

Use of Herbs for Health in The Community of Mueang District Khon Kaen Thailand

**Vivi Silawati^{1*}, Retno Widowati², Triana Indrayani³, Siti Lomrah⁴, Aquarini
Pajriyanti Puteri⁵, Lusi Oktaviani⁶, Siti Puteri Utami⁷**

¹²³⁴⁵⁶⁷*Department of Midwifery Professional Education, Faculty of Health Sciences,
National University of Jakarta*

** Corresponding Author: Vivi Silawati Universitas Nasional Jakarta:
Silawativie79@gmail.com*

Submission date: 26-12-2024; Date of received: 23-2-2025

Abstract

Many community members do not have sufficient knowledge about the benefits of herbs and how to use them properly. This often leads to distrust of the effectiveness of herbs as an alternative treatment. The habit of consuming modern medicines is more dominant than herbs. This is triggered by the perception that modern medicine provides results faster. Limited access to information about the types of herbs and their benefits and limited access to quality herbal products in some areas. In 2024, 56 PCIM members were studying in Thailand, and around 130 Indonesian students studying internationally at Khoen Kaen University (KKU). Around 40% of these students experienced physical complaints such as colds, nausea, vomiting, and dizziness due to physical conditions, weather, and other things. The use of herbs/herbal medicine as an effort to maintain health and treat various diseases that have been passed down from generation to generation. This legacy is expected to continue to be utilized by the younger generation, especially international students, as an alternative to increase endurance and overcome physical complaints. Indonesia and Thailand have similarities in the use of herbs as medicine, including ginger, melon, nutmeg, cinnamon, chili, cloves, galangal, lemongrass, honey, and others. The implementation of community service was carried out in Mueang District, Khon Kaen, Thailand, on August 28, 2024, with 20 participants. After being given counseling and practice in making herbal drinks, participants were able to learn the types, benefits, and how to process spices as herbal drinks to be used as safe and effective alternative medicine.

Keywords: Herbal, Community, Alternative Medicine, Thailand

Introduction

Thailand consists of several different geographic regions. The northern part is the mountainous highlands of Thailand. Khon Kaen is a city in Isan, the northeastern region of Mueang Thai, and is the capital of Khon Kaen. The population of the city is 114,459. Khon Kaen City has a State University called Khon Kaen University (KKU). KKU is a comprehensive and research-intensive university in Isan. Based on data from 2024, 130 Indonesian students were studying at the university and 56 students were members of the PCIM organization.

Based on a preliminary study, 40% of students experienced several health complaints in the form of nausea, dizziness, headaches, and colds. Around 20% of the treatment used conventional medicine to overcome minor physical complaints and around 5% used traditional medicine with the use of herbs.

Herbal medicine has an important role both as an alternative and primary treatment in various parts of the world. According to research by the World Health Organization (WHO), the use of herbal medicine as a second alternative treatment has been implemented in Asian, African, and American countries. In fact, in Africa, almost 80% of the population uses herbal medicine as primary treatment (Adiyasa & Meiyanti, 2021). In Indonesia, the prevalence of herbal medicine use reached 20.99% in 2014, with the main reasons being milder side effects and significant health benefits (Pane et al., 2024). The use of herbal medicine in self-medication practices is also increasingly widespread, especially due to easy access to information via the Internet. However, better education is needed to ensure that the public gets accurate information and avoids misuse of drugs, both herbal and modern (Supriadi et al., 2021). Thus, the development and utilization of herbal plants as part of traditional and modern medicine needs to be continuously supported through ongoing research and education

Method

Community service was held on August 28, 2024 at the Public Health Campus, Khon Kaen University, Thailand, targeting students. This activity involved education and discussion on making herbs for various health complaints such as coughs and colds, chills, diarrhea, and making face masks. The materials and tools used included presentation materials, rooms, LCDs, laptops, herbal ingredients such as ginger,

turmeric, charcoal, sappanwood, lime, honey, and practical equipment in the form of plastic cups, hot water kettles, spoons, and trays. The stages of the activity began with an opening by the Head of Community Service and remarks from representatives of Khon Kaen University and the team from Indonesia. Furthermore, a pre-test was conducted to measure the participants' initial knowledge regarding the material to be presented. In the education session, Lusi Oktaviani and Siti Lomrah delivered presentations on the types of herbs, their properties, and how to use them. After that, participants took part in the practice of making potions, such as cough and cold potions, and face masks through demonstrations that included the selection of ingredients, preparation, manufacturing process, and presentation. Participants were also allowed to taste the processed products and ask questions about manufacturing techniques. The activity was closed with a post-test to evaluate the increase in participants' knowledge and friendly gathering.

