



## The Relationship Between Picky Eating and The Nutritional Status of Pre-School Children

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### ABSTRACT

#### Article history:

Submitted, 2024-05-08  
Accepted, 2024-05-28  
Published, 2024-05-31

#### Keywords:

**Relationship; Picky Eating; Nutritional Status.**

#### Cite This Article:

Cahyaningrum, I., Sumasto, H., Eka, N., Maharrani, T. 2024. The Relationship Between Picky Eating and the Nutritional Status of Pre-School Children. *Jurnal Ilmiah Kebidanan (The Journal of Midwifery)* 12(1):110-116. DOI: 10.33992/jik.v12i1.3290

Dietary status is condition of the body as a result of the retention of basic supplements. Based on actualities within the field, there are still numerous children who encounter ailing health. One of the components that impacts a child's dietary status is the propensity of being a picky eater. This investigate points to decide the relationship between picky eating and the dietary status of children Hasyim Asyari. The sort of investigate utilized is an expository overview with a cross sectional investigate plan. The test comprised of 53 pre-school children who met the consideration criteria. Inspecting utilized straightforward irregular testing. the subordinate variable is dietary status and the autonomous variable is picky eating. Information collection incorporates measuring dietary status utilizing weight/height charts and determining picky eating employing a survey. The information gotten was at that point analyzed utilizing the chi square test. The comes about of this consider appear that there's a relationship between picky eating and the wholesome status of pre-school children. It can be concluded that the more a child encounters picky eating, the lower wholesome status. It is trusted that future inquire about can relate dietary status to other characteristics or utilize distinctive measuring apparatuses of picky eating.

### INTRODUCTION

The body's reaction due to the absorption of nutrients is what is meant by nutritional status. If the amount of nutrition a person consumes is not in line with their body's needs, this can cause pathology<sup>1</sup>. In determining a child's health status, nutritional status is the third indication. In order for children to realize their full potential, it is important for them to maintain a healthy nutritional status throughout their development. Early detection of risk factors for health problems can be done by utilizing nutritional status. Tracking food intake early warning systems to improve children's health conditions<sup>2</sup>.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), 149 million children will experience malnutrition by 2020, and 45,400,000 children will be malnourished. There are 341 toddlers in Sedati



District who will experience malnutrition in 2022, with 154 toddlers in Sidoarjo Regency having the worst nutrition<sup>3</sup>. Results from a preliminary study conducted at Hasyim Asyari Kindergarten in Pepe Village, Sedati District, show that 25% of children experience malnutrition and 5% experience malnutrition.

One of the factors that influences a child's nutritional status is the habit of being picky about eating. Children who experience picky eating will have an impact on the amount of food they consume. Picky eating can cause nutritional deficiencies, especially in micronutrients. Insufficient nutrients can have an effect on the nutritional status of children<sup>5</sup>. Children who experience poor nutrition will experience stunted growth, tend to be short and thin, can experience chronic constipation and severe growth retardation (stunting), and increasingly experience malnutrition, causing growth development to not be optimal and weight to decrease. The body's immunity can decrease, and the morbidity rate can increase<sup>6</sup>.

## METHOD

An analytical research approach was used in a cross-sectional survey design. The research was conducted from October 2023 to May 2024 at Hashim Asyari Kindergarten. The data collection was carried out in March 2024. This research only involved 53 preschool children (ages 3–5) from Hashim Ashari Kindergarten and a total of 118 children. The sampling technique uses a simple random sampling technique. The independent variable in this research is picky eating. The dependent variable in this study is nutritional status. Measuring tools to understand nutritional status include weight/height charts and measuring unbalanced eating patterns through questionnaires. For data analysis, chi-square was used to determine the relationship between picky eating and the nutritional status of preschool children.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Respondent Characteristics based on Gender and Age

Table 1.

Respondent Characteristics based on Gender and Age

Characteristic	Category	Frequency (children)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Girl	29	54,7
	Boy	24	45,3
<b>Amount</b>		<b>53</b>	<b>100</b>
Age	4 years	16	30,2
	5 years	37	69,8
<b>Amount</b>		<b>53</b>	<b>100</b>

The number of research participants reached 53, as can be seen in Table 1. The majority of Hasyim Asyari Kindergarten students are girls (54.7%), while the majority of students are five years old (69.8%).



