

THE INFLUENCE OF TRADITIONAL MEDICINE ON THE HEALING OF CHRONIC DISEASES

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Abstract

Chronic diseases are becoming a global health challenge, with their increasing prevalence and impact on patients' quality of life. Traditional medicine, which has been used for thousands of years in various cultures, offers potential for integration with modern medicine in managing these conditions. This study aimed to assess the effectiveness of traditional medicine in curing chronic diseases through a comprehensive literature review. The results showed that there is positive evidence regarding the effect of traditional medicine on the healing of chronic diseases. The use of medicinal herbs can significantly reduce blood sugar levels in diabetic patients, while acupuncture is effective in reducing pain severity in diseases such as arthritis. Massage therapy and meditation techniques showed a positive impact in reducing stress, which is an important risk factor for many chronic diseases. The study also found that the integration of traditional medicine with conventional care can provide a more holistic and personalized approach to chronic disease management, improving patients' quality of life.

Keywords: Traditional Medicine, Healing, Chronic Disease.

Introduction

In the era of globalization and rapid advances in science and technology, especially in the health sector, traditional medicine still has its own place in people's hearts. Ironically, in the midst of modernity, many people are returning to the use of traditional medicines or herbs to overcome various diseases, including chronic diseases that are considered difficult to cure by modern medicine, such as diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease.

The natural and cultural wealth of many countries, including Indonesia, has contributed significantly to the development of traditional medicine (Kartorningsih, 2023). This is not only evident from the use of herbs and natural ingredients in traditional recipes, but also from the hereditary treatment practices carried out by traditional medicine experts (Damanti, 2021). In addition, traditional medicine is often chosen because it is considered more affordable, has minimal side effects, and has spiritual and emotional aspects that cannot be separated from the healing process (Winarto, 2003).

The increasing interest in traditional medicine in dealing with chronic diseases in many communities around the world can be seen as a response to the limitations and challenges faced in conventional or modern medicine (Muspika, 2017). Chronic illnesses,

which by definition require long-term management and often have no clear cure, pose a significant economic and psychological burden to sufferers (Sudirman & Skripsa, 2020). In many cases, modern pharmaceutical drugs offer maintenance rather than cure, often with unwanted side effects (Dwisatyadini, 2017). In this context, traditional medicine is drawing attention as a potential alternative or complement, focusing not only on physical healing but also holistic well-being, utilizing natural herbs with fewer perceived side effects, and often more affordable compared to conventional medical therapies (Pelokang et al., 2018).

The historical and cultural background of the use of traditional medicine is diverse and profound, reflecting the relationship between humans and the natural environment and traditional understandings of health and disease (Nulfitriani et al., 2013). Since ancient times, various civilizations have developed their own systems of medicine rooted in philosophy, spirituality and empirical experience, including Ayurveda in India, Traditional Chinese medicine, Jamu in Indonesia, as well as the use of herbal medicines by Native American and African communities (Hamsidi et al., 2023). These practices have not only survived through the centuries but have also continued to evolve, often maintained within communities through the transmission of knowledge from generation to generation (Kartika et al., 2015). This wealth adds an important cultural dimension to traditional medicine practices, affirming social identity and shared cultural values while providing direct access to natural and local resources for Health maintenance (FIRDAUS, 2019).

Although traditional medicine has deep roots in the history and culture of society, its contemporary acceptance is not entirely without controversy (Shabrina & Iskandarsyah, 2019). Major challenges in the integration of traditional medicine with the modern health system include questions of standardization, safety, and efficacy. In many cases, the active compounds in herbal medicines have not been fully identified, and variations in processing methods may affect product strength and consistency (Supardi, 2002). In addition, there are concerns regarding interactions between herbal medicines and conventional medicine, which may pose risks to patients. Therefore, to address these concerns, further scientific research is needed as well as the development of adequate regulations to ensure that traditional medicine offered to the public is safe and effective (DESTANTIKA, 2021).

