

Parenting Style as Determinant of Toddler Nutritional Status

Reny Mareta Sari^{1*}, Sergiana F. Saba Jawa

Department of Public Health, Universitas STRADA Indonesia, Indonesia

Department of Public Health, Universitas STRADA Indonesia, Indonesia

Department of Public Health, Universitas STRADA Indonesia, Indonesia

Corresponding author: renymareta@strada.ac.id

ABSTRACT

Appropriate nutrition is essential during the growth and development of toddlers. Therefore, feeding patterns, as a form of parenting style, play an important role in determining the nutritional status of toddlers. This study aims to analyze the relationship between parenting styles and the nutritional status of toddlers in one of the Community health posts (Posyandu) in Kediri City. The research was conducted toward 56 respondents. The measurement of parenting style was conducted to the mother using questionnaire while nutritional status was measured using health card (KMS). The result of study showed that most of the mothers are having good parenting style (51,8%) and most of the toddlers are having normal nutritional status (71,4%). Statistical analysis conducted using Chi-Square showed that there is significant relationship between parenting style and toddlers' nutritional status ($p\text{-value} = 0,027$). Therefore, appropriate feeding pattern and parenting style should be applied to all parents to make sure all children are having good nutritional status for their growth and development.

Keywords: Nutrition, Nutritional Status, Parenting Style, Toddlers

INTRODUCTION

Under five age are a crucial period in a child's growth and development. Nutritional intake plays a crucial role in growth, brain development, and overall health. Therefore, nutritional status during the these years significantly impacts growth and long-term health. (Husna et al., 2025; Suchianti, 2023; WHO, 2023). WHO states that undernutrition is closely linked to 45% of child deaths. Therefore, feeding patterns play a crucial role in improving child survival and promoting healthy and optimal growth and development. (WHO, 2023).

The 2022 Indonesian Nutritional Status Survey (SSGI) showed that the prevalence of stunting had decreased to 21.6% in 2022 and 19.8% in 2024, but the prevalence of wasting remained at 7.4%. Although the stunting rate has decreased, it remains far from the target of 14.2% in the medium-term development plan (RPJMN) by 2029. Therefore, several efforts are needed to address the nutritional problem in Indonesia (Kementerian Kesehatan RI, 2022; UNICEF, 2025).

One effort that can be made is to ensure nutritional intake appropriate to the growth and development stages of children and toddlers as part of parenting patterns. Parenting patterns and diet are closely related, especially in the growth and development of children and toddlers. Differences in parenting will naturally produce different outcomes for each child, including their health status. The parenting patterns applied by parents to children shape their habits, behaviors, and eating patterns because children's food intake is still heavily influenced by their

parents. This will undoubtedly impact children's health as a result of these consumption patterns (Daniels, 2019; Nadhila et al., 2023).

Based on this background, this study aims to analyze the relationship between parenting patterns and nutritional status of toddlers at one of the Integrated Health Posts (Posyandu) in Kediri City.

METHODS

The study was conducted as observational research with cross-sectional approach. A total of 56 respondents consist of mother and her toddler are acquired from Posyandu data. The respondents are chosen randomly based on data given by cadres. The study was approved by Ethics Committee from Universitas STRADA Indonesia with ethical clearance number 001387/EC/KEPK/I/06/2024. The independent variable of the study is parenting style and toddlers' nutritional status is the dependent variables. Parenting style was measured using questionnaire. The questionnaire of the parenting style are consist of 23 question items related to feeding pattern of the toddlers and is categorized as good, moderate, and bad parenting style (Dewi, 2022). Toddlers' nutritional status was measured using health card (KMS) by measuring toddlers weight compared to age (BB/U) and categorized as overweight, normal, wasted, and severely wasted. Statistical analysis was conducted using Chi-square with α set at 0,05 to analyse the relationship between parenting style and toddlers' nutritional status.

