

PEMBIASAAN HIDUP SEHAT MELALUI PROGRAM MAKANAN BERGIZI GRATIS (MBG) PADA SATUAN PAUD DI ACEH BESAR

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Submitted: February 15, 2026

Accepted :25 April 2026

Published: 30 April 2026

Abstract

This study aims to describe the habituation of healthy living through the Free Nutritious Meal Program (MBG) in early childhood education centers in Aceh Besar. The study employed a descriptive qualitative approach conducted at PAUD Al Munawarah, PAUD Nurul Jadid, and PAUD Permata Bangsa. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. The findings revealed that the MBG program supports healthy living habits among young children through handwashing before meals, consuming nutritious food, bringing drinking water, engaging in physical activities, and maintaining environmental cleanliness. The program also helps children develop healthy eating habits and regular meal schedules. However, the utilization of the MBG program as a contextual learning medium is still not optimal because activities involving healthy food exploration, active communication, and simple reflection remain limited. Several obstacles were identified, including limited health education media, insufficient integration of MBG activities into classroom learning, and limited learning innovation involving children's active exploration. This study implies the need for stronger contextual learning approaches and greater teacher creativity so that the MBG program can more effectively support healthy living behaviors in early childhood education.

Keywords: Healthy Living Habits, Free Nutritious Meals, Early Childhood Education, Young Children, Contextual Learning

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan mendeskripsikan pembiasaan hidup sehat melalui Program Makanan Bergizi Gratis (MBG) pada satuan PAUD di Aceh Besar. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif yang dilakukan di PAUD Al Munawarah, PAUD Nurul Jadid, dan PAUD Permata Bangsa. Teknik pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa program MBG mendukung pembiasaan hidup sehat anak usia dini melalui kegiatan mencuci tangan sebelum makan, konsumsi makanan bergizi, membawa air minum, aktivitas fisik, serta menjaga kebersihan lingkungan sekolah. Program ini juga membantu anak mengenal pola makan sehat dan jadwal makan yang teratur. Namun, pemanfaatan program MBG sebagai media pembelajaran kontekstual masih belum optimal karena kegiatan eksplorasi makanan sehat, komunikasi aktif anak, dan refleksi sederhana masih terbatas. Kendala yang ditemukan meliputi keterbatasan media edukasi kesehatan, kurang optimalnya integrasi kegiatan MBG dengan pembelajaran di kelas, serta minimnya inovasi pembelajaran yang melibatkan eksplorasi aktif anak. Penelitian ini memberikan implikasi bahwa diperlukan penguatan pembelajaran kontekstual dan kreativitas guru agar program MBG dapat lebih efektif dalam membentuk perilaku hidup sehat anak usia dini.

Keywords: Pembiasaan Hidup Sehat, Makanan Bergizi Gratis (MBG), PAUD, Anak Usia Dini, Pembelajaran Kontekstual

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood education is a fundamental stage in the formation of children's behaviors and habits, including healthy living habits. At an early age, children are in a period of very rapid development so they need appropriate stimulation through the educational, family, and community environment (Suyadi, 2013b). One of the important aspects that needs to be instilled from an early age is healthy living behavior as an effort to support optimal growth and development of children (Anhusadar & Islamiyah, 2020).

Healthy living habits in early childhood can be done through various simple activities that are applied repeatedly in daily life, such as washing hands before eating, consuming nutritious food, maintaining environmental cleanliness, doing physical activities, and implementing a clean and healthy lifestyle. This habituation is an important part of early childhood character education because it is related to the formation of children's behavior and independence.

The Free Nutritious Food (MBG) Program is one of the programs that supports the fulfillment of children's nutritional needs while building awareness of healthy living from an early age. In the context of early childhood education, the MBG program not only functions as a fulfillment of nutritional needs, but can also be used as a contextual learning medium in instilling healthy living behaviors in children.

The implementation of healthy living habits through the MBG program in PAUD units still faces various challenges. The results of preliminary observations show that eating together activities in several Aceh Besar PAUD units (PAUD Al Munawarah, PAUD Nurul Jadid, and PAUD Permata Bangsa) are still oriented to daily routines and have not been fully developed into a learning experience that encourages active involvement of children. Children have not been given many opportunities to get to know the types of healthy foods, understand the

importance of nutrition, and develop healthy living habits through fun learning activities.

Some studies show that healthy living habits from an early age can help shape positive behaviors in children at later stages of development (Zubaedah & Lestari, 2017). However, studies on the implementation of healthy living habits through the MBG program in PAUD units are still relatively limited. Therefore, this study aims to describe the implementation of healthy living habits through the Free Nutritious Food Program in PAUD units in Aceh Besar.

