Strategies for Reducing and Preventing Anemia in Pregnant Women: Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract

Anemia in pregnant women is a serious health problem with negative impacts on the health of the mother and fetus. The aim of this research is to conduct a literature review on strategies for reducing and preventing anemia in pregnant women. This study used the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method to collect and evaluate 20 relevant articles regarding strategies for reducing and preventing anemia in pregnant women. A literature search was conducted through various databases and articles that met the inclusion and exclusion criteria were selected for analysis. The main finding of this literature review is that several effective strategies have been identified for the reduction and prevention of anemia in pregnant women, including iron and folic acid supplementation, dietary changes, regular check-ups, health education, and community-based awareness campaigns. Factors such as public awareness, supportive health policies, and easy access to health services play an important role in supporting the successful implementation of these strategies. However, there are also obstacles such as limited access and resources, non-compliance, and cultural challenges that can hinder efforts to prevent anemia. The conclusion of this research is that strategies for reducing and preventing anemia in pregnant women require a holistic approach involving various aspects, including strengthening health services, targeted health education, and cross-sector collaboration. By implementing appropriate recommendations, it is hoped that a significant reduction in the prevalence of anemia in pregnant women can be achieved and improve the overall health of mothers and fetuses.

Keywords: reduction strategy, prevention strategy, anemia in pregnant women

Abstrak


Kata kunci: strategi pengurangan, strategi pencegahan, anemia pada ibu hamil
INTRODUCTION

Anemia in pregnant women is a significant global health problem, especially in developing countries. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), approximately 40% of pregnant women worldwide suffer from anemia, with the highest prevalence in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa (Owais et al., 2021). Anemia in pregnant women can be caused by various factors, including deficiencies of iron, folic acid, vitamin B12, as well as chronic diseases and infections such as malaria and HIV/AIDS.

The prevalence of anemia in pregnant women has a serious impact on the health of the mother and fetus. Pregnant women who suffer from anemia are at higher risk of experiencing pregnancy complications, such as premature birth, low birth weight, and increased maternal and infant mortality rates. Apart from that, anemia can also interfere with the cognitive and physical development of the fetus, which can have a long-term impact on the quality of life of the child being born.

The increasing prevalence of anemia in pregnant women is a serious concern for governments and global health organizations. Efforts to reduce anemia rates in pregnant women require a comprehensive and multifaceted approach, including nutritional interventions, supplementation, increasing access to health services, and health education (Aden et al., 2023). National and international programs have been launched to address this problem, but challenges in implementing and monitoring the success of these programs remain.

Anemia in pregnant women is also an urgent public health problem. Therefore, this study aims to examine strategies for reducing and preventing anemia in pregnant women using the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method, with the hope of providing practical and evidence-based recommendations to improve maternal and child health.

Anemia in pregnant women has a broad and serious impact on the health of the mother and fetus. One of the main impacts of anemia on pregnant women is an increased risk of complications during pregnancy and childbirth. Pregnant women who suffer from anemia are more susceptible to extreme fatigue, weakness, and decreased immunity, which can affect their ability to have a healthy pregnancy. Anemia is also associated with an increased risk of preeclampsia, a condition characterized by high blood pressure and organ damage, which can threaten the lives of the mother and fetus if not treated properly (Bongomin et al., 2021).

Anemia in pregnant women can cause premature labor, which is one of the main causes of perinatal morbidity and mortality. Premature birth can result in various health problems in the baby, including respiratory distress syndrome, infections, and developmental disorders. Babies born to mothers who are anemic also tend to have low birth weight (LBW), which can result in various short-term and long-term health complications, such as delays in physical and cognitive development and an increased risk of chronic diseases later in life.

The impact of anemia is not only limited to the period of pregnancy and childbirth, but also continues into the postpartum period. Mothers who suffer from anemia tend to experience slower recovery after giving birth and are more susceptible to postpartum infections. This can affect the mother’s ability to care for her baby well and affect the quality of mother-baby interactions. Anemia can also affect breast milk production, which is important for the baby’s optimal growth and development (Abdelmoty & ..., 2024).

