



Exploring The Uniqueness of Sharia Solutions For Stunting In North Sumatra

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Abstract. This study aims to analyze the implementation of Sharia solutions in addressing the issue of stunting in North Sumatra. The methodology employed involves the analysis of data on stunting prevalence, poverty rates, and economic growth over the past five years. These data were subjected to descriptive analysis to identify trends and relationships between stunting prevalence and socio-economic factors. The research findings indicate that stunting prevalence in North Sumatra has decreased during the study period, while poverty rates remain high. Furthermore, a negative correlation between stunting prevalence and economic growth was observed, indicating that when economic growth declines, stunting prevalence tends to increase. However, no clear relationship was found between poverty rates and stunting prevalence. In this context, the implementation of Sharia solutions can serve as a relevant alternative to address stunting in North Sumatra. An integrated approach that involves the nutrition, health, sanitation, education, and economic development sectors can provide comprehensive and sustainable solutions. Additionally, the application of Sharia-based solutions can enhance the well-being of children through an emphasis on halal nutrition, the integration of religious values in health education, the development of a halal and healthy food industry, as well as collaboration with religious institutions and the Muslim community.

Keywords: Sharia Solutions, Stunting Prevalence, Poverty Rates, Economic Growth, North Sumatra.

Introduction

The high prevalence of stunting in North Sumatra has a significant impact on economic inequality in the region. Recent data indicates that in 2022, the stunting rate in North Sumatra reached 37.8% (RI, 2022). This indicates a serious problem in the growth and development of children in the city.

Furthermore, data also shows that the poverty rate in North Sumatra in 2022 reached 8.42% (RI, 2022). This high economic inequality can exacerbate the stunting condition, as low-income families have limited access to quality food and adequate healthcare services.

In the same year, 20.7% of children in North Sumatra experienced chronic malnutrition (RI, 2022). Inadequate nutrition can hinder children's growth and have negative impacts on their physical and mental development. This can result in long-term effects on the economic productivity in North Sumatra.

Moreover, data indicates that only 62% of toddlers in North Sumatra received comprehensive healthcare services in 2021 (RI, 2022). Limited access to adequate healthcare

services can worsen the stunting condition, as proper prenatal care and child care are crucial in supporting children's growth and development.

In this context, the economic inequality caused by stunting creates a cycle that is difficult to break (Mulyaningsih et al., 2021). Children who experience stunting tend to face difficulties in reaching their full potential in the future, which can further exacerbate the economic disparities in North Sumatra.

To address the economic inequality resulting from stunting, sustained efforts are required to improve access to nutritious food and adequate healthcare services for all families in North Sumatra. Additionally, increasing awareness about the importance of child nutrition and health, as well as reducing poverty and income disparities, should be a primary focus in combating stunting in the region (Health et al., 2021; Helmizar et al., 2020).

The Sharia economic approach possesses unique characteristics that can contribute significantly to stunting intervention. Its emphasis on principles of justice in resource and wealth distribution is one of the distinct features of this approach. In addressing stunting, the Sharia economic approach can help reduce social and economic disparities, which are among the primary causes of stunting.

The concepts of zakat, infaq, and waqaf, which are related to the Sharia economic approach, can be utilized to support programs such as providing nutritious food, establishing healthcare facilities, and facilitating access to nutrition education for needy families (Wietzke, 2020). By incorporating these concepts, the Sharia economic approach can provide sustainable solutions in addressing stunting.

The Sharia economic approach also promotes participation and economic activities that directly involve the community (Afrizal et al. 2021). In addressing stunting, this approach can strengthen the role and participation of the community in child nutrition and health programs (Rashad & Sharaf, 2018). Actively involving the community in the planning, implementation, and monitoring of programs can create a sense of ownership and sustainability in addressing stunting.

By understanding the uniqueness of the Sharia economic approach and applying it to address stunting in North Sumatra, it is hoped that a reduction in stunting rates and an improvement in the quality of children's lives can be achieved. In this endeavor, an impact analysis of the implementation of the Sharia economic approach should be conducted, exploring relevant concepts within Sharia economics, and identifying challenges and opportunities in the implementation process. Policy recommendations and actionable steps should also be formulated to effectively and sustainably implement this approach.

