of 11.96% were obtained. Sukadana Village has the highest prevalence of cases of children in the short and very short categories, namely 67 children in the working area at the Teruwai Health Center. Based on the information above, the researcher wants to investigate the problem of child stunting in Sukadana Village in the working area of the Teruwai Health Center, Pujut District, Central Lombok.

## Method

This study uses qualitative research with a descriptive phenomenological method which aims to find out the experience of posyandu cadres in overcoming stunting under five. The goal of phenomenological research methods is to provide universal insights into individual life experiences, with researchers helping to transform data collected from these experiences into written or narrative forms (Afiyanti, y., & Nur, 2014).

The population studied was cadres who were registered as posyandu cadres in the work area of the Teruwai Health Center, Sukadana Village, Pujut District. The informants who participated in this study were cadres who were directly involved as research subjects. The selection of this informant uses a sampling method, namely purposive sampling. *Purposive sampling* is the selection of informants based on suitability and adequacy (Kahfi, 2021). The number of samples is 4 people, the sample is determined through the point of judah. The sample was obtained from cadres who are still registered as posyandu cadres in Sukadana Village, who are currently still active as posyandu cadres.

The *inclusion* criteria for participants are:

1. Posyandu cadres who are willing to become informants.
2. Able to communicate well.
3. Posyandu cadres who have more than 1 year of experience in carrying out their duties as cadres.

The *exclusion* criteria in this study are

1. Posyandu cadres who are sick.
2. Posyandu cadres are new members.

This research has received ethical approval from the Health Research Ethics Committee (KEPK) of Qamarul Huda Badaruddin University and is declared to comply with the principles of research ethics according to applicable standards with Ethical Clearance Number: 019/KEPK/FKESUNIQHBA/III/2025.

## Results and Discussion

### Result

Based on the results of the analysis of interview data on the experience of posyandu cadres in the management of stunting under five using the Colaizzi technique (1978). The data collection technique was carried out by means of structured interviews. The researcher received 4 main themes consisting of cadres as monitors of growth and development and the preventive role of nutrition problems in toddlers, the perspective of cadre differentiation about *stunting*, the prevalence of *stunting* is still high, cadres as responsive agents in *stunting control*.

Table 1 Results of Thematic Analysis : Theme, Sub-Theme, Category

Tema	Sub-Tema	Kategori
<b>Cadres as monitors of growth and development and the preventive role of nutrition problems for toddlers</b>	Toddler growth and development examination	Height checks, weight, height measurements, counseling for toddlers during posyandu
	Cadre counseling	Counseling by cadres on the importance of posyandu to Parents of toddlers
		Counseling by cadres to parents regarding the provision of PMT for toddlers
<b>Cadre Differentiation Perspectives on <i>Stunting</i></b>	Cadre knowledge	Knowledge of posyandu cadres regarding the definition and symptoms of <i>stunting</i> in toddlers
		Attracting parents to do posyandu through PMT
<b>Stunting prevalence still high</b>	Number of stunted toddlers	Jumlah kejadian balita <i>stunting</i> 1 tahun terakhir
<b>Kader sebagai agen responsif dalam penanggulangan <i>stunting</i></b>	Pelaporan kader posyandu	Contacting the nutrition officer with recording and monthly chart monitoring in KMS books
	Nutrition fulfillment assistance	Assistance from the government
		Forms of supplementary feeding assistance (PMT)
	Empowerment of posyandu cadres	Training for posyandu cadres through <i>stakeholder</i>

## Discussion

### a. Cadres as Monitors of Growth and Development and the Preventive Role of Toddler Nutrition Problems

#### 1) Height, weight, lila measurement and counseling at the time of posyandu

Based on the results of interviews with informants, namely Sukadana Village cadres, Posyandu cadres have duties when carrying out posyandu activities, The tasks carried out by Posyandu cadres during the activity began with registration, weighing, measuring, recording, counseling and immunization.

This statement is strengthened by the statement of Amalia & Makkulawu (2023) The task of Posyandu cadres is responsible for informing the public about the opening days and hours of the posyandu. Before the event, they must also prepare teaching materials, KMS, and notebooks for the implementation of posyandu. In addition, they recorded women of childbearing age, pregnant women, babies, and toddlers who visited the posyandu. In addition, they weigh infants and young children and enter the information into the KMS.

Based on observations made by researchers, Posyandu activities do not run according to the provisions, namely the 5-table system at the time of the posyandu. The posyandu activities carried out include registration of toddlers, measurement of toddler height and weight of toddlers as well as filling out KMS books. Weighing and measuring height is carried out in a hurry due to toddlers crying so that the results obtained are not valid and toddler size tools that are often an obstacle. When during the implementation of the posyandu only a few cadres were present, and officers from the health center rarely monitored the activities of the posyandu, only midwives were present.

