

AN ANALYSIS OF THE FREE NUTRITIOUS MEALS (MBG) PROGRAM AT RA PERWANIDA 4 PALEMBANG IN 2025

Siti Rohani^{1*}, Bukman Lian², Santa Idayana Sinaga³

^{1,2,3}Universitas PGRI Palembang

*Corresponding author: sitirohani@muba@gmail.com, drbukmanlian@univpgri-palembang.ac.id, paudsanta@gmail.com.

Abstrak

Program Makan Bergizi Gratis (MBG) yang diluncurkan pemerintah pada tahun 2025 merupakan intervensi gizi strategis berskala nasional untuk menekan angka stunting dan mengoptimalkan kesiapan belajar anak usia dini. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis secara mendalam pelaksanaan Program MBG di RA Perwanida 4 Palembang, mencakup dimensi perencanaan, pelaksanaan, hambatan, hingga dampak yang dihasilkan. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan desain fenomenologi. Sumber data primer diperoleh melalui wawancara mendalam dengan kepala sekolah, guru kelas, dan orang tua siswa Kelompok B, didukung oleh observasi partisipatif dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa perencanaan menu MBG di RA Perwanida 4 Palembang telah mempertimbangkan parameter gizi seimbang, namun penerapannya masih berada pada taraf standar minimal. Analisis manajemen menunjukkan adanya kesenjangan operasional: perencanaan (planning) cenderung repetitif, pengorganisasian (organizing) terhambat keterbatasan tenaga pendidik, dan pengawasan (controlling) masih bersifat subjektif.

Kata kunci: Program Makan Bergizi Gratis (MBG), Manajemen POAC, Kebutuhan Fisiologis, PAUD.

Abstract

The Free Nutritious Meal Program (Program Makan Bergizi Gratis/MBG) launched by the government in 2025 is a strategic national-scale nutritional intervention to reduce stunting rates and optimize early childhood learning readiness. However, its implementation at the Raudhatul Athfal (RA) level is often faced with complex operational challenges. This study aims to analyze in-depth the implementation of the MBG Program at RA Perwanida 4 Palembang, covering aspects of planning, execution, obstacles, and the resulting impacts. This research employs a qualitative descriptive approach with a phenomenological design. Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews with the principal, class teachers, and parents of Group B students, supported by participatory observation and documentation. The results indicate that the planning of MBG menus at RA Perwanida 4 Palembang has considered balanced nutritional parameters, but its implementation remains at a minimal standard level. Management analysis reveals operational gaps: planning tends to be repetitive, organizing is hindered by a limited number of teaching staff, and controlling is still subjective. Nevertheless, this program has successfully provided positive impacts, such as introducing healthy food types and habituating dining etiquette among students. In conclusion, the effectiveness of the MBG program requires improvements in innovative menu planning, scientific supervision, and solid synergy in nutritional education between the school and parents.

Keywords: Free Nutritious Meal Program (MBG), POAC Management, Physiological Needs, Early Childhood Education (PAUD).

History:

Received : 6 July 2026
Revised : 12 July 2026
Accepted : 18 July 2026
Published : 20 July 2026

Publisher: Horizon Edukasi Prima Indonesia

Licensed: This work is licensed under
a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 License



1. INTRODUCTION

Early childhood education (ECE) constitutes the primary foundation for developing the quality of future generations because this period represents the most rapid phase of child growth and development, commonly referred to as the *golden age*. During the first six years of life, children's brain development reaches its most critical stage; therefore, the quality of educational stimulation and the fulfillment of basic needs, particularly adequate nutrition, play a vital role in optimizing children's development (Herniati & Idawati, 2025). Proper nutrition not only supports physical growth but also determines children's cognitive abilities, concentration, motor development, and emotional stability in school (Syafiqoh & Setyawati, 2025). In 2025, the Government of Indonesia officially introduced the Free Nutritious Meal Program (Makan Bergizi Gratis/MBG) as one of its national strategic development priorities (Saputra, 2025). The MBG program is implemented as a structured system for providing healthy and balanced meals to students across educational institutions, ranging from Early Childhood Education (PAUD), *Raudhatul Athfal* (RA), to secondary education (Sa'adah et al., 2021).

The MBG program is designed not merely as a school meal initiative but as a specific nutritional intervention aimed at improving national nutritional status, reducing stunting, and promoting healthy eating habits from an early age (Maulidya & Fitriani, 2025). Through this policy, the government seeks to ensure that students possess adequate physical readiness to participate effectively in learning activities (Merlinda & Yusuf, 2025). However, the implementation of the MBG program in Indonesia continues to face numerous managerial and operational challenges. These challenges are particularly significant at the *Raudhatul Athfal* (RA) level because young children generally have highly specific preferences regarding the taste, appearance, and texture of food. If these managerial aspects are not handled effectively, the program may become inefficient due to low food consumption among students (Akmalia et al., 2025). Similar conditions were identified at RA Perwanida 4 Palembang, one of the schools implementing the MBG program in 2025. Preliminary observations revealed several practical challenges, including limited food-serving facilities, insufficient variation in daily menus that led to children's boredom, and inadequate teacher supervision during mealtime. Furthermore, children's satisfaction with the taste and presentation of the meals has never been formally evaluated, despite food acceptability being a key indicator of successful nutritional intake.

