



## **Relationship of Parenting and Social Support for Working Single Mothers on the Provision of Balanced Nutrition and Nutritional Status of Early Childhood in Coastal Areas**

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DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.14421/al-athfal.2020.62-07>

### **Abstrak**

Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk menganalisis hubungan pengasuhan dan dukungan sosial ibu tunggal yang bekerja terhadap pemberian makanan bergizi seimbang dan status gizi anak usia dini. Penelitian ini merupakan jenis penelitian kuantitatif dengan desain cross sectional yang dilaksanakan di daerah pesisir Kabupaten Probolinggo yang terdiri dari 16 Kecamatan. Populasi penelitian ini adalah ibu tunggal yang bekerja dan mempunyai anak usia 3 tahun yaitu sebanyak 247 orang. Pengambilan sampling menggunakan *simple random sampling* sebanyak 219 orang. Data sosiodemografi responden penelitian (umur, pendidikan terakhir dan pekerjaan ibu) diukur dengan kuesioner singkat. Data pada variabel pengasuhan dan dukungan sosial diukur dengan kuesioner. Data pada variabel pemberian makanan bergizi seimbang diukur dengan lembar *food recall* untuk melihat makanan yang diberikan ibu kepada anaknya dalam rentang waktu satu bulan. Data variabel status gizi dicatat dengan menggunakan lembar observasi. Teknik analisis data pada penelitian ini dengan regresi logistik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa terdapat hubungan antara pengasuhan dan dukungan sosial oleh ibu tunggal yang bekerja dengan pemberian makanan bergizi seimbang dan status gizi anak usia dini di daerah pesisir. Sehingga diperlukan pendidikan kesehatan untuk ibu yang mempunyai anak usia dini dan kerja sama antar lintas sektoral.

**Kata Kunci:** *pengasuhan; dukungan sosial; ibu tunggal; gizi; anak usia dini.*

### **Abstract**

This study aimed to analyze parenting and social support relationships by working single mothers on balanced nutritious feeding and early childhood nutritional status. This is quantitative research with a cross-sectional design. This research was conducted in the coastal area of the Probolinggo Regency, consisting of 16 sub-districts. The population in this study was 247 single mothers who worked and had 3-year-old children. The sampling technique of this research is simple random sampling. The final sample in this study was 219 people. A short questionnaire measured the sociodemographic data of research respondents (age, last education, and maternal work). Questionnaires measured data on parenting and social support variables. A food recall sheet measured data on balanced nutritious feeding variables to see the food the mother gave to her child within a month. Nutritional status variable data is recorded using the observation sheet. The data analysis technique in this study was logistic regression. The results showed a link between parenting and social support by single mothers who work with balanced nutritious feeding and early childhood nutritional status in coastal areas. From the results of this study, it can be concluded that health education is needed for mothers who have children in early childhood to help them solve the problems they experience when

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Received: 30 September 2020; Accepted: 7 Desember 2020; Published: 31 Desember 2020

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knowing their child is malnourished. Therefore, cross-sectoral cooperation is needed to provide sustainable health education.

**Keywords:** *parenting; social support; mother single; nutrition; early childhood education.*

## Introduction

Coasts and seas are essential aspects of life in all countries of the world (Wang, 2016). Coastal areas are transitional areas from land and sea, where parts of the sea are still affected by land activities. The coast's characteristic is that it is a strategic area with an easy to develop topography because it has excellent access. Coastal is an area rich in natural resources needed by humans. However, the coastal population is too excessive in using these resources. Coastal residents began to open housing by dredging beaches and selling them for economic purposes, making marine natural resources even more extinct (Barnes et al., 2017). Massive fishing damage the existing ecosystem, reducing the ecosystem's productivity, affecting coastal residents' economy (Marasabessy et al., 2018). Marine natural resources must be preserved to return the coastal population's income and alleviate poverty (Rouf et al., 2019). Coastal residents are also less able to process existing natural resources so that outsiders exploit them, and the majority of coastal residents only work as fishing laborers. (Yonvitner et al., 2018). This makes most of the coastal population lacking, even though their area is rich in natural resources (Fatmasari, 2014). From the results of Dewi's (2018) study, the number of low coastal residents in Indonesia is 108.78 million people from the total population of Indonesia

