

JAMU: AN ETHNOMEDICINE STUDY AND LOCAL KNOWLEDGE OF *JAMU* MAKERS IN HEALTH PRACTICES

Zulfa Safitri Kusumaningrum^{1*}, Vania Pramudita Hanjani¹

¹ Department of Social Anthropology, Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University
Antonius Suroyo Street, Kampus Tembalang Semarang - 50275

*Corresponding author: zulfasafitri@live.undip.ac.id

Abstract *Traditional herbal medicine as an ethnomedicine has more meaning than a medicinal function, but also an ancestral heritage that is preserved for generations and represents cultural values and identity. Along with the advancement of science, modern medicinal products develop significantly, and this becomes a challenge to maintain the existence of traditional herbal medicine. This article explores the efforts of jamu makers to maintain their cultural heritage and contribute to health practices. This research was conducted in Wonolopo Village, Mijen Sub-district, Semarang, involving three jamu maker informants, each of whom uses different techniques in the jamu making process. The ethnographic method was used to obtain holistic data through participant observation and in-depth interviews of informants' experiences in making jamu. The results showed that jamu makers play an important role in preserving local knowledge of jamu making through three methods. First, using the traditional process of pounding. Second, semi-traditional by blending. Finally, using sophisticated and more efficient machine technology. Jamu is believed to provide many benefits to cure diseases and maintain health.*

Keyword:

Herbal medicine, ethnomedicine, local knowledge, herbal medicine makers, health practices

Article Info

Received : 04 Mar 2025

Accepted : 17 Apr 2025

Published : 05 Jun 2025

1. Introduction

Jamu is a type of traditional medicine in Indonesia that is believed to have many health benefits. The manufacturing process that does not use a mixture of chemicals gives the impression of a natural product. This type of medicine is in liquid or other forms and is produced using selected fresh medicinal plant ingredients (not using preservatives), then marketed with or without labels, as Zuraina said in Limyati and Juniar (1998). The statement is also supported by Caroline (1999), that the plants used to make *jamu* are daily prepared in the traditional way in a fresh and new. We had the opportunity to see and learn about the process of making *jamu* by *jamu* makers in Wonolopo Village, Semarang. When *jamu* is served fresh, it is usually processed by filtering it first using hot water. *Jamu* has a long history and is becoming increasingly popular. In the past, *jamu* was used by sultans, queens and people with poor economic conditions. The name *jamu* means traditional herbal medicinal plants, henceforth also known as *indigenous medicine* (Caroline, 1999). Javanese people believe that in their lives, *jamu* is believed to be unique because it is passed down from generation to generation from

ancestors (Mulyani., et. al. 2016). In Java, the term *jamu* when refined is '*djampi*' and '*oesodho*' (Hanum., et al., 2011). *Djampi* itself means medicine used for healing and has the power of prayers. Furthermore, *oesodho* has the meaning of health. So, it can be concluded that in health practices, *jamu* plays a very important role in healing and maintaining health with the right mixture and is supported by the power of prayer. We conducted participant observation of *jamu* sellers who sell their *jamu* in the morning by traveling around the villages in narrow alleys. The *jamu* varies, there are liquid and powder forms. Often, buyers order *jamu* according to their health complaints. The results of these observations are in line with the opinion of Isnawati (2021), that herbal medicine is often consumed by the community and over time it has always innovated from only selling in liquid form, now selling powder form.

Herbal medicine production in Indonesia is mostly found in rural social environments, due to the fertile soil conditions that are good for plant development, especially medicinal plants. Local people utilize raw materials for *jamu* production from their own gardens or buy them from traders in the market to be processed at home. This is in line with the findings of (Limyati, 1998) who conducted research in Surabaya on *jamu* gendong whose production is based on *home industries* in densely populated villages. We have traced various studies on *jamu* conducted in the last five years, but not many from an anthropological perspective. Caroline's (1999) research discusses the history of *jamu* in three dimensions of time: past, present and future. The researcher used interviews and in-depth observation methods to obtain data, but the research did not discuss the role of actors in preserving herbal medicine. In addition, the discussion of herbal medicine in the future is not fully explained. In contrast to Caroline, Limyati and Juniar (1998) studied *jamu* from a pharmacological point of view, their findings showed that there was low contamination from *Coliform Bacteria* which could cause acute gastroenterities. Lucie Widowati, et. al. (2024) saw the potential of *jamu* as herbal medicine to support health in Indonesia. When combined with conventional medicine, it will have better effectiveness if consumed properly. Although classified as natural herbal medicine, herbal medicine and conventional medicine must always be under supervision and worthy of laboratory testing by health agencies.