The importance of effective menu management is supported by Albaburrahim et al. (2025), who found that although free meal programs increase students' energy levels, their effectiveness largely depends on the quality of meal presentation. Similarly, Herningtyas et al. (2025) reported that well-structured school meal programs significantly improve children's learning concentration when supported by effective school management and competent teachers. Evaluating the implementation of the MBG program is therefore essential to ensure that the government's policy objectives are effectively translated into tangible benefits for children. Without systematic evaluation, challenges such as repetitive menus or food distribution problems may remain unresolved, limiting the program's potential to improve children's nutritional status. Accordingly, this study aims to examine the implementation of the MBG program at RA Perwanida 4 Palembang, identify the challenges encountered during its implementation, and propose practical recommendations to enhance the quality of school meal services. The findings are expected to provide valuable guidance for improving students' health and learning motivation. Based on these considerations, this study is entitled "An Analysis of the Free Nutritious Meal (MBG) Program at RA Perwanida 4 Palembang in 2025."

To analyze the effectiveness of the MBG program, this study adopts George R. Terry's POAC management theory, which consists of four managerial functions: Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling (Riyyah, 2025). In addition, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory (1943) serves as the primary conceptual framework for understanding the significance of the MBG program. The Free Nutritious Meal Program is one of the flagship policies introduced under the administration of President Prabowo Subianto. Fundamentally, the program aims to ensure that children receive adequate nutritional intake to support both their physical and mental development. Furthermore, the initiative serves as a preventive health measure to reduce the risks of malnutrition and nutrition-related diseases, thereby enabling children to grow into healthy and productive individuals (Aji, 2025). According to Aprillia and Azzahra (2025), the MBG program represents the government's tangible commitment to fulfilling citizens' fundamental rights. Through this initiative, the government provides a concrete and strategic public service that guarantees children's access to adequate nutrition during their school years (Simangunsong & Sinaga, 2026). Likewise, Khasanah et al. (2025) argued that the MBG program functions as an important instrument for promoting social justice and improving public welfare through the provision of quality nutritional intake for students. Similarly, Rahmah et al. (2025) described the policy as a concrete government effort to provide free nutritious meals to targeted populations, particularly students at the elementary, junior high, and senior high school levels. This study therefore seeks to analyze the long-term impact of the MBG program on students' health and educational sustainability (Qomarrullah et al., 2025). From the perspectives of public health and educational management, the MBG program can be examined through several dimensions, including nutritional design

analysis, food supply chain and food safety management, food consumption behavior and acceptability (food waste analysis), pedagogical integration (nutritional schooling), and cognitive and anthropometric impact analysis (Akmalia et al., 2025).

Early childhood refers to children aged 0–6 years, representing a critical period in human development. Early Childhood Education (PAUD) includes various educational institutions, such as Kindergartens (TK), Playgroups (KB), and other Early Childhood Education Centers (SPS), all of which emphasize play-based learning to foster children's motor, language, cognitive, social, and emotional development (Bintang et al., 2024). School feeding programs have been widely recognized as an effective global strategy for combating malnutrition while simultaneously improving school attendance and students' academic performance (Herniati & Idawati, 2025). Based on the Balanced Nutrition Guidelines and Indonesia's "Isi Piringku" (My Plate) concept promoted by the Ministry of Health, the nutritional components of the MBG program are evaluated according to several classifications, namely: carbohydrate sources (primary energy), animal and plant-based protein sources (body-building nutrients), vegetables and fruits (vitamins and minerals), healthy fat quality, food safety and hygiene, and adequate fluid intake (Merlinda & Yusuf, 2025).

2. METHOD

This study was conducted at RA Perwanida 4 Palembang, located in South Sumatra Province, Indonesia, during the first semester of the 2025/2026 academic year. The study employed a descriptive qualitative approach to explore and describe the implementation of the Free Nutritious Meal (MBG) Program in its natural setting. A qualitative design was selected because it enables researchers to understand social phenomena in depth, with the researcher serving as the primary research instrument (Sugiyono, 2019).

The study utilized two sources of data. Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews and participant observation (Sugiyono, 2019). The interviews involved the school principal, teachers responsible for implementing the program, and parents to explore their perspectives, experiences, and attitudes toward the MBG Program, including program implementation, children's responses, parental involvement, and challenges encountered. According to Supriatna et al. (2025), interviews aim to obtain an in-depth understanding of participants' perspectives and subjective interpretations. Creswell (2012, as cited in Nursabella & Astriani, 2024) also defines interviews as direct communication between researchers and participants to gather detailed information, while Warahmah et al. (2023), Leny (2022), Utama et al. (2023), and Pangaribuan (2023) emphasize interviews as one of the primary instruments for collecting qualitative research data.

Secondary data consisted of supporting documents, including daily MBG menu plans, nutrition program evaluation reports, student health and nutrition records, school policies, attendance records, and visual documentation such as photographs and videos (Sugiyono, 2019).

Data were collected using three techniques: interviews, observations, and documentation. Observations were conducted systematically to examine the actual implementation of the MBG Program, including food preparation and distribution, compliance with hygiene standards, teachers' assistance during mealtimes, and children's eating behaviors and food acceptance. Observation is regarded as a systematic method of collecting scientific data through direct examination of real-life situations (Kamil et al., 2024; Hasibuan et al., 2023; Puspasary & Wicaksono, 2025; Pratiwi et al., 2024). The observation checklist included indicators such as food hygiene, timeliness of meal distribution, nutritional adequacy, eating etiquette, environmental cleanliness, students' responses, teacher assistance, food quality, and the orderly implementation of the program.