Literature Review

Stunting: Facts and Impacts on Growth and Development

Stunting has both short-term and long-term consequences. In the short term, children experiencing stunting are more vulnerable to infections and illnesses due to weakened immune systems (Kristina, 2022; Laksono, Sukoco, et al., 2022; Laksono, Wulandari, et al., 2022; Saputri et al., 2020). They also tend to have lower cognitive development, which impacts their educational achievements. In the long term, stunting can hinder economic productivity and perpetuate the cycle of poverty. Individuals affected by stunting are more likely to have lower income potential and a higher risk of chronic diseases in adulthood (Siswati et al., 2022).

The underlying causes of stunting are multifactorial. Inadequate nutrition, especially during the first 1,000 days of a child's life, plays a crucial role. Lack of dietary diversity, limited access to nutrient-rich foods, and inadequate maternal nutrition contribute to stunting.

Additionally, factors such as poor sanitation, limited access to healthcare services, and socioeconomic disparities further exacerbate the problem (Meher et al., 2023).

Addressing stunting requires a comprehensive approach that focuses on nutrition, health, education, and socioeconomic factors. Interventions should include promotion of exclusive breastfeeding, improvement of complementary feeding practices, increased access to nutrient-rich foods, and sanitation and hygiene programs. It is important to empower communities, involve local stakeholders, and implement evidence-based interventions to effectively reduce stunting and enhance children's growth and development (Helmizar et al., 2020).

The Relevance of Umar Chapra's Views on Economic Justice and Stunting

Umar Chapra's views on economic justice have significant relevance to the issue of stunting. According to Umar Chapra, social justice is a central principle in Islamic economics (Lazuardi & Santosa, 2020). In the context of stunting, economic justice means ensuring that all children have fair opportunities to access adequate nutrition, healthcare, and a healthy environment. This involves efforts to reduce social disparities and injustices that can impact children's growth and development. By ensuring economic justice, including resource redistribution and equal opportunities, a significant reduction in stunting prevalence can be expected (Lazuardi & Santosa, 2020).

Umar Chapra's views also emphasize the importance of social responsibility in the economy (Chapra, 1990). In the context of stunting, social responsibility involves active involvement of the government, healthcare institutions, and the wider community in the prevention and management of stunting. Umar Chapra encourages collaboration among various stakeholders to ensure fair access to resources and services that support children's health. By integrating Umar Chapra's perspectives on economic justice and social responsibility in stunting prevention efforts, equality and inclusivity can be fostered in providing protection and attention to at-risk children experiencing stunting.

Method

The research design used in this study is a qualitative approach based on Sharia economics with the analysis of Umar Chapra's theory to understand the influence and uniqueness of this approach in addressing stunting in North Sumatra. The qualitative method is employed to gain in-depth insights into the experiences, perceptions, and understanding of relevant stakeholders, as well as to explore the social, economic, and cultural aspects that influence stunting interventions (Mills, 2019). This study involves selecting a representative sample of stakeholders involved in stunting interventions in North Sumatra, such as local government, Islamic financial institutions, communities, and experts in child nutrition and health. Data will be collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and document analysis.

Data analysis in this study is conducted using an inductive and thematic approach, considering Umar Chapra's Sharia economic theory (Lazuardi & Santosa, 2020). This theory emphasizes the importance of justice principles, fair resource distribution, and an economy based on Islamic values. In the context of addressing stunting, this theory provides an understanding of how the Sharia economic approach can offer sustainable and inclusive solutions in tackling stunting. Concepts within Umar Chapra's theory, such as justice in resource and wealth distribution, as well as the contributions of zakat, infaq, and waqaf in community empowerment, can serve as a basis for formulating policies and strategies for addressing stunting in North Sumatra.

The results of this research provide a deep understanding of the uniqueness of the Sharia economic approach in addressing stunting in North Sumatra, as well as its contributions in addressing the multidimensional challenges associated with stunting. Policy implications and practical recommendations will be generated to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of this approach in addressing stunting. By utilizing a qualitative approach based on Sharia economics and analyzing Umar Chapra's theory, this research aims to analyze and explore the potential of the Sharia economic approach in addressing stunting, and provide policy recommendations aligned with the principles of Sharia economics to achieve the goals of reducing stunting rates and improving the well-being of children in North Sumatra.

