

Economic Income as a Cause of Stunting: An Analysis Based on the Perspective of Karl Marx: Literature Review

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Stunting begins to appear when the child is two years old and continues when the fetus is still in the womb. The increase in child morbidity and mortality is the impact caused by the incidence of stunting. Stunting children will be able to experience disturbances in their intelligence level, susceptibility to diseases, decreased productivity, and stunted economic growth, which impacts poverty.

Method: This study is a Literature Review using the PRISMA method. Articles published in 2022-2024 were identified by conducting database searches (Garuda and Google Scholar) and keywords "Stunting," "Economic Income," and limited to using Chi-Square analysis so that articles meet the criteria for analysis, as many of 10 articles.

Results: The search results for the ten articles were obtained, all stating the relationship between economic income and stunting. The author claims that Karl Marx's point of view highlights this problem as a social problem from a social system that subjugates a particular economic class. Dependence on the wage system, inadequate social security, and the exploitation of labor by capitalism trap many proletarian families in a cycle of poverty. This leaves children in these homes vulnerable to chronic malnutrition, which adversely affects their physical and cognitive development.

Conclusion: The problem of low economic income in society as the cause of stunting is not only technical interventions, such as supplementary nutrition programs, but rather more fundamental structural changes, as seen from a Marxist perspective. Economic inequality and stunting prevention can be systematically reduced through wealth redistribution, wage system improvement, and the elimination of labor exploitation.

Keywords: Economic income; Karl Marx; Stunting.



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INTRODUCTION

The management of Indonesia's natural products is one of the ways the state makes money. For example, it can weave various baskets, fabrics, plates, etc. Many people also work as laborers. Of course, the rupiah does not just appear; everything has to go through the process and needs work. However, some people choose to work as laborers to make a living because they are not lucky enough to be able to work efficiently. Some people work light hours, and others work very hard. People who do heavy work are called physical workers. However, it is not a big deal. You can still make money if you have a job (Suardi, Ramlan, and Reskiana, 2022).

In the context of Karl Marx's analysis of society, the framework is structural. In his concept, Marx divided society into two large structures: the superstructure (the upper building) and the infrastructure (the base) (Kambali, 2020). Karl Marx argued that the production process of material goods determines the development and transformation of society. Productive energy determines the production process. Changes and developments of productive forces will form production relations, resulting in a community economic or development system. Karl Marx argued that the development of society began with primitive societies that developed into slave-owning societies. Social change is that it does not stop from time to time. Everything constantly changes because it is a natural process (Mutmainnah, Nonci, and Muslim, 2023).

Stunting begins to appear when the child is two years old and continues when the fetus is still in the womb. The occurrence of increased morbidity and mortality, as well as child development problems, are the impacts caused by the incidence of stunting. Stunted children will be able to experience disturbances in their intelligence levels, susceptibility to diseases, decreased productivity, and stunted economic growth, which impacts poverty (Agustin and Rahmawati, 2021). One of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is to end extreme poverty, achieve basic education for all, and increase girls' and boys' access to quality secondary education by 2030. Stunting, or high birth weight by age, is an indicator of growth retardation caused by chromosomal abnormalities (Hidayah, Siswanto and Pertiwi, 2021a). Food and nutrition development initiatives are strategic investments because they contribute significantly to developing quality and competitive human resources. Food and nutrition development progress, especially in the first 1000 days of life (HPK), from fetal to age two, is an essential opportunity for optimal human growth and development. However, the prevalence of growth and developmental disorders in children during this critical period is still quite high. Stunting is a prominent nutritional problem globally, especially in Indonesia (Nasir, Amalia and Zahra, 2021).

The impact of stunting on children's lives, even up to puberty, including risks to their physical and mental development if not adequately addressed, requires further investigation. Stunting in childhood can signify reduced learning ability due to stunted cognitive development. On the other hand, in the long run, it can affect a child's quality of life in the short term due to the increased effort required to understand better the concepts of education, work, and income. In addition, there is a possibility of obesity-related health problems in the future, which can increase the likelihood of developing diabetes, hypertension, cancer, and other serious diseases (Nirmalasari, 2020). Therefore, the researcher is interested in conducting a literature review study titled "Economic income as a cause of stunting: an analysis based on Karl Marx's perspective." This study aims to describe various scientific evidence articles on economic income as the cause of stunting with an analysis based on Karl Marx's perspective.