METHODS

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach. The research was carried out in three PAUD units in Aceh Besar, namely PAUD Al Munawarah, PAUD Nurul Jadid, and PAUD Permata Bangsa from September 29 to October 01, 2025. The research subjects include healthy living habituation activities and the implementation of the Free Nutritious Food Program in each PAUD unit. Data collection was carried out through observation and documentation of eating activities. The research instrument is in the form of an observation sheet that is compiled based on indicators of healthy living habits in early childhood. Data analysis uses the Miles and Huberman model which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Scott, 2016).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Healthy Living Habits

The results of the study show that PAUD units in Aceh Besar have carried out various activities to habituate healthy living through the Free Nutritious Food Program. This habit is carried out through washing hands before eating, consuming nutritious food, bringing drinking water, and physical activities such as gymnastics and outdoor games.

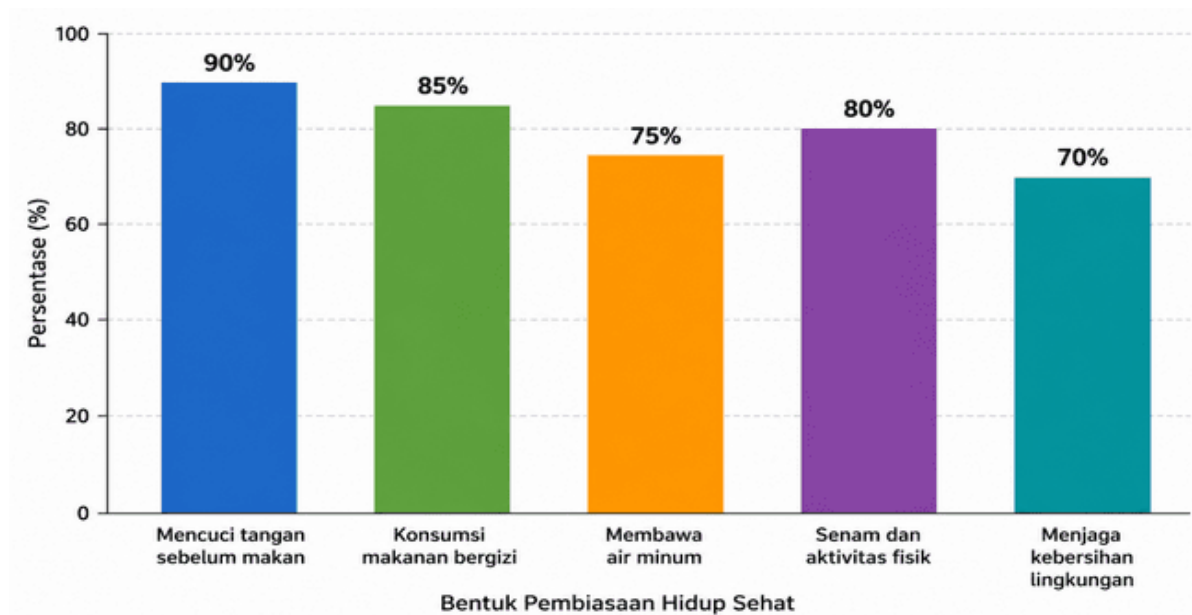


Figure 1. Data on Healthy Living Habits in Early Childhood Education Units

Based on the figure of graph 1, the activity of washing hands before eating shows the highest percentage, which is 90%. Children have been accustomed to washing their hands using soap and running water before eating together. The habit of consuming nutritious food has also been applied consistently to MBG activities. Physical activity activities through morning gymnastics and outdoor games are also part of the healthy living habits applied to the PAUD unit. These activities help increase motor activity while supporting early childhood physical health.

Healthy living habits in PAUD units in Aceh Besar have been carried out quite well through the Free Nutritious Food Program (MBG). Washing hands before eating, consuming nutritious food, bringing drinking water, physical activity, and maintaining environmental cleanliness have become part of children's daily routines. These findings show that habituation that is carried out consistently in the school environment can help children build healthy living behaviors from an early age. In early childhood education, habituation that is

repeated through real activities is an effective strategy because children learn through direct experiences that are close to their daily lives (Suyadi, 2013a). Routinely applied health habits also play a role in shaping children's life skills and supporting their social development and independence (WHO, 2019, 2021). The high percentage of hygiene indicators before meals shows that children have begun to understand the importance of personal hygiene as part of healthy living. Washing your hands with soap before eating is a simple habit that is important in preventing disease transmission and maintaining children's health. This custom also reflects that health education can be introduced through concrete daily activities. UNICEF emphasizes that habituating hygiene behaviors in early childhood, including washing hands with soap, is an important step in supporting children's health and preventing the risk of infectious diseases in the school environment (UNICEF, 2021). Regular activities done before meals not only support physical health, but also help build children's awareness of the importance of maintaining personal hygiene.