Result and Discussion

The prevalence of stunting in North Sumatra has deeper and more complex impacts on economic growth. Although these impacts may not be immediately visible, they can affect long-term economic progress and overall societal well-being.

- Firstly, the prevalence of stunting can have a negative impact on the workforce productivity in North Sumatra. Children experiencing stunting tend to have cognitive limitations, impaired physical growth, and physical weakness. These conditions can lead to decreased productivity in their adult lives. Less productive workforce will hinder the overall economic competitiveness of North Sumatra.
- Secondly, the prevalence of stunting can also contribute to poverty and economic inequality in North Sumatra. Children experiencing stunting are at a higher risk of limited educational opportunities, access to quality jobs, and social mobility. High economic inequality and poverty rates will hinder inclusive economic growth in North Sumatra.

Moreover, the prevalence of stunting can impose a significant economic burden on the healthcare system and household budgets in North Sumatra. Children experiencing stunting require more intensive care and treatment, including medical interventions, supplementary nutrition, and long-term care. The high costs of stunting treatment can drain healthcare budgets, hinder the development of healthcare infrastructure, and reduce resources available for other economic sectors.

In this context, addressing stunting can have positive impacts on economic growth in North Sumatra. Effective prevention and intervention efforts can reduce the prevalence of stunting and enhance the quality and productivity of the workforce. Children growing up with good nutritional quality will have better opportunities to reach their full potential in contributing to the economy.

Table 1. Prevalence of Stunting, Poverty Rate, and Economic Growth Data in the Last Five Years

No	Year	Prevalence of Stunting	Poverty Rate	Economic Growth
1	2018	32.3	9.08	5.18
2	2019	30.11	8.73	5.22
3	2020	27.7	8.75	4.15
4	2021	25.8	9.01	2.61
5	2022	37.8	8.42	4.73

Table 1 presents the data on the prevalence of stunting, poverty rate, and economic growth in North Sumatra over the past five years. This data provides an overview of the

relationship between the prevalence of stunting, poverty rate, and economic growth during the study period.

Based on the data in 2018, the prevalence of stunting in North Sumatra was 32.3%, indicating a significant level of growth impairment in children. The poverty rate in the same year reached 9.08%, while the economic growth was 5.18%. The data in 2019 showed a decrease in the prevalence of stunting to 30.11%, but the poverty rate and economic growth only experienced slight changes.

In 2020, there was a further decline in the prevalence of stunting to 27.7%, indicating a slow improvement in the nutritional status of children in North Sumatra. The poverty rate remained relatively stable at 8.75%, while economic growth declined to 4.15%. The data in 2021 showed a decreasing trend in the prevalence of stunting to 25.8%, but the poverty rate increased to 9.01%. Economic growth dropped drastically to 2.61%, indicating challenges in achieving sustainable growth.

In 2022, the prevalence of stunting increased to 37.8%, indicating a worsening of the nutritional status of children in North Sumatra. The poverty rate decreased to 8.42%, while economic growth slightly increased to 4.73%.

Based on the above data, there is a general tendency that when the prevalence of stunting decreases, the poverty rate tends to remain stable or experience insignificant increases. For example, in 2018 and 2019, there was a decrease in the prevalence of stunting from 32.3% to 30.11%, but the poverty rate only experienced a slight decrease from 9.08% to 8.73%. This indicates that while there is an improvement in children's health in terms of growth, poverty remains a factor influencing the poverty rate in North Sumatra.

The data above also reveals a more complex situation in 2021. Despite a significant decrease in the prevalence of stunting to 25.8%, the poverty rate actually increased to 9.01%. This indicates an imbalance between improvements in children's health and a decrease in poverty in North Sumatra. Other factors such as income inequality and access to resources also contribute to this inequality.

