

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GIVING AMBON BANANAS AND DATES ON HEMOGLOBIN LEVELS IN PREGNANT WOMEN WITH ANEMIA

Fatmawati Ibrahim  , Rahma Dewi Agustini , Desak Made Yulianti 
Department of Midwifery, Health Polytechnic Gorontalo

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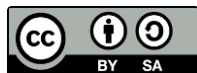
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ABSTRACT

Anemia in pregnant women is a health problem that can increase the risk of complications for the mother and fetus. Efforts to improve hemoglobin (Hb) levels can be carried out through pharmacological and non-pharmacological approaches, including the consumption of fruits rich in iron. This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of giving Ambon bananas and dates on improving hemoglobin levels in pregnant women with anemia. This study used a quasi-experimental design with a pre-post test with control group approach. The sample consisted of 32 pregnant women with anemia who were divided into two groups, namely the intervention group (Fe + Ambon bananas) and the control group (Fe + dates). The intervention was given for 14 days, with Hb levels measured before and after treatment. The results of the Wilcoxon test showed a significant increase in Hb levels in both groups ($p < 0.05$). The results of the Mann-Whitney test showed that the increase in Hb levels in the Fe + dates group was higher compared to the Fe + Ambon bananas group ($p < 0.05$). The conclusion of this study shows that the consumption of dates is more effective than Ambon bananas in increasing hemoglobin levels in pregnant women with anemia.

ABSTRAK

Anemia pada ibu hamil merupakan masalah kesehatan yang dapat meningkatkan risiko komplikasi bagi ibu dan janin. Upaya peningkatan kadar hemoglobin (Hb) dapat dilakukan melalui pendekatan farmakologis dan non-farmakologis, termasuk konsumsi buah yang kaya zat besi. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis efektivitas pemberian pisang Ambon dan kurma terhadap peningkatan kadar hemoglobin pada ibu hamil dengan anemia. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain quasi-eksperimental dengan pendekatan pre-post test with control group design. Sampel penelitian berjumlah 32 ibu hamil dengan anemia yang dibagi menjadi dua kelompok, yaitu kelompok intervensi (Fe + pisang Ambon) dan kelompok kontrol (Fe + kurma). Intervensi diberikan selama 14 hari, dengan pengukuran kadar Hb sebelum dan sesudah perlakuan. Hasil uji Wilcoxon menunjukkan adanya peningkatan kadar Hb yang signifikan pada kedua kelompok ($p < 0,05$). Hasil uji Mann-Whitney menunjukkan bahwa peningkatan kadar Hb pada kelompok Fe + kurma lebih tinggi dibandingkan kelompok Fe + pisang Ambon ($p < 0,05$). Kesimpulan penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa konsumsi kurma lebih efektif dibandingkan pisang Ambon dalam meningkatkan kadar hemoglobin pada ibu hamil dengan anemia.

Corresponding Author:

Fatmawati Ibrahim
Telp. 085240259288
Email: fatmawatiibrahim456@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

Anemia in pregnant women is a medical condition characterized by a decrease in the number of red blood cells in the body. This health issue is common in many countries, including Indonesia, and risks causing various complications for both the mother and the fetus, such as premature birth, low birth weight, and fetal developmental disorders. Anemia occurs when the concentration of hemoglobin in the blood decreases. Approximately 40% of maternal deaths are associated with anemia. Iron deficiency in pregnant women also increases the risk of miscarriage, stillbirth, premature birth, and low birth weight babies (Dewi et al., 2024; Aisah et al., 2024).

According to available data, the public health situation can be seen from the still high maternal mortality rate (MMR), which is 194.7 per 100,000 live births. In Gorontalo Province, the maternal mortality rate was recorded at 39 cases in 2018, with the highest number of deaths occurring in the age group of 20–34 years, totaling 32 deaths. During pregnancy, the need for iron increases, especially in the second and third trimesters, particularly in areas with a prevalence of iron deficiency anemia of over 40% (Sari et al., 2022).

One way to treat anemia during pregnancy, according to government policy, is by providing iron and folic acid tablets. Pregnant women are advised to consume 60 mg of iron and 0.25 mg of folic acid, equivalent to 200 mg of ferrous sulfate, for at least 90 days during pregnancy, starting from the first trimester. However, the use of Fe tablets may cause side effects such as nausea, vomiting, constipation, and epigastric pain. To increase hemoglobin levels in pregnant women, there are two approaches: pharmacological and non-pharmacological. The pharmacological approach involves the consumption of Fe tablets, while non-pharmacological approaches include consuming green vegetables, beets, and dates (Munawaroh et al., 2024).