Utilization of the MBG Program

The results of the study show that the MBG program has helped build healthy eating habits in early childhood. Children begin to get acquainted with healthy food, regular meal schedules, and the habit of maintaining cleanliness before and after meals.

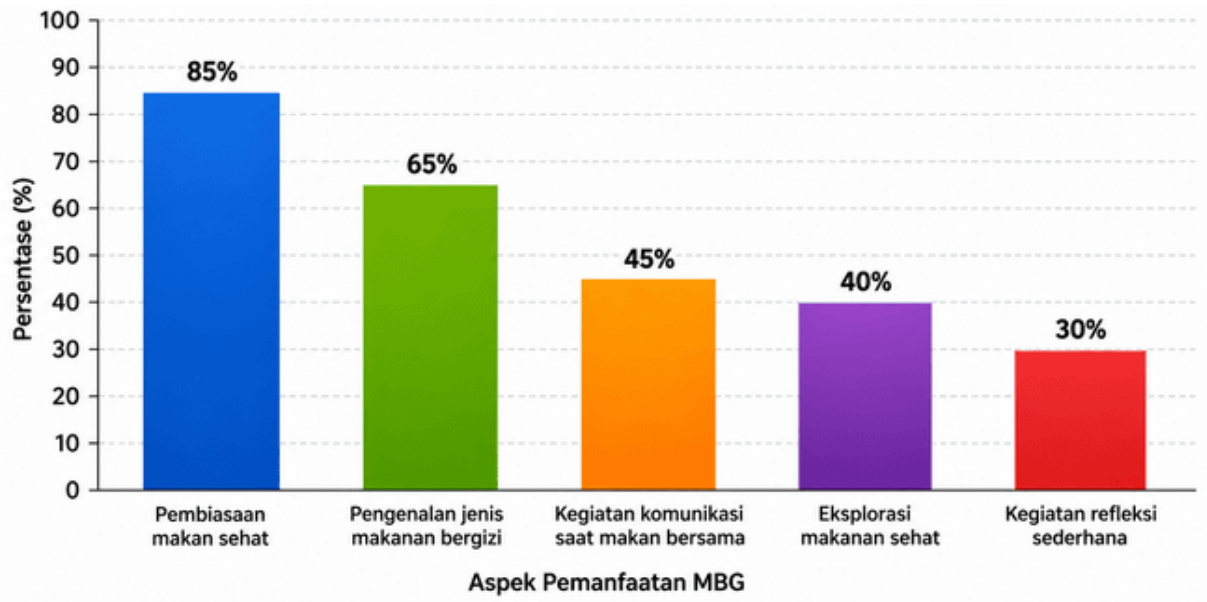


Figure 2. Data on the Utilization of MBG Programs in Learning

The data in figure 2 shows that the use of MBG is still dominant in healthy eating habits with a percentage of 85%. However, the exploration of healthy food and simple reflection is still relatively low. This condition shows that eating together activities have not been fully utilized as a learning medium that encourages children's exploration and active involvement. Children have not been given many opportunities to get to know the simple nutritional content, observe the shape and color of food, or communicate healthy eating experiences using their own language.

The MBG program helps build healthy eating habits in early childhood. Children begin to get used to a regular meal schedule and get to know the nutritious foods consumed together at school. This shows that the MBG program not only functions as a fulfillment of nutritional needs, but also as an effort to form healthy eating behaviors from an early age. The fulfillment of good nutrition in early childhood is very important because it is directly related to physical growth, brain development, and children's readiness to learn at school (Black et al., 2018). Children who get a balanced nutritional intake consistently

tend to have better study concentration and more optimal body condition in participating in learning activities.

The MBG program has an important contribution to the quality of health and child development in the PAUD unit. However, the results of the study also show that the use of the MBG Program as a learning medium is not fully optimal. Eating together activities are still more dominant as healthy eating routines, while food exploration activities, children's communication during meals, and simple reflection are still in the low category. This condition shows that MBG activities have not been fully developed into contextual and meaningful learning experiences. In fact, in early childhood learning, daily activities such as eating together can be a rich means of learning to introduce the concepts of color, taste, texture, and benefits of food, and encourage children to communicate through their experiences. Contextual learning that involves real-life experiences has been shown to help children understand concepts more meaningfully and increase active engagement in the learning process (Scott, 2016).