Saranani, Selpirahmawati, et al (2021) put the focus on only one type of medicinal plant used to treat hypertension. The results show that there are 20 different types of plants that can be processed to make herbal medicine. The method, plants such as leaves, fruits, rhizome seeds and herbs are boiled, brewed, pounded and chewed. In this study, the subjects in the study who concocted the medicine or chose the plants were not too much reviewed because they only explained details about the types of medicinal plants. Another study like Saranani's, Devonita, Dheandra, et al (2024), explored the decoction of bay leaves and lemongrass stems that can be used to treat gout. The key informants in this study are community leaders. Researchers tend to put the focus on the cognitive reconstruction of the community regarding the efficacy of herbal medicine to scientific knowledge or science. Furthermore, Fiakhsani, Murningsih, and Jumari (2020) also focused their study on the diversity of medicinal plants used for making herbal medicine. Studied in terms of composition, plant utilization and preparation of ingredients used for the continuity of herbal medicine making. The authors in the study did not emphasize the practice of local communities in utilizing medicinal plants.

The next article is an ethnographic work that explores the benefits of *jamu* as an immune booster during the Covid-19 pandemic. The main focus is based on a person's decision in choosing herbal medicine because of three motivations, namely, because of tradition, believed to be able to increase and maintain endurance and 3M (easy, cheap and effective) (Khiyaaroh and Triratnawati, 2021). Further research conducted by Hartanti, Dwi, Binar Asrining Dhiani, et al

(2020) discussed the same theme as before, about *jamu* and Covid-19. The difference is that the focus is on the effectiveness of herbal medicine or herbs that have been standardized by BPOM because they are considered safer for consumption. Strict and good *quality control* on herbal medicines aims to avoid negative side effects when consumed such as diarrhea, or other stomachaches.

Other research related to herbal medicine also discusses community empowerment by utilizing local fertile land for the cultivation of various types of medicinal plants. There are five types of plants that are favored by the community, and in the process of land preparation, planting, care and herbal medicine processing they are actively involved (Parmin, et.al, 2022). Finally, the article written from the research results of Husain Fadly, et. al. (2020) discusses the ethnobotanical local knowledge known by *jamu* sellers and what types of medicinal plants are planted. These herbal sellers get knowledge about herbal medicine from generation to generation, thus showing an effort to preserve knowledge and traditions. Some of the studies that we have briefly described, no one has studied herbal medicine from the perspective of Health Anthropology or ethnomedicine that focuses on the health practices of the actors making herbal medicine. Based on this concern, we will explore *jamu* as ethnomedicine and the preservation of local knowledge of *jamu* makers in health practices. Ethnomedicine itself is a multidimensional and metamedical study, referring to the overall interpretation of experience and ideology, illness, resistance and healing. Within Anthropology, ethnomedicine is often placed as a subfield of Health Anthropology with the boundaries of the study of local or *folk illness*, traditional medical systems, herbal medicine and healing rituals (Nichter, 2021). According to Bhasin and Daval (as cited in Saranani, 2021), ethnomedicine studies include the way people form perceptions and conceptions in understanding traditional ethnic medical systems. Generally, such medical systems are not recorded in writing because they are passed on from the upper generation to the next generation by word of mouth, so that much knowledge is modified and even lost. Ethnomedicine has not been well documented, through this paper we present descriptive data on the experiences of *jamu* makers in preserving local knowledge of *jamu* passed down through generations with consistency of knowledge and its changes.