The occurrence of poverty causes coastal residents to marry off their daughters at adolescence more quickly so that teenage girls cannot attend higher schools and cannot find jobs. Early marriages inherited from the coastal population's ancestors have resulted in many divorces, leading to many unproductive young widows and malnourished children. The majority of young widows do not know the correct way of caring for children, providing food, and providing social support to children to reach standard nutritional status, so that the family's role and function cannot be maximized (Mubarak, 2018). Malnutrition status disrupts body growth, communication, cognitive, and psychomotor (Olsen et al., 2020). Following Arini et al.'s (2019) study, the growth of children under five in coastal areas tends to be slow when analyzed according to height, weight, and compared age. As for cognitive development achievement, 88.3% of coastal toddlers were suspects of mental retardation, and 2.1% experienced mental retardation. As many as 45.5% of children under five were suspects of motor development instability, and 20.7% of children under five experienced motor instability.

Malnutrition in childhood is a global problem (Albert et al., 2020), threatening society (Sirasa et al., 2020). According to Patty and Nugroho's (2019) study, most children under five in coastal areas experience nutritional problems, i.e., malnutrition due to mothers' lack of parenting and social support, food availability, and poverty. Children under five in coastal areas who experience malnutrition are 4.9%, and those with malnutrition are 8.1% (Mubarak, 2018). The number of malnutrition in coastal areas increases each year and causes infant or toddler mortality. The occurrence of malnutrition is influenced by the level of education and knowledge of mothers about balanced nutritional diets. Another factor that causes malnutrition in coastal children is that parents still think that malnourished children and healthy children are the same, so toddlers are identical to malnutrition (Patty & Nugroho, 2019). Therefore, it is important to fulfill the nutrition of children under five which affects nutritional status in the next life period (Patty & Nugroho, 2019). Problems that arise if toddlers have a malnutrition status, among others, are children become vulnerable to protein energy deficiency (KEP), endemic goiter, iron anemia and infectious diseases that increase the number of under-five deaths. Apart from physical health problems, malnutrition causes mental development disorders (Lautetu et al., 2019).

Thus, it is necessary to research the relationship between parenting and social support for working single mothers towards providing balanced nutritious food and nutritional status of early childhood in coastal areas. Researchers coordinate with village midwives in determining

respondents. The village midwife looks at medical records to see data on children aged three years who experience malnutrition. The village midwife provided data on ten 3-year-old children who experienced malnutrition in March 2020 and provided the addresses and telephone numbers of these toddlers' parents. A preliminary study using anthropometric measurements by measuring the child's weight and height compared to the child's age was conducted on five girls and five boys aged three years. It was found that they all had low nutritional status. Physically, these children look smaller and shorter when compared to their age. After conducting interviews with these children, four girls aged three years, they informed them that they had two meals in one day. One girl and five boys age three years said they had one meal a day because they did not feel hungry. Caregivers said that children ate when they were hungry and did not like vegetables because children refused to eat vegetables as they considered the vegetables tasted terrible. Data from caregivers obtained information that their mothers went to work in the morning and did not have time to prepare balanced nutritional meals. Also, their mothers do not understand what is called a balanced nutritional meal. They think that the most important thing is for children in early childhood to eat a lot and be full so that they are not fussy.

## Methods

This is quantitative research with a cross-sectional design. This research was conducted in March 2020 in Kraksaan District, Probolinggo Regency, East Java. The study population is working single mothers, as many as 247 people and their children aged three years. The data were analyzed using simple random sampling. The final sample is 219 people. The inclusion criteria of respondents sampled in this study were single mothers who work outside the home, read and write, are willing to participate in the study, and have a 3-year-old child.

The parenting variable was measured by instruments based on Baumrind's theory in Sofa (2015) and is adopted by current researchers. Social support is measured by a questionnaire adopted from Linasta (2017). A food recall sheet measured the variable of balanced nutritional feeding to see what foods the mother has given to her child. Food recall was adopted from the Ministry of Health (2019). a status variable was measured using the observation sheet.

The researcher obtained data on early childhood and their nutritional status with good, sufficient, and fewer criteria from the Village Midwives who work in the Kraksaan Health Center's working area, consisting of 16 villages. The researcher worked with village midwives and integrated services post cadres to recap the days and dates of implementing the data collection plan. The research data were collected in the afternoon at the Village Maternity Cottage (Polindes) because all research respondents worked from morning to noon. Integrated services post cadres assisted researchers to distribute invitations to the homes of prospective research respondents.

