



Original Research

## Knowledge, Attitude, and Compliance With Iron Tablet Consumption Among Adolescent Girls at Haruai Health Center

Icha Marshella<sup>1</sup>, Evi Dwi Prastiwi<sup>\*2</sup>

1, The Working Area of Haruai Health Center, Tabalong Regency, South Kalimantan Province

2, Lecturer in Midwifery Maharani Health Sciences College Malang

\* Corresponding author.

Evi Dwi Prastiwi

E-mail address:

[evidwiprastiwi89@gmail.com](mailto:evidwiprastiwi89@gmail.com),

[ichamarshella139@gmail.com](mailto:ichamarshella139@gmail.com)

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### Abstract

Adolescence is a growth period marked by increased iron requirements. Iron deficiency may lead to anemia, which can affect the health and productivity of adolescent girls. Routine consumption of iron tablets is one strategy to prevent anemia, but adherence may be influenced by adolescents' knowledge and attitudes. This study aimed to analyze the relationship between knowledge level, attitude, and compliance with iron tablet consumption among adolescent girls in the working area of Haruai Health Center, Tabalong Regency, South Kalimantan Province. This observational analytic study used a cross-sectional design. A total of 25 adolescent girls who met the inclusion criteria were selected using total sampling. Data were collected through questionnaires and analyzed using the Chi-Square test with SPSS. The study found a significant relationship between knowledge level and compliance with iron tablet consumption ( $p = 0.000$ ), as well as between attitude and compliance ( $p = 0.012$ ). Adolescents with good knowledge and positive attitudes tended to be more compliant. Knowledge and attitude are significantly associated with compliance in consuming iron tablets. Strengthening health education is needed to support anemia prevention programs among adolescent

### 1. Introduction

Adolescence is a phase in which a person experiences the transition to adulthood. Adolescence is a period of development after childhood ends, characterized by accelerated physical growth. This acceleration is related to their nutrient intake, especially the consumption of iron-rich foods. Inadequate iron intake can cause anemia in adolescents. Adolescence is the developmental period after childhood ends, marked by an acceleration of physical growth. This acceleration is related to their nutritional intake, especially the consumption of iron-rich foods. Inadequate iron intake can cause anemia in adolescents. (Wahyuningsih & Uswatun, 2019).

Anemia is a disorder that affects humans, characterized by a hemoglobin level that does not reach the normal limit, which is <12-16 g/dl. Anemia in adolescent girls can cause reduced focus, lack of enthusiasm in activities, memory impairment, and decreased learning capacity at school (Gibney, 2009). Untreated iron deficiency in adolescents poses a significant risk, especially during the critical phases of pregnancy and childbirth as they reach adulthood (Andani et al., 2020).

The World Health Organization (WHO) reported in the 2021 World Health Statistics that the frequency of anemia among women of reproductive age (15-49) globally in 2019 reached 29.9%, while the prevalence among non-pregnant women aged 15-49, including adolescents, reached 29.6%. The 2023 Indonesian Health Survey (SKI) shows that anemia remains a health issue that requires attention. In addition, the 2023 SKI reports that 54.8% of adolescent girls have never received Iron Supplement Tablets (TTD) and 51.4% of adolescent girls do not take TTD because they are unaware of its benefits, indicating that knowledge and compliance among adolescents regarding the anemia prevention program are still low. Anemia in adolescent girls remains a public health

challenge because it can interfere with growth, reduce learning concentration, productivity, and increase the risk of health complications during the reproductive period. Low knowledge about the benefits of Iron Supplement Tablets and attitudes that are not supportive of TTD consumption are factors that contribute to the low compliance with TTD consumption in adolescent girls, which is influenced by suboptimal dietary patterns and lack of physical exercise (Aulya et al., 2022). Based on inspection data in South Kalimantan in 2019, anemia among teenage girls reached 42.45% (Diskominfomc, 2022).