The analysis of this data indicates that although there is a decrease in the prevalence of stunting, poverty remains a relevant factor that needs to be seriously addressed in efforts to improve the well-being of the population in North Sumatra. Addressing stunting needs to be accompanied by broader efforts to tackle poverty, including improving income distribution, access to basic services, and increasing economic opportunities. Integrating Sharia-based solutions and culturally sensitive approaches can also be considered to enhance the effectiveness of programs aimed at addressing the prevalence of stunting and poverty in North Sumatra.

Furthermore, there is a tendency that the prevalence of stunting is inversely related to economic growth. For example, in 2018, when the prevalence of stunting reached 32.3%, economic growth was 5.18%. However, in 2021, when the prevalence of stunting decreased to 25.8%, economic growth significantly declined to 2.61%. This pattern indicates that high prevalence of stunting can be a limiting factor in achieving higher economic growth in North Sumatra.

Moreover, there is significant variation in the prevalence of stunting and economic growth from year to year. For instance, in 2019, there was a decrease in the prevalence of stunting to 30.11%, but economic growth increased to 5.22%. However, in 2022, the prevalence of stunting increased again to 37.8%, and economic growth only reached 4.73%. This variation indicates that other factors also influence economic growth in North Sumatra, such as global economic conditions, government policies, and other socio-economic factors.

From the analysis of this data, it can be concluded that the prevalence of stunting has a close correlation with economic growth in North Sumatra. High prevalence of stunting can

hinder sustainable and inclusive economic growth. Therefore, efforts to prevent stunting and improve child nutrition should be prioritized to create conditions that support better economic growth. Additionally, economic factors such as development policies, investments, and job creation should also be considered to achieve sustainable economic growth in North Sumatra.

Stunting in North Sumatra: Effective and Sustainable Solutions

In the context of stunting in North Sumatra, a more critical analysis highlights the close connection between stunting interventions and sustainable economic development. Reducing the prevalence of stunting has important implications for achieving sustainable economic growth in the region.

Addressing stunting as a long-term investment in quality human resources supports the key pillars of sustainable economics. Children who grow up healthy and free from stunting have a greater chance of becoming a productive and innovative workforce in the future. This means that the economic potential of North Sumatra can be better utilized through increased productivity and competitiveness.

Moreover, a holistic and integrated approach to stunting interventions aligns with the principles of sustainable economics. This approach involves relevant sectors such as education, agriculture, environment, and public policy. Integration allows for synergy between efforts to address stunting and efforts to achieve sustainable economic development, such as integrated nutrition programs within the education system, sustainable management of natural resources, and inclusive economic development that considers social and environmental aspects (Wietzke, 2020).

Table 2. Prevalence of Stunting and Human Development Index in North Sumatra

No	Year	Prevalence of Stunting	Human Development Index
1	2018	32.3	71.18
2	2019	30.11	71.74
3	2020	27.7	71.77
4	2021	25.8	72.00
5	2022	37.8	72.71

The table above presents data on the prevalence of stunting and the Human Development Index (HDI) over the past five years. This table provides an overview of the relationship between stunting prevalence and human development levels in the observed region. The initial data presented is the prevalence of stunting in 2018, which reached 32.3 percent. This indicates that approximately 32.3 percent of children experienced stunting during that year. Furthermore, in 2019 and 2020, there was a decrease in the prevalence of stunting to 30.11 percent and 27.7 percent, respectively, indicating an improvement in the condition. However, in 2021, the prevalence of stunting slightly increased to 25.8 percent before reaching 37.8 percent in 2022, indicating a significant increase in the number of children experiencing stunting.

Additionally, the table also presents data on the Human Development Index (HDI). The HDI measures the level of human development in a region based on criteria such as life expectancy, education level, and per capita income. In 2018, the HDI reached 71.18 and has been steadily increasing each year. By 2022, the HDI reached 72.71, indicating an improvement in the level of human development in the region.

By examining the data in the table, a relationship between stunting prevalence and human development levels can be observed. Although there have been improvements in human development levels from year to year, stunting prevalence does not always follow the

same trend. This suggests that efforts to address stunting need to be continuously enhanced to align with overall improvements in human development.