Documentation was employed to complement interview and observation data by collecting official documents, administrative records, photographs, and other supporting evidence (Hasan, 2022; Tanjung et al., 2022; Ayumsari, 2022; Iku et al., 2024; Syahri et al., 2025). These documents strengthened the credibility of the findings and provided additional evidence regarding program implementation.

To ensure the credibility of the data, the study applied data triangulation by comparing information obtained from multiple sources, including the school principal, teachers, and parents. This process enabled the researcher to verify the consistency of findings and minimize potential bias.

Data analysis followed the interactive qualitative analysis model proposed by Sugiyono (2019), which consists of three continuous stages. First, data reduction involved selecting, organizing, and focusing relevant information while eliminating unnecessary data (Purnamasari & Afriansyah, 2021; Nurrisa et al., 2025; Rabbania et al., 2025). Second, data display involved organizing the reduced data into descriptive narratives to facilitate interpretation (Rahayu & Aniswita, 2023; Sarumaha, 2023; Zebua et al., 2024; Sugiyono, 2019). Finally, the researcher conducted conclusion drawing and verification by interpreting emerging patterns, identifying factors contributing to the success and challenges of the MBG Program, and verifying findings through cross-checking interview, observation, and documentation data, consistent with the qualitative analysis framework of Miles and Huberman (as cited in Sugiyono, 2019; Yolan et al., 2024).

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

RA Perwanida 4 Palembang is an early childhood education institution that served as the research site for this study. Geographically, the school is located on Jl. Pendidikan, Komplek MAN 1 Jakabaring, RT. 67 RW. 19, 15 Ulu Village, Seberang Ulu I District, Palembang City, South Sumatra Province. The following are the findings obtained through observations, interviews, and documentation.

1. Analysis of MBG Program Planning

The planning of the Free Nutritious Meal (MBG) Program at RA Perwanida 4 Palembang is based on government policies regarding the fulfillment of nutritional needs for early childhood. Conceptually, this policy aims to improve the quality of human resources from an early age through adequate nutritional intake. However, based on interview findings, researchers found that teachers' understanding of the policy was not yet uniform. Some teachers still perceived the MBG program merely as a free meal distribution activity without fully understanding its strategic role in supporting children's cognitive and physical development.

2. Research Findings

Based on in-depth interviews with teachers, the principal, and parents, several findings regarding the implementation of the Free Nutritious Meal (MBG) Program were identified.

a. Implementation Mechanism and Teacher Readiness

The implementation of the MBG program at RA Perwanida 4 Palembang is supported by systematic technical procedures. Mrs. Dwi Pratiwi, S.Pd., a classroom teacher, explained the daily implementation process:

"Meals are delivered directly to each classroom shortly before the break time. Teachers guide the children to wash their hands, say prayers, and distribute the meals equally."

This statement indicates that the school emphasizes not only nutritional fulfillment but also character education by promoting hygiene practices through handwashing and strengthening religious values through prayers before meals.

b. Students' Responses and Impact on Learning

Students' enthusiasm became one of the initial indicators of the program's success. Mrs. Dwi Pratiwi stated:

"The students are very enthusiastic, especially when the menu varies. They become more excited because they can eat together with their classmates."

She further observed the direct impact on classroom learning:

"There is a noticeable improvement in children's concentration during the second learning session after eating. They are less fussy because they are no longer hungry."

From the researcher's analytical perspective, the MBG program functions as cognitive fuel for young learners. Hunger, which often disrupts children's attention and learning readiness, can be minimized through appropriate nutritional intake.

c. School Policy, Management, and Evaluation

The sustainability of the program is supported by measurable managerial policies. Mrs. Yuniliyanti, M.Pd., Gr., the school principal, explained:

"This program was established to support children's growth and development while ensuring that every child receives equal nutritional intake during school hours."

Regarding operational management, she further explained:

"The budget is managed transparently in collaboration with selected catering providers or the school"

canteen that have met the required standards."

These findings indicate that the school has implemented principles of good governance in managing the MBG program.

d. Parents' Perceptions and Support

Parents expressed highly positive responses toward the program because it helps reduce family burdens while ensuring their children's nutritional needs.

Mrs. Amelia Putri stated:

"This program is very helpful, especially for working parents, because our children are guaranteed to receive nutritious meals at school."

Similarly, Mrs. Rika Saputri observed changes in her child's eating behavior:

"My child, who used to refuse vegetables, is now willing to try them because he sees his friends eating vegetables enthusiastically at school."

The researcher interprets this finding as evidence of a positive peer effect, where children's eating behaviors are influenced by observing their classmates.

3. Menu Planning and Nutritional Value

Menu planning is one of the most important technical aspects of the MBG program. However, the findings revealed several weaknesses, particularly the limited variety of menus. Meals tended to be repetitive over certain periods, resulting in children's boredom. Although the program conceptually emphasizes balanced nutrition, field observations indicated that menu planning remained standardized without adaptive variations or innovations.

This finding was reinforced by Mrs. Yuniliyanti, M.Pd., Gr., who stated:

"If the menu remains the same—for example, fried chicken throughout the week—the children in Class B become bored. At the beginning of lunchtime, they are excited, but after opening their lunch boxes, some children only take a few bites before closing them again. As a result, much of the food is left unfinished." (Interview with the Principal, May 14, 2026).

