

EXPLORING ENDEAVOUR OF HEALTH FACILITATORS REINFORCE PUBLIC CONSCIOUSNESS ON STUNTING REDUCTION

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ABSTRACT

Health facilitators (IHT cadres/posyandu and village midwives) play a strategic role in preventing stunting. This study aims to uncover how health facilitators strengthen family awareness using Aristotle's persuasive analysis. Primary data were collected using in-depth interview techniques with informants determined by the purposive sampling method. Secondary data were collected by observation techniques during the interaction process between health facilitators and target groups and literature studies. Next, the data was encoded and analysed with Aristotle's three persuasive concepts: ethos, pathos, and logos. The results showed that health facilitators interacted directly with the target group through two important moments: during health checks at posyandu, and sweeping people's homes. The facilitator's knowledge is sourced from MCH books and other valid references. In conclusion, the facilitator applies interpersonal communication (counseling) to reinforce consciousness of the target group, which is reinforced by Aristotle's persuasion techniques: ethos, pathos, and logos. Through direct interaction, they convince and change family views, beliefs, and behaviours to comply with stunting guidelines. Facilitators promoted three key messages in strengthening consciousness: maternal and child health, healthy behaviours and lifestyles, and environmental health.

Keywords: *stunting, health facilitators, posyandu cadre, Aristotle*

INTRODUCTION

According to the Indonesian Nutritional Status Survey (SSGI), the prevalence of stunting in Indonesia decreased from 24.4% in 2021 to 21.6% in 2022.⁽²⁶⁾ The prevalence of stunting in Indonesia is higher than the WHO standard, which is 20%. During the pandemic, almost all areas that have confirmed Covid-19 have a majority of stunting (short size) and wasting (thin size) medium and even tall. Of the 260 stunting locus districts/cities, 71 are red, and 61 are green zones.⁽¹⁴⁾

As a form of commitment to accelerate stunting reduction, the government has issued Presidential Regulation (Perpres) Number 72 of 2021 concerning the Acceleration of Stunting Reduction.⁽⁸⁾ This Presidential Regulation is a legal umbrella for the National Strategy for the Acceleration of Stunting Reduction, launched and implemented in 2018.

In Bogor Regency, there was a reported decrease in stunting cases from 2020, namely 12.69% to 9.89% in 2021.⁽⁶⁾ The Bogor Regency Government launched a stunting reduction program called the Stunting-Free Bogor Regency (Bogor Bebas Stunting/Gobest) in 2023. The Bogor Regency Government also ensures a clean water supply, sanitation improvements, education facilities, poverty reduction, and gender equality campaigns.⁽⁶⁾ To accelerate the prevention of stunting in 2022, as

many as 36 villages from 21 sub-districts in Bogor Regency to become the focus of stunting interventions in 2022, one of which is Ciawi Village, Ciawi District, Bogor Regency.⁽⁶⁾

Field officers, namely village midwives and integrated healthcare center (IHT/pos pelayanan terpadu/posyandu) cadres contributed significantly to the success of those national strategic programs. They play a crucial role in breaking down policies into operational guidelines that are easy to understand and implement at the operational level. Both of them also play a key role in persuading and reinforcing consciousness for Ciawi Village families to comply with the recommendations and provisions for handling stunting. Midwives are classified as health workers and do not include IHT cadres. For ease of analysis, the two professions were called "health facilitators" in this study.⁽⁵⁾

Stunting is a condition of growth failure in children (body and brain) due to malnutrition for a long time, from when the fetus is in the womb to the beginning of the child's life (the first 1000 days of birth). Children with stunting grow shorter than normal ones their age and delay in thinking.⁽²⁷⁾ Among the causes of stunting is the low maternal awareness of a healthy lifestyle.⁽³³⁾

Consciousness can be explained by Jung's theory of personality, especially the concept of ego and

personal unconscious. The ego is part of a person's consciousness. The ego becomes the centre of self-control over the activities that a person performs daily, such as thinking, feeling, remembering and understanding, working and so on.⁽²⁴⁾ Personal unconsciousness is a knot, of various past experiences in the form of beliefs, feelings, pressure that accumulate and settle in a person, and can become an ego.⁽²²⁾