A community in Central Java that is suitable for inclusion in the context of this study is the *jamu* makers in Wonolopo Village, Semarang. They call their group *paguyuban jamu*, which is also known as the thematic *jamu* village. The majority of people in this area are private sector workers, some selling *jamu gendong* or *jamu* on motorcycles. Wonolopo Village is densely populated, with houses very close to each other. The walls between houses are almost touching, creating a crowded atmosphere. The road in Wonolopo Village is not very wide and can only be passed by one car. Medicinal plants used to make *jamu* are almost in every yard. Neighborly life in this neighborhood is warm, with residents greeting each other when they meet and helping each other when there is an event. This research presents a study of *jamu* as ethnomedicine and the preservation of local knowledge of *jamu* makers in health practices.

2. Methods

This research uses an ethnographic method that emphasizes the daily practice of the subject's life in relation to the activity of making herbal medicine. In general, ethnography is the study of people's culture. According to Spradley (1979), ethnography is a work that describes a culture. Its main purpose is to provide an understanding of how culture is viewed from the point of view of the indigenous people. Furthermore, it can easily study the relationship between society and culture, how culture is produced, changed, and replaced for survival. Through this method, the researcher learned a lot about *jamu* as an ethnomedicine, part of the culture that

maintains the balance of the socio-economic life of the Wonolopo village community. The selection of informants was carried out by considering two aspects, first, the researcher chose three informants who each made herbal medicine using different methods, namely traditional, semi-traditional and modern. Secondly, the background of the informants who have been making herbal medicine for a long time and have been preserved from generation to generation in their families.

Data were collected through participant observation and in-depth interviews with three informants. Observation is not only done by observing informants' activities from afar, but researchers are involved in the practice of taking medicinal plants, making herbal medicine, and selling herbal medicine. Researcher join informants in harvesting medicinal plants from their own garden. They observe the knowledge of specific plants, understand seasonal availability, and learn about ethical harvesting. The process making herbal medicine are divided into three categories, traditional, contemporary, and modern. By participating in this process, researchers can understand various techniques such as selecting ingredients, drying, grinding and mixing different herbal plants. Selling *jamu* is the art of communicating with customer, explanation about benefit of each product and understanding consumer's preferences. Researcher experienced how social trust in herbal medicine becomes factor in maintaining the existence of *jamu*. The importance of these three steps in making *jamu* is that researcher knows how symbolic and ritualistic elements involved. According to Spradley (1980), participant observation provides researchers with a good opportunity to experience and feel informants' practices or activities directly, understand informants' perceptions and provide researchers' own perceptions. In-depth interviews were conducted with an interview guide in order to stay on track with the topics discussed in this study. Researchers conducted interviews with *jamu* sellers when they collected raw materials or medicinal plants, produced *jamu* and sold *jamu*.

3. Result and Discussion

3.1 *Jamu* and Wonolopo's Engagement

Jamu has been more than just a traditional herbal medicine in Wonolopo; it has become a crucial part of the community's identity, economy, and daily life. The deep-rooted relationship between *jamu* and the people of Wonolopo is shaped by generations of knowledge transfer, shared experiences, and the community's commitment to preserving this cultural heritage. Since its introduction in the 1980s by a migrant from Sukoharjo, *jamu* has steadily grown into a significant economic activity, providing stability for many families. What began as an alternative means of livelihood during uncertain economic times eventually transformed into a community-wide practice, sustained by strong social bonds and a shared understanding of the benefits of herbal medicine.

Over time, the knowledge and skills of *jamu*-making were passed down through oral tradition, primarily within families, ensuring that younger generations continued the practice. The persistence of this tradition is not only due to its economic benefits but also because of the community's belief in the healing properties of *jamu*. Unlike modern pharmaceutical drugs, *jamu* is perceived as a natural and accessible remedy that aligns with the local wisdom of using plants for health maintenance. As a result, *jamu* remains a preferred choice for treating ailments and boosting immunity, especially during times of crisis, such as the COVID-19 pandemic when demand for herbal remedies surged. Beyond its economic and medicinal value, *jamu* has also played a vital role in strengthening social ties within the Wonolopo community. The *jamu* makers have formed a close-knit association or *paguyuban*, where they share knowledge, support each other, and maintain a strong sense of solidarity. Monthly meetings

and communal activities foster a sense of belonging among *jamu* makers, reinforcing their commitment to preserving this traditional practice. Even in times of personal loss, such as the passing of a family member, the community comes together to provide emotional and logistical support, highlighting the deep connections formed through their shared dedication to *jamu*-making.