Results and Discussion

Based on the results of the dependent test statistics in Table 1, there is a significant difference in community knowledge before and after education and practicum.

Before being counseled, most students had limited knowledge about various types of herbal plants and their health benefits. Many of them did not know the potential of herbal plants that are easily found around them, such as ginger, turmeric, pandan leaves, and other natural ingredients, in supporting daily health. However, after participating in the counseling activities, there was a significant increase in their understanding. Students were able to recognize more types of herbs, understand the contents contained in them, and know how to use them to overcome health complaints such as flu, cough, fever, and skincare.

This counseling also had a positive impact on students' practical skills. A total of 20 participants successfully practiced making herbal concoctions, such as concoctions for flu, cough, fever, and face masks. This shows their high interest in trying to use herbs in everyday life. Students who were previously hesitant or did not have the skills now feel more confident in making and using their herbal concoctions.

This real difference reflects the effectiveness of extension activities in improving students' knowledge and practical skills so that they can provide sustainable benefits for

both themselves and their surrounding communities.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this outreach activity not only succeeded in increasing public knowledge about the use of herbs but also provided practical skills that can be directly applied in everyday life. Participants felt helped by the information provided and were enthusiastic to practice making herbal concoctions at home. In addition, this activity showed that the use of herbs as an alternative treatment can be a good choice, especially in supporting a healthy lifestyle and reducing dependence on chemical drugs. Although there were several obstacles, such as language barriers and difficulties in obtaining herbal ingredients, the positive impacts produced were still significant. Therefore, this activity can be a model for further community service programs, with improvements in aspects that are still lacking, as well as expanding the reach of information about the benefits and how to use more diverse herbal plants.

References

1. Adiyasa, M. R., & Meiyanti, M. (2021). Pemanfaatan Obat Tradisional Di Indonesia: Distribusi Dan Faktor Demografis Yang Berpengaruh. *Jurnal Biomedika Dan Kesehatan*, 4(3), 130-138.
2. Azizah, A. N., & Kurniati, C. H. (2020). Obat Herbal Tradisional Pereda Batuk Pilek Pada Balita. *Jurnal Kebidanan Indonesia*, 11(2), 29-36.
3. Supriadi, S., Suryani, S., Anggresani, L., Perawati, S., & Yulion, R. (2021). Analisis Penggunaan Obat Tradisional Dan Obat Modern Dalam Penggunaan Sendiri (Swamedikasi) Oleh Masyarakat. *Jurnal Kesehatan*, 14(2), 138-148.
4. Raharjo, H. (2022). Suplemen Dan Obat Herbal: Sejarah Serta Gambaran Pemanfaatannya Dalam Tindakan Preventif Dan Kuratif Pada Pandemi Covid-19 Di Indonesia (Telaah Naratif). *Media Bina Ilmiah*, 16(12), 7897-7916.
5. Badan Pusat Statistik. 2019. Statistik Indonesia 2019. Subdirektorat Publikasi Dan Kompilasi Statistik. Jakarta: Badan Pusat Statistik
6. Oashttamadea, R., & Maiyonti, P. (2024). Studi Literature: Tanaman Obat Herbal Untuk Penyembuhan Batuk Dan Flu. *Iris Journal Of Health Information Management*.

7. Hendy Suhendy, et.al. 2021. Formulasi Minuman Herbal Antioksidan Jahe Merah (*ZingiberOfficinale* Rosc. Var. Rubrum). Jurnal Ilmiah Farmasi Farmasyifa. JIF Farmasyifa 4(2):79-86 (Juli 2021).
8. Wati Sukmawati, Merina. 2019. Pelatihan Pembuatan Minuman Herbal Instan Untuk,Meningkatkan Ekonomi Warga. Jurnal Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat (JPKM). Volume 25 No. 4, Oktober - Desember 2019.
9. M.I. Shaik, I.H. Hamdi, N.M. Sarbon. 2023. A comprehensive review on traditional herbal drinks: Physicochemical, phytochemicals and pharmacology properties, Food Chemistry Advances. Food Chemistry Advances. Volume 3, December 2023, 100460.
10. Imam Haromin, Bahrul Ulum, Abdul Aziz. 2020. Pengolahan Jahe Pandan Menjadi Produk Minuman Herbal (Japan) Untuk Meningkatkan Kualitas Sdm Ekonomi Kreatif Di Desa Kampak Kecamatan Geger. Dharma: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat. Volume: 1, Nomor: 1, Desember 2020.
11. Kassim, M., Achoui, M., Mustafa, M. R., Mohd, M. A., & Yusoff, K. M. (2020). Antioxidant and anti-inflammatory activities of polyphenolic-rich Malaysian honey in a normal human cell model. Journal of Integrative Medicine, 18(5), 346-355.