However, in recent years, there has been a paradigm shift where traditional medicine has started to be recognized as an important asset in global health (Nonasri, 2021). The World Health Organization (WHO) has issued guidelines to support the integration of traditional medicine into national health systems, emphasizing the importance of scientific research to validate the use of traditional medicine as well as the need to preserve traditional knowledge as part of the world's cultural heritage (Handayani et al., 2019). Furthermore, global initiatives and collaborations between countries aim to support the development of evidence-based traditional medicine,

demonstrating a growing recognition of its potential contribution to global public health (Dewi, 2019).

In short, traditional medicine, with its deep roots in the history and culture of various societies, continues to have significant relevance in dealing with chronic diseases in the modern era (Supardi, 2002). Recognizing and integrating traditional medicine into the modern health system, with careful attention to standardization, safety, and efficacy, can offer a more holistic and inclusive approach to health (Dalimartha, 2013). Bridging conventional and traditional medicine is thus not only about respecting the wisdom passed down through generations but also about maximizing the potential of all available resources to achieve optimal health and well-being for all (Gita & Danuji, 2021).

While there have been many anecdotal reports and some studies on the success of traditional medicine in overcoming chronic diseases, there remains skepticism in medical and scientific circles regarding its effectiveness and safety (Kartika et al., 2015; Damanti, 2021). The existence of ill-defined treatment standards, variability in the quality of raw materials, and lack of adequate clinical research are barriers to recognizing traditional medicine as a scientifically valid therapeutic option (Winarto, 2003; Muspika, 2017).

Therefore, it is important for us to conduct further research on the effect of traditional medicine on healing chronic diseases. This research is expected to provide scientific evidence regarding the efficacy and safety of traditional medicine, so that it can guide the public, medical profession, and policy makers in integrating traditional medicine with the modern health system, as well as in designing more inclusive and holistic health policies.

Research Method

The study in this research uses literature. The literature research method is a research approach that involves collecting, analyzing, and synthesizing existing data from relevant sources to produce new findings or an in-depth understanding of a topic or problem (Boyle et al., 2014); (Earley, 2014). Researchers use analytical descriptive methods by identifying, compiling, and analyzing various data found in the available literature (Zhu et al., 2018). Researchers will then map and understand trends, relationships, and patterns that emerge from the literature to form new conclusions or theories.

Literature study research can be applied in various fields such as psychology, education, social science, health, and exact sciences. This method is suitable for gaining a broad overview of a topic, identifying gaps in existing research, and developing a conceptual or theoretical framework for further research (Caruth, 2013; Angell et al., 2015).

Result and Discussion

Definition of Chronic Disease

Chronic illness is defined as a health disorder that is long-lasting, often progressive, and generally requires long-term management or constant supervision from healthcare professionals (Mishra et al., 2022). In contrast to acute illnesses that are generally short-lived and often fully reversible, chronic illnesses tend to last for a period of three months or longer, according to the World Health Organization (WHO) definition (Rashid et al., 2022). Chronic diseases include conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), chronic kidney disease and autoimmune diseases. Some chronic diseases, such as type 2 diabetes, can be prevented or controlled with healthy lifestyle changes, while others, such as lupus, have more complex etiologies and require specific management (Salokhiddinova, 2023).

Chronic disease management not only focuses on medical treatment to reduce symptoms or slow disease progression but also involves a holistic approach that takes into account the patient's physical, psychological and social factors (Master et al., 2022). This includes health education for patients, strategies to improve therapy adherence, and support to address the impact of the disease on quality of life (Frank et al., 2022). Long-term chronic disease management often requires collaboration between different health disciplines as well as support from families and communities. With the aging of the global population and the prevalence of risk factors such as obesity and unhealthy lifestyle habits, chronic diseases continue to be a major health challenge that requires significant attention and resources (Ehrman et al., 2023).