However, as technology advances, the *jamu*-making tradition faces new challenges. While some *jamu* makers have begun adopting modern tools to improve production efficiency, others, particularly the older generation, struggle to adapt to digital marketing and new sales strategies. The use of social media for promotion remains underutilized, limiting the reach of Wonolopo's *jamu* beyond the local market. Despite these challenges, the resilience of *jamu* makers and their willingness to innovate demonstrate the community's commitment to keeping this tradition alive.

This chapter will explore the historical journey of *jamu* in Wonolopo, the social and economic impact it has had on the community, and the ways in which *jamu* makers are adapting to modern times. Through the stories of key figures who have played a role in preserving and evolving the *jamu*-making tradition, we will gain insight into how this centuries-old practice continues to thrive in the contemporary world while maintaining its cultural and historical significance.

3.2 History of *Jamu* in Wonolopo

Jamu in Wonolopo has been around since 1980, said one informant who is the younger brother of a senior *jamu* maker. In the past, the livelihood of the residents of Wonolopo Village was uncertain, then one of the migrants from Sukoharjo who had lived in Wonolopo for a long time tried to make *jamu* and sell it. The income generated by selling *jamu* provides a significant profit. There were many people interested in *jamu* at that time, due to the local community's belief in the benefits of traditional medicines. As time passed, the migrants returned to their hometowns and the tradition of making *jamu* has yet to be carried on. Mrs. Rebi, one of the residents in Wonolopo took the initiative to continue the business of making and selling *jamu* because it was considered capable of improving the family economy. She was the first to teach and preserve the knowledge of herbal medicine making to the Wonolopo community.

"In the past, there was a Sukoharjo person who lived here for a long time, then because he wanted to work, he finally tried to make herbal medicine, sold it for a lot of profit. When he returned to his hometown in Sukoharjo, he was continued by my brother, Mrs. Rebi," said Mr. Kholidi, who is Mrs. Rebi's brother. (Mr Kholidi, 21 Oktober 2024)

Since then, the majority of people in Wonolopo have been selling *jamu* and it has been passed down from generation to generation. My informant, Mr. Kholidi, admitted that making and selling *jamu* provides many benefits to the economy of the Wonolopo community. In addition, *jamu* also plays a role in maintaining health.

"Selling herbal medicine knows no season, it is always sought after even during an economic crisis like the old days. Especially when the corona was yesterday, many people bought and asked to make corona herbal medicine," explained Mr. Kholidi.

Jamu is a business that knows no season, which is why the existence of this business still survives despite the economic crisis. This is because the public's interest in herbal medicine is so high, not only used for treatment but also to increase the body's immunity. The persistence of *jamu*-making in Wonolopo is not only driven by economic factors but also by the cultural and social values embedded in the practice. The strong belief in the efficacy of *jamu* as a natural remedy has been passed down from one generation to another, creating a deep sense of responsibility among *jamu* makers to preserve this knowledge. Beyond being a source of income, *jamu* is perceived as a legacy that must be maintained to uphold the well-being of the community. The tradition of making *jamu* is not merely about preparing and selling herbal drinks; it involves a holistic understanding of medicinal plants, their properties, and the correct methods of processing them to maximize their benefits. This knowledge is often shared informally within families, where older generations teach younger ones through hands-on experience. As a result, *jamu*-making has become a fundamental aspect of daily life, where skills are refined over time and adapted to meet the changing needs of consumers.