Dates are a fruit that is rich in carbohydrates, tryptophan, omega-3, vitamin C, vitamin B6, calcium (Ca), zinc (Zn), and magnesium (Mg), as well as compounds that can stimulate uterine muscle contractions. If consumed after childbirth, dates can help prevent bleeding. Compared to most other fruits, dates contain relatively high levels of carbohydrates and iron, approximately 0.9 mg per 100 g. Besides being consumed directly, dates can also be processed into date syrup by extracting their juice. Date syrup has a thick consistency, is dark in color, tastes sweet, and contains nutrients equivalent to the dates themselves (Fatimah et al., 2024).

Dates can increase hemoglobin levels, both in whole fruit form and as juice. In 100 grams of dates, there are 1.02 mg of iron, 88.78 grams of carbohydrates, 2.81 grams of protein, 35 mg of calcium, 7.1 grams of fiber, and 0.4 grams of vitamin C. A study conducted by Astutik P in 2022 showed that giving iron and consuming 100 mg of dates per day for 14 days can increase hemoglobin levels in pregnant women in the third trimester. Dates have a significant iron content, approximately 0.90 mg per 100 grams, equivalent to 11% of the recommended daily intake (RDI). Iron plays a role in blood formation, helps oxygen transport, and regulates iron levels in the body, thereby reducing the risk of bleeding in pregnant women. Dates (*Phoenix dactylifera*) have long been recognized as a beneficial fruit for health. They are rich in energy and serve as a food supplement, containing various essential nutrients such as fiber, vitamin C, tryptophan, carbohydrates, omega-3, vitamin B6, calcium, and magnesium. In addition, dates also contain potassium, calcium, iron, manganese, phosphorus, and sulfur (Fatmawati & Sugesti, 2024; Messy & Kusumadewi, 2024).

Increasing hemoglobin levels can also be achieved by consuming Ambon bananas twice a day, in the morning and evening, along with Fe tablets. This is in line with the theory that one way to increase hemoglobin levels in pregnant women with anemia is through the consumption of bananas, which are an excellent food source because they contain essential vitamins needed by pregnant women. Bananas help fulfill iron intake for anemia patients and also provide energy. Bananas are rich in folic acid and vitamin B6, which are necessary for the synthesis of nucleic acids and hemoglobin (Hb) in red blood cells. Vitamin B6 in bananas also helps neutralize stomach acid and improve digestion. In addition, bananas contain 467 mg of potassium, while pregnant women need about 2000 mg of potassium per day. Leg cramps, which often occur during pregnancy, can be minimized by increasing potassium intake. Consuming two bananas every day can be beneficial in addressing this issue (Suhadah et al., 2024).

Another benefit of Ambon bananas is their vitamin C content, which can help increase iron absorption. In 100 grams of Ambon bananas, vitamin C helps reduce ferric iron into a more absorbable form, making it easier for the body to absorb iron. Vitamin C can increase iron absorption from 25% to 50% by forming an iron-ascorbate complex with iron salts. In addition, vitamin C in Ambon bananas can also stimulate hemoglobin production, help prevent anemia, and enhance iron absorption (Mandasari et al., 2024).

This study also shows that the group given Fe tablets along with Ambon bananas experienced improvement after treatment. Ambon bananas are commonly found in tropical areas and grow quickly, producing a large yield in a single harvest, around 7–10 bunches with a total of 100–150 bananas. Compared to other types of fruit, Ambon bananas have relatively high nutritional content. They are also commonly used as a traditional remedy to prevent anemia. Hemoglobin levels in pregnant women are

influenced not only by iron supplementation but also by the consumption of foods that support hemoglobin synthesis, such as Ambon bananas, which contain vitamins B6 and B12 (Astutik et al., 2023).

Iron requirements increase significantly during pregnancy, especially in the second and third trimesters. Therefore, meeting iron requirements is crucial. The government has recommended iron tablets as the primary intervention, but their use often causes side effects such as nausea and constipation, resulting in low compliance among pregnant women. A non-pharmacological approach through consuming iron-rich foods can be an effective alternative. Ambon bananas are known to contain vitamin B6 and vitamin C, which can aid iron absorption, while dates contain iron and other nutrients that play a role in hemoglobin formation (Fatimah et al., 2024)

Based on the above explanation, this study aims to analyze the effectiveness of giving Ambon bananas and dates on improving hemoglobin levels in pregnant women with anemia.

METHOD

Type of Research

This type of research is experimental research with a quasi-experimental approach using a pre-post test with a control group design. This study is intended to analyze the effectiveness of giving Ambon bananas and dates on the hemoglobin levels of pregnant women as an effort to treat anemia in the working area of the Gorontalo City Health Office in 2023.

Place and Time of Research

The study took place in the Kota Tengah and Kota Selatan health centers in Gorontalo City between August and October 2024.

Population and Sample

The study population was all pregnant women with anemia in the working areas of the Central and South City Community Health Centers. The study sample consisted of 32 pregnant women in their second and third trimesters who met the inclusion and exclusion criteria, which were determined using a total sampling technique.