According to Merriam Webster's dictionary, consciousness means (a) the quality or state of being aware especially of something within oneself, and (b) the state or fact of being conscious of an external object, state, or fact. In this study, consciousness is interpreted as the state of a person with past experiences that precipitate transformation by being able to think, feel, remember and understand circumstances surrounding the internal and external environment. Consciousness has four functions: thinking, feeling, sensation, and intuition.⁽²⁵⁾

A person's consciousness can be influenced and changed by rhetoric technique of communication. Rhetoric is "the ability in every (certain) case, to see the means available for persuasion".⁽²⁾ "Persuasion" is equated with several terms such as influencing, convincing, manipulating or teasing Perloff defines "persuasion" as a symbolic process in which communicators try to convince others to change their attitude or behaviour regarding an issue by transmitting messages in an atmosphere of free choice.⁽³⁷⁾

Aristotle divided persuasion into two types: artistic and non-artistic. Non-artistic is related to facts outside the communicator.⁽³⁾ Furthermore, the artistic is everything related to the communicator, including the *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos*. From the explanation above, *ethos* is built on three factors, namely practical ability or wisdom (wisdom or phronesis), benevolence or goodness (*arête* or virtue), and desire and goodwill towards others (*eunoia* or goodwill).⁽³⁾

According to the online Indonesian dictionary, wisdom referred to a person who 1) always uses his mind (his experience and knowledge); 2) is clever and careful (meticulous, and so on) when facing difficulties.⁽¹⁹⁾ *Arête* or virtue is associated with good moral quality.⁽⁹⁾ Generally, good moral qualities mean that a person's thoughts, speech, and deeds are in line with and acceptable to the environment.⁽¹³⁾ The good morality based on sincere intentions becomes the capital of a persuader to seize credibility from the public. *Eunoia* or goodwill refers to kindness, sincerity, and willingness to sacrifice for others. *Ethos* is commonly associated with dedication, sincerity, willingness, and sacrifice in

duty.⁽¹⁶⁾ A figure who works with the those qualities tends to be trusted and accepted by his environment (credible).

Pathos refers to how the communicator can influence the feelings and emotions of the audience that appear in the form of joy, sadness, contentment, pity, or fear.⁽¹⁾ To create a *pathos* effect, the communicator first identifies or selects aspects of the audience that are judged to be the most potential to evoke emotions.⁽⁷⁾ The choice of environmental situation can be related to the needs, values, and desires.⁽⁴⁰⁾ The emotional aspects of *pathos* are understood from three concepts: empathy, trust, and understanding. Empathy in the context of communication is an attitude of understanding others to reinforce and support for the other party to achieve common goals. Trust is rooted in one party's openness to the other, which is the foundation for growing a sense of security and reducing one party's concerns about the other. Openness is also the basis for increasing understanding and reducing conflict.

The *logos* component refers to the ability of rationality of the communicator. He or she is considered qualified if he or she can explain his/her thoughts and opinions logically based on data and facts that can be verified. Communicators with *logos* qualifications can express ideas that are easy to understand and based on information that can be tested for validity (clarity and integrity).⁽¹⁷⁾

A communicator with *logos* quality examines the audience's character in understanding the message. From the Elaboration Likelihood Theory/Model (ELT/M) perspective, two types of persuasion message reception routes are known as the peripheral route and the central route.⁽³⁸⁾ The central route occurs in a motivated individual who has time to think about decisions. In this type, person will carefully consider the message in detail, think critically, and try to make the best decisions.

Person with little time and find the message received less valuable tend to be more easily persuaded through peripheral routes. They are processed the messages with little involvement in logical considerations. The emotional appeal of the message will be the primary considerations. They does not have enough ability to process messages.⁽⁴⁵⁾

The *logos* aspect hints at a communicator's careful understanding of the interlocutor or audience. The persuader should understand how to convey a message according to general characteristics of audience, analyse problems and build arguments.