Retrieval of research data was on schedule for 16 villages. Before the data collection implementation, all respondents were contacted by the researcher and integrated services post cadres to remember the data collection activity schedule and are willing to bring their 3-year-old child to participate in the activity. Before data collection, all single mothers who were respondents have explained the study's aims and objectives. For those who agreed to participate in the study, informed consent was given as evidence of consent. It was given a brief questionnaire about sociodemographic data, including mother's age, occupation, latest education, income in one month, sex of early childhood children, and causes of being a single mother. Respondents were given a parenting and social support questionnaire. Then, the mother was given a food recall form to be filled with whatever food has been given to her child. Anthropometric measurements were carried out on children by measuring their height and weight compared with their age. The results of anthropometric measurements are written on the observation sheet. All respondents were given money for transportation, snacks, and mineral water as a thank you for participating in the research. The data analysis technique used to analyze multivariate variables is logistic regression.

## Results

The results of the performed research are presented in the table below. The study results consisted of sociodemographic data from mothers, mothers' parenting to their children, social support, balanced nutritious foods, and early childhood nutritional status.

Table 1. Sociodemographic Data

Sociodemography of Mother	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Age (years)</b>		
<20	102	46.57
21-25	39	17.80
26-30	65	29.68
31-40	13	5.93
<b>Profession</b>		
Farm labor	13	5.93
Factory employees	98	44.74
Store employees	39	17.80
Traders	34	15.52
Civil Servants (PNS)	15	6.84
Housemaid	20	9,13
<b>Education</b>		
Elementary School	49	22.37
Junior High School	136	62.10
Senior High School	26	11.87
Higher Education	8	3.65
<b>Income (Within one month)</b>		
> IDR 500,000	23	10.50
IDR 500,000-1,000,000	116	52.96
IDR 1,100,000-2,000,000	75	34.24
< IDR 2,000,000	5	2.28
<b>Cause of being a single mother</b>		
Divorced	121	55.25
Widow	78	35.61
Foster children	20	9,13
<b>Child sex</b>		
Male	87	35.22%
Female	132	53.44%
<b>Family type</b>		
<i>Extended family</i>	179	72.46%
<i>Three generation</i>	68	27.53%

Table 2. Parenting, social support, provision of balanced nutritious food, and nutrition status of early childhood children

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Parenting</b>		
Democratic	25	11.41
Authoritative	32	14.61
Permissive	162	73.97
<b>Social Support</b>		
Enough	176	80.36
Less	43	19.63
<b>Provision of a balanced nutritious diet</b>		
Rice and side dishes	96	43.83
Rice, side dishes, and vegetables	75	34.24
Rice, side dishes, vegetables, and fruit	39	17.80

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Rice, side dishes, vegetables, fruit, and milk	9	4.10
<b>Nutrition status of early childhood children</b>		
Good	38	17.35
Moderate	109	49.77
Severe	72	32.87

The results showed that most single mothers applied permissive parenting to their children (73.97%), 14.61% applied authoritative parenting, and 11.41% applied democratic parenting. The majority of single mothers (43.83%) gave food in the form of rice and side dishes, 34.24% gave food in the form of rice, side dishes, and vegetables, 17.80% gave food in the form of rice, side dishes, vegetables, and fruit to their children, and only 4.10 % single mothers who provide food in the form of rice, side dishes, vegetables, fruit and milk to their children. After anthropometry measuring, the results showed that the majority (49.77%) of children had a moderate malnutrition status, 32.87% had a severe malnutrition status, and only 17.35% had a good nutritional status.

The provision of balanced nutritious food has a sig value of 0.001 <0.05, which means that parenting affects the provision of balanced nutritious food. Nutritional status has a sig value of 0.000 <0.005, which means that parenting affects nutritional status. Exp (B) value in the logistic regression analysis of balanced nutritious food has a value of 0.279, which means that balanced nutritious food has a 0.279 chance to change. Meanwhile, the logistic regression's nutritional status variable has an Exp (B) value of 65.933. From these results, it can be explained that nutritional status has the opportunity to increase 65.933 times.

The provision of balanced nutritious food has a sig value of 0.001 <0.05, which means that social support affects the provision of balanced nutritious food. Nutritional status has a sig value of 0.002 <0.005, which means that social support affects nutritional status. The value of Exp (B) in the logistic regression analysis of the provision of balanced nutritious food has a value of 0.192. This means that the provision of balanced nutritious food has 0.192 times the chance to change. Meanwhile, the logistic regression's nutritional status variable has an Exp (B) value of 52.765. From these results, it can be explained that nutritional status has the opportunity to increase 52.765 times.