Factors that influence nutritional problems in adolescents include knowledge and awareness about meeting certain nutritional needs. Knowledge affects attitudes and behaviors regarding food choices and the use of dietary supplements, thereby influencing a person's nutritional status (Wahyuningsih & Rohmawati, 2020). Anemia is still one of the public health problems commonly found in adolescent girls. This group has a higher risk of experiencing anemia due to increased iron requirements during growth and blood loss during menstruation. According to the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2025, the main cause of anemia is iron deficiency due to insufficient iron intake, which is the most common nutritional cause of anemia. In addition, anemia can also be caused by a lack of folate, vitamin B12, and vitamin A intake, nutrient absorption disorders, infections, chronic diseases, as well as blood loss due to excessive menstruation. Various variables influence iron tablet intake among adolescent girls, including nutritional awareness, eating habits, and adherence to iron tablet use. The level of information among adolescents affects their attitudes and behaviors regarding food choices at school and at home, thereby influencing their understanding of the benefits of iron tablets. Understanding the benefits of high-quality iron tablets can affect nutritious food intake, thus achieving optimal nutritional status. Providing counseling about the benefits of iron pills is very important to improve adolescents' understanding, so it needs to be done to change their consumption behavior toward iron tablets. (Safitri et al., 2024).

Comprehensive nutritional knowledge, along with the provision of iron pills, significantly increases hemoglobin levels in adolescent girls compared to those who have little nutritional knowledge or those who only receive iron tablets. The adolescents feel that they do not need iron pills due to a lack of awareness of the importance of iron pills for this age group (Ode Putri W.W & Zainuddin A, 2023).

Menstruation, which occurs between the ages of 10 and 16, is a cause of anemia in adolescent girls, as it can lead to a loss of iron of 12-15 mg per month, or 0.4-0.5 mg per day. During menstruation, women experience iron loss and basal loss, resulting in a total daily iron loss of 1.25 mg. The monthly blood volume lost ranges from 30 to 50 cc. This condition causes anemia in women. Anemia is defined as a decrease in hemoglobin (Hb) levels or hematocrit levels below the threshold value, caused by reduced erythrocyte synthesis, increased erythrocyte destruction, or significant blood loss (Putra et al., 2020).” Anemia significantly affects the reproductive health of adolescent girls, especially when they are transitioning to becoming future mothers and undergoing menstruation, pregnancy, and childbirth. It is important to prevent anemia as early as possible (Delvina Safitri, 2022). Improving eating habits among adolescent girls is a key strategy to prevent anemia; however, doing this solely by increasing food intake is quite challenging. Adolescents are a distinct demographic group for whom efforts to increase iron levels are not sufficient through dietary changes alone. Therefore, one component of the government's prevention initiative is the administration of iron supplements (Runiari & Hartati, 2020). The peak level of iron supplement tablet intake among female adolescents in schools occurs at the junior high school level, reaching 87.6%. Currently, only 1.4% of female adolescents comply with taking iron tablets, although the government targets a compliance rate of 58% by 2024 (Sintawati et al., 2024).

Based on the description of the background of the problem above, the formulation of the research problem is: “Is there a Relationship Between the Level of Knowledge and Attitudes of Adolescents and Compliance with Iron Tablet Consumption in the Work Area of Haruai Health Center, Tabalong Regency, South Kalimantan Province?”.

## **2. Research Method**

This study uses an observational analytic design with a cross-sectional approach. This design is used to determine the relationship between the level of knowledge and attitudes of adolescent girls and adherence to the consumption of Iron Supplement Tablets (TTD/Fe Tablets) at the same time.

The study was conducted in the working area of Haruai Health Center, Tabalong Regency, South Kalimantan Province, from October to November 2024. The population in this study consisted of all

adolescent girls who are the targets of the Iron Supplement Tablet (TTD) program in the working area of Haruai Health Center.

The sampling technique used was total sampling, meaning all members of the population who met the inclusion criteria were made research respondents. The number of samples obtained was 25 adolescent girls. The inclusion criteria included: adolescent girls aged 14–17 years, registered as targets of the Iron Supplement Tablet (TTD/Fe Tablet) program in the working area of Haruai Health Center, willing to be respondents, and able to complete the questionnaire independently. The research instrument used was a closed questionnaire consisting of questions regarding the level of knowledge, attitude, and compliance in consuming Iron Tablets. In the closed questionnaire, all answer alternatives were provided so that respondents only chose the answer that most suited their condition. The data obtained were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) program. Bivariate analysis was conducted using the Chi-Square test at a significance level ( $\alpha$ ) of 0.05 to determine the relationship between the level of knowledge and the attitude of female adolescents with adherence to Fe Tablet consumption.