## Respondent Characteristics based on the Picky Eating Questionnaire

Table 2.

Respondent Characteristics based on the Picky Eating Questionnaire

Characteristic	Frequency (children)	Percentage (%)
Picky Eating	29	54,7
Not Picky eating	24	45,3
<b>Total</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 2 shows that 45.3% of children do not experience picky eating; 54.7% of children in Hasyim Asyari Kindergarten do. The findings of a study on the eating habits of preschool children at Hasyim Asyari Kindergarten revealed that some of the parents surveyed showed very selective eating habits. This is similar to Putri's research (2022), which found that the majority of respondents suffered from picky eating<sup>7</sup>. According to the report, most of the people who experienced picky eating were children aged five years. Preschool is a period of major change for children as they begin to learn, grow, and form their food preferences. Children usually develop the habit around the age of five, when they start to show signs of starting to consume solid foods on their own. They are able to decide whether they enjoy certain types of food or not<sup>8</sup>.

Based on research, the majority of Hasyim Asyari Kindergarten students are girls. According to research, the majority of people who have experienced picky eating problems as children are boys. Preschool children generally show picky eating habits, according to previous research<sup>9</sup>. This shows zero fundamental differences between girls and boys. That's why both boy and girl can show fussy eating habits.

Ariyanti (2023) found that food acceptance is a significant factor in children's behavior regarding picky eating. Many things influence how we react to food, including how we were raised and how we consume food as we age. Children at this age often show a natural reluctance to try unfamiliar foods. Children are more likely than adults to develop difficult or fussy eating habits because their sense of taste is more developed<sup>10</sup>. Research and theory show that picky eating is a common occurrence among preschool children. This happens because children begin to make decisions about what type of food they consume, along with the process of accepting food, which occurs through improving eating skills and developing food preferences.

## Characteristics of Picky Eating Respondents based on Questionnaire Indicators

Tabel 3.

Characteristics of Picky Eating Respondents based on Questionnaire Indicators

Indicator	Average (point)	Percentage (%)	
<b>Approacing eating</b>	eating responsiveness	2	13%
	enjoyment of eating	2	13%
<b>Avoidance of eating</b>	satiety response	4	24%
	slow eating	4	25%
	fussy eating	4	24%



Based on table 3, it can be seen that most of the picky eating children at Hasyim Asyari Kindergarten have an average of 4 points (often), namely avoidance of eating such as satiety response, slow eating, and fussy eating. In the following research, it was found that the majority of people with picky eating had high scores on indicators of avoiding eating such as satiety response, slow eating, and fussy eating. Meanwhile, non-picky-eating children always approach eating with high responsiveness and enjoyment of eating. In line with research conducted in Surabaya, it was found that most children with picky eating behavior rarely ask for food, do not enjoy food, lose their appetite, and their stomachs feel full quickly. Meanwhile, respondents who are non-picky eaters always have a strong desire to consume snacks<sup>11</sup>.

In the author's opinion, students with picky eating behaviors eat and ask for food no more than non-picky eating children. This shows that picky eating behavior in children is caused by food acceptance, such as the level of fullness, the duration of eating, and fussiness in eating.

### Characteristics of Respondents based on Nutritional Status

Table 4.  
 Characteristics of Respondents based on Nutritional Status

Characteristic	Frequency (children)	Percentage (%)
Malnutrition	22	41,5
Good Nutrition	28	52,8
More Nutrition	3	5,7
<b>Total</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4 shows that of the 53 preschool-age children at Hasyim Asyari Kindergarten, some of the children have good nutritional conditions. The majority of respondents had good nutritional status. As explained by Putri (2022), we know that the majority of children with good nutritional conditions get results like this. The respondent's nutritional status is good because they consume nutritious food, which must be done consistently so that energy in and out is balanced<sup>7</sup>. One way to measure whether or not a child's nutritional needs are met is to look at their weight and height as markers of nutritional status. If you eat enough to meet your nutritional needs, your body will be in good nutritional condition<sup>7</sup>. A child's energy level indicates that his nutritional condition is good; this is most likely due to consuming a balanced diet.

