

# Effect of a six-month iron-zinc fortified milk supplementation on nutritional status, physical capacity and speed learning process in Indonesian underweight schoolchildren: randomized, placebo-controlled

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## Abstrak

Tujuan mengevaluasi efek suplementasi susu yang diperkaya dengan zat besi dan zink terhadap indikator pertumbuhan, kapasitas fisik dan kecepatan berpikir anak sekolah yang kurang berat (underweight). Metode Eksperimen pada dua kelompok paralel tersamar ganda dilaksanakan di beberapa sekolah dasar di Jakarta dan Surakarta, Indonesia. Sejumlah 245 anak sekolah usia 7-9 tahun yang underweight di daerah miskin perkotaan Jakarta and Solo dialokasikan secara acak menerima dua gelas susu yang diperkaya zat besi dan zink ( $n = 121$ ) atau susu biasa ( $n = 124$ ) setiap hari selama enam bulan. Indikator biokimia, antropometri, kapasitas fisik dan fungsi kognisi diukur saat awal, bulan ke-3 dan ke-6. Hasil Antara kelompok susu diperkaya dibandingkan dengan kelompok susu biasa, peningkatan kadar hemoglobin (berturut-turut  $0,01 + 0,96$  mg/dL dan  $0,17 + 0,81$  mg/dL) dan serum feritin (berturut-turut  $12,77 + 25,50$  mcg/dL dan  $14,99 + 29,56$  mcg/dL) tidak berbeda bermakna antara kedua kelompok. Selanjutnya, terjadi penurunan kadar serum zink (berturut-turut  $3,01 + 3,24$  mMol/dL dan  $3,12 + 3,71$  mMol/dL) yang tidak bermakna antara kedua kelompok. Penambahan berat badan pada kelompok susu diperkaya ( $1,31 + 0,69$  kg) berbeda secara bermakna ( $P=0.045$ ) dibandingkan dengan kelompok susu biasa ( $1,13 + 0,69$  kg), sejalan dengan peningkatan indikator underweight (WAZ) pada kelompok susu diperkaya ( $1,47 + 0,50$ ) yang lebih besar secara bermakna ( $P=0.025$ ) dibandingkan dengan peningkatannya pada kelompok susu biasa ( $1,33 + 0,47$ ). Terdapat perbaikan skor kecepatan berpikir yang bermakna ( $P=0.001$ ) pada kelompok susu diperkaya ( $12,74 + 11,76$ ) dibandingkan dengan kelompok susu biasa ( $8,31 + 9,60$ ), namun tidak ada perbedaan yang bermakna untuk perbaikan skor kapasitas fisik antara kedua kelompok (berturut-turut  $10323,77 + 9253,83$  dan  $8435,94 + 8824,55$ ). Kesimpulan pada anak sekolah usia 7-9 tahun yang underweight, suplementasi susu yang diperkaya dengan zat besi dan zink akan lebih mendukung pertumbuhan dan kecepatan berpikir.

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## **Abstract**

Aim to evaluated the effect of milk supplementation enriched with iron and zinc on indicators of growth, physical capacity and cognitive performance in underweight school-children. Method Two-armed, randomized controlled double-blind trial was performed in several primary schools in Jakarta and Surakarta, Indonesia. A total of 245 underweight schoolchildren aged 7-9 years living in urban poor areas of Jakarta and Solo were randomly allocated to receive two cups of iron-zinc fortified-milk ( $n = 121$ ) or non-iron-zinc fortified milk ( $n = 124$ ) supplementation daily for six months. Biochemical indicators, anthropometric indices, physical capacity and cognitive performance were measured at before and after the supplementation. Results The study shows that between the fortified and non-fortified milk group, there was no significant different in haemoglobin increase ( $0.01 + 0.96$  mg/dL versus  $0.17 + 0.81$  mg/dL) nor serum ferritin increase ( $12.77 + 25.50$  mcg/dL versus  $14.99 + 29.56$  mcg/dL). Unexpectedly, decreased in serum zinc was found in both groups ( $3.01 + 3.24$  mMol/dL and  $3.12 + 3.71$  mMol/dL). There was significant higher increment ( $P=0.045$ ) in body weight among the fortified milk group ( $1.31 + 0.69$  kg) as compared to

the non-fortified group ( $1.13 + 0.69$  kg). Consistently, there was significant increase ( $P=0.025$ ) in the indicator of underweight (WAZ) among the fortified milk group ( $1.47 + 0.50$ ) as compared to the non-fortified group ( $1.33 + 0.47$ ). There was significant improvement ( $P=0.001$ ) of cognitive performance, i.e. coding test-score among the fortified group ( $12.74 + 11.76$ ) as compared to the non-fortified group ( $8.31 + 9.60$ ), but there was no significant difference found in the improvement of physical capacity score in both groups ( $10323.77 + 9253.83$  versus  $8435.94 + 8824.55$ ). Conclusion Among underweight schoolchildren aged 7-9 y, supplementation of milk fortified with iron and zinc can provide better growth, and better speed processing of learning ability.