## Discussion

Children are priceless gifts and sustenance given by Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala (SWT) given to a family. A family with children is lucky and is trusted by Allah SWT to take care of the trust entrusted to the family. Not all families are given the trust to have children. This is possible because Allah SWT has not trusted them. In general, and according to the context, the family is the family in which it consists of a father and a mother (Kurniati et al., 2020). Children at an early age are entering the most critical stage in their lives, called the golden age period. The golden age period is the period from birth to 5 years, a period of a full development of body cells and brain development that cannot be found or cannot be repeated in the next period. According to the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia in 2014, early childhood children who do not make it through this period will experience a failure in physical or psychological growth, impacting the next life's welfare.

This study's findings indicate that most single mothers who are less than 20 years old were as many as 102 people (46.57%). The existence of young mothers aged less than 20 years is because they live on the coast where the occupation has a culture of early marriage as a legacy from their ancestors (Widyastari et al., 2020). The age of a too young single mother is a factor that causes them to be less ready to build a household, have children, and do parenting (Tyas & Tin, 2017). Female teenagers who became mothers in this study married earlier and had

children soon after marriage. The young age of adolescents makes them not ready to have children. Therefore, the relatively young age of the mother affects the readiness of child care.

Furthermore, most mothers with the last education level of junior high school were 136 people (62.10%). The majority of young mothers are only junior high school graduates because they are married early by their parents, who believe that marrying young is the solution to life's problems, so there is no need for higher education (Widyastari et al., 2020). Education is influenced by age. According to study research conducted by Kurniasari (2017), very young female teenagers are more likely to marry quickly and not continue their education. Low education affects someone's knowledge. The lower the mother's education, the less comfortable it is to receive knowledge (R. F. Putri et al., 2015). The mothers in the current study had insufficient knowledge about the provision of balanced nutritious foods and the nutritional status of their children due to the low formal education they had previously obtained. Therefore, education affects the knowledge of mothers about the nutritional status of children.

Other findings show that most mothers who work as factory employees were as many as 98 people (44.74%). The existence of a single mother due to divorce made her feel like she lost her husband. Single mothers who previously did not work and only depended on their husbands' livelihoods are forced to be independent and work to provide for themselves and their children. The impact of divorce is a reduction in family economic resources, a change in multiple roles, sadness and widowhood, and the perception of helplessness (Jonathan et al., 2020). For this reason, many single mothers decide to start playing a role in the public sector to work for income. This causes single mothers to have a dual role as housewives and workers to support their families. Being a single mother and a worker is difficult, especially if they still have young children (0-5 years). Single mothers who work are required to have a maximum dual role in their children's growth and development (Affrida, 2017). Work is influenced by age and previously obtained education. According to Kurniasari's (2017) study, it is explained that someone who has higher education will get a more decent job than people with lower education. In the current study, the majority of mothers worked as factory employees. Working as a factory employee is a job that is relatively easy to get because it does not require education and high degree diplomas, does not require special skills and is one of the most types of employment in the Probolinggo Regency, East Java. However, working as a factory employee takes more time to work than in other sectors so that parenting often cannot be done alone.

Then, most mothers, as many as 116 people (52.96%), received income per month of less than Rp related to income. 500,000. According to a study by Afifah (2019), it is explained that the level of income is influenced by education and the type of work. Low education affects the type of work obtained and affects the amount of income. Low income causes low food availability and a low variety of foods in the family (Makanlehi & Redjeki, 2018). Accessible foods are likely not to be high in protein and vitamins and with low concentrations of other nutrients (Wamalwa & Masibo, 2020). In the current research, there is a condition where the money earned by the mother's work is not only used to meet the family's food needs, especially their children who are still toddlers. Their money is also used to meet the relatively large needs of other households. The foods that can be reached and purchased by single mothers in this study are not diverse and do not contain balanced nutrition. Mothers are only able to provide what is needed for their children and adopt a regular diet.