A previous study conducted by Hutagaol & Agustin described the interpersonal communication of health workers with qualitative descriptive

methods and content analysis techniques.⁽¹⁸⁾ Data were collected using in-depth interview methods, FGD, and participant observation. Then, Maulida & Suriani identified the influence of communication and mobilization of IHT cadres on behavior change in stunting prevention using a correlation method with a cross-sectional approach.⁽²⁷⁾ Novrianti & Achmadi used quantitative descriptive methods to examine the decrease in interest of mothers coming to IHT. Data were collected through questionnaires and library data.⁽³⁴⁾ This study explores the endeavor of health facilitators to change the beliefs and reinforce consciousness of residents of Ciawi Village, Bogor, Indonesia, in handling stunting using Aristotle's persuasive communication analysis.

METHOD

This research used a qualitative descriptive approach with Aristotle's persuasive analysis techniques. Qualitative research tracks and finds informants' thoughts, values, life principles, and habits (individuals or groups) so that the research object can be understood thoroughly and completely.⁽³⁵⁾ Thus, qualitative research is a type of constructivist research emphasizing that knowledge is active and creative, seeing, hearing, and reading from people, places, events, and activities.^{(33),(44)}

This study collected primary data through in-depth interviews with selected informants based on purposive, judgmental, or subjective sampling procedures. They are selected based on certain criteria, namely individuals who convey stunting socialization messages directly to the residents of Ciawi Village (audience), have competencies (knowledge about stunting), and have the capacity (officers responsible for carrying out stunting prevention socialization tasks). From these criteria, the informants selected were two cadres of the IHT, a village midwife, a secretary and a head of the Ciawi Village Government.

Secondary data was gathered in two ways. First, through observation of where interaction between health facilitators and target group took place. Secondly, we explored manuscripts, documents, and other references to find out important data and information related to answer problem statement.

List of questions designed systematically derived from the three basic notion of Aristotle persuasive communications: *ethos*, *pathos* and *logos*. All data-gathering results were validated and categorised. Furthermore, we also counted and selected the valid data using the MsWord search tool before coded, analysed, and interpreted.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on 2020 data, the population of Ciawi Village, Ciawi District, Bogor Regency, is 7,883 people, with 4,098 men and 3,785 women.⁽¹²⁾ Most of the population of Ciawi Village (77%) has a low secondary education level (Table 1). Only a small percentage of the population with fixed incomes (9%) – teachers, civil servants and employees, – while most group worked in the informal sector that does not promise a fixed income (Table 2).

Table 1. Ciawi Resident Level of Education

Education	Male	Female	%
Pre School	427	597	15,61
Primary School	834	996	22,92
Junior H-School	855	1100	29,81
Senior H-School	746	551	19,78
Diploma	76	64	00,02
College	200	111	00,04

Table 2. Ciawi Resident Level of Occupation

Occupation	Male	Female	%
Farmer	22	3	00,01
Civil Servant	99	22	00,05
Labor	282	250	22,79
Entrepreneur	998	0	42,75
Teacher	26	14	00,17
Retire	35	15	00,17
Employee	313	255	02,43

According to the Ciawi Village report in 2022, there are 99 children with stunting were identified when this study was conducted.¹¹ In supporting the socialization of stunting prevention, the Ciawi village government held a village-level “rembuk stunting” in the office hall of Ciawi Village. This activity was attended by representatives from the Ministry of Social Affairs, Ministry of Village, Development of Disadvantaged Regions and Transmigration, as well as village officials, pregnant women and mothers with babies-toddlers, community leaders, religious leaders, cultural leaders, representatives of local IHT cadres, healthcare staff, early childhood education initiator (penggerak pendidikan anak usia dini/AUD), village governments officer, member of village consultative bodies (anggota badan penasehat desa/BPD), and village communities (Participant 4, personal interview, 26 July, 2022; Participant 5, personal interview, 22 July, 2022).

Through rembuk stunting, the participant develops their knowledge of how to weigh, measure, and

understand children's health. Mothers also must go to the IHT at periodic times. We consist of doing. (Participant 4, personal interview, 26 July, 2022).

Hopefully, after this, the mothers will also come to the IHT. (We always try persuading mothers with children) five years old to come to the IHT and understand more and more what is called growth. (Participant 1, personal interview, 10 Oct, 2022).

