

# *Soliti in Ethnomedicine of Muna People*

La Ode TopoJers<sup>1</sup>, La Ode Ali Basri<sup>2</sup>, Erens Elvianus Koodoh<sup>3</sup>, La Ode Muhammad RuspanTakas<sup>4</sup>, La Aso<sup>5</sup>, Nasruddin Suyuti<sup>6</sup>, Enis Wilda Ningsi<sup>7</sup>  
{topojers@yahoo.com<sup>1</sup>, alibasri@yahoo.com<sup>2</sup>, erens.elvianus@yahoo.com<sup>3</sup>, rupantakas@yahoo.com<sup>4</sup>, laaso@yahoo.com<sup>5</sup>, nasrudinsuyuti@yahoo.com<sup>6</sup>, wildaningsi@yahoo.com<sup>7</sup>}

<sup>123456</sup>Halu Oleo University Kendari, Sulawesi Tenggara, Indonesia

**Abstract**— This study aimed to explain the soliti plant in Muna people's traditional medication, referring to disease and ethnomedicine theories, namely the spiritual aspect in human health system. Therefore, the spiritual aspect of the human health system is made as one of integrated components from ethno medicine practices (Anderson, 1986). This study used ethnographic method and data analysis technique used qualitative descriptive. Data collection was conducted through direct observation and in-depth interview with informants related to soliti in Muna people's traditional medication practice. The result of the study showed that soliti plant is a traditional medication known by Muna people as an efficacious solution to modern medical treatment attempt. This study concluded that soliti as a wild plant either in the forest or in the farm, is useful as a traditional medication herb. Based on local knowledge of Muna people, this plant is used to treat eyes diseases, cough that are indicated as symptoms of lung disorders and to recover a mother who has given a birth, it can also heal wounds on the human body caused by sharp objects and prevent the emergence of uterus cancer. The representation of spiritual support and natural resource that has provided drug sources is viewed as a fact of traditional medical healing for those who are sick.

**Keywords**— *Traditional medication, muna people, soliti*

## 1 Introduction

Muna regency is known for having land and forest providing drug sources for human health. Varying vegetation is available in the forest can be utilized for traditional medication in solving the public health problems. Muna people's traditional medication utilizes the plant the nature has provided, one of which is *soliti* (*Wrightia arborea*).

Muna people's level of understanding on *soliti* growth as traditional medication concoction has cultural characteristic different from other ethnics. Historically, it is likely due to different geographic condition of an area and different knowledge bequeathed. Muna people residing in South East Celebes (*Sulawesi Tenggara*) believe that *soliti* plant as a traditional medicine has great benefit and high quality in the process of healing and treating disease.

Traditional medication system is a cultural characteristic in rural people's life. Rural people have experience with the cause of disease incidence and medication measure utilizing plant

known originating from the forest. Regarding this, Jenifer et al [1] Examining individual prevalence of traditional medication in Indonesia. Regression test results with probit method used seven variables produce three independent variables which have a significant influence on the dependent variables such as age, of area of the residence and the presence of a drug post. While, health insurance ownership and education do not affect on the probability of choosing traditional medication. As a consideration, they provide some suggestions that the government should campaign the importance of healthy life by using traditional medicines because of the impact caused by consuming chemical drugs and as early prevention by switching to the traditional materials are able to minimize further risk presence.

The type of plant known to Muna people is *Soliti*, a plant growing wildly either in the jungle or in the community's farms. Ningsih [2] in her study on the utilization of *soliti* plant as traditional medication herbs, she states this plant is beneficial to human health, so that Muna people make it as traditional medication concoction that helps healing those who suffer cataract disease, add energy among post-partum women, and women developing hemorrhage.

Another traditional medication practice is also stated by Syahrin in his study [3] on traditional medication of Buton people showed that Buton people perceive the sick individual as the one with mental and physical disorder so that he/she cannot do his/her activities well. Sickness, according to Buton people, can be seen or felt clearly on the part of body feeling sick or impaired, so that a medication measure can be taken easily to the patients. Knowledge on medicinal plant as traditional medication has different characteristics between an area and others. Such knowledge is usually a part of hereditary inheritance. Medicinal plant is the one with medicinal activity used to cure or to prevent disease [4]. People's predisposition of choosing traditional medication, according to Pratiwi [5], is due its limited side effect and relatively low cost. The use of medicinal plant can be done by means of drinking, pasting, using it for washing/bathing or inhaling it, so that it can fulfill the work concept of body cell receptor in accepting chemical compound or stimulation.

The Utilization of traditional medication stated by Fitri et al [6] on the exploration of traditional medication in the perspective of intellectual property law in Bengkulu. Knowledge exploration on traditional medication in Bengkulu is quite a lot so that the potential of intellectual property in each region is already exist. Many natural resources can be explored such as white turmeric, mango turmeric, parasites, whistle, typhus leaves, etc. This traditional medication knowledge form is only known by the community and their generations has no written evidence so that only from generations and mouth to mouth, until in certain generations, they can mix these ingredients into healing medication. In addition, the utilization method of traditional medication for rheumatic patients according to Zalbawi, et al [7] says that rheumatic patients used traditional medication in order they will recover quickly. They use herbal medications from roots, leaves, fruit, and skin to treat the rheumatic. To prevent the presence of rheumatic diseases, it is recommended to drink honey and do not consume meat, offal, and fat.