### 3. Results and Discussion

Table 1. Frequency Distribution of Knowledge Level, Attitude, and Compliance with Iron Tablet Consumption in the Working Area of Haruai Public Health Center, Tabalong Regency, South Kalimantan Province

Respondent Characteristics	f	%
<b>Knowledge Level</b>		
Less	3	12,0
Enough	6	24,0
Good	16	64,0
<b>Attitude</b>		
Less	3	12,0
Enough	6	24,0
Good	16	64,0
<b>Compliance</b>		
Non- Compliant	4	16,0
Compliant	21	84,0

Based on Table 1, it can be seen that the level of knowledge of the respondents is mostly in the good knowledge category, with 16 respondents (64.0%), most respondents have a good attitude, with 16 respondents (64.0%). And based on the level of compliance in consuming Fe tablets, most are in the compliant category, with 21 respondents (84.0%).

Table 2. Relationship between knowledge level and adherence to the consumption of Fe tablets in the working area of the Haruai Health Center, Tabalong Regency, South Kalimantan Province

Knowledge Level	Compliant		P-value				
	f	%	f	%	f	%	
Less	3	100,0	0	0	3	100	0,000
Enough	0	0	6	100,0	6	100	
Good	1	6	15	94	16	100	

Based on Table 2, it shows that the level of knowledge among female adolescents in the good category is 1 respondent (6%) and compliant in consuming Fe tablets is 15 respondents (94%). From the statistical test using the Chi-square test, a P-Value of  $0.000 < 0.05$  was obtained, thus it can be concluded that there is a relationship between the level of knowledge and compliance in consuming Fe tablets.

Table 3 Relationship Of Attitude With Fe Tablet Consumption Compliance In The Working Area Of Haruai District Health Center. Tabalong South Kalimantan Province

Compliance Attitude	Total		Non-Compliant		Compliant		P-value
	f	%	f	%	f	%	
Less	1	33,3	2	66,7	3	100	0,012
Enough	3	50,0	3	50,0	6	100	
Good	0	0	16	100,0	16	100	

Based on Table 3, it shows that the majority of female adolescents fall into the good knowledge category and comply with consuming iron tablets, totaling 16 respondents (100%). From the Chi-square test results, a P-Value of  $0.012 < 0.05$  was obtained; thus, it can be concluded that there is a relationship between attitude and compliance in consuming iron tablets.

Based on the SPSS results with the Chi-Square test, the relationship between adolescents' knowledge and attitudes with compliance in consuming Fe tablets was identified. The knowledge level had a P-value (asympt. Sig 2-tailed) of 0.000 and attitude had a P-value (asympt. Sig 2-tailed) of  $0.012 < 0.05$ , which means there is a relationship between adolescents' knowledge and attitudes with compliance in consuming Fe tablets. Therefore,  $H_0$  is rejected and  $H_1$  is accepted, so it can be concluded that there is a relationship between adolescents' knowledge and attitudes with compliance in consuming Fe tablets.

This research is in line with previous research conducted by Devi Permata Sari, Sri Sat Titi Hamranani, Suyami (2020) entitled "The Relationship Between Knowledge and Attitude With Adherence to Taking Fe Tablets in Adolescent Girls." The Kendall tau test results showed a p-value of 0.02, which is less than 0.05, for the relationship between knowledge and adherence. An investigation of Fe tablet consumption adherence, using the Kendall tau test, yielded a p-value of 0.004, which is less than 0.05. These findings indicate that adherence to Fe tablet consumption is correlated with the knowledge and attitudes of tenth-grade adolescent girls at SMK N 1 Klaten.

Adolescence is the transitional phase from childhood to adulthood, which marks the beginning of different dietary needs depending on gender. Teenage girls are vulnerable to anemia due to the significant influence of the social environment on their dietary choices. Misperceptions among teenage girls about their body shape limit their food intake, leading to reduced consumption of animal protein sources and increased iron loss due to monthly menstruation. In addition, interventions to prevent anemia in pregnant women will be more effective if carried out during adolescence. (Andani et al., 2020). Iron folate tablet supplementation, as recommended, is given independently with a dose of one tablet per week for 16 weeks. The dose is adjusted to one tablet per day if the adolescent girl is menstruating. And it is not implemented in daily practice. (Murnariswari et al., 2021).

Attitude is defined as a response to a stimulus or an object. Attitude clearly reflects a connotation of a response that is conformist to a certain stimulus or in daily life manifests as an emotional reaction to social stimuli. According to (Klau, 2019) attitude is a view or feeling accompanied by a tendency to act in accordance with the intended attitude (Herawati & Martina, 2023).

