

Conference Paper

Training Programs on the Uses and Benefits of Herbal Feminine Hygiene

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The Community Service Program, PKM, provides information and training in the methods of using herbal ingredients from the Arabic Bidara leaf's extract (*Ziziphus spina-christi*, L.), to improve feminine hygiene. These methods are halal, safe, effective and easy to use. There were 20 female participants in the program who were aged between 17-50 years old. It was conducted on March 10, 2021, in West Bandung, Indonesia. The program pointed out problems in feminine hygiene provisions and laid out training programs that were equipped with materials and infrastructures to educate about and improve feminine hygiene. The program ended with training in a simple method for improving feminine hygiene using the Arabic Bidara leaf's extract. Comparison between pre-program and post-program questionnaires showed a significant increase in the knowledge and abilities of participants. With continuous training, participants will gain knowledge and skills that will improve their quality of life and support their economic needs.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The notion that the feminine area must smell good makes many women interested in using feminine hygiene. Not to mention the many choices of feminine hygiene products with a variety of tempting fragrances. However, is it really necessary to use a feminine hygiene to clean the feminine area? Feminine hygiene is claimed to be able to clean and scent the feminine area and eliminate vaginal discharge [1].

Currently, many feminine hygiene products are circulating that contain chemicals that can cause adverse effects such as irritation, itching, redness to cervical cancer, while feminine hygiene products made from natural herbs are very limited. One of the herbs

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that have many virtues and benefits, especially in the health sector as stated in the Al-Quran and Hadith, is bidara [2].

Bidara is one of the herbs that was Sunnah by the Prophet Muhammad, especially its use in purification or bathing for postmenstrual and postpartum women, which is now rarely used by Muslim women, because of the difficulty of finding bidara trees and the lack of information or education about this. To revive this Sunnah, the UNISBA Pharmacy Study Program research team has succeeded in finding a feminine hygiene formula from the extract of the leaves of

the arabic bidara (*Ziziphus spina-christi* L.) that is practical and easy to use. The results of this study were disseminated to PKM activities specifically for the Cost-Sharing FMIPA-LPPM UNISBA grant with the Community Partnership Program scheme where Kebun Quran Foundation is a partner [3,4].

This PKM activity aims to provide counseling on the use of feminine hygiene made from herbal bidara leaf extract (*Ziziphus spina-christi*, L.) which is halal, safe, effective, and practical to use, as a solution to the use of chemical feminine hygiene that has a risk of irritation [5].

2. METHODS

This PKM activity was carried out on twenty respondents who took part in counseling about the use of feminine hygiene made of herbs. The number of respondents followed the rules for limiting the number of participants during the pandemic related to the PPKM (Enforcement of Community Activity Restrictions) rules. Respondents are women, with ages ranging from 17-50 years. The counseling was carried out on March 10, 2021 in Cihideung village, Parongpong sub-district, West Bandung district, by implementing health protocols as an effort to prevent COVID-19 transmission, namely using masks and spraying hand sanitizer.

This study uses pretest and posttest questionnaires to see the knowledge of the respondents. Before counseling, respondents were given a questionnaire containing ten questions regarding the use of feminine hygiene. The questionnaire was given back after counseling. Each question point will get a value of 10 if it is true and a value of 0 if it is false. The mean scores before and after the counseling were evaluated. The results were tested by paired t-test using SPSS ver. 24.0.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A total of 20 female respondents had attended the counseling and had filled out the pretest and posttest questionnaires. From the results, it can be seen that in Fig. 1. The percentage of pretest scores with fewer scores is quite a lot. However, after counseling, there was an increase in the percentage of good and very good scores.