## **2) Counseling by cadres to parents regarding the provision of PMT for toddlers**

Based on the results of interviews conducted by researchers, The informant said that another task of Posyandu cadres is counseling on the provision of PMT to parents. The counseling carried out by Sukadana Village cadres focused on counseling for the provision of PMT and was carried out during the posyandu. Kharisna et al., (2024) revealed that one way to reduce *stunting* is to teach mothers about how to prevent *stunting*. With cadres, they teach parents how to eat good food in preventing *stunting*, so that they are able to apply it to their toddlers.

Pernyataan tersebut diperkuat melalui hasil penelitian yang dilakukan oleh Purwanti & Ningrum (2023) showed that counseling on the provision of PMT to parents who have toddlers with *stunted* and undernourished nutrition Works well. The results showed that food making knowledge and skills increased by 64.3% before and after the activity. In line with the results of research conducted by Akbar et al (2022) Regular administration of PMT can increase the child's weight gradually. In addition, parents' awareness of the importance of nutrition for children and toddlers has increased by almost 100%.

Other research results were also shown by Nurmala (2024) which involved twelve articles through *the literature review method*. It was found that counseling related to the administration of PMT affected the weight and height of toddlers after being given an intervention. In improving the *stunting* problem, PMT counseling is expected to change feeding behavior in children (Kharisna et al., 2024).

Based on the results of observations made by the researcher, When the Posyandu cadres do not conduct counseling to parents, parents also seem to be in a hurry to immediately take their children home because of crying and work from parents.

### **Counseling by cadres to parents of toddlers to attend posyandu**

Based on the results of interviews with Sukadana Village cadre informants, In addition to providing counseling on PMT, cadres also conduct counseling on the importance of posyandu for parents to attend posyandu activities. This is done because parents are essential for the development and growth of toddlers. Parents can actively monitor their child's development through health services such as posyandu, because parents gain knowledge about parenting that

supports child development, which includes providing nutritious food, encouraging mental and physical development and maintaining a clean environment (Mamoh et al., 2024).

This statement is strengthened through the results of research conducted by Abdurrahman et al., (2024), 23 individuals had pre-test results classified as poor (76.7%), and 7 individuals had pre-test results classified as having good knowledge (23.3%), according to pre-test and post-test scores collected from respondents after they received counseling. After the counseling session, the post-test findings revealed that all respondents had good knowledge (96.6%). So that counseling on the importance of parents bringing toddlers to posyandu increased by 96.6% after providing counseling through leaflets.

Different results from the research shown by Alma (2024) The counseling activity was attended by 28 mothers and their toddlers regarding the importance of visiting the posyandu regularly. The results of counseling activities regarding the importance of people to the posyandu have not reached success indicators. The participation of mothers with babies and toddlers at the Mawar Indah posyandu is still low, Although efforts have been made to increase awareness and participation of parents.

In line with the findings of the study by Nurpratama et al (2023) Questionnaires and attendance list checks of mothers with toddlers were used to collect data. Nine women had a percentage of 45%, which was lower than the previous percentage of 60%, indicating a low level of awareness among the mothers, according to the results. After receiving counseling, 45% of people still do not fully understand the importance of parental visits to the posyandu.

Through 3 previous research results, The researcher argues that there is no relationship with the conduct of counseling by Posyandu cadres. More efficient steps are needed to increase parental participation in visiting posyandu, So that parents are more active in bringing their children to visit the Posyandu. From the results of observations obtained by the researcher to the cadres, At the time of the posyandu, it appeared that cadres contacted the parents of toddlers to attend the posyandu. Researchers consider this step to be less effective in attracting parental participation. Although cadres tried to contact the parents of the toddlers, few parents had the opportunity to attend.

### **Increase parental interest in doing posyandu through PMT**

Based on the results of the research through interviews conducted with posyandu cadres, The level of parental attendance in bringing their toddlers to the posyandu is still low, so that Sukadana Village cadres in increasing parental participation to be more active in bringing their toddlers to the posyandu, namely through PMT. The purpose of PMT is to help parents meet the nutritional needs of their toddlers, educate them about healthy snacks for toddlers, and motivate them to attend posyandu more often. (Firin, 2021).

This statement is reinforced through research conducted by Loaloka & Umbu Zogara (2023) Through giving additional food to toddlers is a way to attract parents to take their children

to the posyandu for weighing. Therefore, by attracting parents' interest in using PMT, it is hoped that it will be able to increase parental participation to more actively bring their toddlers to the posyandu.

Based on the results of observations made by researchers, cadres prepare PMT in the form of interlude food given to toddlers when visiting the posyandu. Researchers consider this step effective in attracting parent participants to bring their children to be more active in detecting the growth and development of toddlers. The researcher assumes that the provision of PMT carried out by cadres during the posyandu can attract people's interest in bringing their children to the posyandu.