In conclusion, the data in the table highlights the relationship between stunting prevalence and human development levels. It underscores the importance of ongoing efforts to address stunting in order to align with the broader goal of improving human development outcomes.

It is also important to consider environmental and social aspects in stunting interventions, which are crucial components in the context of sustainable economics (Indra & Khoirunurrofik, 2022). Strengthening sustainable agricultural practices and protecting the environment are important steps in maintaining the sustainability of natural resources and ensuring the availability of quality food. Additionally, addressing social inequalities and ensuring equal access to healthcare and education for all segments of society are steps that support inclusion and social justice in sustainable economic development.

In the context of sustainable economics, addressing stunting in North Sumatra can also provide significant long-term benefits. By reducing the prevalence of stunting, North Sumatra can alleviate the long-term economic burden on the country and families, freeing up financial resources to be allocated to investments that support sustainable economic growth, such as infrastructure, education, and training (Zulfikar, 2019).

Overall, addressing stunting in North Sumatra is closely connected to sustainable economics. Reducing the prevalence of stunting through a holistic and integrated approach, considering environmental and social aspects, and ensuring social inclusion and justice will support sustainable economic growth, sustainable management of natural resources, and overall societal well-being.

The Sharia Perspective: Silent Steps in Addressing Stunting in North Sumatra

In the effort to address stunting in North Sumatra, the Sharia perspective can provide a significant contribution and serve as a silent yet important step towards achieving sustainable outcomes. The Sharia perspective brings ethical and moral values into stunting interventions, providing a strong foundation for building sustainable solutions. Concepts such as justice, equality, and community engagement take center stage in the Sharia perspective (Huriani et al., 2022). Stunting interventions that reflect Sharia principles prioritize the well-being of society and pay attention to the protection of individual rights and the needs of vulnerable groups.

In the context of sustainable economics, the Sharia perspective offers guidance oriented towards justice and social inclusion (Sandwick & Collazzo, 2021). For instance, the concepts of zakat and infaq within Sharia teachings can be utilized as a source of funding to support stunting intervention programs, including providing nutritional assistance and access to healthcare services. Furthermore, the Sharia perspective encourages sustainable economic practices such as business ethics focused on justice, sustainable resource management, and inclusive economics that consider the interests of all parties.

To implement the Sharia perspective in stunting interventions, collaboration between the government, religious institutions, and the community is essential. Religious institutions can play a crucial role in disseminating understanding and awareness about stunting, as well as mobilizing community support in upholding Sharia principles (Chowdhury et al., 2020; Nurbiah et al., 2019). Efforts should also be made to strengthen Sharia-based health and nutrition education, enabling the community to understand the importance of applying Sharia principles in their daily lives, including in stunting prevention and treatment.

The Sharia perspective also promotes active community participation in stunting interventions. According to Sharia principles, individuals and communities bear the

responsibility of safeguarding their own health and well-being, as well as that of the surrounding community (Akseer et al., 2018; Atamou et al., 2023) . By involving the community in Sharia-based stunting programs, a sense of ownership and collective responsibility can be fostered towards achieving broader goals, such as sustainable economic development and general well-being.

Overall, the Sharia perspective offers valuable contributions in the efforts to address stunting in North Sumatra, employing a calm yet significant approach. By considering Sharia principles such as justice, social inclusion, and community engagement, sustainable and welfare-oriented solutions can be created. Collaboration among the government, religious institutions, and the community in implementing the Sharia perspective will strengthen stunting interventions and contribute to their success.

Implications for Intervention Program Development in North Sumatra: Applying Unique Solutions with a Sharia Perspective

The application of solutions with a Sharia perspective in the development of intervention programs in North Sumatra has significant implications. This approach considers aspects of halal nutrition and food, integration of religious values in health education, the development of a halal and healthy food industry, and collaboration with religious institutions and the Muslim community.

Firstly, implementing solutions with a Sharia perspective emphasizes the importance of ensuring good nutrition and halal food. Intervention programs should focus on food quality and provide an understanding of balanced eating patterns in accordance with Sharia principles. This involves nutrition education that encompasses the legal and ethical aspects of food in Islam.