In the fetus, maternal anemia can cause intrauterine growth disorders (IUGR), which results in the baby being born with a smaller than normal size and weight. IUGR is associated with an increased risk of perinatal mortality and a variety of long-term health problems, including cognitive impairment, metabolic disorders, and increased risk of cardiovascular disease in adulthood. Therefore, preventing
and treating anemia in pregnant women is very important to ensure the health and well-being of the mother and optimal development of the fetus.

This study aims to identify and evaluate effective strategies in reducing and preventing anemia in pregnant women. Anemia in pregnant women is a significant health problem with widespread impacts on maternal and fetal health. Therefore, a deep understanding of strategies that have been proven effective in various contexts is needed in order for them to be widely applied (Jeannette & Cecile, 2022).

Identify various interventions that have been carried out to reduce the prevalence of anemia in pregnant women. These interventions may include supplementation with iron, folic acid, and other vitamins; change in diet; health education programs; and public health policy.

Focuses on identifying preventive measures that have been implemented to prevent anemia in pregnant women. This prevention may involve nutritional interventions, routine screening to detect anemia early, and promotion of supportive health behaviors.

Evaluate the effectiveness of various strategies in different contexts, such as in developed vs. less developed countries, developing countries, in urban environments vs. rural areas, and in populations with different socio-economic characteristics. This evaluation will help identify the most appropriate strategies for various conditions and contexts.

Through SLR, this research will collect, evaluate and synthesize the results of various relevant studies to provide evidence-based guidance regarding strategies for reducing and preventing anemia in pregnant women. It is hoped that the results of this research can make a significant contribution to efforts to improve maternal and child health, especially in countries with a high prevalence of anemia.

**METHOD**

This research uses the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method, which is a comprehensive approach to identify, evaluate and synthesize relevant research results regarding strategies for reducing and preventing anemia in pregnant women. SLR allows researchers to collect data from various trusted sources, evaluate research quality, and organize findings systematically. This method is important to ensure that the conclusions drawn are evidence-based and reflect the current scientific consensus (Dziopa & Ahern, 2011).

A literature search strategy was carried out using relevant keywords such as "anemia in pregnant women", "reduction of anemia", "prevention of anemia", "nutritional intervention", and "iron supplementation". Searches were conducted across multiple scientific databases to ensure broad coverage.

Inclusion criteria include studies published within the last five years, articles available in English, as well as studies that focus on strategies for reducing and preventing anemia in pregnant women. Exclusion criteria included studies not available in full text, studies with unclear methodology, and non-scientific articles (Nasution, 2023).

The literature selection process involved an initial screening stage based on titles and abstracts, followed by full text review to ensure relevance and quality. Each study was evaluated using critical appraisal tools to assess internal and external validity, as well as potential bias.

The data sources used in this research include major scientific databases. From the results of this search, 20 articles in 2019-2024 which discuss strategies for reducing and preventing anemia in
Pregnant women will be selected for further analysis. This selection is based on relevance, methodological quality, and contribution to understanding of the topic under study.

The extracted results were then synthesized to identify patterns, themes, and general findings emerging from the literature. This synthesis was carried out qualitatively to provide a comprehensive picture of the effectiveness of the various strategies that have been tested (Figure 1: Systematic Literature Review Method, 2021).

Articles were evaluated using critical appraisal tools to assess the quality of methodology and results. This assessment helps ensure that conclusions drawn from the literature are sound, evidence-based. The synthesis results are then interpreted to draw conclusions that can be used to recommend strategies for reducing and preventing anemia in pregnant women that are most effective and practical to implement (Trombly & Alsmadi, 2023).