The quality of health services through IHT is determined by the performance of its cadres. They are required to perform optimal services during the implementation of the IHT, especially counseling on the results of weighing babies and toddlers about the growth and development of the child concerned. IHT cadres are people who are chosen, willing, able, and have time and concern for basic social services of the community, especially related to the decrease in maternal mortality rate (MMR), the infant mortality rate (AKB/angka kematian bayi), and toddler mortality rate.⁽³⁷⁾

One of their important role is to perform services optimally during the implementation of IHT, especially counseling the results of weighing babysitters and toddlers about child growth and development.⁽⁴³⁾ In 2011, there were 266,827 IHT in Indonesia, with around 3-4 cadres for each IHT. This means there are more than 1 million IHT cadres are in Indonesia.⁽³⁷⁾ Bogor Regency has 26,155 IHT cadres.⁽⁴⁶⁾ In Ciawi Village, there are seven IHT cadres with five ones each, so there are a total of 35 IHT cadres (Participant 1, personal interview, 10 Oct, 2022).

IHT has the task of being one of the providers of primary health care (PHC) at the village level. IHT is coordinated by the community health centre (CHC/puskesmas).⁽³⁸⁾ Together with other health service units, IHT provides integrated services from health promotion, prevention, and disease diagnosis, to treatment and rehabilitation efforts.^{(29),(32)}

As a series of PHC policies, IHT adheres to several principles: community-based, community participation, preventive and participatory. PHC is community-oriented (people-centered) rather than waiting for disease-centered treatment.^{(38),(42)} IHT locations in villages increase community access to health services, especially for target groups from the poor. PHC's operating budget is supported by the state, so that they can access services at a low cost.

At the IHT, five tables were prepared starting from registration, height and weight measurements, recording, nutrition counseling, and health services. The results of height and weight measurements and the recording of nutritional status are important data

that can indicate whether the babies have early symptoms or not. IHT cadres weighed the babies, and the data was matched with the graph (curve) on the Card Towards Health (Kartu Menuju Sehat/KMS) in the Kesehatan Ibu dan Anak (KIA) book. If the child's growth curve is on the green curve, the IHT cadre motivates the mother to continue the already good breastfeeding, feeding, and parenting routine (participant 3, personal interview, 19 Jul, 2022). If the results of measuring weight and height are below the indicators, the facilitator conducts knowledge-based counseling on the KIA book.



Figure 1. KIA book's cover

We use the KMS book as a guide when providing counseling at IHT. In addition to KMS, KIA book also contains a complete guide for stunting prevention. To the people present at the IHT, we are always explained and reminded of the instructions and provisions inside KIA book. That's the basis for our providing counselling (Participant 3, personal interview, 19 Jul, 2022).

Counseling refers to counselors' planned and systematic efforts to provide assistance and guidance to resolve psychological, social, and personal difficulties.³⁹ Through emotional closeness, the counselor helps clients (target groups) identify the problems, provides reinforcement, and jointly solves problems by optimizing existing resources. With the goal of empowerment, counselors use their values, information, knowledge, and skills to increase knowledge, strengthen motivation, push persuasion, and encourage changes in client behaviour. In this study, counseling is understood as a process that

occurs systematically and linearly through three stages: cognitive, affective and behavioural change.

Especially, the KIA book is designed and compiled to maintain maternal and child health, including preventing developmental disorders in children. The KIA book contains essential information about maternal and child health that mothers and their families need to do shortly and concisely, including regarding family and community awareness of symptoms of illness and emergencies in pregnant women, newborns, and toddlers (hereinafter referred to as the target group).



Figure 2. One of illustration inside KIA book

This book also contains various instructions, examples, and prohibitions, with more speaking in the language of the picture. Almost every suggestion, guidance, and bans presentation is presented with coloured images. The language used in the KIA book is relatively short and uses diction that everyday people commonly use. The KIA book also collects health records of the member of Ciawi Village, such as the KMS, to measure the growth and development of infants under five, immunization cards, mother cards, and several other things.