This statement indicates that limited innovation in meal presentation reduces children's interest, despite the fact that young children are highly responsive to visually appealing food.

4. Program Resource Dimension

The findings indicate that the human resources involved include the principal, classroom teachers, and supporting staff. Teachers play a dominant role by supervising mealtime, providing nutrition education, and encouraging healthy eating habits. Nevertheless, the limited number of teachers makes it difficult to supervise all children simultaneously.

Mrs. Dwi Pratiwi explained:

"We are indeed overwhelmed during lunchtime. There are many children, while teachers have to divide their attention between ensuring orderly eating and assisting children who experience difficulties. Therefore, supervision cannot be equally provided to every individual."

These findings suggest that although the program already has essential human resources, additional personnel are needed to optimize implementation.

5. Program Implementation Dimension

The MBG program is implemented routinely according to the school's schedule. Children are required to bring lunchboxes that meet balanced nutritional standards. Teachers play a central role in encouraging healthy eating habits and educating children about the importance of nutrition.

However, questionnaire results showed that although 70% of respondents agreed that the school consistently promoted nutritious eating, parental involvement remained a challenge. Many parents admitted that their understanding of balanced nutrition varied, causing some children to continue bringing processed foods to school.

Mrs. Rika Saputri explained:

"Honestly, I sometimes don't know what kind of lunch to prepare that my child likes but is still nutritious. When I am in a hurry in the morning, I often choose nuggets or sausages because they are quick to prepare and my child will definitely eat them. I realize they are not the healthiest option, but they are often the most practical choice."

This statement was reinforced by Mrs. Dwi Pratiwi:

"We routinely check the children's lunchboxes, but honestly, some parents still provide processed foods such as nuggets or instant noodles. We have tried to educate parents, but children's eating habits are strongly influenced by their routines at home, which are not always aligned with the school's nutrition program."

These findings indicate that program implementation has not yet fully achieved its intended objectives because parental understanding of balanced nutrition remains inconsistent.

6. Program Constraints

Several challenges emerged during the implementation of the MBG program. One major obstacle was parents' limited understanding of balanced nutrition for early childhood, resulting in lunchboxes that often failed to meet nutritional recommendations.

The school also acknowledged:

"Our biggest challenge actually comes from home. Some working parents simply provide instant nuggets or fried noodles in the morning. Although the school encourages children to bring vegetables, those who are accustomed to processed foods find it very difficult to eat vegetables together with their classmates."

Limited teacher supervision during mealtime and children's preference for tasty rather than nutritious food also remain ongoing challenges. These findings highlight the importance of strengthening the **Controlling** function within the management process.

7. Program Impact

The findings demonstrate positive behavioral changes among children. Approximately 65% of parents reported improvements in their children's eating habits at home, including greater willingness to consume vegetables and fruits.

Mrs. Dwi Pratiwi stated:

"Gradually, I have observed behavioral changes among the children. Those who previously closed their lunchboxes because they were bored are now willing to try vegetables brought by their classmates. This is a valuable first step toward building awareness of healthy eating."

Nevertheless, the program's impact has not yet been experienced equally by all students because family environments continue to exert a strong influence on children's dietary habits. Continuous evaluation is therefore necessary to improve program effectiveness.

8. Theoretical Analysis of the MBG Program

To examine the effectiveness of the MBG program at RA Perwanida 4 Palembang, the researcher synthesized empirical findings with management theory and developmental psychology.

a. Management Analysis Based on George R. Terry's POAC Theory

Planning. Although the school has attempted to design balanced menus, the planning process remains relatively rigid and top-down. Repetitive menus contribute to sensory boredom among children. Ideally, menu

planning should be more dynamic, participatory, and based on children's preferences as well as individual nutritional needs.

Organizing. Organizationally, responsibilities have been divided between the principal and teachers. However, workload distribution remains inefficient because teachers simultaneously supervise meals, provide nutrition education, and conduct classroom instruction. More specialized task allocation would reduce teachers' workload and improve program quality.

Actuating. Program implementation is strongly influenced by parenting practices at home. Differences between healthy eating promoted at school and children's eating habits at home reduce the effectiveness of nutrition education. Although teachers actively motivate children, stronger collaboration with parents is necessary.

Controlling. Current monitoring relies mainly on teachers' visual observations during mealtime. No systematic evaluation tools, such as food waste records, children's satisfaction surveys, or anthropometric monitoring, have been established. Consequently, continuous feedback for program improvement remains limited.

b. Analysis Based on Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

From Maslow's perspective, the MBG program fulfills children's **physiological needs**, the most fundamental level of human needs. Adequate nutrition enables children's physical homeostasis, allowing their cognitive functions to operate optimally during classroom learning.

Once physiological needs are fulfilled, children are better positioned to achieve **safety needs**, reflected in feeling cared for and secure at school, and **love and belonging needs**, reflected in positive peer interactions during shared mealtimes.

The findings suggest that inconsistent nutritional fulfillment caused by limited menu variation or family-related factors may reduce children's readiness to learn. Therefore, the MBG program should be understood as a strategic intervention that promotes **readiness to learn** by fostering children's physical health, emotional security, and social well-being. Ultimately, the program contributes not only to children's nutritional status but also to their holistic academic, psychological, and social development.