The cause of single mothers due to divorce with their husbands was as many as 121 people (55.25%). The high level of divorce is also due to the coastal culture that identifies unmarried 16-year-old girls as old virgins who embarrass the family, so the family prefers to marry their daughter early with the girl's household's consequences lasting (Widyastari et al., 2020). Various types of problems and calamities that befall a family cause division in the family (Jonathan et al., 2020). The parenting rights of children before 17 years of age due to divorce will mostly go to the mother. According to Hifni's research in 2016, apart from the age factor of children who have not turned 17 years old, the fall of custody of single mothers is also due to many fathers who are not willing to take care of young children because they are not useful in

taking care of their children and that has to go to work, so they cannot take care of the child (Hifni, 2016). According to Tyas and Tin (2017), One of the factors causing divorce is the age that is still too young at marriage and their low education level. Individuals who are too young are not ready to undergo marriage. Too young of age makes a married couple physically and psychologically immature so that various kinds of problems arise that spur divorce (Ainiyah & Muslih, 2020). Marrying too young causes the mother or father to be unprepared in carrying out their duties to raise children from the result of the marriage (Tyas & Tin, 2017). According to a study by Septianah et al. (2019), divorce causes not optimal parenting to children, especially in fulfilling nutrition.

This gives rise to the extended family type of 179 people (72.46%). The father and mother usually raise a child in a family (Sary, 2021). The nuclear family consists of a father, mother, and child. However, there are also incomplete families, so there is only a father or a mother for various reasons (D. Astuti, 2015). The emergence of single parents causes various arising problems in a previously intact family called a single-parent family. A family is a gathering place for several people with different rules between individuals who live in one house. In Indonesia, there are several types of families. A nuclear family consists of a father, mother, and child. The extended family consists of a nuclear family with other families such as grandparents or uncles in one house. The nuclear dyad consists of married couples without children. Blended families are formed from a couple's marriage because of the wife or husband's previous marriage. The wife or husband has children from the result of the previous marriage. Three generation consists of three generations of a grandfather, grandmother, father, mother, and child. Single adult living alone consists of one adult in one house. Middle age or elderly couple consists of elderly married couples. A father or mother heads a single parent family only with children who are still dependent on the single parent. The extended family consists of a mother, grandfather or grandmother, children, and other family members who live in one house.

Often divorced women will return to live with their parents because they need a carer for their child when they have to leave to work, i.e., a grandfather or grandmother (Sary, 2021). According to a previous study conducted by Septianah et al. (2019), it is known that parenting in an extended family provides the advantage that parenting can be done together with many family members so that it does not cause difficulties and burdens for one family member. However, there is a disadvantage, i.e., the emergence of permissive parenting because all family members always obey whatever the child wants. In the current research, the formation of the extended family is because single mothers are unable to care for their own children because they are divorced from their husbands and have to work outside the home so that parenting is left to the family.

Single mothers' permissive type of parenting resulted in as many as 162 people (73.97%). Early childhood growth and development are still very dependent on parents' parenting to fulfill their basic needs, such as eating, drinking, bathing, or studying. Parenting is a strategy owned by parents to shape their children for the future (Hasanah & Sugito, 2020). Parenting is the parents' effort to guide and give children examples of social life and community norms (Susanti, 2015). Parenting done by single mothers includes parenting physical and psychological aspects. In this case, physical parenting is a significant factor in children's health welfare.

Parenting consists of several types, i.e., permissive type parenting, authoritative type parenting, and democratic type parenting (Sary, 2018). Each of the types of parenting has advantages and disadvantages. Permissive parenting is a type of parenting without being actively involved in parenting. This tends to let children choose the things they like without giving directions. Authoritative parenting is a type of parenting that encourages children to be independent while still providing limits for children to take action. Democratic parenting tends to provide children choices and applies the principle of discussion with children (Susanti, 2015). Permissive parenting tends not to care about children by not giving correct directions about eating foods containing balanced nutrition. Authoritative parenting tends to determine and force the child to eat prepared food. Democratic-type parenting tends to have discussions with children to eat foods they like and direct them to eat balanced nutrition (Ulfiani Rahman,

Mardhiah, 2015). In parenting, parents focus on being an educator, responsible for children's growth, caring for, protecting, and directing every stage of their child's life towards a new life (Rozana et al., 2018).

Shifting roles in the family due to working single mothers impact mothers' absence directly in children's parenting. This condition requires a mother to apply appropriate parenting to maintain a warm relationship and smooth communication between mother and child (Fatkhurohmah et al., 2019). The mother's most crucial parenting is parenting for physical well-being because the toddler period is a golden period for swift growth and development that will affect early childhood children's welfare later (Aghnaita, 2017).