Despite the strong cultural foundation of *jamu*-making in Wonolopo, the industry is now facing new challenges, particularly in adapting to modern market demands. While traditional *jamu* sellers continue to operate using face-to-face interactions and word-of-mouth recommendations, younger generations are exploring digital platforms to expand their customer base. However, this transition is not without obstacles. Many older *jamu* makers are unfamiliar with digital marketing strategies, making it difficult for them to compete with commercially packaged herbal products available in supermarkets and online stores. Additionally, the perception of *jamu* as an informal home-based business limits its potential for large-scale production and distribution. To ensure the sustainability of this tradition, efforts must be made to bridge the gap between traditional knowledge and modern business practices. This could involve training programs for *jamu* makers on how to utilize social media, improve packaging and branding, and comply with health regulations to gain wider recognition. By embracing innovation while staying true to its cultural roots, the *jamu* industry in Wonolopo can continue to thrive and reach a broader audience without losing its authenticity.

In Wonolopo, the *jamu* community is referred to as a *paguyuban*, which illustrates the close and harmonious personal relationships between residents. Regular meetings of the Wonolopo *jamu* *paguyuban* are held every month on the 20th, rotating from one house to the next. Every *jamu* maker who joins this association has a strong bond with each other. This can be seen when one of the *jamu* makers' family members dies, the other residents will help take care of the funeral. The strong emotional bond is reflected when they take a day off from selling *jamu* during a funeral. So, it can be concluded that this hereditary *jamu* business is still maintained until now because of the strong *bonding* between residents and they have good business management.

Along with the development of technology, people continue to innovate in the process of herbal medicine making, marketing and sales. The methods of making *jamu* that we write about in this article are divided into three, first using traditional tools, second using semi-traditional tools and finally using modern tools. The way sellers market their *jamu* also varies, some use social media for promotion and some are word of mouth. Unfortunately, the promotion of *jamu* using social media is less than optimal and also many of the sellers are old and not proficient in using technology.

3.3 *Jamu* as Ethnomedicine

Jamu is a traditional medicine that is popular among the people, especially in Java. *Jamu* is easy to get and the price is affordable, so there are many enthusiasts. The fairly low price does not make the quality of *jamu* decrease, on the contrary, this cheap herb is in great demand because it has health benefits. Buyers of *jamu* are not only from the lower class, but also the upper class. This means that besides being found in rural areas, *jamu* can also be found in urban areas. According to Elfahmi, et al (2014), *jamu* is still a popular medicine in both rural and urban areas with its clinical benefits. Furthermore, Khiyaaroh (2021) stated that people choose *jamu* as the main medicine consumed to maintain health because it has been around for a long time. They do not feel worried if they consume *jamu* together with modern medicine because of its natural content.

In Wonolopo, *jamu* has become part of the community's daily practice and thus their identity. Growing their own medicinal plants, processing the herbs with the right concoction and selling them in the neighborhood shows their harmony with nature. According to Ms. Puji, who is one of the *jamu* makers, the plants around us can be used for medicine such as roots, leaves and herbs. The data is supported by the concept put forward by Nichter (2021) that ethnomedicine is the study of everyday life, the way people perceive what is normal and natural, desired and feared, and the knowledge formed known as common sense. This is an effort made to restore health as an aspect of well-being. As Nichter (2021) explains:

“Ethnomedicine is grounded in the study of everyday life, perceptions of the normal and natural, the desirable and feared, and that form of embodied knowledge known as common sense as it emerges in efforts to establish or reestablish health as one aspect of well-being”.

Jamu makers in Wonolopo produce two types of *jamu*: *jamu* that is produced every day and *jamu* that is produced according to customer orders. Everyday *jamu* is what they sell on a daily basis, usually at the market or in the neighborhood. The herbs they produce every day are divided into twelve. Here is the list of herbs and their properties:

