ABSTRACT

Nutritional status of under-five children is an important indicator in determining the quality of child growth and development and serves as a fundamental foundation for human resource development. However, nutritional problems such as underweight, stunting, and wasting remain major challenges in Indonesia due to the relatively slow pace of improvement and persistent regional disparities. Based on the UNICEF conceptual framework, malnutrition is multifactorial in nature and results from the interaction of various interrelated risk factors. Therefore, this study formulates four main factors hypothesized to influence child nutritional status, namely child-related factors, maternal factors, household factors, and infant and young child feeding practices. This study aims to develop and examine a structural model of factors influencing underweight, stunting, and wasting among under-five children in Indonesia using the Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach, utilizing data from the 2024 Indonesian Nutrition Status Survey (SSGI). The results indicate that in the underweight and wasting models, household factors are the only factors that have a statistically significant effect, whereas in the stunting model, maternal factors and household factors show significant effects. Structural model evaluation reveals that the R^2 values for the underweight, stunting, and wasting models are 82.2%, 81.3%, and 75.2%, respectively, indicating strong predictive capability of the exogenous variables in explaining variations in toddler nutritional status. Although several structural paths and indicators are not statistically significant, all constructs and indicators are retained due to their theoretical relevance and substantive meaning in explaining the mechanisms underlying child malnutrition. Overall, this study confirms that underweight, stunting, and wasting are influenced by a combination of individual, household, and environmental factors, highlighting that efforts to improve child nutritional status require integrated, targeted, and sustainable interventions as a basis for nutrition policy formulation in Indonesia.

Keywords: nutritional status of under-five children, underweight, stunting, wasting, risk factors, PLS-SEM.