

Coping Strategy of Student Households in Fulfilling Nutrition During Covid-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

Malnutrition (Wasting, Stunting) caused by inadequate food intake. Household food security is needed to ensure food fulfillment. Household food security can be seen from the income aspect. The purpose of this study was to observe the coping strategy practices of the households of students majoring in the nutrition of Poltekkes Kemenkes Riau during the Covid-19 pandemic. This type of research is qualitative research and observational. There are 69 research respondents and was determined by simple random sampling. Household food security was explored using the RCSI (Reduced Coping Strategy Index) questionnaire. The results of the study revealed that the respondents used combined coping strategy practices and most frequently used by households is reducing expensive food by 31 respondents and buying ready-to-eat food by 52 respondents. Whereas 1 respondents were rarely or not to eating days (<1x/week) as the last coping strategy.

Keywords:

Coping strategy; Food security; Covid -19 pandemic

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia has ratified the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). One of them is achieving the 'No Hunger' goal, namely ending hunger, realizing food security, and improving nutrition and sustainable agriculture. This goal is in line with the main focus of Indonesia's development which is included in the priorities of food security and job creation. By 2030, it is targeted that there will be no more hunger, and there will be guaranteed access to safe, nutritious, and sufficient food all year round for all people, especially the poor and those in vulnerable situations, including babies. In addition, by 2030 the target is also to eliminate all forms of malnutrition, after achieving the internationally agreed targets for short and thin children under the age of 5, and meeting the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women, and the elderly, including in 2025.

Food security does not only mean food availability but also access to get food easier.[1]. Food security at the household level

is one of the challenges that must be met to ensure that household members can meet their food and nutrition needs. The problem of realizing household food security is likely to become more serious, especially due to the Covid-19 pandemic since early 2020. The income aspect is an important factor in determining household expenditure, including family food consumption patterns [2].

Food security is related to many aspects, thus an assessment of the food security situation requires a comprehensive measure in the sense that it involves various indicators. The combination of various indicators produces a composite value of food security. Furthermore, this composite value is expressed as the Food Security Index (FSI) [3].

Globally, FSI has been developed to assess and compare the situation of food security at the country level. In addition to the state level, FSI can also be measured at the national level. Based on the release of the Ministry of Agriculture's Food Security Agency, Pekanbaru's FSI rating and scores have

decreased from 2018 to 2019, from a 13th rating with score of 85.38 to 22nd rating with score of 81.15. The reason can be interpreted is that there has been a decrease in food security in the city of Pekanbaru.

The Covid-19 pandemic in Indonesia has taken place in early 2020. This condition has had an impact on various aspects. Large-Scale Social Restrictions as a policy against a pandemic in several big cities have harmed the economic sector and have resulted in a decrease in people's income in general.

The Riau Province Food Consumption Survey for 2016, 2017, and 2018 conducted by the Riau Province Food Security Service, shows that the amount and level of household energy consumption in Riau Province has decreased from 2,126.0 kcal/cap/day in 2016 to 2,050.8 kcal/cap/day in 2017, and decreased again to 2,038.9 kcal/cap/day in 2018. This means that the amount and level of household energy consumption in Riau Province before the pandemic Covid-19 indicated some problems had to be fixed. The Covid-19 pandemic has the potential to exacerbate this situation. As data from the Central Statistics Agency shows that the national economic growth rate in the first quarter (January-March) of 2020 only grew 2.97%. This figure slowed down from the initial 4.97% in the fourth quarter of 2019. Growth was far below the achievement in the first quarter of 2019 which reached 5.07%. Furthermore, in the second quarter of 2020, Indonesia's economic growth rate was minus 5.32%. This situation is inversely proportional to the second quarter of 2019 of 5.05% [4].

Community defense strategies against food shortages are carried out in various ways. Maulana et al., (2020) found that the efforts made by the community were included in the *food coping strategy category* refers to the act of making dietary changes, seeking to increase short-term household food availability,

reducing the amount of food the family can eat and other measures such as side jobs, food debt, and changing food distribution.