Not all village residents are willing to come to IHT voluntarily and consciously. Health facilitators come to every resident's home to ensure affordable medical services, termed “sweeping.” Health facilitators carry out baby and toddler feeding, provide immunizations, and check the health of pregnant women. All pregnant women and toddlers are given additional food to improve their nutritional status.

Sweeping is also carried out to ensure the quality of the environment and residents' support of clean and healthy living behaviours, including by checking wells, bathrooms, and washing-latrines facilities (MCK). (Participant 2, personal interview, 20 Jul, 2022).

During the “sweeping” activity, health facilitators again inserted messages, so mothers or premarital spouses must obey the recommendations and behaviours supported by the KIA book. Facilitators also strengthen residents' awareness about risky pregnancies, which are pregnant at too old (close to 40 years old), too young, too tight, and too many – or abbreviated as “4-too”. In the case of a young marriage has found, the facilitator persuades the couple and relatives to postpone the pregnancy.

To pregnant women, we persuaded them to be willing to come to IHT. Not all obeyed. Some of them are reluctant for various reasons. To ensure the mother and fetus are healthy and give birth to a healthy baby, we also visit the house regularly and snuff out the pregnancy. We accompany mothers who give birth at home. (participant 2, personal interview, 20 Jul, 2022).

Health facilitators play an important role in handling stunting. Facilitators are at the forefront, and interact directly with the target group. During the interaction, they communicate their knowledge about stunting reduction to the village community. Facilitators are in a crucial situation because they must be able to translate stunting management policies at the strategic level into detailed practical and operational instructions. Their interlocutors are villagers characterized by a low level of education and economics. Health facilitators must be able to choose the proper diction so that the message is clear and correct, easy to understand, and does not create multi-interpreted meaning (ambiguous) for the residents.

It is not easy to convince the target group to follow the recommendations and comply with the guidelines for handling stunting. This research shows that not all target groups fulfill the facilitator's call to attend at IHT. Some pregnant women refuse to be persuaded to give birth at PHC (Participant 2, personal interview, 20 Jul, 2022). In Asdhany & Kartini study on maternal participation in IHT activities, 43.6% of respondents visited HIT less than eight times a year.⁽⁴⁾ Through in-depth interviews, the study of Fitriyanti & Mulyati shows that the lack of maternal awareness in accessing knowledge impacts malnutrition in infants under five.⁽¹⁵⁾

This fact shows that the values of personal unconsciousness still shackle people, so they are reluctant to follow medical advice.⁽²¹⁾ They are affected by the general perception that dealing with health facilities is synonymous with expensive costs. Moreover, the education and economic level of the village community is at a low level (Table 1 and Table 2). To reinforce the target group's awareness, health facilitators use counseling techniques (participant 2, personal interview, 20 Jul, 2022).

The messages discussed during counseling included pregnancy care, prevention of congenital abnormalities, childbirth and early initiation of breastfeeding (IMD), postpartum, newborn care, exclusive breastfeeding, family planning, and immunization of infants.

Counseling includes building a trusting relationship, identifying problems, setting goals and shared commitments, solving problems, and evaluating. The general perception that health facilitators are there to help makes them trustworthy and acceptable to residents. Identification of problems in the target group was carried out by measuring the height and weight of the babies under five at the IHT. Based on the KMS book, the weight of infants in the green zone shows nutritional adequacy. Weight in the yellow area indicates malnutrition status, and weight below the red line (BGM) indicates malnutrition has the potential to trigger stunting.

The facilitator instills a message to mothers about the dangers of infants with BGM conditions. Children with indications of nutritional problems are vulnerable to various health problems (morbidity), experience disability, and even death (mortality). Malnutrition can reduce the quality of human resources (HR) of a nation and even become a threat to the resilience and survival of a nation.

Mothers are given an understanding of the importance of nutrition. To achieve optimal height and weight for infants and toddlers, the facilitator motivates mothers to take in balanced nutrition (micro-macro), exclusive breastfeeding for up to 6 months, continuing to provide breastmilk (air susu ibu/ASI) and complementary food (makanan pendamping ASI/MP-ASI).⁽²⁰⁾

(The message conveyed is basically how) to produce good (healthy) children or superior seeds, sir... (Requested) eat a nutritious, balanced diet. Back to a healthy lifestyle. (participant 3, personal interview, 20 Jul, 2022).