METHODOLOGY

This study reviews the Literature using the PRISMA method. This study traces Karl Marx's perspective on the economic income class as the cause of stunting. The research was selected based on the specified criteria, namely articles published in 2022-2024 by searching databases (PubMed, Garuda, Google Scholar) and the keywords "Stunting, "Economic Income" and the research area was limited to only areas in the Indonesian territory and limited to using Chi-Square analysis so that articles met the criteria for analysis as many as 10 articles were obtained.

RESULT

Table 1. of the 10 articles that met the criteria for a literature review using *the Chi-Square analysis design*.

No	Author	Result		Conclusion
		P-value	Data Analysis	
1	(Nurdiyanti <i>et al.</i> , 2024)	0,075	Chi-Square	This study showed no relationship between parental income and the prevalence of stunting in toddlers at the Pekauman Health Center, Banjarmasin.
2	(Solihin <i>et al.</i> , 2024)	0,011	Chi-Square	There is a close relationship between family income and stunting incidence in Sukamulya Village, which does not grow well.
3	(Teuf <i>et al.</i> , 2024)	0,000	Chi-Square	This study shows that parental income affects the incidence of stunting, which is one of the determining factors.
4	(Wati and Ichsan, 2024)	0,005	Chi-Square	The study's results found a relationship between income level and the incidence of stunting at the Gatak Health Center.
5	(Hidayah, Siswanto and Pertiwi, 2021b)	0,001	Chi-Square	There is a significant relationship between family economic status and babies with low birth weight, underweight, and stunting.
6	(Khati and Ariesta, 2023)	0,00	Chi-Square	The study results show a substantial correlation between economic status and the prevalence of stunting in toddlers in Kupang Village, Tambang District, in 2023.
7	(Ahnafani <i>et al.</i> , 2024)	0,027	Chi-Square	There is a significant relationship between the economic status of mothers and the incidence of stunting in toddlers.
8	(Yuningsih, Sari and Handayani, 2023)	0,000	Chi-Square	The Chi-Square test results showed a strong correlation between the profession of parents and the prevalence of stunting in toddlers aged 12-60 months at the Kaliwates Health Center.
9	(Bao, 2023)	0,026	Chi-Square	Final Assessment: There is a correlation between family income and the prevalence of stunting in toddlers in the Nosarra Health Center, Tatanga District, South Palu working area.
10	(Wulandari and Arianti, 2023)	0,000	Chi-Square	There is a correlation between income level and the prevalence of stunting in toddlers in the working area of the Tanjung Batu Kepri Health Center.

Based on Table 1. The above shows that of the 10 articles analyzed, nine stated that there was a relationship between economic income and stunting incidence, and 1 article stated that there was no relationship between income and stunting incidence.

DISCUSSION

From this literature review, article 1 states that the study results show no relationship between parental income and the incidence of stunting in toddlers. However, this study confirms that low income is one of the highest causes of malnutrition, with low-income conditions causing families to be unable to meet nutritional needs, which has an impact on nutritional fulfillment in toddlers; generally, when income increases, the amount and type of food tend to vary. The income level also determines what kinds of food to buy with additional money. The higher the income, the greater the percentage of income used to purchase fruits, vegetables, and various other types of food. So, income is an essential factor for the quality and quantity of nutrition in toddlers (Ria, 2020) (Nurdiyanti et al., 2024).

Some articles in this literature review state a relationship between parents' economic income and the incidence of stunting; there are nine articles, namely articles 2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10. A very significant relationship with stunting can be seen in article 3, which shows from the study that parents with an income level of < Rp.1,975,000 are at risk of having stunted toddlers 5,577 times. This study also uses the results of the Logistic Regression Test (Variables in The Equation), showing that if the income level of parents has a direction or has a positive effect of 1.169 which means that every time there is an addition of one unit of income level of parents who are low in eating, there will be an increase in the incidence of stunting of 1.169 with a significance of 0.040 ($p < 0.04$ which means that there is a significant influence between parental income levels on stunting incidence. This is in line with the research in article 4, which explains the magnitude of the P value of the income level variable of 0.005 (<0.05) with an Odds Ratio (Exp B) value of 6.927. This shows a significant relationship between the income of parents who have toddlers and the incidence of stunting, where respondents with low-income levels have a 6,927 times greater risk of experiencing stunting in toddlers (Wati & Ichsan, 2024).