9. Triangulation of Data

To ensure the validity and credibility of the research findings, the researcher employed triangulation techniques, including source triangulation and methodological triangulation. Through source triangulation, a convergence of information was identified among the school principal, teachers, and parents regarding the implementation of the Free Nutritious Meal (MBG) Program at RA Perwanida 4 Palembang. The school administration confirmed its commitment to providing equitable nutritional support for all students, which was reinforced by teachers' testimonies describing the systematic distribution of meals in the classroom. These findings were further supported by parents, who acknowledged that the program had positively influenced their children's appetite, health condition, and enthusiasm for learning.

Methodological triangulation was conducted by comparing data obtained from interviews, observations, and document analysis. Interview findings indicated that the school had implemented standard operating procedures (SOPs) for meal preparation and distribution. These findings were verified through direct classroom observations, which demonstrated that meal distribution was carried out in an orderly manner, students consistently practiced appropriate eating etiquette, and the school environment remained clean throughout mealtime activities. Furthermore, documentary evidence, including photographs of the meals and meal distribution schedules, strengthened the credibility of the findings by confirming that the MBG program was implemented consistently and systematically.

The consistency of evidence generated through these three data collection techniques demonstrates a high level of trustworthiness and credibility. Therefore, the findings regarding the effectiveness and positive impact of the MBG Program at RA Perwanida 4 Palembang can be considered scientifically reliable and provide an authentic representation of the implementation of a school-based nutrition program.

Discussion

From a theoretical perspective, the implementation of the MBG Program was analyzed using George R. Terry's POAC Management Theory and Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory. The findings indicate that the four management functions have not yet operated synergistically. The Planning function remains relatively rigid, while the Controlling function is limited to teachers' visual observations without systematic evaluation instruments.

The implementation of the Free Nutritious Meal (MBG) Program at RA Perwanida 4 Palembang has

become an established school routine aimed at improving children's nutritional status and overall health. Nevertheless, the findings reveal that the program is still implemented at a basic operational level and has not yet achieved optimal effectiveness. A significant discrepancy exists between policymakers' strategic objectives and implementers' understanding of the program, as many teachers continue to perceive MBG primarily as a meal distribution initiative rather than a comprehensive strategy to promote children's physical, cognitive, and psychosocial development.

Several operational challenges were also identified. Menu planning remains repetitive, resulting in children's boredom and reduced food acceptance. In addition, limited creativity in meal presentation fails to accommodate the developmental characteristics of early childhood learners, who are highly influenced by the visual appearance of food. The absence of adequate dining facilities further constrains the quality of program implementation. Regarding human resources, teachers play a central role in supervising mealtime activities and providing nutrition education; however, the limited number of teaching staff reduces the effectiveness of individual supervision. Furthermore, dependence on parental support creates disparities in children's nutritional intake, particularly when healthy eating habits promoted at school are not reinforced at home.

These findings are consistent with Hasanah (2025), who emphasized that effective Planning in school nutrition programs requires active parental participation. The study argues that successful nutritional interventions cannot be separated from strong collaboration between schools and families, as consistency between home and school eating practices is essential for ensuring the sustainability of healthy eating behaviors. This finding aligns closely with the present study, which highlights the need to strengthen partnerships between parents and schools to support the successful implementation of the MBG Program.

The findings are further supported by Shofarina et al. (2026), who reported that high-quality nutritional intake significantly improves children's attention span, learning concentration, and readiness to learn in classroom settings. Likewise, Afiatun et al. (2026) identified weaknesses in the Controlling function—particularly the absence of systematic monitoring of food waste and menu diversity—as one of the primary factors reducing the effectiveness of school nutrition interventions. Similar conditions were observed at RA Perwanida 4 Palembang, where program evaluation continues to rely on subjective teacher observations rather than measurable indicators such as food waste records, children's menu preferences, or periodic nutritional assessments.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that although the MBG Program has become an integral component of the school's efforts to improve children's health and nutritional well-being, considerable discrepancies remain between policy expectations and practical implementation. Strengthening management functions particularly Planning, Organizing, and Controlling along with fostering stronger collaboration between schools and parents, is essential to maximize the long-term effectiveness and sustainability of the program.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion regarding the implementation of the Free Nutritious Meal (MBG) Program at RA Perwanida 4 Palembang in 2025, it can be concluded that the program has been implemented as part of the school's daily routine; however, its implementation remains at a basic operational level and has not yet reached optimal effectiveness. This limitation is primarily caused by a gap between the government's strategic policy objectives and the operational understanding of program implementers, many of whom still perceive MBG merely as a free meal distribution initiative rather than a comprehensive strategy to enhance children's nutritional status and overall development. From the perspective of George R. Terry's POAC management theory, the study identified weaknesses in the Planning function, characterized by rigid and repetitive menu planning that contributed to children's boredom; the Organizing function, which was constrained by the limited number of teaching staff; and the Controlling function, which relied primarily on subjective visual observation without systematic evaluation instruments such as food waste records or measurable monitoring indicators. Furthermore, when analyzed through Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, shortcomings in meeting children's physiological needs (Level 1) resulting from limited menu variety and inconsistencies between healthy eating practices at school and at home affected children's concentration and readiness to learn in the classroom. Nevertheless, the program has generated positive initial outcomes by introducing children to healthy eating habits, promoting balanced nutrition awareness, and fostering appropriate eating etiquette, thereby providing an important foundation for improving children's health, learning readiness, and overall development.