To restore children's nutritional status, important for children to receive Recovery Food Supplement (MPT), namely nutritional supplementation in the form of additional food with special formulations and fortified with vitamins and minerals.⁽³¹⁾

Counseling also took place during the sweeping activities. In the residents' homes, the facilitator ensures environmental support for health by checking the quality of sanitation in the homes of the target group. The facilitator educates residents on the important role of healthy sanitation in supporting human quality of life. Several good environmental quality are washing hands, quality latrines, not smoking, and consuming lots of fruits and clean water.²⁸ The facilitator also emphasized the importance of attending regularly at the IHT to receive health services.

During the counseling activities, the facilitator interacts directly, talks from heart to heart, explores the needs and solves the problems the target group faces.^{(41),(12)} Counseling is based on mutual trust, openness for a common goal. Health facilitators are accepted and trusted (*ethos*), because they work for the benefit of the target group (*pathos/empathy*).

Counseling provides a wide range of non-verbal expressions in interpersonal communication. This research is in line with the study of Maulida & Suriani, which concluded that interpersonal communication for cadres has a better effect on stunting prevention (behaviour change).⁽²³⁾ It also strengthens the study of Hutagaol & Agustin which concluded that rude attitudes were the cause of the failure of IHT cadres to change people's behaviour.⁽¹⁸⁾

Various thoughts and knowledge of health facilitators are conveyed to change the awareness and behaviour of the target group, referring to the recommended references of knowledge (*logos*) that base on the KIA book. Beside contain knowledge and information, the KIA handbook also shares practical instructions and operational guidelines supported by colourful illustrations, pictures, graphics and tables (Figure 2). Operational guidelines that are easy to understand and work with, this book helps instill new awareness and change behaviour, especially for target groups who low in education level. They are easier to understand the message through visual messages.^{(38),(45)}

The communicator's efforts to reinforce the audience's consciousness with three key messages using Aristotle's basic concepts of persuasion, as analysed in this discussion section, can be illustrated in Figure 3.

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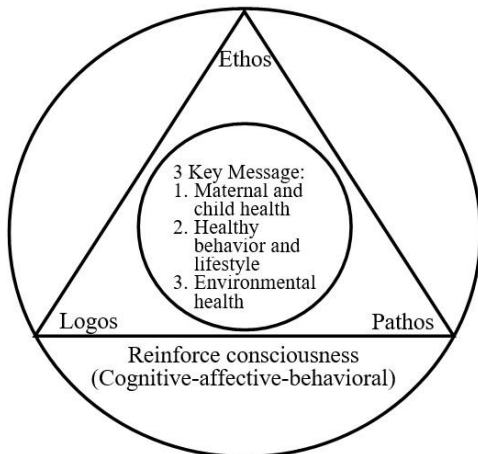


Figure 3. Aristotle's persuasion techniques in the strengthening of consciousness

CONCLUSION

All aspects can be understood through three concepts of Aristotle's persuasion: *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos*. The facilitator interacts directly, talks from heart to heart, explores the needs and solves the target group's problems (*ethos*). The colourful design of the KIA book can touch the feelings and emotions of their readers (*pathos*), as well as promote the acronym "4-too" and "golden age" making it easier for the target group to remember the message. Rembuk stunting, KIA book and other relevant references become important in building and strengthening knowledge (*logos*) and information the resident.

Three topics become key messages for health facilitators in strengthening target group awareness: maternal and child health, healthy behaviour and lifestyle, and environmental health. Those endeavours can be identified from two activities: during intensive interactions at IHT and sweeping moment, and how health facilitators embed messages from the KIA book due to interaction taking place. Interpersonal communication helps improve the effectiveness of delivering messages to the audience.

SUGGESTION

For researchers, we recommend conducting further study on the role of informal groups in improving communication effectiveness for target group.

For village governments to increase technical support and administration to strengthen the efforts of health facilitators reduction stunting.

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