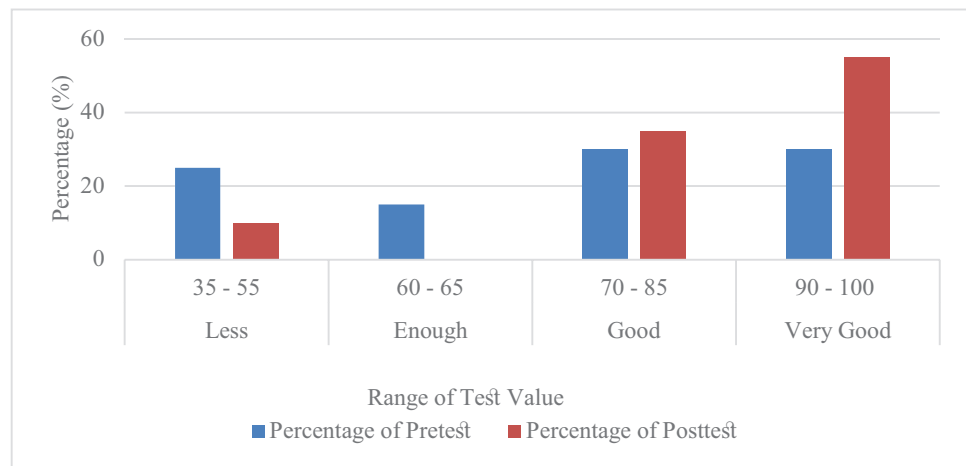


Figure 1: Percentage of clustering pretest and posttest questionnaire values.

The average pretest score before counseling was 65, while the posttest means value was 84. The paired t-test results showed that there was a significant difference in the results of the posttest compared to the pretest ($p < 0.005$), with the mean value of the posttest being greater than the value of the pretest (Fig. 2).

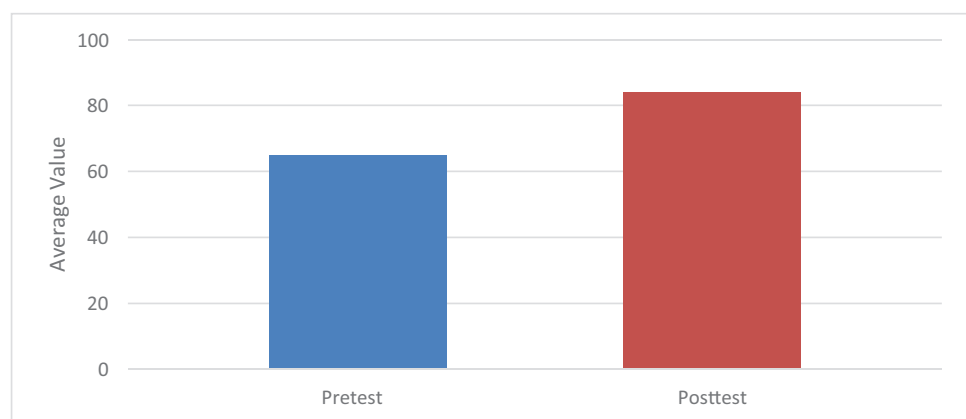


Figure 2: Comparison of the mean scores before and after counseling regarding the use of feminine hygiene made from herbs from bidara. The data are presented in mean \pm standard error. Respondent's knowledge increased after counseling, $p < 0.001^{**}$ (paired t-test).

In normal conditions, the use of feminine hygiene is not necessary. The female area (vagina) is actually able to regularly clean and protect itself without the need for help. Vaginal discharge is a sign that the vaginal cleaning function is running normally. Vaginal

discharge is a natural and normal phase experienced by every woman. Because the environment in the vagina is naturally acidic, it is ideal for maintaining a colony of good bacteria. The presence of good bacteria is what protects against the risk of infection. Precisely when using feminine hygiene which contains a lot of chemicals, the pH balance in the vagina will be disturbed. This will make bad bacteria and yeast (fungus) grow in excess, causing infection, while feminine hygiene products made from herbs are very limited [6].

In this PKM activity, the community was given counseling about the benefits of arabic bidara leaves as feminine hygiene made from herbs, as well as its use for purification or bathing for postmenstrual and postpartum women. Feminine hygiene bidara is expected to be a solution to the use of feminine hygiene chemicals that have a risk of irritation [7].

The results of the evaluation showed an increase in knowledge about the benefits of Arabic bidara leaves as feminine hygiene after counseling. Counseling can also provide correct information about the use of feminine hygiene so that it can reduce misconceptions of knowledge and help change people's behavior. Correct knowledge can change behavior and can prevent the risk of irritation from the use of chemical-based feminine hygiene that can cause diseases related to female genitalia and reproduction [8].

4. CONCLUSION

Counseling on the benefits of arabic bidara leaves as feminine hygiene made from herbs, as well as its use for purification or bathing for postmenstrual and postpartum women in this PKM activity, shows an increase in public knowledge about the use of proper feminine hygiene so that it can reduce misconceptions of knowledge and help change people's behavior to avoid from the risk of irritation or disease related to female genitalia and reproduction.

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