Compliance is closely related to teenage girls' understanding of the consequences of not taking iron pills during menstruation and anemia; this awareness must be fostered early to prevent direct and indirect impacts on these teenage girls (Monika et al., 2023). Compliant behavior is characterized by adherence to orders and regulations. Compliance refers to the behavior of individuals or patients who are actively engaged in a series of self-healing procedures according to established health standards. Compliance with the use of Blood-Boosting Tablets among adolescent girls is influenced by their understanding. New behavior based on good knowledge, awareness, and perception of its value, purpose, or benefits will lead to the formation of permanent behavior, unlike behavior that is not based on knowledge (Alfia et al., 2022).

Anemia in adolescents can have a negative impact on their health. Anemia can cause several complications, including decreased reproductive health, impaired motor and cognitive development, obstacles in cognitive function, decreased academic achievement, lower fitness levels, and inability to reach optimal physical growth. In addition, the Ministry of Health indicates that anemia adversely affects female adolescents by reducing immunity, concentration, academic achievement, physical fitness, and productivity, as well as increasing the risk of death during childbirth, and the possibility

of preterm birth and low birth weight in babies. Anemia in female adolescents can negatively impact their future, especially when getting married and giving birth. Pregnant women who have experienced anemia since their teenage years are at higher risk of giving birth to babies with low birth weight (LBW). Children with LBW are vulnerable to stunting, which can disrupt their cognitive development, thereby increasing the burden on society (Ansyariah et al., 2023)."

Iron supplements are used to increase blood levels or hemoglobin. The importance of consuming iron supplements consistently can begin from adolescence, which is between the ages of 10 and 24, especially for teenage girls. Teenage girls experience a menstrual cycle every month, which increases the risk of anemia compared to teenage boys. The practice of consuming iron supplements consistently with the correct dosage and method is based on self-awareness that comes from prior understanding. Broad information will cultivate a positive attitude and encourage the consistent and proper consumption of iron supplements. Consuming iron tablets is very important for the prevention and treatment of anemia, as well as for preventing the birth of babies with short stature or low birth weight (Annisa Mutiara Nandasari Hartono et al., 2023).

The consumption of iron and folic acid supplements is chosen as a method to prevent and address anemia in this population. Iron and folic acid supplementation is necessary in accordance with the Guidelines for the Prevention and Management of Anemia in Adolescent Girls and Women of Reproductive Age (WRA). Folic acid iron tablet supplementation, as recommended, is given independently at a dose of one tablet per week for 16 weeks. The dose is adjusted to one tablet per day if the adolescent girl is menstruating. Although this program is designed with clear criteria, it has challenges in implementation, especially in terms of compliance (Tirthawati et al., 2020).

#### **Research Limitations and Suggestions**

This study has several research limitations. It used a cross-sectional design, so the relationships found between knowledge level, attitude, and adherence to iron tablet consumption only indicate relationships at a single point in time and cannot directly explain causal relationships. Second, the relatively small sample size, which was 25 respondents, as well as the research location that only covered the working area of Haruai Health Center, Tabalong Regency, caused the study results to have limitations in generalizing to a broader population of adolescent girls. Future research is expected to involve a larger sample size and a wider area coverage so that the research results have better generalizability to the population of adolescent girls in general.

#### **4. Conclusion**

The results of the statistical analysis showed that the level of knowledge and attitudes of adolescents has a significant relationship with compliance in consuming Fe tablets ( $p$ -value 0.000 and  $0.012 < 0.05$ ). This study supports previous findings which indicate that adolescents with positive knowledge and attitudes are more likely to comply with consuming Fe tablets.

The results of the statistical analysis showed that the level of knowledge and attitudes of adolescents has a significant relationship with compliance in consuming Fe tablets ( $p$ -value 0.000 and  $0.012 < 0.05$ ). This study supports previous findings which indicate that adolescents with positive knowledge and attitudes are more likely to comply with consuming Fe tablets.

Adolescence is an important period to develop healthy habits, including anemia prevention through the consumption of iron tablets. Low knowledge about anemia and the benefits of iron tablets often leads to low compliance. Anemia in adolescent girls has long-term impacts, including reproductive health disorders, decreased productivity, and the risk of babies being born with low birth weight, which can cause stunting.

Prevention of anemia from adolescence through regular and appropriately dosed Fe tablet consumption is a strategic step to improve the health of the next generation.

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programs among adolescent girls, particularly through improved knowledge, positive attitudes, and adherence to iron tablet consumption.

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