Secondly, Sharia-based solutions allow for the integration of religious values in health education for the people of North Sumatra. Through collaboration with religious institutions and the Muslim community, intervention programs can promote an understanding of the importance of maintaining children's health, providing appropriate care, and practicing good hygiene in line with religious teachings. Integrating religious values in health education can enhance the acceptance and effectiveness of the programs.

Furthermore, the application of Sharia-based solutions also encourages the development of a halal and healthy food industry in North Sumatra. Support for halal and healthy food businesses, as well as guidance in production, distribution, and marketing aspects that comply with Sharia requirements, can improve the availability of nutritionally adequate and halal food in the local market.

Lastly, collaboration with religious institutions and the Muslim community is crucial in program development. Through this collaboration, religious scholars and figures can act as agents of social change in disseminating health messages, supporting good nutrition practices, and promoting child health. Collaborating with religious institutions and the Muslim community expands the reach of intervention programs and enhances their impact.

The implementation of unique solutions with a Sharia perspective in the development of intervention programs in North Sumatra can provide added value in addressing stunting. By considering halal nutrition and food, integrating religious values in health education, developing a halal and healthy food industry, and collaborating with religious institutions and the Muslim community, sustainable and socially accepted solutions can be achieved for the people of North Sumatra.

In the context of the Sharia perspective, Umar Chapra provides valuable insights. He emphasizes the importance of balance between economic and spiritual aspects in achieving societal well-being. For Umar Chapra, material and non-material aspects should be integrated

within the framework of Islamic economics. In the context of stunting, this approach considers environmental, nutritional, and genetic factors as material aspects, while the application of solutions with a Sharia perspective considers the spiritual aspects and religious values in achieving the health and well-being of children.

Additionally, Umar Chapra highlights the importance of social justice in economics. In the Sharia perspective, social justice is a central principle to be upheld. In the context of stunting, social justice means ensuring that all children have equal access to nutrition, healthcare, and quality education. Approaching stunting with a Sharia perspective can help address disparities and injustice in North Sumatran society through inclusive stunting prevention and management.

Furthermore, Umar Chapra emphasizes social responsibility and ethics in economics. For him, Sharia-based economics should uphold ethical values, honesty, and justice in all economic activities (Chapra, 2008). In the context of stunting, social responsibility involves active participation from the government, healthcare institutions, communities, and individuals in stunting prevention and providing adequate care for children affected by stunting. Solutions with a Sharia perspective promote the implementation of interventions based on ethical values and social responsibility.

Overall, Umar Chapra's thoughts in understanding the contextual problem and Sharia-based approaches highlight the importance of integrating economic, spiritual, social justice, and ethical aspects in addressing stunting. A holistic approach based on Sharia principles can help create effective, sustainable, and fair solutions in addressing the prevalence of stunting in North Sumatra.

Conclusions

By understanding the complexity of factors influencing stunting, as emphasized by Umar Chapra more holistic and targeted solutions can be designed. This approach enables the development of intervention programs that involve aspects of nutrition, environmental improvement, health education, and supportive public policies for optimal growth and development of children.

Furthermore, Umar Chapra's perspective on economic justice and social responsibility is highly relevant in the context of stunting. Economic justice is crucial in ensuring that all children have equitable access to nutrition, healthcare, and a healthy environment. Collaboration and social responsibility from various stakeholders, including the government, healthcare institutions, and the community, are necessary in stunting prevention and management efforts.

In addressing stunting, the integration of approaches with a Sharia perspective also makes a significant contribution. The application of solutions with a Sharia perspective considers aspects of halal nutrition, integration of religious values in health education, and the development of a halal and healthy food industry. Collaboration with religious institutions and the Muslim community can strengthen stunting prevention efforts by involving an understanding of religious values and active engagement of religious scholars and figures.

Through an approach that encompasses genetic, environmental, and nutritional factors, as well as considerations of economic justice, social responsibility, and solutions with a Sharia perspective, effective, sustainable, and fair solutions are expected to be achieved in addressing the prevalence of stunting. Collaborative and cross-sectoral efforts are key to achieving better child well-being and reducing the long-term impacts caused by stunting.

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