

REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR-52114

Date: 05/05/2025

Title: *Risk Factors for Stunting in Children Under Five Years of Age: A Scoping Review (As inferred from the content and headings)*

Recommendation:

- ✓ Accept as it is
 Accept after minor revision.....
 Accept after major revision
 Do not accept (*Reasons below*)

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality		✓		
Techn. Quality		✓		
Clarity		✓		
Significance	✓			

Reviewer Name: Dr. S. K. Nath

Date: 07/05/2025

Reviewer's Comment for Publication:

The paper effectively highlights the multifactorial nature of stunting in children under five, with low birth weight emerging as a critical risk factor. It underscores the importance of integrated interventions focusing on maternal health, nutrition, sanitation, immunization, and education to combat stunting globally. Despite some limitations in qualitative assessment and heterogeneity across studies, the review offers valuable insights for policymakers, healthcare providers, and researchers aiming to develop holistic strategies to reduce childhood stunting.

Reviewer's Comment / Report

Strengths

- Comprehensive Literature Review:** The paper systematically synthesizes evidence from multiple studies, including 14 selected articles, providing a broad overview of the risk factors associated with stunting.
- Methodological Rigor:** Utilizes the PRISMA-ScR guidelines for scoping reviews, ensuring transparency and systematicity in the selection and analysis process.
- Focus on Low Birth Weight (LBW):** Emphasizes LBW as a principal factor, supported by multiple studies, which helps clarify the importance of maternal health and prenatal care in preventing stunting.
- Multifactorial Analysis:** Considers various social, biological, and environmental factors—such as maternal education, sanitation, immunization, and socio-economic status—highlighting the complex nature of stunting.
- Global Perspective:** Incorporates studies from different countries (e.g., Indonesia, Bangladesh, Malawi), emphasizing that stunting is a worldwide health issue requiring context-specific interventions.

Weaknesses

- Limited Detail on Study Quality:** While the review summarizes findings from multiple studies, it does not thoroughly assess the quality or biases of these individual studies, which could affect the strength of conclusions.
- Heterogeneity of Studies:** Variations in study design, sample sizes, and measurement standards (e.g., different definitions or tools for assessing stunting and LBW) might limit the comparability of findings.
- Lack of Quantitative Meta-Analysis:** The review is descriptive and narrative, lacking meta-analytical statistical integration, which could have quantified the overall effect sizes and strengthened the evidence.
- Focus Mainly on LBW:** Although LBW is emphasized, other contributors such as genetic factors, infections, or cultural practices are less discussed.
- Limited Recent Data:** The included studies mostly date from 2016-2025, but the review could benefit from more recent data or longitudinal studies to understand trends over time.