From the above, chronic diseases can be summarized as long-term health conditions that require a comprehensive and sustainable management approach. These diseases, which include a wide spectrum of conditions such as heart disease, diabetes and autoimmune diseases, not only significantly impact the quality of life of individuals, but also pose challenges to health systems and economies. Chronic disease management is not limited to medical therapy alone, but also involves psychosocial support and lifestyle modifications to help patients lead better lives despite their disease conditions.

In light of the increasing prevalence of chronic diseases, it is clear that prevention and education are key to mitigating the burden of these diseases. Public health strategies focused on healthy lifestyle promotion, early detection and risk management can reduce the incidence and complications of chronic diseases (Alipoor & Fotokian, 2022). In addition, health systems need to strengthen primary and integrated care services to provide effective and sustainable care for individuals with chronic diseases (Waddell & Orfila, 2023). In conclusion, chronic diseases require a collective response from individuals, communities and health systems to effectively address their widespread impact.

Traditional Medicine Methods

Traditional medicine methods refer to health practices that are based on knowledge, skills, and practices that evolve from cultural experiences and traditions that span generations (Kartika et al., 2015). These approaches often include the use of herbs, physical manipulation techniques, rituals, and energy medicine, which aim to treat various diseases or maintain body balance (Damanti, 2021). Traditional medicine has deep roots in the history and culture of society, playing an important role in health care especially in areas or countries where access to modern health systems is limited or as a complement to conventional medicine (Winarto, 2003).

In many parts of the world, traditional medicine, such as Ayurvedic medicine, Acupuncture, and Chinese Herbal Medicine, has gained recognition and integration into the formal health system. For example, Ayurveda, which originated in India, prioritizes balance between mind, body and spirit, and uses various herbs and physical practices to create this balance (Muspika, 2017). Meanwhile, acupuncture, with its deep roots in traditional Chinese medicine, uses needles inserted at specific points on the body to improve energy flow and balance (Sudirman & Skripsa, 2020). Both of these methods, along with many others from various cultures, have demonstrated effectiveness in addressing a number of health conditions, offer alternatives or complements to conventional medical treatment, and continue to be the subject of scientific research to further validate their efficacy and clinical applications (Dwisatyadini, 2017).

As such, traditional medicine offers a holistic approach and is rooted in cultural traditions in treating various health conditions. Methods such as Ayurveda, acupuncture, and the use of herbs have been known for centuries and are now being integrated into modern health systems, showing potential as alternatives or complements to conventional medicine. The effectiveness and global acceptance of these treatment methods signifies the importance of preserving traditional knowledge while continuing scientific research and validation to ensure their safety and effectiveness. This approach not only re-emphasizes the importance of diversity in medical practice but also encourages a more personalized and holistic approach to healthcare.

Chronic Disease Treatment

Treatment of chronic diseases demands a comprehensive and sustainable strategy, as diseases such as diabetes, heart disease and asthma often require lifelong management (Waddell & Orfila, 2023). Treatment approaches for chronic diseases focus not only on symptom management, but also on lifestyle modification and preventive interventions to control the disease and prevent complications (Hoong et al., 2023). Treatment usually involves a combination of pharmacological therapies aimed at controlling or reducing disease symptoms and non-pharmacological therapies aimed at

improving patients' quality of life, such as a healthy diet, regular exercise, and stress management (Prescott et al., 2023).

In addition to direct treatment, the importance of psychosocial support and patient education in chronic disease management cannot be underestimated. This support can include counseling, support groups, and educational programs to help patients understand their condition and develop the necessary skills to manage their health independently (Martel et al., 2022). Health technologies, such as mobile apps and remote monitoring devices, are also increasingly playing an important role in facilitating the treatment and monitoring of chronic diseases, allowing for earlier and more customized interventions whenever a patient's condition changes. This approach demonstrates the importance of active cooperation between patients and healthcare providers in achieving optimal treatment outcomes (Tian et al., 2023).