Results and Discussion

From the results of the literature search and selection, 20 articles were selected for analysis in this Systematic Literature Review (SLR). The studies included in this SLR were published within the last five years, namely from 2019 to 2024. The purpose of selecting this time period is to ensure that the strategies analyzed are up-to-date and relevant to current developments in science and clinical practice.

The selected articles come from various countries, including studies conducted in developed and developing countries. This provides a broad perspective regarding the effectiveness of strategies to reduce and prevent anemia in pregnant women in various maternal health contexts. Some studies focus on specific interventions such as iron and folic acid supplementation, while others explore health education programs and dietary changes as primary strategies.

Other relevant characteristics of these studies include the research methods used, the populations studied, and the primary outcomes reported. Most studies used quasi-experimental research designs or randomized controlled trials, which allow a more accurate assessment of the effectiveness of the intervention. The populations studied in these studies are varied, including pregnant women from various age backgrounds, economic statuses, and health conditions.

The analysis includes various outcome indicators, such as changes in hemoglobin levels, anemia prevalence, and impacts on maternal and fetal health. This allows a comprehensive analysis of various aspects of anemia reduction and prevention strategies, as well as the identification of factors that influence the success of these interventions.

With the diverse characteristics of these studies, it is hoped that the SLR results can provide a holistic and evidence-based picture of effective strategies for reducing and preventing anemia in pregnant women. Further analysis will explore the key findings of each study, evaluate the effectiveness of the interventions, and identify best practices that can be applied in various contexts.

### Systematic Literature Review Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Article Title</th>
<th>Prevention Strategy</th>
<th>Decline Strategy</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Meta-Analysis: The Effect Of Anemia In Pregnant Women On The Risk Of Postpartum</td>
<td>Regular iron and folic acid supplementation. Education about the</td>
<td>Giving iron supplements to</td>
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<td>Article Title</td>
<td>Summary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bleeding And Low Birth Weight (Adhimukti Et Al., 2023)</td>
<td>importance of nutrition during pregnancy.</td>
<td>increase hemoglobin levels.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 The Relationship Of Anemia In Pregnant Women And The Incidence Of Premature Delivery: Systematic Review (Adnin &amp; Dewi, 2022)</td>
<td>Anemia screening in early pregnancy. - Nutritional counseling for pregnant women.</td>
<td>Medical interventions and iron supplements to reduce the risk of preterm labor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Risk Factors Of Anemia In Pregnant Women: Literature Review (Anggreny &amp; Fajar, 2023)</td>
<td>Identify risk factors for anemia. - Health promotion about nutrition and the importance of supplements.</td>
<td>Management of risk factors such as malnutrition and infection.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 The Relationship Between Knowledge Of Pregnant Women About Anemia And Prevention Of Folic Acid Consumption During Pregnancy (Aryunita, 2022)</td>
<td>Health education regarding consumption of folic acid. - Increased knowledge of pregnant women about anemia.</td>
<td>Use of folic acid supplements to prevent anemia.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5 Prevalence Of Anemia And Its Associated Factors Among Pregnant Women In Georgia (Boll, 2021)</td>
<td>Regular check of hemoglobin levels. - Awareness campaign about the importance of nutrition.</td>
<td>Nutritional interventions and iron supplementation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 Assessment And Associated Factors Of Knowledge, Attitude And Practice Towards Prevent Of Nutritional Anemia Among Pregnant Women In Selected Health Facilities (Chanie, 2019)</td>
<td>Increased knowledge and attitudes towards anemia prevention. - Health education programs in health facilities.</td>
<td>Direct intervention through supplementation and improved diet.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 Anemia Awareness, Causes, And Prevention Among Pregnant Women At Asogbon Phc, Bariga, Lagos State, Nigeria (Cole Et Al, 2022)</td>
<td>Increased awareness about anemia and its causes. - Health promotion in the community.</td>
<td>Providing regular iron supplements.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 A Systematic Review Of The Burden Of Anemia In Pregnant Women–Indian Perspective (Dutta, 2021)</td>
<td>- Identify the burden of anemia in pregnant women. - Health policy for anemia prevention.</td>
<td>Focused nutritional interventions and supplementation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Meta-Analysis: The Relationship Of Fe Tablet Consumption Adherence And Anemia Prevalence In Pregnant Women (Noor, N.D.)</td>
<td>Compliance with Fe tablet consumption. - Education about the importance of consuming Fe tablets.</td>
<td>Providing Fe supplements to reduce the prevalence of anemia.</td>
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Anemia Reduction Strategy