RESULTS

Table 1. Mothers' characteristic

No	Characteristic	Frequency	%
1	Age		
	< 20 years old	2	3,6
	20-35 years old	41	73,2
	>35 years old	13	23,2
	Total	56	100
2	Educational level		
	Junior high school	6	10,7
	Senior high school	36	64,3
	Bachelor degree and above	14	25,0
	Total	56	100
3	Working status		
	Working	27	48,2
	Not working	29	51,8
	Total	56	100
4	Parenting style		
	Good	29	51,8
	Moderate	18	32,1
	Bad	9	16,1
	Total	56	100

Table 1 showed that most of the mother are aged 20-35 years old (73,2%) with education level at senior high school (64,3%). There is no much different in number between mother who work (48,2%) and not working (51,8%). The measurement of the parenting style showed that more than half of the respondents are having good parenting style (51,8%) but there are 16,1% mothers who have bad parenting style.

Table 2. Children's characteristik

No	Characteristic	Frequency	%
1	Sex		
	Male	31	55,4
	Female	25	44,6
	Total	56	100
2	Age		
	1-5 months	5	8,9
	6-12 months	3	5,4
	13-24 months	12	21,4
	25-36 months	10	17,9
	37-48 months	12	21,4
	49-60 months	14	25,0
	Total	56	100
3	Nutritional Status		
	Overweight	11	19,6
	Normal	40	71,4
	Underweight	4	7,1
	Severe underweight	1	1,8
	Total	56	100

Table 2 showed that more than half of the toddlers of this study are male (55,4%) and most of them are aged more than 24 months old. Toddlers' nutritional status acquired from KMS showed that most of them are having normal nutritional status (71,4%) while there are 19,6% who were overweight, 7,1% are underweight, and even there is 1 toddler who were having severe underweight.

Table 3. The relationship between parenting style and toddlers' nutritional status

Parenting Style	Toddlers' Nutritional Status				Total	P-value
	Severe Underweight	Underweight	Normal	Overweight		
Good	0	1	21	7	9	0,027
Moderate	0	1	16	1	18	
Bad	1	2	3	3	29	
Total	1	4	40	11	56	

Table 3 showed that most of the toddler who have normal nutritional status are having mother with good parenting style. Cross tabulation also showed that toddlers with severe underweight are from mother with bad parenting style. Good parenting style also found at toddlers with overweight even tough mother with moderate and bad parenting style also having overweight toddlers. But most of them are from mother with good parenting style. Statistical analysis showed that p-value are less than α ($0,027 < 0,05$) indicate that there is relationship between parenting style and toddlers nutritional status significantly.

DISCUSSION

The research results show that parenting styles have a significant relationship with the nutritional status of toddlers. Parents with good parenting styles have children with good nutritional status. A child's diet and the quality of food consumed are largely determined by their parents. This is because in early life, children are highly dependent on adults for everything, including their nutritional intake. Nutritional intake during infancy and toddlers

plays a crucial role in determining their nutritional status (Ningning & Wenguang, 2023). Parenting styles reflect the attitudes and behaviors of parents in raising and influencing their children's lifestyle habits. Parenting and feeding practices are determined by several factors, including knowledge, attitudes, and access to information related to parenting and feeding. Access to appropriate and accurate information can increase parental knowledge and awareness. Parents with a good level of knowledge tend to have positive attitudes toward parenting, including feeding practices (Musher-Eizenman & Kiefner, 2013; Prasticha et al., 2023; Sari et al., 2025).

Feeding patterns, as part of parenting, are a major factor influencing children's eating behavior. This is because parents are the primary providers of and control over children's food. Therefore, parenting patterns are closely linked to eating behavior, dietary preferences, food choices, and nutritional status. Numerous studies have also shown that poor feeding patterns contribute to overweight and obesity in preschool children (Birch & Davison, 2001; Lo et al., 2015; Musher-Eizenman & Kiefner, 2013; Ningning & Wenguang, 2023).

CONCLUSION

The study showed that there is significant relationship between parenting style and nutritional status among toddlers. Bad parenting style could result to poor nutritional status such as underweight, severe underweight, and overweight, while toddler with normal nutritional status is from mother with good or at least moderate parenting style. Therefore, parents should be facilitated to access proper information so they can provide a better parenting style to improve their children nutritional status.

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