With the increasing prevalence of chronic diseases worldwide, the importance of research and development in new treatment strategies is becoming increasingly significant. Innovations in pharmacology, genetic therapy and medical technology are opening up new possibilities in the management of chronic diseases, offering hope for more effective and personalized therapies (Alanazi, 2022). For example, gene-based therapies for certain diseases previously considered incurable are now being investigated as potential treatment options. Meanwhile, the utilization of big data and artificial intelligence in healthcare promises advances in risk prediction, early detection, and treatment that is more tailored to individual needs (Mercola & D'Adamo, 2023).

In conclusion, the treatment of chronic diseases requires a multifaceted approach that includes medical therapy, psychosocial support, patient education, and lifestyle modification. Continuous innovation in medical science and technology is important to pave the way for more effective and personalized therapies. Collaboration between patients and healthcare providers, along with utilizing the latest innovations in medicine, can provide a more effective way to manage chronic diseases, improve patients' quality of life, and lower the overall burden of chronic diseases on society.

Concept of Disease Cure

The concept of disease healing undergoes transformations throughout time, combining evolving medical understanding with traditional practices passed down from generation to generation (Bailey & Stover, 2023). Essentially, illness healing focuses not only on the removal of specific symptoms or conditions but also on restoring an individual's overall balance and well-being. This includes the physical, mental, and social aspects of one's being. The approach to healing is often holistic, looking for the root cause of illness rather than simply relieving obvious symptoms (Wang et al., 2023). In many traditions, health is considered to be the result of harmony between body, mind and environment, demanding healing strategies that also respond to all three aspects.

In healing endeavors, integration between conventional and alternative methods is becoming increasingly important. Conventional medicine, with its strong scientific basis, provides effective interventions for many medical conditions through the use of pharmaceuticals, surgery, and other therapies (Jomova et al., 2023). On the other hand, alternative methods, which can include acupuncture, meditation, and the use of herbal remedies, offer healing approaches that focus more on non-physical aspects of health, such as mental and spiritual well-being (Vijay & Valdes, 2022). The integration of these two approaches can provide more holistic results, often with fewer side effects, promoting a faster and more complete recovery. Recognizing the value of each approach and finding the right balance for each individual is key to achieving optimal healing (Agorastos & Chrousos, 2022).

In conclusion, healing disease is a complex process that requires a holistic and integrated approach, combining the best of both worlds—conventional and alternative medicine (Malik & Hu, 2022). Understanding that health is a unity between the physical, mental and social, guides the need for healing strategies that are holistic and adapt to the unique needs and conditions of each individual. The integration of these approaches not only improves treatment efficacy but also helps in promoting a complete recovery, minimizing relapse and improving the quality of life of patients (Mishra et al., 2022). By continuously evaluating and adapting these healing approaches, we can more effectively address current and future health challenges.

Traditional Medicine and its interaction in the modern medical context

Traditional medicine, rooted in the customs and hereditary knowledge of various cultures around the world, continues to play a vital role in the health and well-being of many communities (Maulani & Jonyanis, 2024). These practices, which include the use of herbs, physical therapies, and spiritual rituals, represent a holistic approach to healing, emphasizing balance and harmony between the individual and their environment (Dewi, 2019). In recent decades, recognition of the intrinsic value of traditional medicine from a modern medical perspective has increased, marking a paradigmatic shift in the way we understand health and healing (Hasliani & Wulandari, 2023). Clinics and medical practitioners are increasingly integrating traditional techniques and therapies in their treatment plans, recognizing that the combination of both approaches can provide patients with more holistic and personalized healing solutions (Fahmi, 2023).

The interaction between traditional medicine and modern medicine is not always without challenges—questions about the scientific validity, standardization, and safety of traditional practices often arise. However, increased research and collaboration between practitioners of both have helped in addressing some of these concerns, with studies designed to assess the effectiveness and mechanisms of action of traditional therapies in scientific terms (Janhari, 2023). This integrative approach not only helps in

the validity and acceptance of traditional medicine in the modern medical context but also expands the treatment options available to patients (Putri et al., 2023). By preserving traditional knowledge while integrating it with modern medical innovations, we can create a more inclusive health system that values the wisdom and practices of all cultural backgrounds.