This is also by Article 6 Research, where 19 (13.7%) of the 79 respondents in the low category, whose economic status is below the UMR, do not experience delays in growth and development in their young children. In contrast, among respondents in the high economic group, 19 (13.7%) children do not experience developmental delays. Of the minimum wage, 28 (20.1%) of young children are in the developmental delay category. Results: The statistical test showed a $p\text{-value} = 0.000 \leq (0.05)$, indicating a significant relationship between economic status and the incidence of developmental delays in children under 5 years old. The analysis of information on the relationship between the two variables obtained a prevalence value or (POR) (95% CI: 1,751-7,440), which can be interpreted as the risk of developing this disease in respondents with the economic status category <UMR. 3,609 times. Young children experience developmental delays compared to respondents with economic status in the UMR category (Khatai and Ariesta, 2023). Knowledge about stunting prevention in pregnant women plays a vital role in shaping attitudes and behaviors that support stunting prevention efforts (Adam, Fitrianiingsih, and Basir, 2024).

Based on the research frequency, article 7 shows the mother's age with a mean and standard deviation of $28,69 \pm 5,168$ in the age range of 21-45 years. Most mothers' economic status was in the low category, with as many as 59 respondents (59.8%) and as

many as 69 (71.1%) having high maternal education levels. Based on the age of toddlers, the mean and standard deviation of $41,12 \pm 11,203$ in the range of 24-59 months, the majority are male, as many as 50 (51.5%), and most of the toddlers do not experience stunting as much as 66 (68.1%) (Ahnafani et al., 2024). It is also supported by employment data that the results of the research from article 8 show that the most maternal work categories are the unemployed group and the short category (stunted), and the most father education category is the low education group and the short category (stunted) (Yuningsih et al., 2023).

The results of the research on the 10 articles found that economic income is one of the things that causes stunting. Stunting is one of the world's health problems that has a long-term impact on human and societal growth. The high stunting rate in Indonesia is still a significant problem related to unfair social and economic conditions. Income and economic inequality are indirect reasons for stunting. Eliminating the things that cause stunting requires political will and action strategies, participation from governments and other sectors, and the ability to implement the plan (Kemenkes, 2023). Karl Marx described socialism as an economic scheme in which the government controls much of the economy. A socialist economic system does not mean that people cannot be free in their economic activities; Everyone has always had the right to be free in their economic activities, but often the government intervenes. The government is critical in social welfare (Meidyawati and Qodir, 2023).

Karl Marx's ideas can help us understand how class differences affect backwardness in capitalist society. Marx argued that economic imbalances caused by how goods are made can cause many social problems, such as health problems and underdevelopment. Inequality plays a fundamental part that undermines the health and progress of children, as Marxism shows. Karl Marx saw and understood society in the context of how society was built. Marx argued that society comprises two significant buildings: infrastructure (base) and superstructure (upper building). Karl Marx said that in a capitalist society, there are two main groups: the rich, who own the means of production, and the workers, who work on them. When power and ownership of the means of production are unequal, people are exploited, which leads to an unequal distribution of wealth. This inequality makes it difficult for some people to get simple things like food, health care, and education.

Based on the literature review findings and Article 10 analysis, the economy is an investment that can help reduce stunting rates. Along with economic growth, people's food conditions improve, which can help stop stunting. Insufficient food intake leads to growth failure. Women who experience stunting will have children who are stunted, which starts a cycle of poverty and loss of human resources that is difficult to stop (Zurhayati & Hidayah, 2022). This suggests that differences in economic income can be seen as social traits that affect how people eat and how healthy their families are. Working-class families in low-income areas often cannot provide their children nutritious meals. Low-income families are also unable to avoid or overcome hunger because they do not have easy access to health services that can help with stunting prevention and treatment. The author claims that Karl Marx's point of view highlights this problem as a social problem that stems from a social system that subjugates a particular economic class. Dependence on the wage system, inadequate social security, and the exploitation of labor by capitalism trap many proletarian families in a cycle of poverty. This leaves children in these homes vulnerable to chronic malnutrition, which adversely affects their physical and cognitive development.

CONCLUSION

Based on a study of 10 articles, which is the result of research conducted in various regions in Indonesia, it is known that the leading cause of stunting is the low economic income of the community. In addition, there is a correlation between the incidence of stunting in Indonesia and the economic income of the community. In Indonesia, the solution to the problem of low economic income in the community as a cause of stunting is not just technical interventions, such as supplementary nutrition programs, but rather more fundamental structural changes, as seen from a Marxist perspective. Economic inequality and stunting prevention can be systematically reduced through wealth redistribution, wage system improvement, and the elimination of labor exploitation. This literature review only reviews articles published between 2022 and 2024. We hope to conduct further research on other causes of stunting.

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