Table 1. List of Herbs

No.	Herb's Name	Efficacy/Benefits
1.	Kunir Asem (made from turmeric and tamarind)	Improves menstruation and relieves abdominal pain, lowers cholesterol
2.	Papaya (combination of papaya leaves, temulawak, kunir and puyang)	Serves as <i>advice</i> , for breastfeeding mothers to make their milk flow smoothly
3.	Curcuma longa	Used to increase children's appetite
4.	Chili Puyang (a combination of puyang/lempuyang, Javanese chili and ginger)	Used to treat body aches
5.	Suroh (a combination of betel leaf and mango turmeric)	Used for vaginal discharge and stomach cramps
6.	Beras Kencur (A combination of rice, kencur, coconut juice, a little ginger)	Works to treat body odor and as an antibiotic
7.	Pluntas Leaf	Works to treat body odor and as an

		antibiotic
8.	Sambiloto (a combination of bitter melon and betel leaf)	Works to lower blood sugar
9.	Tempayak (combination with ginger turmeric and brown sugar)	Used for digestive health, maintaining liver health, to boost immunity and overcome cough or flu
10.	Unsalted Turmeric (without sugar and acid mixture)	Used for anti-inflammatory and immune-boosting purposes
11.	Cat Whiskers (made from the cat whisker plant)	Used for hypertension
12.	Temu Ireng (turmeric, honey and ginger)	Used to increase appetite

Another type of *jamu* is *jamu* according to consumer orders, usually ordered to treat certain health problems. For example, *jamu corona* was widely ordered during the covid-19 virus pandemic a few years ago. This *jamu* is a combination of lemongrass, turmeric, temulawak, and ginger that is believed to boost the body's immunity. Besides *jamu corona*, there is also a concoction of temulawak mixed with tamarind turmeric for colds.

The knowledge of herbal medicine informants in recognizing the efficacy of various herbal medicines is obtained from generation to generation taught by their mothers, grandmothers or siblings. This means that the transfer of knowledge is carried out between families through oral traditions that are not documented in writing. The effectiveness of *jamu* consumption according to them depends on consumer judgment, but so far the *jamu* makers have admitted that their *jamu* has health benefits because their consumers buy and consume regularly. Nichet (2021) emphasized that drug effectiveness is patient satisfaction and the benefits felt by the wider community. The benchmark of whether or not a drug is effective depends on whether or not the patient feels better after taking the drug, and whether they feel the drug is worth the time and cost.

The existence of *jamu* in Wonolopo is not just a means of livelihood but also a cultural heritage that reflects the community's deep connection with nature and traditional knowledge. The practice of growing, processing, and selling *jamu* has been passed down through generations, maintaining the identity and solidarity of the people in this area. Despite the presence of modern medicine, *jamu* continues to hold an important place in people's lives due to its perceived effectiveness, affordability, and natural ingredients. The commitment of *jamu* makers to preserving this tradition shows how deeply ingrained herbal medicine is in their way of life. Even without formal documentation, their knowledge remains valuable and continues to be shared within families and communities. This informal yet strong system of knowledge transfer highlights the resilience of local wisdom, proving that traditional practices can coexist with modernization. However, to ensure the sustainability of *jamu*-making in the future, there is a need for documentation and structured training to encourage younger generations to take part in this heritage and prevent the loss of knowledge.

Moving forward, the challenges of promoting *jamu* in the digital era must also be addressed. While word-of-mouth marketing has been effective for decades, leveraging social media and digital platforms can help expand its reach beyond local communities. Many *jamu* makers in Wonolopo struggle with technology, which presents an opportunity for collaboration between the younger and older generations. Workshops or training sessions on digital marketing and packaging innovation could greatly benefit these small-scale businesses, making *jamu* more

appealing to a wider audience, including urban consumers who seek natural alternatives for health and wellness. Additionally, scientific studies and collaborations with health experts could further validate the benefits of *jamu*, strengthening public trust and opening doors for wider recognition. By integrating tradition with modern approaches, the *jamu* industry in Wonolopo can continue to thrive, ensuring that this valuable cultural and medicinal legacy remains relevant for generations to come.

3.4 Preservation of Local Knowledge in Health Practices

The transfer of knowledge about herbal medicine through oral tradition is carried out by each informant's family. They learn from family members who own herbal medicine businesses, such as their grandmother, mother, sister or uncle or aunt. Perdani and Hasibuan in Khiyaaroh (2021) state that human behavior that reflects part of culture is values, ideas and thoughts. One form of this is the knowledge of the use of medicinal plants in the prevention and treatment of diseases, which is basically formed from knowledge, experience and skills from generation to generation.