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations are proposed to improve the implementation of the MBG Program. First, RA Perwanida 4 Palembang is encouraged to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of its meal management system by improving menu diversity, enhancing food presentation quality, and strengthening internal monitoring mechanisms to ensure that program implementation becomes more effective, measurable, and sustainable. Second, teachers and educational staff should play a more proactive role in integrating nutrition education into daily classroom activities so that children not only receive nutritious meals but also develop positive attitudes and long-term awareness of healthy eating through engaging and creative learning experiences. Third, parents and the wider community are expected to strengthen their active participation by consistently providing balanced nutrition at home and establishing stronger collaboration with the school to ensure that healthy eating habits developed through the MBG Program

continue beyond the school environment. Finally, the government and relevant stakeholders are encouraged to use the empirical findings of this study as evidence for refining the technical implementation guidelines of the MBG Program, particularly by developing more contextual, practical, and developmentally appropriate policies that address the specific needs of early childhood education institutions.

5. REFERENCES

- Afiatun, F., Pratiwi, E. M., Andayani, E. N., & Nimah, R. (2026). Implementasi Program Makan Bergizi Gratis Sebagai Pencegahan Stunting Anak Usia Dini Di Tk Aisyiyah Bustanul Athfal Ii Boyolali. *Jurnal Abdi Masyarakat Indonesia (Jamsi)*, 6(2), 1305–1316. <https://doi.org/10.54082/Jamsi.2651>
- Aji, W. T. (2025). Makan Bergizi Gratis Di Era Prabowo-Gibran : Solusi Untuk Rakyat Atau Beban Baru ? *Naafi: Jurnal Ilmiah Mahasiswa*, 2(2), 215–226. <https://doi.org/10.62387/Naafijurnalilmiahmahasiswa.V2i2.134>
- Akmalia, I., Atika, D., Rahmatika, E., Zulva, A. A., Auliya, I., Safitri, N., Princessa, R. A. R., Sabila, R. F., & Fatmawati, A. (2025). Analisis Dampak Program Makan Bergizi Gratis (Mbg) Terhadap Konsentrasi Dan Kedisiplinan Belajar Siswa Sd. *Jipsd: Jurnal Inovasi Pendidikan Sekolah Dasar*, 2(2), 125–137. <https://journal.innoscientia.org/index.php/jipsd/index%0ajipsd>
- Albaburrahim, A., Putikadyanto, A. P. A., Efendi, A. N., Alatas, M. A., Romadhon, S., & Wachidah, L. R. (2025). Program Makan Bergizi Gratis : Analisis Kritis Transformasi Pendidikan Indonesia Menuju Generasi Emas 2045. *Entita: Jurnal Pendidikan Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial Dan Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial*, 767–780.
- Aprillia, N. P., & Azzahra, M. U. D. (2025). Program Makan Bergizi Gratis (Mbg) : Antara Legacy Project Dan Solusi Stunting. *Journal Of Information Systems And Management*, 04(05), 19–22. <https://jisma.org>
- Ayumsari, R. (2022). Peran Dokumentasi Informasi Terhadap Keberlangsungan Kegiatan Organisasi Mahasiswa. *Tibannbaru: Jurnal Ilmu Perpustakaan Dan Informasi*, 6(1), 63–78.
- Bintang, D. W. P., Pertiwi, A. D., & Azainil, A. (2024). Analisis Penggunaan Teknologi Pada Proses Pembelajaran Di Paud. *Aulad: Journal On Early Childhood*, 7(3), 873–884. <https://doi.org/10.31004/Aulad.V7i3.810>
- Hasan, H. (2022). Pengembangan Sistem Informasi Dokumentasi Terpusat Pada Stmik Tidore Mandiri. *Jurasik (Jurnal Sistem Informasi Dan Komputer) Vol.*, 2(1), 23–29.
- Hasanah, U. (2025). Pelaksanaan Program Makan Bergizi Gratis Sebagai Upaya Peningkatan Kesehatan Anak Di Tk Harapan Muda Bandar Lampung. *Eduimpact: Jurnal Pengabdian Dan Inovasi Pendidikan Masyarakat*, 2(2), 189–198. <https://journal.ciptapustaka.com/index.php/eipm/index>
- Hasibuan, M. P., Azmi, R., Arjuna, D. B., & Rahayu, S. U. (2023). Analisis Pengukuran Temperatur Udara Dengan Metode Observasi. *Gabdimas: Jurnal Garuda Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat*, 1(1), 8–15.
- Herniati, N., & Idawati, I. (2025). Efektivitas Program Pemerintah Mbg (Makan Bergizi Gratis) Terhadap Minat Belajar Anak Usia Dini. *Aura: Jurnal Pendidikan Aura*, 6(1), 88–98. <https://doi.org/10.37216/Aura.V6i1.2484>
- Herningtyas, T., Azrianti, S., Fadrijani, L., & Yulisa, P. D. (2025). Efektivitas Program Mbg (Makan Bergizi Gratis) Pada Anak Tk Darussalam Guna Peningkatkan Kualitas Belajar Mengajar Di Desa Wedoro , Kecamatan Waru , Sidoarjo. *Jurnal Kolaboratif Sains*, 8(10), 6520–6526. <https://doi.org/10.56338/Jks.V8i10.9027>
- Iku, K. S. D., Sedu, V. A., Kedoh, L. N., & Mustafa, I. (2024). Dokumentasi Dan Kearsipan Sebagai Bentuk Komunikasi Organisasi Pada Dinas Pariwisata Dan Kebudayaan Kabupaten Sikka. *Arus Jurnal Sosial Dan Humaniora (Ajsh)*, 4(3), 2146–2151.
- Kamil, M. F., Safitri, D., Herdayanti, S., Agustin, I., Aryanti, M., Maharani, S. D., Zahroh, F. A., Aslamiah, A., & Pratiwi, D. A. (2024). Analisis Kurikulum Di Sdn Alalak Utara 3 Banjarmasin : Observasi Dan Implikasi Untuk Peningkatan Kualitas Pembelajaran. *Maras: Jurnal Penelitian Multidisplin*, 2(3), 1247–1255. <https://ejournal.lumbungpare.org/index.php/maras>
- Khasanah, M., Hasanudin, C., & Saputri, E. D. (2025). *Upaya Meningkatkan Kesejahteraan Dan Keadilan Melalui Program Makan Bergizi Gratis (Mbg)*. 120–129.
- Leny, L. (2022). Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka Untuk Meningkatkan Motivasi Belajar Pada Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan Pusat Keunggulan. *Sentikjar*, 1(1), 38–49.
- Maulidya, A., & Fitriani, Y. (2025). Arus Jurnal Sosial Dan Humaniora (Ajsh) Analisis Program Makan Bergizi Gratis Terhadap Strategi Peningkatan Motivasi Belajar Siswa Sekolah Dasar Di Lampung. *Arus Jurnal Sosial Dan Humaniora (Ajsh)*, 5(3), 3792–3803. <http://jurnal.ardenjaya.com/index.php/ajsh>
- Merlinda, A. A., & Yusuf, Y. (2025). Analisis Program Makan Gratis Prabowo Subianto Terhadap Strategi Peningkatan Motivasi Belajar Siswa Di Sekolah Tinjauan Dari Perspektif Sosiologi Pendidikan. *Journal Of Multidisciplinary Research And Development*, 7(2), 1364–1373. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.38035/Rrj.V7i2>
- Nurrisa, F., Hermina, D., & Norlaila, N. (2025). Pendekatan Kualitatif Dalam Penelitian : Strategi , Tahapan ,