Effectiveness of Traditional Medicine in Curing Chronic Diseases

Traditional medicine has demonstrated its effectiveness in treating and managing chronic diseases, as part of complementary or alternative medicine. Methods such as the use of herbs, acupuncture, and massage therapy have been used for thousands of years in various cultures to promote health and prevent disease (Cahyani, 2023). In the context of chronic diseases-such as diabetes, hypertension, and arthritis-traditional medicine often takes a holistic approach, not only addressing specific symptoms, but also improving the patient's overall quality of life (Rasyid, 2023). Numerous scientific studies have shown that such therapies can be effective in reducing symptoms, improving bodily functions, and even preventing further complications in chronic diseases, especially when used in conjunction with conventional medicine (Nadirah & Khaddapi, 2023).

However, it is important to approach traditional medicine with a critical attitude and sufficient information. While many methods have been proven safe and effective, further research is still needed to fully quantify the effectiveness and determine the mechanism of action of many traditional therapies (Pratiwi et al., 2023). The use of traditional medicine as part of a treatment plan for chronic diseases should be done under the supervision of a qualified healthcare professional, to ensure that the treatment is safe and suitable for use alongside conventional medical therapy (Setianingsih & Rusmiati, 2023). Thoughtful integration of traditional medicine with modern medical can provide a more comprehensive and personalized approach in managing chronic diseases, offering greater hope and well-being for patients.

The integration of traditional medicine with modern medical practices in managing chronic diseases also opens the door for innovation in healthcare approaches. By combining the wisdom of time-tested traditional techniques with conventional therapeutic methods backed by scientific evidence, healthcare practitioners can offer more customized treatment plans that take into account the physical, emotional, and spiritual aspects of patients (Hati et al., 2023). Such an approach encourages patients to participate more actively in their healing process, giving them greater control over their own health and encouraging an overall healthier lifestyle (Solechah et al., 2023). In addition, integration places emphasis on the prevention and management of chronic diseases through nutrition, physical activity and

stress reduction, all of which are core principles of many traditional systems of medicine (Hegemur et al., 2023).

While there are great strengths in this integrative approach, challenges remain, including the need for more standardized clinical guidelines, consistent efficacy testing, and education for health practitioners on how to best combine traditional medicine with conventional medicine (Dewi, 2019). It is important that the medical community, regulatory bodies, and researchers continue to work together to explore and appreciate the potential of traditional medicine in a modern context. It is also crucial to ensure fair access and correct information regarding these alternative therapies, so that all patients, regardless of their background, can benefit from a more holistic and inclusive approach to healthcare (Risnawati, 2023). Through continuous cooperation and innovation, we can create a healthcare system that combines the best of both worlds, providing effective and sustainable solutions to manage and defeat chronic diseases.

Conclusion

The conclusion of the research on the effect of traditional medicine on the healing of chronic diseases can state that there is evidence to support the effectiveness of traditional therapies in the management of chronic diseases. Research shows that traditional medicine, including the use of medicinal plants, acupuncture, massage therapy, and other holistic approaches, can contribute significantly to improving the quality of life of patients with chronic conditions. These therapies often focus on balancing the body and mind and facilitating the body's natural healing mechanisms, which in some cases, can alleviate symptoms of the disease, reduce the need for medications, and even prevent further complications associated with the disease.

However, research also emphasizes the need for a cautious approach and correct information when choosing traditional medicine as part of a chronic disease management strategy. It is important for patients to consult a healthcare professional first and not replace medical therapies that have been proven effective with traditional medicine. In addition, further studies are needed to precisely identify the mechanism of action, determine the appropriate dosage, and assess interactions with conventional therapies. In conclusion, traditional medicine can offer significant benefits in the management of chronic diseases if used judiciously and as part of an integrated treatment approach, drawing on scientific evidence and supported by professional medical knowledge and supervision.

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