Obstacles to Healthy Living Habits in the Utilization of MBG Programs in Learning

Some of the obstacles found in the implementation of healthy living habits through the MBG program include the limitations of health education media, the lack of optimal integration of MBG activities with classroom learning, and the limitations of learning innovations that involve active exploration of children. Healthy living habits are still more oriented to daily routines than the development of contextual and enjoyable learning experiences for early childhood.

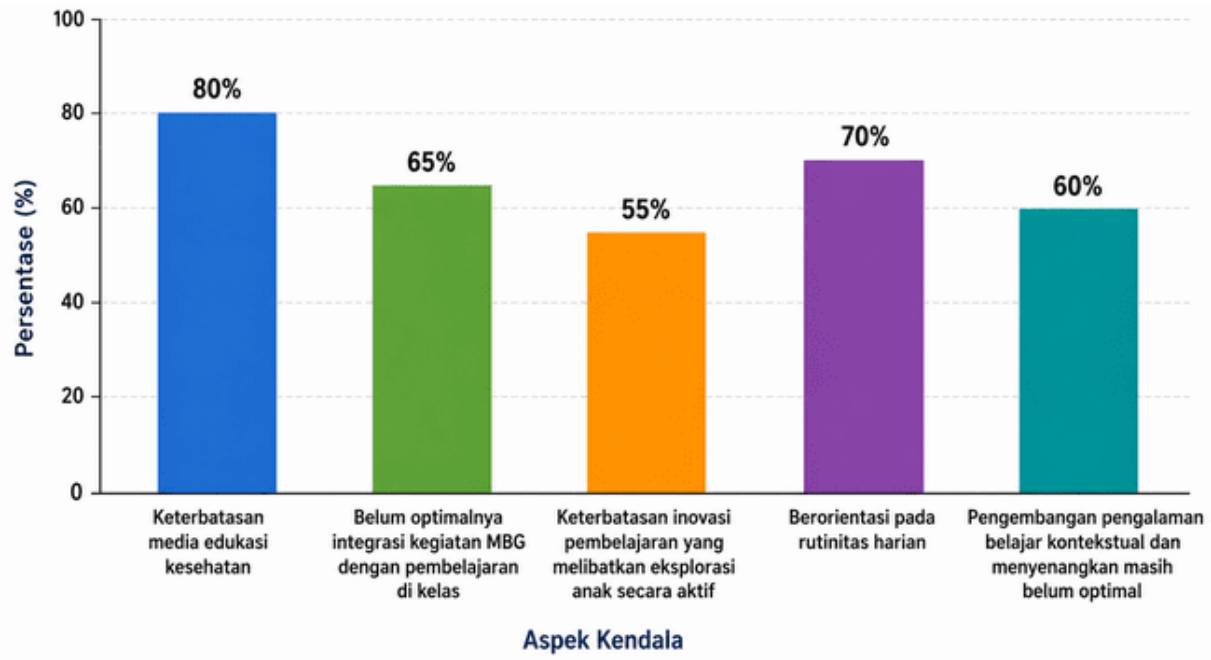


Figure 3. Constraint Aspect Data

Based on the graph 3 image above, the indicator of the limitation of health education media with a percentage of 80%, which shows that supporting facilities such as teaching aids and learning media about healthy living are still inadequate. In addition, healthy living habits also tend to be oriented towards daily routines (70%), such as washing hands and eating together, without being fully developed into a meaningful learning experience for children. The suboptimal integration of MBG activities with classroom learning is also seen at 65%, which shows that the MBG program is still more understood as a nutrition fulfillment activity than as part of the early childhood learning process. The development of contextual and fun learning experiences is also still not optimal with a percentage of 60%, while the limitation of learning innovations involving children's active exploration is at 55%. These findings show that healthy living habituation activities in PAUD units have begun to be implemented, but they still need to be strengthened to be more integrated with children's learning activities.

Some of the obstacles found in this study, such as the limitations of health education media, the lack of optimal integration of MBG activities with classroom learning, and the limited learning innovations involving children's active exploration, show the need to strengthen the implementation of the program. Interesting learning media that is in accordance with children's development is very important to help children understand the concept of healthy living in a simple and fun way. Teachers also have an important role in integrating meal activities together with the learning theme so that these activities not only focus on food consumption, but also become part of the child's learning experience. According to NAEYC (2020), early childhood learning will be more effective if it is designed through active, meaningful, and engaging experiences with the surrounding environment.