The process of sharing knowledge is carried out in three stages, namely, through oral teaching from parents to children or other family members, direct observation when processing herbal medicine and practicing making herbal medicine. They are taught about what plants have health benefits such as distinguishing white turmeric, mango turmeric and yellow turmeric according to their properties, then learn how to select ingredients or harvest good medicinal plants to be processed into herbal medicine such as distinguishing betel leaves that are young and old, good and not. Furthermore, they learn how to prepare equipment according to the herbal medicine processing method applied in each family. The following is an excerpt of an interview by the researcher with a *jamu* maker informant who gained knowledge from her mother who works as a *jamu* seller on how to make *jamu*.

"I can make jamu because I learned from my mother, who makes and sells jamu. Incidentally, making and selling jamu has been passed down in our family from my grandmother, mother, mother's siblings and me". Ms. Puji

Some people in the Wonolopo *jamu* association also have close family ties and have been making *jamu* for generations. A man named Mr. Kholidi is well known to the people in the *jamu* association because he is the brother of Ibu Rebi, who was the first person to teach *jamu* making in Wonolopo. The method used by Mrs. Rebi in teaching *jamu* making is by direct practice or involving people in making the *jamu*. Mr. Kholidi, who continues Mrs. Rebi's business, processes herbal medicine using modern equipment. In the afternoon, he starts harvesting, cleaning medicinal plants and equipment. Next, the packaging for selling the *jamu* is prepared at night. Once ready, the *jamu* is made at 3am and finished before dawn. Other *jamu* makers do the same thing, so that consumers consume *jamu* in the morning in a fresh condition.

Another experience was shared by Mrs. Nur, who has been making herbal medicine for generations. Every day, she harvests medicinal plants in the afternoon and cleans them at night. In the morning at 03.00 new *jamu* is made using the traditional process. The medicinal plants are pounded, squeezed into a container and then given a little warm water. Making this *jamu* takes a relatively quick time, around dawn the *jamu* is finished and ready to be packaged for sale. Ms. Nur still uses the traditional way to sell *jamu*, by carrying the *jamu* and walking around the housing complex.

Jamu has become such a cultural identity in Wonolopo Village that the outside world

recognizes it as a *jamu* village. That is, a village where people are adept at making and selling *jamu*. Identity represents how a person or group is recognized through values, beliefs and culture. Spradley (1980) revealed that every culture is the way people see the world by giving meaning or categorizing the place where they live. Herbal medicine makers have an important role in health practices as the main guardians of tradition and public health by passing on local knowledge of herbal medicine making from generation to generation.

The existence of *jamu* in Wonolopo is more than just a means of livelihood; it is a living tradition that continues to shape the identity of its people. The inheritance of knowledge about *jamu*-making through oral tradition has played a vital role in ensuring its sustainability. Unlike modern medical knowledge, which is often documented and taught in formal institutions, *jamu*-making is passed down through direct experience, observation, and hands-on practice. This learning process does not merely involve technical skills but also fosters a deep sense of cultural pride and belonging. The knowledge is embedded within daily activities and family interactions, strengthening the bonds between generations. As a result, *jamu* is not just a commodity but a reflection of the values, wisdom, and resilience of the community. The strong oral tradition ensures that essential knowledge about herbal medicine does not fade away despite the increasing influence of modern pharmaceuticals. However, in an era where documentation is crucial for the preservation of cultural heritage, efforts to record and systematize this knowledge should also be encouraged. By combining traditional knowledge with modern research and technological advancements, the *jamu*-making tradition can gain broader recognition and continue to thrive for future generations.