[6] Classify food coping strategies into 7 categories and further group them into 3 actions. Furthermore, Sayekti et al., (2019) found that household food coping strategies were mostly the act of buying cheap food, reducing the number of types of food, and collecting wild food or leaves. The next action that is commonly taken by households is debt and taking savings, then migrating out of town. Various data and facts about the situation and the Covid-19 pandemic have exacerbated the situation, this will affect the achievement of Indonesia's SDGs target which wants to realize the "No Hunger" goal. This is what prompted researchers to observe coping strategy practices carried out by student households majoring in the nutrition of Poltekkes Kemenkes Riau in meeting food and nutrition needs during the Covid-19 pandemic.

METHOD

This study is a qualitative research with a cross-sectional design that focuses on interviews at the same time. Data collection was carried out through interviews based on questionnaires with the respondent, namely the student's parents. Some of the answers to the questions were also clarified to the respondents.

The population of this study was all students majoring in nutrition. Determination of the number of samples based on the slovin formula as many as 69 respondents. The sampling technique used was simple random sampling.

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

Respondent Household Characteristics

Respondent household characteristics examined in this study included the number of family members family size), educational background and the occupation of the parents.

Table 1. Respondent Household Characteristics

Description	Amount (n)	Percentage (%)
Number of family members		
a. Small (≤ 4)	34	49,3
b. Moderate (5-6)	33	47,8
c. Large (> 6)	2	2,9
Total	69	100
Father's Educational Background		
a. Low (junior high school and below)	13	18,8
b. Intermediate (SLTA/equivalent)	36	52,2
c. High (academy/college level)	20	29,0
Total	69	100
Mother's Educational Background		
a. Low (junior high school and below)	17	24,6
b. Intermediate (SLTA/equivalent)	31	44,9
c. High (academy/college level)	21	30,4
Total	69	100
Father's occupation		
a. Farmer	8	11,6
b. Government employees	7	10,1
c. Private employees	6	8,6
d. Self-employed	32	46,4
e. Laborer	11	15,9
f. Retired	8	11,6
Total	69	100
Mother's occupation		
a. Farmer	8	11,6
b. Trader	1	1,4
c. Government employees	5	7,2
d. IRT	43	62,3
e. Other	8	11,6
Total	69	100

The number of family members is consisting of a father, mother, children, and other household members who live in part or all of the physical building, and usually eat together in the same kitchen. One kitchen in question is taking care of daily needs together as one [7]. The number of family members in student households majoring in the nutrition of Poltekkes Kemenkes Riau studied showed that as many as 49.3% were included in the small household category (family members ≤ 4), 47.8% were in the medium household category (5-6 family members), and 2.9% large household category. The size of the

number of family members will affect the high and low amounts of food that can be consumed by family members.

The education of heads of families (52.2%) and their wives (44.9%) had education at the high school level/equivalent. According to [8] that the education is related to household food security. In addition, the level of education also influences household businesses to get decent jobs and also supports household food purchasing power.

Most of the work of the head of the household is in the type of self-employed work (40.6%) while the wife or mother (62.3%) is a housewife.

The Covid-19 Pandemic and the Home Economy Ladder

The Covid-19 pandemic in Indonesia had an impact on various aspects. One of them has an impact on the economic aspects of the household community.

Table 2. Household Economic Impact

	Amount (n)	Percentage (%)
1. Affected by the economy	45	65,2
a. Termination of employment/layoffs	0.0	0.0
b. Reduction in income	45	62,3
c. Inhibited business activities/reduced turnover	15	21,7
2. Not affected by the economy	24	34,8
Total	69	100

Based on the data in Table 2, a total of 24 households felt that they were not affected by

the economy during the Covid-19 pandemic. As many as 45 other respondents felt the impact of the household economy such as a reduction in income by as much as 62.3% and inhibition of business activities or reduced turnover. However, as many of the 15 respondents felt the economic impact of both. This shows that the pandemic situation had a real impact on the household economy. The household economy is also related to food security as described by [9] who examined food security and household coping strategies, namely that some households with food insecure status make coping strategy efforts.