Implementation of Healthy Living Habits with the Utilization of the MBG Program in the Early Childhood Education Unit

The implementation of healthy living habits with the use of the MBG program in PAUD units in Aceh Besar showed the following results:

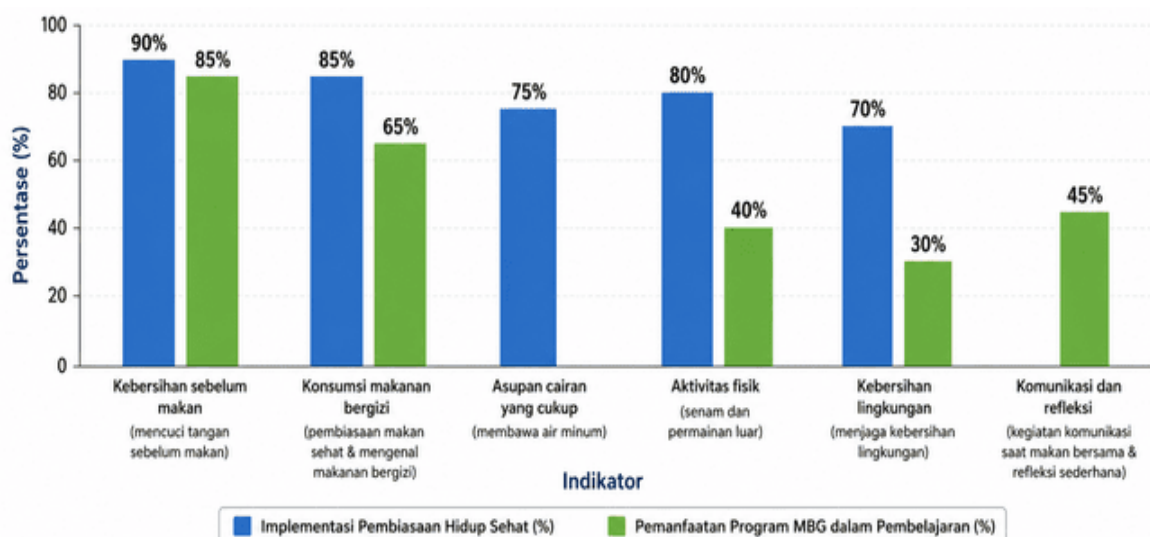


Figure 4. Data on Healthy Living Habits with the Utilization of the MBG Program

Based on the figure of graph 4 above, the implementation of healthy living habits in PAUD units in Aceh Besar shows the highest percentage of hygiene indicators before meals at 90%, followed by nutritious food consumption at 85%, physical activity at 80%, fluid intake at 75%, and environmental hygiene at 70%. Meanwhile, the use of the MBG program in learning showed the highest achievement in healthy eating habits at 85%, followed by the introduction of nutritious food at 65%, communication when eating together 45%, healthy food exploration 40%, and simple reflection at 30%.

The MBG program has great potential in supporting healthy living habits in early childhood in the Aceh Besar PAUD unit. This program has helped build habits of maintaining cleanliness and healthy food consumption, but its use as a learning medium still needs to be improved. Therefore, more contextual learning innovations, the provision of adequate educational media, and the strengthening of the integration of MBG activities with classroom learning are needed. With this step, the MBG Program is not only a means of fulfilling children's nutrition, but also an important part of building healthy living behaviors through active, fun, and appropriate learning experiences for early childhood development.

CONCLUSION

Based on the formulation of the research problem, it can be concluded that healthy living habits through the Free Nutritious Food Program (MBG) in PAUD units in Aceh Besar have been carried out quite well. This can be seen from children's habits in washing their hands before eating, consuming nutritious food, bringing drinking water, doing physical activities, and maintaining the cleanliness of the school environment. This habit is carried out

regularly in daily activities and helps instill healthy living behaviors from an early age.

The use of the MBG Program in learning in early childhood education units showed positive results, especially in healthy eating habits and the introduction of nutritious food to children. This program has supported children to get used to eating regularly and recognize the importance of nutritious food for the health of the body. However, the use of MBG as a learning medium is still not optimal, especially in healthy food exploration activities, communication during meals together, and simple reflections that are still not widely applied in the learning process.

The obstacles faced in the implementation of healthy living habits through the MBG Program include the limitations of health education media, the lack of optimal integration of MBG activities with classroom learning, and the limited learning innovations involving children's active exploration. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen through the provision of appropriate learning media, increase teachers' creativity in integrating MBG activities into learning, and develop more contextual and fun activities so that healthy living habits can be carried out more optimally in early childhood.

ACKNOWLEDMENT

The author would like to thank the PAUD unit in Aceh Besar for its willingness to provide data for the purposes of this research.

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