Adjustment to parenthood is related to readiness in terms of knowledge and behavior in caring for their children. Single mothers with a permissive type give children the freedom to behave or make decisions (Makanlehi & Redjeki, 2018). Mothers with permissive parenting patterns feel tired from all the burdens of life (F. D. Astuti & Sulistyowati, 2013). Single mothers with permissive parenting are lease-fair, giving no guidance and control (Ana Stevi et al., 2017). Permissive parenting focuses on children doing everything they want without any control or rules from parents, such as choosing their favorite food (Rozana et al., 2018). Permissive parenting tends not to care about what foods a child eats, according to Joni (2015). The type of extended family influences the permissive parenting of children. In the current study, children are cared for by an extended family type consisting of many family members. Each family member always obeys the child's wishes in all matters, especially eating, causing the emergence of permissive parenting.

In addition to parenting, mothers' social support for children maintains physical health by providing nutritious food to prevent malnutrition (Septiana & Widiastuti, 2020). Sufficient social support in Probolinggo District for children providing balanced nutritious food is 176 people (80.36%). This social support in providing balanced nutritious food plays a role in helping early childhood children gain self-confidence to be motivated to trust their mother who has prepared food for them (Yosua On & Sumargi, 2018). The provision of balanced nutritious food by single mothers must align with the government's provisions, aiming to make the nutritional status profitable and prevent under or over-nutrition in children. Nutritional status is a state of balanced consumption of nutrients with nutritional needs. Individuals with average balance are also in a normal state (Khayati, 2020). Nutritional status can be divided into good, moderate, and low. Nutritional status can be measured by anthropometry, i.e., a method of determining nutritional status presented in the form of an index (Khayati, 2020). Social support is a feeling of comfort that children get because they feel helped by their mother to improve their health and well-being (Istanto Trinand & Engry, 2019). Social support from single mothers in this study included emotional, informational, and instrumental support. According to Latifah et al. (2018), social support is provided to children in the form of caring for children while eating, giving appreciation by praising children when they finish the food provided by their mothers, and providing balanced nutritious food for children.

Balanced nutrition can be done by feeding. The majority of single mothers who gave their children food in rice and side dishes are 96 people (43.83%). According to a study by Jannat et al. (2020), single mothers tend to choose to buy fast and cheap side dishes because it saves time and is following their income. The provision of foods that do not contain balanced nutrition contributes to the child's survival (Sebayang et al., 2020). Lack of protein consumption causes growth failure and increases death from a heart attack in adulthood (Martony et al., 2020). Unbalanced protein intake also results in anemia in early childhood (Makanlehi & Redjeki, 2018).

Moreover, there were 109 people (49.77%) who lacked nutritional status. Nutrition is a determinant of a person's health level, which can affect physical and mental health. Nutritional status was seen by measuring the body mass index (BMI) compared to age and the Z-Score. Anthropometry is the development of physical anthropology. In line with the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia's decision, the reference for determining early childhood's nutritional status is age, sex, weight, and height (D. R. Putri & Sudarmilah, 2020).



Factors affecting nutritional status are low socio-economic and formal education of family members (Islam & Biswas, 2020). According to R. F. Putri et al. (2015), another factor that causes most children under five to experience malnutrition is their mothers' work. Working mothers do not have enough time to care for their children and pay attention to their diet. Children with moderate malnutrition and severe malnutrition status are still an unresolved problem in coastal areas due to many factors, one of which is the double burden on parents in coastal areas (Ghattas et al., 2020). Malnutrition is detrimental to children both physically and mentally in development (Nahar et al., 2020). According to research by Wamalwa and Masibo (2020), malnutrition status is caused by a deficiency of one nutrient as a result of the lack of a variety of foods consumed by children.

Therefore, the solution related to the importance of public health, especially mothers who have early childhood children, is in the form of correct health information. This is meant to help them make decisions and solve their problems when they find out that their children fall under moderate malnutrition or severe malnutrition. Of course, cross-sectoral cooperation is needed to provide health education continuously and sustainably to mothers with early childhood children. Cross-sectoral cooperation can be carried out between health workers, social services, and children and women empowerment institution.

## Conclusion

This study concludes that there is a relationship between single mothers and early childhood in coastal areas, and health education is needed for mothers who have early childhood. Cross-sectoral cooperation is then needed to provide continuous and sustainable health education, such as health workers, social services, and children and women empowerment institutions.

## Acknowledgment

Researchers would like to extend their gratitude to the Hafshawaty Foundation Chairman, who has provided support for this research. Gratitude also goes to the Probolinggo District Health Office, village midwives in the working area of Probolinggo Regency, East Java, and all respondents involved in this research.

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