- Dan Analisis Data. *Jurnal Teknologi Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran (Jtpp)*, 02(03), 793–800. <https://Jurnal.Kopusindo.Com/Index.Php/Jtpp/Index>
- Nursabella, M. L., & Astriani, L. (2024). *Upaya Meningkatkan Keterampilan Berbicara Dalam Teknik Wawancara Siswa Kelas 5 Sdn Benda Baru 03*. 669–676.
- Pangaribuan, A. (2023). Metode Wawancara Dalam Penelitian Hukum Doktrinal Dan Sosio-Legal. *Undang: Jurnal Hukum*, 6(2), 351–383. <https://doi.org/10.22437/Ujh.6.2.351-383>
- Pratiwi, P. A., Mashalani, F., Hafizhah, M., Sabrina, A. B., Harahap, N. H., & Siregar, D. Y. (2024). Mengungkap Metode Observasi Yang Efektif Menurut Pra-Pengajar Efl. *Mutiara : Jurnal Penelitian Dan Karya Ilmiah*, 2(1), 133–149.
- Purnamasari, A., & Afriansyah, E. A. (2021). Kemampuan Komunikasi Matematis Siswa Smp Pada Topik Penyajian Data Di Pondok Pesantren. *Jurnal Pendidikan Matematika*, 1(2), 207–222.
- Puspasary, A. Q., & Wicaksono, A. (2025). Implementasi Model Self - Directed Learning Dalam Pembelajaran Menulis Laporan Hasil Observasi. *Jurnal Leksis*, 5(1), 1–9. <https://Jurnal.Stkipgriponorogo.Ac.Id/Index.Php/Leksis>
- Qomarrullah, R., Suratni, S., S, L. W., & Sawir, M. (2025). Dampak Jangka Panjang Program Makan Bergizi Gratis Terhadap Kesehatan Dan Keberlanjutan Pendidikan. *Indonesian Journal Of Intellectual Publication*, 5(2), 130–137.
- Rabbania, M. I., Gustiawati, S., & Hambari, H. (2025). Implementasi Metode Demonstrasi Untuk Meningkatkan Keaktifan Siswa Pada Pelajaran Fiqih Kelas Xi Man 1 Kota Bogor. *Journal Of Religion And Social Community*, 1(4), 175–179.
- Rahayu, M. P., & Aniswita, A. (2023). Peran Guru Dalam Proses Pembelajaran Matematika Era New Normal Di Kelas X Ips Sman 2 Mandau. *Journal Of Educational Management And Strategy*, 02(01), 21–30.
- Rahmah, H. A., Anggraini, A., Nilasari, Y. P., Putri, E., & Salsabilla, S. (2025). Analisis Efektivitas Program Makan Bergizi Gratis Di Sekolah Dasar Indonesia Tahun 2025. *Integrative Perspectives Of Social And Science Journal (Ipssj)*, 2(2), 2855–2866.
- Riyyah, M. H. (2025). Analisis Efektivitas Pemberian Edukasi Pada Program Makan Bergizi Gratis Terhadap Sasaran B3 (Ibu Hamil, Ibu Menyusui, Dan Balita Non Paud) Di Desa Ngabenrejo Kabupaten Grobogan Provinsi Jawa Tengah. *Journal Health Sains*, 6(2), 141–147.
- Sa'adah, D. A., Hafni, N. D., Huda, M., & Anikmah, A. (2021). Pengaruh Program Makan Bergizi Gratis Terhadap Perkembangan Fisik Anak Usia Dini. *Jurnal Waladi : Jurnal Wawasan Ilmu Anak Usia Dini*, 1(1), 1–11. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.61815/Waladi.V3i1.679>
- Saputra, E. E. (2025). Program Makan Bergizi (Mbg) Sebagai Katalis Peningkatan Kualitas Pembelajaran Di Sekolah Dasar. *Jurnal Pendidikan, Kepelatihan, Olahraga, Dan Kesehatan (Sportika)*, 1(1), 1–15.
- Sarumaha, W. F. (2023). Analisis Kemampuan Pemecahan Masalah Matematis Pada Materi Perpangkatan Dan Bentuk Akar Ditinjau Dari Minat Belajar Siswa Kelas Ix Di Smks Kristen Bnkp Telukdalam. *Afore: Jurnal Pendidikan Matematika*, 2(2), 12–26.