The findings from the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) that have been carried out identify several main strategies that are effective in reducing the prevalence of anemia in pregnant women. Based on the analysis of the 20 articles studied, the following strategies were found:

1. **Iron and Folic Acid Supplementation**

   One of the most common and effective strategies is iron and folic acid supplementation. Several studies show that giving iron supplements can significantly increase hemoglobin levels and reduce the prevalence of anemia in pregnant women. For example, research by Adhimukti et al. (2023) emphasizes the importance of routine iron supplementation to prevent the risk of anemia continuing until postpartum and reduce the possibility of low birth weight in babies.

2. **Nutrition Intervention and Nutrition Education**

   In addition to supplementation, nutritional interventions that include education about good nutrition are also very important. Health education programs that emphasize the importance of a balanced diet, rich in iron and folic acid, have proven effective. A study by Anggreny and Fajar (2023) shows that increasing pregnant women’s knowledge regarding healthy eating patterns can contribute significantly to reducing anemia rates.

3. **Providing Multivitamins and Additional Supplements**

   Research by Aryunita (2022) found that apart from iron and folic acid, administering multivitamins containing vitamin B12, vitamin C and other micronutrients also plays a role in reducing anemia in pregnant women. Vitamin C, in particular, can increase the absorption of iron from food, which further helps in increasing hemoglobin levels.

4. **Improvement of Antenatal Health Services**

   Improving antenatal health services, including routine screening for anemia, is also an important strategy. According to research by Chanie (2019), early detection of anemia through routine blood tests during antenatal visits allows for quicker and more effective intervention. This includes administering appropriate supplements and treating comorbidities that may affect the anemia status of pregnant women.

5. **Community Based Policy and Intervention Program**
Research by Bongomin et al. (2021) show that community-based interventions, including awareness campaigns and mass distribution of iron supplements, can increase awareness and compliance with supplementation. This approach involves active involvement of communities and local stakeholders to support anemia prevention programs.

In conclusion, an effective strategy to reduce anemia in pregnant women involves a combination of nutritional interventions, supplementation, health education, improved antenatal services, and supportive policy programs. Comprehensive and sustainable implementation of these strategies can significantly reduce the prevalence of anemia in pregnant women and improve maternal and fetal health.

### Anemia Prevention Strategy

Findings from related literature show that various strategies for preventing anemia in pregnant women have been proven to be effective. The following are some of the main strategies identified from the literature:

1. **Dietary Changes**
   
   Dietary changes are one of the most important prevention strategies. Foods rich in iron, such as red meat, liver, dark green leafy vegetables, nuts, and seeds, are highly recommended for pregnant women. A study by Anggreny and Fajar (2023) emphasizes that balanced food intake with high iron content can help prevent anemia. In addition, consuming foods that contain vitamin C is also important because it can increase the absorption of iron from plant foods.

2. **Iron and Folic Acid Supplementation**

   Routine provision of iron and folic acid supplements during pregnancy is a preventive strategy that has been widely recommended. According to research by Aryunita (2022), this supplementation is important, especially in the second and third trimesters, when iron requirements increase significantly. This supplementation helps prevent iron deficiency and keeps hemoglobin levels in the blood at a healthy level.

3. **Routine Checkup**

   Regular check-ups during pregnancy, including blood tests to monitor hemoglobin levels, are essential for early detection of anemia. Chanie (2019) shows that routine examinations allow early detection of anemia, so that intervention can be carried out immediately before the condition worsens. This examination also includes an evaluation of diet and level of compliance with supplementation.

