

## **ABSTRACT**

### **THE INFLUENCE OF NURTURING TOWARDS INFANT GROWTH A longitudinal observation at 0-12 months Buginese infant, Barru, South Sulawesi**

The Research of Hadju in South Sulawesi (1999) showed that the prevalence of wasting in this area was about 14.4%. Thaha (1997) found out that the prevalence of wasting at 6-23 months babies in Barru was around 9.9%. The difference between the number of wasting prevalence and the expected number was only 2.3%, indicating something had happened on the infants in South Sulawesi. The low quality of infant nurturing practice among the people of South Sulawesi were possibly the cause of this growth disorder. The objective this research is to study the influence of nurturing towards infant growth.

The research used cohort design. Thirty-eight infants (24 are male and 14 are female) with both normal newborn-body weight and height were observed longitudinally for one year. During 12 months of the infants' life, the infant feeding practices, basic infant care, personal hygiene, and infant environmental safety and healthiness were observed as main independent variables.

The weight velocity of male infants in the first six month was 674.4 gr/month, and 603.9 gr/month on female infants. The height velocity of male infants was 2.8 cm/month and 2.8 cm/month on female infants. In the second six months, the weight velocity of male infants was 207.1 gr/month, and 158.1

gr/month on female infants. The height velocity of male infants was 1.2 cm/month and 1.0 cm/month on female infants. The weight velocity of infants gaining proper infants' food practice in the first six months was 1503.4 gr higher than those gaining improper one ( $p < 0.05$ ). In the second six months the weight velocity of infant gaining proper infant feeding practice was 180 gr higher than that of the infants gaining improper one. The infants whose mothers could provide proper basic infant care to their infants had better weight and height velocity than those whose mothers could not. In the first six months, the weight velocity of the infants whose mothers could provide better personal hygiene, and infant environmental safety and healthiness was better than that height velocity of the infants. In the second six months, the weight and height velocity of the infants whose mothers could provide better personal hygiene, and infant environmental safety and healthiness was similar to that of the infants whose mothers could provider lower one.

Based on the findings it can be concluded that the variable of infant feeding practices dominantly affected the growth of the infants. The variable of basic infant care, personal hygiene, and infant environmental safety and healthiness influence the growth of the infants. It was also found out that the variable of infant nurturing information affected the main independent variables.

**Keywords:** nurturing, growth velocity, information