Coping Strategy

The types of activities for each coping strategy are different for each household. Each household has its priorities in determining how to overcome the problem of food shortages. Related to the economic impact felt by households which influences the coping strategy that will be carried out. When faced with a shock, in this case, the Covid-19 pandemic situation to income or food supply, households may protect food consumption by buying or receiving food from other sources.[10].

Table 3. Coping Strategy Indeks

Coping Strategy Index	Every day		Often		Occasionally		Seldom		Total	Never	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%		n	%
1. Reduce expensive food	1	1,4	9	13	13	18,8	8	11,6	31	38	55,1
2. Borrow groceries					4	5,8	3	4,3	7	62	89,9
3. Buying food on debt			1	1,4	2	2,9	1	1,4	4	65	94,2
4. Gather food from nature			1	1,4	1	1,4	1	1,4	3	66	95,7
5. Sending family members to eat elsewhere										69	100
6. Sending family members to beg										69	100
7. Limiting food portions			2	2,9	2	2,9	3	4,3	7	62	89,9
8. Limit consumption by adults			4	5,8			5	7,2	9	60	87
9. Feeding working family							1	1,4	1	68	98,6

Coping Strategy Index	Every day		Often		Occasionall y		Seldom		Total	Never	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	n	%
	members										
10. Prepared food	2	2,9	8	11,6	25	36,2	17	24,6	52	17	24,6
11. Reducing the number of meals in a day					4	5,8	6	8,7	10	59	85,5
12. Day without eating							1	1,4	1	68	98,6

Based on the data in Table 3, the action of reducing expensive food is mostly carried out by households with an occasional frequency or 1-2x/week. In the research by [11] on household socio-economic analysis, children's nutritional status and coping mechanisms to support household food adequacy, it was revealed that the strategy or coping mechanism adopted by the community when facing income constraints was to buy food at a lower price, reducing the type of food consumed, and changing food priorities. In the households studied, data was obtained that most of them took action to reduce expensive food on animal side dishes such as chicken or meat which were usually replaced with fish or vegetable side dishes such as tofu and tempeh. Meanwhile, a few others chose to reduce the use of vegetables and fruits to save on household expenses.

The act of borrowing groceries is carried out at most with an occasional frequency or 1-2x/week with a percentage of 5.8%. According to [12], who examined the relationship between coping levels and food security in poor households, this act of borrowing food was also found in households for reasons of blood ties with relatives and the process was easier.

The next action is to buy food on credit, most of it (2.9%) is carried out by households with an occasional frequency or as much as 1-2x/week. Other coping strategies are collecting food from nature (for example vegetables), limiting portions at mealtimes, limiting adult consumption

so that young children can eat, sacrificing family members who are not working, and reducing the amount of food eaten in a day which has an almost equal percentage. the same as the previous strategy. Whereas in the act of sending family members to eat elsewhere and begging, no household did this.

And in the last action, namely the day without eating, was only carried out by 1 household with a rare frequency (<1x/week). This last action occurs in situations of food shortage or when a person cannot get enough food.

The results interviews were conducted with respondents who were housewives from students majoring in nutrition at the Riau Ministry of Health Polytechnic with a variety of different backgrounds. Mothers are the dominant coping strategy actors, especially in actions related to financial control for food [6].

CONCLUSION

The number of family members in the respondent's household is mostly in the small household category (≤ 4 family members) with a percentage of 49.3%. For the last level of education the head of the family (52.2%) and his wife (44.9%) most of them had a high school level education/equivalent. And the economic impacts felt by households include reduced income (62.3%) and hampered business activities or reduced turnover (21.7%). Meanwhile, coping strategies or defensive actions taken by households are reducing expensive food (31 households) and buying ready-to-eat food (52 households).

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