4. **Health Education**

   Health education regarding the importance of nutrition and preventing anemia is also very important. According to research by Cole et al. (2022), educational programs delivered through antenatal services can increase awareness and knowledge of pregnant women about the importance of iron intake and balanced nutrition. This education includes information about food sources rich in iron, the importance of supplements, and how to overcome barriers to eating healthy foods.

5. **Improved Access to Health Services**

   Increasing access to health services is also a key factor in preventing anemia. The study by Bongomin et al. (2021) highlight the importance of easy and affordable access to health services for screening and supplementation. This includes the provision of free or low-cost iron supplements, as well as the provision of quality antenatal care.
6. Community Based Awareness and Intervention Campaigns

Community-based interventions, including awareness campaigns about anemia and the importance of prevention, are also effective. Research by Fauzianty (2022) shows that campaigns involving the community, such as educational programs at community health centers, can increase compliance with anemia prevention recommendations. This approach involves multiple stakeholders, including health workers, community leaders, and families.

Prevention of anemia in pregnant women requires a holistic and integrated approach. A combination of dietary changes, supplementation, regular check-ups, health education, increased access to health services, and community-based awareness campaigns has proven effective in preventing anemia and improving the health of pregnant women. Sustainable implementation of these strategies can reduce the prevalence of anemia and support maternal and fetal health.

Strategy Effectiveness

The results of the literature review show that various anemia prevention strategies in pregnant women have varying levels of effectiveness depending on the context of implementation and compliance of pregnant women with the intervention provided. The following is a discussion of the effectiveness of some of the key strategies identified:

1. Iron and Folic Acid Supplementation:
   a. Effectiveness: Routine iron and folic acid supplementation has been proven to be very effective in preventing and reducing the prevalence of anemia in pregnant women. According to research by Adhimukti et al. (2023), this supplementation not only increases hemoglobin levels, but also reduces the risk of pregnancy complications such as postpartum bleeding and low birth weight.
   b. Criticism: Its effectiveness really depends on the pregnant woman's compliance in taking supplements regularly. There are challenges in ensuring that all pregnant women have access to and continue to use the supplements they are given.

2. Dietary Changes:
   a. Effectiveness: Adopting a diet rich in iron and other essential nutrients is a natural and sustainable strategy for anemia prevention. A study by Anggreny and Fajar (2023) shows that education and counseling regarding healthy eating patterns can significantly increase the intake of necessary nutrients.
   b. Criticism: Dietary changes require time and a lot of awareness from pregnant women. Other challenges include limited access to nutritious food in some regions and food preferences that are difficult to change.

3. Routine Checks:
   a. Effectiveness: Regular screening allows early detection of anemia and rapid intervention before the condition worsens. According to Chanie (2019), routine blood tests and assessment of nutritional status during antenatal visits are very helpful in maintaining the health of pregnant women.
   b. Criticism: Implementation of routine checks requires adequate health infrastructure and trained health personnel. In some remote areas, access to routine health services is still a challenge.

4. Health Education:
   a. Effectiveness: Health education programs increase pregnant women's knowledge about the importance of nutrition and preventing anemia. Research by Cole et al. (2022) emphasize that appropriate education can change the behavior and eating habits of pregnant women.
b. Criticism: The effectiveness of health education depends on the method of delivery and how well the information is received and understood by pregnant women. Sometimes, there are cultural or linguistic barriers that can reduce the educational impact.

5. Community Based Awareness and Intervention Campaigns:
   a. Effectiveness: Awareness campaigns involving the wider community can increase compliance with anemia prevention and expand the reach of health programs. Fauzianty (2022) shows that a community-based approach can create strong social support for pregnant women.
   b. Criticism: The success of the campaign depends on the active involvement of all stakeholders, including local government, health organizations, and communities. Requires good coordination and adequate resources for effective implementation.