Data Collection

Data collection was conducted by measuring hemoglobin (Hb) levels using standard measuring instruments before the intervention (pretest) and after the intervention (posttest). On the first day, an initial Hb test was performed in both groups, then respondents were given the intervention for 14 consecutive days. The control group was given 100 grams of Ajwa dates per day, while the intervention group was given Ambon bananas, consumed as whole fruit without processing to maintain nutritional content. After 14 days, another Hb test was performed to determine changes in hemoglobin levels after the intervention. During the study, no respondents dropped out, so the sample size remained 32 participants.

Based on the results before and after the intervention, the researcher then tested the comparison between the two research groups using the Mann-Whitney test to determine which treatment group was more effective. The results showed that the group of pregnant women given Fe + dates experienced a higher increase in hemoglobin compared to the group given Fe + Ambon bananas.

Data Analysis and Processing

Data analysis was performed using the Wilcoxon test to determine differences before and after treatment in each group, and the Mann-Whitney test to determine differences between groups. This research has obtained ethical approval from the relevant ethics committee.

RESULT

Based on Table 1, the number of respondents was 32 pregnant women divided into two groups: 16 respondents in the Ambon banana group and 16 in the date group. Most respondents were of normal reproductive age in both groups. The majority of respondents had secondary education. Most respondents were working, had good knowledge of anemia, and were multiparous. Furthermore, most respondents routinely underwent antenatal care (ANC) checkups.

Table 1.
Frequency Distribution of Respondent Characteristics (n=32)

Characteristics	Pregnant mother			
	Banana		Ajwa dates	
	n	%	n	%
Age				
Normal	14	87.5	13	81.3
Risk	2	12.5	3	18.8
Education				
Elementary (Primary-Junior High School)	0	0.0	2	12.5
Middle School (Senior High School)	9	56.3	10	62.5
College (3-year diploma - Bachelor's degree)	7	43.8	4	25.0
Work				
Not working	7	43.7	5	31.3
Working	9	56.3	11	68.7
Knowledge				
Not Understanding	4	25.0	5	31.3
Understanding	12	75.0	11	68.8
Parity				
Primipara	2	12.5	6	37.5
Multipara	14	87.5	10	62.5
ANC Examination				
Rarely	8	50.0	5	31.3
Routine	8	50.0	11	68.8

Based on Table 1, the number of respondents was 32 pregnant women divided into two groups: 16 respondents in the Ambon banana group and 16 in the date group. Most respondents were of normal reproductive age in both groups. The majority of respondents had secondary education. Most respondents were working, had good knowledge of anemia, and were multiparous. Furthermore, most respondents routinely underwent antenatal care (ANC) checkups.

Table 2.
Normality Test of Data Before and After for the Banana Group and Date

Group	p-value Pretest	posttest p-value	Information
Ambon Banana	0.007	0.317	not normally distributed
Ajwa dates	0.007	0.317	not normally distributed

Table 2 shows the results of the normality test for hemoglobin levels before and after the intervention. The results showed a p-value < 0.05 in one measurement, indicating that the data were not normally distributed. Therefore, data analysis was continued using non-parametric tests, namely the Wilcoxon and Mann-Whitney tests.

Table 3.
Data Analysis of the Effectiveness of Banana and Date Consumption on Increasing Hemoglobin (Hb) Levels in Pregnant Women

Pregnant mother	Variables	n	%	Negatif Rank	Positif Rank	Ties	P-Value
Hemoglobin (Hb)							
Fe + Ambon banana	Pretest- Posttest	16	100	0	16	0	0.000*
Fe + Dates	Pretest- Posttest	16	100	0	16	0	0.000*

* *Wilcoxon test*

Table 3 shows the effect of giving Fe tablets + bananas and Fe tablets + dates on increasing hemoglobin (Hb) levels in pregnant women from 32 respondents (16 respondents given Fe tablets + bananas and 16 respondents given Fe tablets + dates). All pregnant women in both groups experienced an increase in hemoglobin levels. Based on the results of the Wilcoxon test, the p-value was 0.000, which is < 0.05 .

Table 4.
Data Analysis of the Difference in Increasing Hemoglobin in Pregnant Women after Banana and Date Consumption

Kelompok	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Rank	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
Dates Group	16	23.78	380.50	0.000
Ambon Banana Group	16	9.22	147.50	

* *Mann witney test*

The results in Table 4 show that pregnant women who were given Fe + dates experienced a higher increase in hemoglobin compared to those who were given Fe + Ambon bananas, with a p-value of 0.000, which is < 0.05 .