- Shofarina, D., Khoirunnisa, I., Pratiwi, F., Nugroho, A. R., & Abiyyu, A. (2026). Implementasi Program Makan Bergizi Gratis Sebagai Strategi Investasi Sumber Daya Manusia Melalui Peningkatan Kesehatan Dan Kualitas Pendidikan. *Journal Of Artificial Intelligence And Digital Business (Riggs)*, 5(1), 9592–9599. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.31004/Riggs.V5i1.7454>
- Simangunsong, G. A., & Sinaga, L. V. (2026). Tanggungjawab Perdata Pengelola Dapur Program Makan Bergizi Gratis (Mbg) Menurut Kuherperdata Terhadap Pasca- Kasus Keracunan Makanan. *Judge : Jurnal Hukum*, 06(08), 1340–1347. <https://Journal.Cattleayadf.Org/Index.Php/Judge/Index>
- Sugiyono. (2019). *Metode Penelitian Pendidikan: Pendekatan Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, Dan R & D*. (Edisi Ke-1). Alfabeta, Cv.
- Supriatna, P., Saputri, A., Manalu, D. A., Sasmita, N., & Suwandi, S. (2025). Komunikasi Efektif Sebagai Kunci Sukses Wawancara Kerja Di Dunia Bisnis. *Jurnal Ilmiah Multidisiplin*, 1(4), 955–962.
- Syafiqoh, I., & Setyawati, A. (2025). Program Mbg (Makan Bergizi Gratis) Terhadap Pelaksanaan Kegiatan Belajar Mengajar Pada Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini Di Lamongan. *Jurnal Almurtaja : Jurnal Pendidikan Islam Anak Usia Dini*, 1020(1), 1–6.
- Syahri, P., Lubis, M. A., Putri, D. A., Kurniawan, H., Lubis, Y. A., & Amri, N. W. (2025). Hasil Observasi Kegiatan Pengenalan Lapangan Persekolahan Tentang Pengelolaan Kelas Dan Pembelajaran. *Aksi Kolektif: Jurnal Pengabdian*, 2(1), 69–82.
- Tanjung, R., Supriani, Y., Mayasari, A., & Arifudin, O. (2022). Manajemen Mutu Dalam Penyelenggaraan Pendidikan. *Jurnal Pendidikan Glasser*, 6(1), 29–36. <https://doi.org/10.32529/Glasser.V6i1.1481>
- Utama, A. S. W., Widigdyo, A., & Widayani, A. (2023). Metode Perekrutan Karyawan Ukm Melalui Wawancara Dengan Pendekatan Visi, Misi, Dan Nilai Perusahaan. *Pandita: Interdisciplinary Journal Of Public Affairs*, 6(1), 1–8. Web: <http://Pandita-Fia.Unkris.Ac.Id/>
- Warahmah, M., Risnita, R., & Jailani, M. S. (2023). Pendekatan Dan Tahapan Penelitian Dalam Kajian Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini. *Dzurriyat: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam Anak Usia Dini*, 1(2), 72–81. <http://Ejournal.Yayasanpendidikandzurriyatulquran.Id/Index.Php/Dzurriyat>
- Yolan, Y., Suparman, S., Herdiana, B., & Nuruaahmad, M. (2024). Kemampuan Menulis Karangan Argumentasi Dengan Menggunakan Media Gambar Pada Siswa Kelas Vii Smp Negri Ii Walenrang.

Jurnal Vokatif: Pendidikan Bahasa, Kebahasaan Dan Sastra, 1(2), 102–108.

Zebua, J. N., Mendrofa, S. A., Lase, D., Waruwu, E., & Halawa, F. (2024). Analisis Penerapan Manajemen Talenta Dalam Meningkatkan Kinerja Guru Pada Uptd Sd Negeri 070989 Hilinaa Kota Gunungsitoli. *Innovative: Journal Of Social Science Research Volume*, 4(3), 1240–1252.