

Food habits of mother and their children 2-5 years old within low and high socioeconomic status in five selected villages, east Jakarta

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Abstrak

The urban population of Indonesia has doubled in the last three decades, and it is estimated that by the year of 2010 almost 40-45% of the population will be living in urban areas. Jakarta as the capital city is the most rapid growing city among others in Indonesia. This, for the most part, was influenced by rapid growing of industrial factories, enlargement of the administration areas of the city, as well as high population growth rate. As the consequence, many aspects of human life including housing, food stock and food production, health and environmental condition, educational situation, economical improvement, social and cultural life, political stability, and national resistance have been changed. However, the changes could be positive or negative.

Urbanization was associated with important changes in food consumption pattern. The urban diet may be more varied and may include higher levels of animal proteins and fats while being lower in calories (Pagaspas 1994, Santoso 1995). Fresh foods such as vegetables, meat, poultry, milk and other dairy products were consumed more by urban than by rural people. Another change that had occurred in urban food habit was an increase in the amount of food eaten outside the household (FAO 1984). These foods tend to be eaten by the consumer at the roadside and were relatively cheap. Ease of preparation, time saving and money, taste, identification with an urban lifestyle, and inaccessibility to cooking facilities in crowded urban slums were among the reasons for the shifts in food consumption patterns. The value of women's time was an important factor affecting household expenditure on food. A greater variety of foods were also available in urban areas, leading to more diversified diets. Information from a slum in Brazil, indicated the lower income class tended to meet a smaller amount of its energy and nutrient requirements than did the higher income class (Von Braun et al 1993).

Study carried out by SEAMEO - UI participants from 1985-1989 in five slum areas in Jakarta showed that the prevalence of nutritional deficiency in terms of moderate and severe PEM was still very high (31.9%) in East Jakarta (Von Braun et al 1993). Besides, study carried out by Susilowati (1997) revealed that mothers suffered from undernutrition (27%) and overnutrition (30%). Mothers had higher calorie and protein intake as compared to underfive children (Pagaspas 1994, Santoso 1995). Compared to Jakarta's prevalence of PEM among underfive children (25.8%), the figures of East Jakarta was higher. Nationally, prevalence of PEM among underfive children was 28.6% (Indonesian Health Profile 1997).

As one main determinant of malnutrition, food consumption was greatly influenced by purchasing power. On average, calories correlates with income in urban area. Marginal intake of calories decreases with increasing income levels. As prices or incomes change, there was a greater tendency among urban consumers to diversify their diet and substitute more readily (Von Braun et al 1993). Study about undernutrition in low income households in West Jakarta found that at least more than 30% of food

expenditure was spent on street foods.

Undernutrition among underfive children mainly due to eating snacks and street food. It was caused by social pressure from neighbor, clever promotion strategy of street vendor, especially on its convenience (located at strategic places, going house to house), tasty, snacking (child refused to eat main meals but will eat snacks) had made eating out a general habit and difficult to be modified. In another word, dietary inadequacy was not primarily due to low purchasing power but rather to habit of buying snacks outside home (Pujilestari et al 1995).

Moreover, the habitual diet of family consists of rice, soybean products (tofu, tempe), fresh fish and dark green leafy vegetables. Noodles often replaced a rice meal. Their food composition was quite simple and less varied. A rough estimate of energy intake for consumption unit (CU) was made from the amount of calories major sources bought, i.e. rice, noodles, cooking oil. The average daily energy intake from these sources covered 63% of RDA (Pujilestari et al 1995).

The study about food habits among mothers and their children 2-5 aged in urban areas in Indonesia is rare. The study was usually implemented in rural area at provincial level. It was related to the application of nutritional anthropology with agriculture science, for example study on "Social and Cultural Influences on Food Habits and Food Consumption Patterns of Staple Food in the Family with Preschool Children". The study was undertaken by Ministry of Health in collaboration with The National Development Planning Board in 1986. The study revealed that the family in areas with other staple food than rice, eating rice is not considered as to provide strength for working in the field or in the forest.