## **b. Cadres Differences in Perspective on *Stunting***

### **1) Knowledge of posyandu cadres regarding the definition and symptoms of *stunting* in toddlers**

Based on the results of interviews obtained with the four informants, The researcher concluded that the knowledge of Posyandu cadres is not good enough because it is only limited to the general definition of *stunting*. One of the factors that can affect the knowledge of posyandu cadres regarding *stunting* is the level of cadre education. Based on the table of informant demographic characteristics, 2 out of 4 informants have a high school education level. The higher a person's level of knowledge, the easier it is for them to receive information, so that it produces more knowledge that is owned. Conversely, the lower one's education, the more difficult it is to receive information (Mazidatul et al., 2023).

This statement is strengthened through the results of research conducted by Neira (2024) Knowledge and performance of cadres are significantly correlated, according to the findings of statistical analysis ( $p=0.004$ ,  $OR=6.502$ ,  $95\% CI: 1.813-23.312$ ). When compared to cadres who had less knowledge, those who had more knowledge were 6.5 times more likely to succeed. In line with the results of research conducted by Archda (2020) Posyandu cadres with low education will find it more difficult to receive instructions on nutritional fulfillment. It is very important for cadres to have knowledge about posyandu, as this knowledge can improve the quality of their work. It is hoped that knowledgeable cadres will be more confident compared to less knowledgeable ones, so that they can provide quality services during posyandu activities. (Muntafiah et al., 2023). With the proportion of education that cadres have with the working period, so that it will have a good impact in terms of knowledge and skills on performance when doing posyandu. From the results of interviews obtained from informants, the researcher concluded that there is a relationship between education and the activities of posyandu cadres in carrying out their duties as cadres.

**c. Stunting Prevalence Still High**

**1) Number of incidents of stunting toddlers in the last 1 year**

Based on the results of interviews conducted with employees of the Teruwai health center, Cumulative case data for the month of October 2024 was obtained with a *stunting* prevalence of 11.96% and Sukadana Village became the most prevalent in child cases in the short and very short categories, namely 67 children. From the results of interviews with informants, from Sanggeng Hamlet, 1 toddler who was stunting. Meanwhile, from Jerulang and Mongge 2 Hamlets, there are 4 toddlers who suffer *from stunting* and the most from Mongge 1 Hamlet, which is 8 toddlers.

The high incidence of *stunting* in children in Sukadana Village is influenced by many factors, namely socio-cultural factors such as parenting, economy and food security, maternal health and nutrition of pregnant women, and lack of education and awareness. Although intervention programs from the government such as supplementary feeding have been carried out, a holistic approach involving empowerment such as improving the family economy, and changing social norms is needed to achieve the target of reducing *stunting* to 14% by 2024 as expected by the Government of NTB (Nurbaya et al., 2022).

**d. Cadres as Responsive Agents in *Stunting Prevention***

**1) Contacting the nutrition officer accompanied by recording and monitoring the graph every month in the KMS book.**

Based on the results of interviews with Sukadana Village cadres, reporting carried out by Sukadana Village cadres by contacting nutrition officers accompanied by recording and monitoring charts every month is carried out through the toddler KMS book. Furthermore, it will be handed over to the nutrition officer for follow-up by the health center.

According to the information obtained, the informant contacted the nutrition officer at the time of the posyandu, the cadre found a toddler who was detected early as *stunting*. Before contacting the nutrition officer, cadres will weigh and re-measure to match the graph in the KMS book. If the graph decreases below the yellow line, toddlers are detected to be *stunted*. Another informant also said that if three times the posyandu in a row, the graph does not increase, then the toddler is identified early as *stunting*.

**2) Assistance from the government and forms of supplementary feeding assistance (PMT)**

Based on the results of interviews with informants of Sukadana Village posyandu cadres, Efforts made in tackling stunting toddlers are carried out by getting nutritional development assistance in the form of assistance from *stakeholders* and the provision of PMT. To reduce the incidence of *stunting*, a comprehensive approach is needed. In addition, the Provincial, Regency and City governments must collaborate and commit to

tackling *stunting* (Regita et al., 2023). Assistance from stakeholders and the provision of PMT as conveyed by the informant of Sukadana Village cadres came from the government, villages and baznas in the form of balanced nutritious food packages that included rice, eggs, milk, green beans, chicken, fish, vegetables and fruits. There are also interlude foods such as tempeh, mendoan, chicken nuggets and others.

This statement is strengthened through the results of research conducted by Puspita et al (2023) through the provision of PMT using local ingredients such as moringa leaves made into pudding and chicken chicken from dragon fruit peels proved its success in overcoming *stunting* in Palaran District, Samarinda. In line with the results of research conducted by Nur et al (2024), a collaborative program through the provision of PMT has been carried out by universities and the Health Office of Pangkajene and Islands Regency for six months. The results showed a reduction in *stunting* rates by 17%.