Traditional medication using therapy is also still developing in the local community. Kamaluddin [8] on the consideration and reasons of hepatitis patients take cupping (bekam) complementary alternative therapy in Banyumas district. According to Kamaludin, the decision-making process of hypertension patients take cupping therapy by considering on social and psychological factors. Social factors that influence in decision-making process of choosing cupping therapy because of support from the family and discussion with other family members. Psychological factors that influence in a decision-making process of choosing cupping therapy are due to trust to the others. The reasons for taking cupping therapy include physiological, economic, psychological, and spiritual aspects. The physiological aspects as the reason for taking cupping therapy are free from the drug side effects and from the economy side, it is relatively low costs. And from the psychological fits, cupping therapy and the spiritual aspects of cupping therapy becomes one of faith in a certain religion.

Yunarto [9] examined the prospects of medicine plants as anti-hepatitis, says the plants help to prevent and treat hepatitis both caused by viruses and non-viruses. Medicine plants functioned as anti-hepatitis, including meniran, turmeric, mengkudu and pegagan. High awareness of the community on the health importance effects on the increasing of use the anti-hepatitis drugs from the natural ingredients so that the prospects of these drugs both in terms of medical and business are very large. Some of the study results stated, the traditional medication using medicine plants can be a solution for the community, especially for rural-level.

## 2 Method

This research used ethnographic method to consider the representation of ethnic and cultural life. It was in accordance with the purpose to be achieved in this study. This study was conducted in Muna Regency area, by considering that majority Muna people as the local population use *soliti* plant as a traditional medication source. Informants in this study were selected using *purposive sampling* technique as a reference to get informants that could give information on traditional medication in Muna. In addition, this technique is intended to obtain information and data about *soliti* in Muna people's traditional medication as it is relevant directly to the object of the study. Furthermore, techniques of collecting data used were participatory observation and in-depth interview. Participatory observation intended in this study was to observe directly and to record systematically the problem studied or investigated. Meanwhile, in-depth interview pertained to the conversation to search for information on the problem of research [10]. The next step was to conduct data analysis by organizing the data obtained in the field, from data collection to the end of research. The data analyzed was then interpreted and associated with concepts or theories considered as relevant to the problem of research.

## 3 Result and Discussion

Traditional medication implemented in Muna still has great attraction. It is because, according to local knowledge, the people still consider that traditional medication ritual is an efficacious solution to medical treatment measure. In their opinion, traditional medication system is implemented by referring to belief and credo sent down from one generation to the next locally in each of local groups. Many people applying traditional medication can provide certainty that traditional medication culture can be maintained and developed as an attempt of facilitating the people to get healthcare service optimally, particularly those with limited economy.

It has also been mandated in Republic of Indonesia Minister of Health's Decree Number: 381/MENKES/SK/III/2017 [11] about traditional medicine policy, stating that the Development and Improvement of high-quality, safe, efficacious, scientifically proved traditional medicines and to anticipate the change and the strategic challenge, either internally or externally in line with the national health system, policy measures should be taken in traditional medication field nationally.

People's belief in traditional medication using *soliti* plant can be seen from the information given by Wanafiu (47 years), a housewife, stating as follows: "I drink this *soliti* concoction because my parents taught me following the delivery process. Having drinking *soliti* concoction, my health condition improves, and I feel better. A week after drinking this concoction, I can work normally again. I feel this effect is different from that of modern

(*puskesmas*) drug. My grandma made me concoction from *soliti* leaves taken from the jungle as it grows uncertainly and is known as wild vegetation. A grasp of *Soliti* leaves concoction is taken to be squeezed for producing its liquid and then consumed 3 times a day for 30 days as recovery measure". Interview on October 2019).

In relation to the disease-related concept, Anderson [12] emphasized on the problem of sickness incidence, medication measure, and how every individual or group can make decision in determining the measure to be taken to treat some disease affecting human beings. It means that a treatment system or disease healing system is a social unit interacting to each others. This action will create relations between patients, indigenous medical practitioners, and modern medical practitioners called *Ethnomedicine* by Anderson.

Ningsih [2] defined traditional medication system as the one not only prevailing in poor people group or class but also used by all classes or groups of society or social classes in a nation. In principle, the practice of Muna people's traditional medication rite using *soliti* plant concoction is due to human knowledge network in building a consciousness of responding to the health. In addition to being used for treating and recovering post-partum women, it can also be utilized to cure the severe lesion due to sharp object occurring and to prevent womb cancer in human being.

Empirically, people love traditional medication from early age, adolescence to adulthood. They solve healthcare problem using herbal medicine by utilizing medicinal herbs obtained from the jungle. It is in line with La Ode Resi (59 years) stating that:

Villages use many herbal concoctions to cure a variety of diseases. The treatment of disease using *soliti* plant has long been known by the people in Liabalano village, before there were medicines from physician. We use it to cure eye disease and wound. We know it from our parents' story in the past (Interview on September 2019).

The efficacy of traditional concoction made of *soliti* plant has grown trust among the wide society. This medication practice is generally conducted at night after dinner. This prescription is made based on their knowledge, that the drug's reaction is very efficacious at night, so that it can help the process of healing the patient optimally.

Muna people's knowledge in traditional medication according to Jers, et al [13] that people's belief in traditional medication is an empirical fact of a belief system stating that traditional medical treatment can be a populace medication method explaining how the rite is practiced, the medication is enlivened, and the natural resource is preserved.

## 4 Conclusion

*Solitias* a wild plant according to local knowledge of Muna people, in addition to being useful as a medicine herbs for eye diseases, cough indicated by symptoms of lung disorders and to recover a mother who has given a birth, it can also heal the wounds in human caused by sharp objects and to prevent a womb cancer. A medication using *soliti* plants is carried out based on tradition, a traditional form of medical representation of spiritual support and natural resources for healing diseases in human. The ethnomedicine traditional of Muna people traditional rituals refers to an understanding practice and interpretation on individuals and community groups.

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