The daily routine of *jamu* makers in Wonolopo reflects the discipline, dedication, and meticulous process involved in herbal medicine production. The structured method of harvesting, processing, and packaging *jamu* shows that traditional knowledge is not stagnant but continuously evolving to adapt to contemporary needs. While some *jamu* makers still rely on conventional manual processing, others, like Mr. Kholidi, have integrated modern equipment into their production to increase efficiency and maintain consistency. This ability to adapt while preserving the essence of traditional herbal medicine is a testament to the resilience of the *jamu*-making community. Moreover, the presence of a *jamu* association in Wonolopo serves as a unifying force that not only strengthens the social fabric of the village but also provides a platform for collective learning and business development. This strong communal bond is reflected in the way *jamu* makers support each other, whether in sharing knowledge, providing assistance during difficult times, or maintaining the cultural significance of *jamu* through collective efforts. The cooperative nature of *jamu*-making in Wonolopo highlights how traditional practices can be sustained through a combination of familial inheritance and communal support systems.

Beyond its economic and cultural significance, *jamu* also plays a crucial role in public health. The increasing awareness of the benefits of natural remedies, especially during health crises like the COVID-19 pandemic, has further reinforced the importance of traditional medicine. Many people turned to *jamu* as a preventive measure to boost their immune systems, demonstrating a renewed trust in traditional health solutions. This growing interest presents an opportunity to expand the reach of *jamu* beyond the local market. However, despite its popularity, *jamu* still faces challenges in terms of standardization, packaging, and wider commercialization. The lack of proper branding and limited access to broader distribution channels have hindered the growth of *jamu* businesses. While traditional selling methods, such as door-to-door sales and market stalls, remain effective within the local community, digital marketing and online sales platforms could help expand its consumer base. Younger generations, who are more familiar with

technology, could play a pivotal role in bridging the gap between tradition and modernity by introducing *jamu* to a wider audience through social media, e-commerce, and digital storytelling.

Looking ahead, the sustainability of *jamu*-making in Wonolopo will depend on the ability of the community to adapt to changing times while staying true to their traditions. Formalizing training programs, creating written records of herbal recipes, and collaborating with health institutions for research and validation could further strengthen the credibility of *jamu* as an alternative medicine. Additionally, government support in the form of policies, funding, and training initiatives could provide *jamu* makers with the necessary resources to innovate and grow their businesses. The recognition of Wonolopo as a '*jamu* village' is a step in the right direction, but more efforts are needed to ensure that this heritage continues to flourish in the future. The preservation of *jamu* is not just about maintaining a traditional practice; it is about safeguarding an invaluable cultural legacy that embodies the wisdom of generations. With a balanced approach that combines tradition with modern advancements, *jamu* can continue to be a significant part of Indonesia's rich cultural and health heritage, serving both local and global communities in the years to come.

4. Conclusion

Jamu in Wonolopo is not merely a traditional herbal remedy for maintaining health, but also a cultural heritage passed down through generations. Its presence not only provides health benefits to the community but also contributes to the economic and social aspects of Wonolopo. With diverse production methods, ranging from traditional to modern techniques, *jamu* remains an integral part of the local way of life. This study reveals that knowledge transfer regarding *jamu* production is carried out through oral traditions within families, strengthening intergenerational bonds. *Jamu* makers in Wonolopo actively preserve this tradition by teaching the techniques of *jamu*-making to their family members and participating in a strong *jamu* community. This reflects the importance of the social aspect in maintaining *jamu*'s existence as part of Wonolopo's cultural identity. Although *jamu* has long been part of daily life, modern challenges such as competition with conventional medicine, lifestyle changes, and limited access to digital marketing technology pose obstacles to the sustainability of this tradition. Therefore, innovation and adaptation are required, such as utilizing digital media for marketing, improving product quality through standardization, and collaborating with health institutions to strengthen *jamu*'s legitimacy as a safe and effective complementary medicine. In the long term, the sustainability of *jamu* in Wonolopo can be ensured through official documentation of *jamu*-making knowledge, training for younger generations, and support from the government and academics in developing a *jamu* industry based on local wisdom. With a balanced approach between tradition and modernity, *jamu* in Wonolopo can not only endure but also thrive as part of a cultural heritage that holds high health, economic, and social value. In conclusion, *jamu* is not just an herbal concoction but also a reflection of the cultural and social values of the Wonolopo community. With proper preservation efforts, *jamu* can continue to contribute to public health and serve as a symbol of the sustainability of local wisdom amidst globalization.

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