From this research, most of the children with malnutrition and normal nutritional status were aged 5 years. According to previous writing, this is because many children experience picky eating among pre-school students, and at the age of five, children are smarter at managing themselves. This is what causes children to eat less<sup>12</sup>. According to researchers' analysis, the older the child, the smarter he will be in choosing and determining the foods he likes.

Based on research, it was also found that the majority of children who were malnourished were identified as boy. In accordance with the opinion of Ratih (2023) that differences in eating habits can be seen between boy and girl students, students are accustomed to large physical activities, as well as during childhood, to support their growth and development<sup>13</sup>. According to the researchers' analysis, gender influences nutritional status because men's eating patterns or eating habits are different, which influences nutritional status.



In this study, it was also found that some children were malnourished. According to Pertiwi Research (2021), there are many factors, including parental income and education level, that influence children's nutritional conditions before they start school. Type, quantity, pattern, and frequency There is an influence on the nutritional status of toddlers when mothers do not consume enough food because of their low economic position. In his capacity as a health service provider, he also has an impact on the nutritional status of children<sup>14</sup>. Researchers indicate that the education and income level of parents influence the nutritional status of children, as well as their habits and eating patterns.

### The Relationship Between Picky Eating and Nutritional Status

Table 5.

The relationship between Picky Eating and the Nutritional Status of Pre-School Children in Hasyim Asyari Kindergarten

	Picky Eating	Picky Eating		Not Picky Eating		Amount	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
Nutritional Status	Malnutrition	19	65,5	3	12,5	22	41,5
	Good Nutrition	10	34,5	18	75	28	52,8
	More Nutrition	0	0	3	12,5	3	5,7
<b><i>p-value</i></b>				<b>.001</b>			

It can be seen that the majority of children who experience picky eating, 65.5%, have poor nutritional status, and the majority of children who do not experience picky eating, 75%, have good nutritional status. The chi square test results obtained a significance p-value of 0.001 ( $p < 0.050$ ), so it can be concluded that there is a relationship between picky eating and nutritional status in pre-school children. According to Listiyarini's research (2018), this happens to preschool-age children, and there appears to be a statistically large correlation between food preferences and their nutritional status<sup>15</sup>. Astuti and Ayuningtyas (2023) said that the nutritional level of picky eaters is lower than that of non-persecutors. picky eating. Children who have restrictive eating habits tend to be underweight<sup>16</sup>. Sambo's research (2020) provides support for children in the poor nutritional status group because there is a clear correlation between children's food consumption and their nutritional status, which causes the child not to get adequate nutrition<sup>17</sup>.

In Qazaryan's (2019) research, children with picky eating behaviors did not like certain types of vegetables, meat, fruit, fish, and other foods and tended to eat sweets or snacks. Apart from that, some children with picky eating prefer to drink milk, which results in a low appetite and inadequate energy intake. Typical behaviors of picky eating described in this research include not wanting to eat, not wanting to try new foods, and only accepting a few types of food<sup>18</sup>. If this habit persists, it can cause problems with nutritional levels, resulting in abnormal growth and development and impaired endurance. and risk of death<sup>6</sup>.

In connection with the incidence of picky eating children with good nutritional status, this is supported by previous writing, namely that the impact on picky eating sufferers is that there are several kinds of health problems, namely, children will become obese if they tend to choose foods that contain



lots of non-nutritious foods and are high in fat, experiencing unbalanced nutrition or a risk of malnutrition due to limited food intake and nutritional content<sup>19</sup>. According to Astuti and Ayuningtyas (2023), identifying picky eaters results in low nutritional levels. Picky eaters who are treated late result in low nutrition, which causes problems with eating habits when they grow up<sup>16</sup>.

According to researchers' analysis, most children with picky eating have low nutritional levels due to the body not getting enough food. Picky-eating children can have an impact on poor nutritional status if this is not addressed immediately.

## CONCLUSION

The results of research conducted on pre-school children at Hasyim Asyari Kindergarten indicate that there is a relationship between picky eating and the nutritional status of pre-school children.

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