Comparison and Critical Analysis of Strategies

Through critical analysis, it can be concluded that each strategy has its own advantages and disadvantages. Iron and folic acid supplementation is the most direct and often provides rapid results in increasing hemoglobin levels. However, the main challenge is ensuring long-term compliance and equitable access.

Dietary change is a sustainable and natural strategy, but requires significant behavioral changes and is often difficult to implement in areas with limited access to nutritious food. Routine screening is very effective in early detection, but requires a strong health system and good accessibility, which can be an obstacle in remote areas.

Community-based health education and awareness campaigns are effective in increasing knowledge and changing behavior, but require approaches tailored to cultural and local contexts. This program also requires ongoing collaborative efforts from various stakeholders.

The most effective strategies are those that combine these approaches, ensuring that pregnant women receive adequate education, access to screening and supplements, and support from their communities. The combination of these various strategies can provide more comprehensive and sustainable results in preventing anemia in pregnant women.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors

1. Public Awareness: High public awareness about the importance of the health of pregnant women and babies, as well as the negative impacts of anemia, can be the main driver in supporting the success of anemia reduction and prevention strategies.
2. Health Policy: Health policies that are proactive and focus on the well-being of pregnant women can create a strong foundation for the implementation of anemia prevention programs, including access to supplements and antenatal health services.
3. Access to Health Services: The availability of affordable and easily accessible health services for pregnant women plays an important role in improving monitoring and early intervention for anemia.
4. Inter-Stakeholder Collaboration: Strong collaboration between governments, health institutions, non-governmental organizations, and local communities can strengthen anemia prevention efforts by maximizing resources and program reach.
5. Health Education: Effective health education for pregnant women, families, and health workers can increase understanding of anemia prevention and encourage healthy behavior.
Obstacles and Challenges

1. Limited Access and Resources: In some regions, especially in rural or remote areas, access to health services and resources needed for anemia prevention may be limited.
2. Non-adherence: Compliance with iron and folic acid supplementation is often problematic, whether for economic, cultural, or convenience reasons.
3. Cultural Challenges: Certain cultural practices or societal beliefs about pregnancy and health may hinder the acceptance and implementation of anemia prevention programs.
4. Lack of Trained Health Workers: The lack of trained health workers to carry out examinations and provide appropriate education to pregnant women can be an obstacle in early detection and intervention of anemia.
5. Health Crises and Natural Disasters: Health crises or natural disasters can disrupt routine health services and divert resources that should be allocated to anemia prevention.

CONCLUSION

The results of a literature review regarding strategies for reducing and preventing anemia in pregnant women show several main findings:

1. Strategy Effectiveness: Iron and folic acid supplementation, changes to a diet rich in iron, regular check-ups during pregnancy, health education, and community-based awareness campaigns are effective strategies in reducing and preventing anemia in pregnant women.
2. Supporting Factors: Public awareness, supportive health policies, easy access to health services, collaboration between stakeholders, and health education are factors that support the successful implementation of anemia prevention strategies.
3. Obstacles and Challenges: Limited access and resources, non-compliance, cultural challenges, lack of trained health workers, and health crises or natural disasters are the main challenges that can hinder anemia prevention efforts.

Implications

Based on research findings, several recommendations for clinical practice and health policy are as follows:

1. Expanding Access and Increasing Supplement Availability: Increasing access and availability of affordable iron and folic acid supplements can improve compliance and effectiveness of anemia prevention strategies.
2. Health Program Integration: Integrating anemia prevention programs into maternal and child health services, including antenatal services and posyandu, can expand the scope of interventions and increase service efficiency.
3. Targeted Health Education: Providing targeted health education to pregnant women, families and health workers about the importance of balanced nutrition and iron supplementation can increase knowledge and awareness about preventing anemia.
4. Inter-Sector Collaboration: Encouraging cross-sector collaboration between government, non-government organizations, the private sector, and civil society can strengthen anemia prevention efforts through more effective use of available resources.
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