DISCUSSION

Anemia in pregnant women is a medical condition marked by a low number of red blood cells in the body. Anemia is a common health issue found in many countries, including Indonesia. This condition increases the risk of various complications for both the mother and the fetus, such as premature birth, low birth weight, and fetal developmental issues. Anemia occurs when hemoglobin levels in the blood decrease. Approximately 40% of maternal deaths are associated with anemia. Iron deficiency in pregnant women can increase the risk of miscarriage, stillbirth, premature birth, and low birth weight (Pratiwi & Triani, 2024; Widayati & Aisah, 2021).

Iron requirements during pregnancy increase, especially in the second and third trimesters, reaching 5.6 mg per day (range 3.54–8.80 mg per day). This requirement is difficult to fulfill through daily diet alone, so iron reserves before pregnancy and iron supplement consumption during pregnancy are very important. Therefore, WHO recommends providing 60 mg of iron and 400 µg of folic acid supplements during pregnancy in areas with a prevalence of iron deficiency anemia of more than 40%. In this study, the group given Fe tablets and Ambon bananas showed an increase after treatment. Ambon bananas are commonly found in tropical regions, grow quickly, and can produce 7–10 hands with 100–150 fruits per tree. Compared to other fruits, Ambon bananas have relatively high nutritional content and are often used empirically by the community to prevent anemia. In addition, hemoglobin levels in pregnant women are influenced not only by Fe supplements but also by the consumption of foods that

contain essential substances for Hb synthesis. Ambon bananas contain vitamins B6 and B12, which support the hemoglobin synthesis process (Lindia et al., 2024).

An increase in hemoglobin (Hb) levels can be achieved by consuming Ambon bananas twice a day, in the morning and evening, along with Fe tablets. This is in line with the theory stating that the use of bananas as one of the therapies to increase Hb levels in third-trimester pregnant women with anemia is effective. Bananas are rich in vitamins needed by pregnant women and can help fulfill iron requirements for anemia patients while also providing energy. Bananas also contain folic acid or vitamin B6, which is water-soluble and necessary for the synthesis of nucleic acids and Hb in red blood cells. Vitamin B6 in bananas is also beneficial for neutralizing stomach acid and improving digestion. In addition, bananas contain 467 mg of potassium, while pregnant women need about 2000 mg of potassium per day. Potassium deficiency often causes leg cramps, a common complaint during pregnancy, which can be reduced by consuming two bananas daily (Tri Restu & Contesa, 2024; Rismayani & Maulani, 2023).

Besides bananas, dates are also a fruit rich in carbohydrates, tryptophan, omega-3, vitamin C, vitamin B6, calcium (Ca), zinc (Zn), magnesium (Mg), and compounds that can stimulate uterine muscle contractions. If consumed after childbirth, dates can help prevent bleeding. Dates contain relatively high iron, about 0.9 mg per 100 grams, along with carbohydrates. In addition to being consumed directly, dates can be processed into date juice, which is made by grinding dates into a thick, dark liquid with a sweet taste while still containing similar nutrients to whole dates (Nurislamayah et al., 2024).

Dates can increase hemoglobin levels, both in whole fruit form and as juice. In 100 grams of dates, there are 1.02 mg of iron, 88.78 grams of carbohydrates, 2.81 grams of protein, 35 mg of calcium, 7.1 grams of fiber, and 0.4 grams of vitamin C. A study conducted by Astutik P in 2022 showed that consuming 100 mg of dates per day for 14 days could increase hemoglobin levels in third-trimester pregnant women. Dates contain about 0.90 mg of iron per 100 grams, equivalent to 11% of the recommended dietary allowance (RDA). Iron plays a crucial role in blood formation, helps oxygen transport, and regulates iron levels in the body, thereby reducing the risk of bleeding in pregnant women. Dates (*Phoenix dactylifera*) have long been known for their health benefits. This fruit is rich in energy and is often used as a food supplement. In addition, dates contain fiber, vitamin C, tryptophan, carbohydrates, omega-3, vitamin B6, calcium, magnesium, potassium, manganese, phosphorus, and sulfur (Mandiri et al., 2023; Pulungan et al., 2021).

This study shows that the group given Fe + dates was more effective compared to the group given Fe + Ambon bananas, as shown in Table 4. These results are in line with a study that reported that among 15 respondents, there was a positive mean rank value, indicating that all samples experienced an increase in Hb levels from pre-treatment to post-treatment. In addition, the number of positive ranks recorded was 120, with 0 ties, meaning there was no similarity in Hb levels before and after consuming dates, indicating a change after consumption (Hermawan et al., 2021; Putri & Zuraida, 2024)

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that consuming dates and Ambon bananas, which are rich in iron, can help fulfill the iron needs of pregnant women, thereby preventing and treating anemia. However, dates are more effective in increasing hemoglobin levels compared to bananas because they contain higher levels of iron and vitamin C. Therefore, it is expected that healthcare workers can enhance public knowledge, especially among pregnant women, about iron-rich food sources in order to prevent and reduce the incidence of anemia during pregnancy.

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