The results of other research were also conducted by Abdul Haris & Miftaakhul, (2024) in terms of *stakeholder assistance*. The research shows that supporting institutions such as Baznas have succeeded in reducing *stunting* and overcoming malnutrition in Brebes Regency in 2023. Similarly, research conducted by Devi (2023) *stunting prevention* carried out by the Banyumas Regency government is quite good, the *prevalence of stunting* was originally 32.02 percent in 2018 when it was designated as one of the 100 districts/cities prioritized for *stunting* intervention to drop to 16.6 percent in 2022 based on SSGI data in 2022.

Based on the results of interviews conducted with informants, often when providing PMT in Sukadana Village, parents are not able to maximize it. The informant said that often parents who receive PMT assistance do not necessarily directly give it to toddlers, but the PMT obtained is given to neighbors. According to the journal Fachirunisa et al (2024), with the provision of PMT high in nutrients in toddlers, it is hoped that it can improve the nutritional status of toddlers.

### **3) Training of posyandu cadres through *stakeholders***

Based on the results of interviews conducted by researchers with Sukadana Village cadres, Stunting prevention for toddlers through socialization is not only carried out to parents of toddlers but also to posyandu cadres. The socialization given to the Sukadana Village posyandu cadres was carried out by the puskesmas officers, namely about training in making PMT, complementary foods, parenting for parents and filling out the correct KMS book. According to the informant, training in making children's supplements can be completed with cheap products that are easy to get around the house. As the types of supplements made from local raw materials will be more varied, the supplemental feeding program (PMT) will not only consist of packaged milk and biscuits. Therefore, cadres'

understanding of how to process foodstuffs into healthy and nutritious snacks for toddlers is very important (Amalia & Makkulawu, 2023).

This statement is strengthened through the results of research conducted by Handayani & Nuryani (2022) There is a relationship between training and the performance of Posyandu cadres so that cadres with sufficient training have sufficient performance. Posyandu cadres receive extensive training with the aim of improving their understanding of nutrition, maternal and child health, and health measures to prevent stunting in toddlers. From the basics of stunting, including the value of exclusive breastfeeding and proper supplemental feeding, to the prevention of diseases and disorders that can affect the nutritional status of toddlers, this course covers a wide range of topics (Munir, 2024).

In line with the results of research conducted by Kurniawati & Handayani (2023), The majority of respondents' knowledge falls into the category both before and after training. There was a clear change or increase in the number of cadres with knowledge both before training, which was 33 (60%), and after training, which was 51 (92.7%). Other research was also carried out by Islamiyati et al (2024), Through community service, significant results were obtained, namely an increase in knowledge and skills of cadres who were very good after being given a demonstration. Training activities can support the increase of cadres' knowledge in making additional foods, especially using local food (Husnul et al., 2023).

## **Conclusion**

The results of the research on the experience of posyandu cadres in overcoming stunting under five resulted in 4 themes, namely; cadres as monitors growth and development and the preventive role of nutrition problems for toddlers, the perspective of cadre differentiation about *stunting*, the prevalence of *stunting* is still high, cadres as responsive agents in *stunting control*.

## **Suggestion**

### **For Nurses**

For nurses, especially community nurses in public health services when running the posyandu program so that it becomes a motivating picture in providing services according to the needs of parents and the community. Nurses can be educators for the elderly, the community. In addition, it can carry out collaboration with other health professions in order to provide comprehensive services according to needs.

### **For Health Offices and Institutions Non-Health**

For agencies, *stakeholder support* from the government and health and non-health institutions. It is expected that it is necessary to provide more support in terms of funding and facilities to support posyandu activities including the training of posyandu cadres, the provision of adequate posyandu facilities and the fulfillment of nutrition and health for toddlers who are *stunted*.

### For the Government

It is expected that all Governments in Indonesia, especially Central Lombok Regency, will be more committed to allocating APBD funds in funding programs/activities that support the acceleration of *stunting reduction*, especially in the provision of sensitive nutrition interventions and the optimization of village funds in budget allocation to reduce the prevalence of *stunting* in Indonesia, especially in Sukadana Village, Pujut District, Central Lombok Regency.

### For Puskesmas

In increasing the role and duties of posyandu cadres, it is expected that the Puskesmas will conduct regular monitoring and supervision related to the performance of cadres to ensure that they carry out their duties properly.

### For Posyandu Cadres

Regular training and coaching for posyandu cadres in an effort to prevent *stunting* can be carried out to increase their roles and responsibilities, thereby improving their positive role. Regular assessment of the role of posyandu cadres by the authorities is another way to improve their functions and responsibilities in *stunting* prevention.

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