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Training in making tea bags from Cherry leaves to foster entrepreneurial creativity with PKK women in Krandon village, Demak

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ABSTRACT

KKN students of Universitas Islam Negeri Walisongo Semarang held a cherry leaf tea-making activity with PKK women in Krandon village. Using cherry leaves to make tea bags is a creative idea from the students that can be applied in the health sector and as an entrepreneurial idea independently carried out by the community. This initiative is motivated by the fact that most of the population has high blood sugar, cholesterol, and uric acid levels. The primary purpose of this training is to socialize the health benefits of cherry leaves and provide entrepreneurial ideas for selling herbal tea bags from cherry leaves that can be made more attractive and have high selling value. The results of the cherry leaf tea-making training activities have positively impacted the people of Krandon village. Firstly, it can provide information about the benefits of cherry leaves that were previously unknown to the public. Previously, people only used the fruit without knowing that cherry leaves can also be used for health and as an entrepreneurial idea. Secondly, it motivates women to develop the use of cherry leaves as a selling idea. Thirdly, it can produce tea bags from leaves found in many places and substitute other herbal teas.

Keywords:
Training; Cherry Leaf; Herbal Tea; Entrepreneurship; PKK Krandon village.

Introduction

Health is one of Allah's blessings, and we must be grateful for it by maintaining it through a healthy lifestyle, regular exercise, and consuming healthy food/drinks. Regularly consuming healthy food/drinks can maintain body endurance, prevent degenerative diseases, and support medical treatments to cure chronic diseases such as cancer and tumors (Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, 2020).

Body health supports humans' daily activities to achieve success and happiness. One of the ways to achieve success is through entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurs can reduce dependence on others and create job opportunities, reducing unemployment. A decrease in unemployment increases society's per capita income (Winarto, 2011; Rusdiana, 2018).

Creativity in entrepreneurship must be continuously developed to foster entrepreneurial spirit and generate new opportunities and innovations. Creativity is the skill to generate new ideas and find new methods of viewing problems and opportunities so that these ideas can solve existing problems in society and create profit opportunities. A dedicated entrepreneur can turn opportunities into productive ventures and create new job opportunities. Entrepreneurship is the creative and innovative ability to see opportunities and remain open to positive inputs and changes that can help the business grow (Wiyono, 2020). In Islam, entrepreneurship is viewed as a form of work. In the perspective of Islamic economics, work is an effort by an individual to fulfill physical and spiritual needs. Islamic teachings encourage its followers to engage in business activities (Linge & Ahmad, 2016). This is aligned with the teachings in Surah At-Taubah verse 105:

تَعْمَلُونَ كُنتُمْ بِمَا فَيُنَبِّئُكُم وَٱلشَّهَٰدَةِ ٱلْغَيْبِ عَٰلِمِ إِلَىٰ وَسَتُرَدُّونَ ۖ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَرَسُولُهُۥ عَمَلَكُمْ ٱللَّهُ فَسَيَرَى ٱعْمَلُوا۟ وَقُلِ

Meaning: "And say, 'Do [as you will], for Allah will see your deeds, and [so will] His Messenger and the believers. And you will be returned to the Knower of the unseen and the witnessed, and He will inform you of what you used to do.'" (QS At-Taubah: 105).

The development of the current era affects not only technology but also the economy, such as ready-to-eat food and drinks. In rural areas, cherry trees are commonly used for their fruit. However, humans are the most perfect beings, gifted with the intellect to observe phenomena around us. As explained by Allah SWT in Surah Yunus verse 101:

يُؤْمِنُوْنَ لَّا قَوْمٍ عَنْ وَالنُّذُرُ الْاٰيٰتُ تُغْنِى وَمَآ ۗوَالْاَرْضِ السَّمٰوٰتِ فِى مَاذَا انْظُرُوْا قُلِ

Meaning: "Say, 'Observe what is in the heavens and earth!' But of no benefit are signs and warners to a people who do not believe." (QS Yunus: 101).

The cherry tree, or kersen (Muntingia calabura), is known for its small, sweet, bright red fruit. The tree is called various names in different regions: baler in Lumajang, dates, articles, manzanitas in the Philippines, mat sam in Vietnam, kerukup siam in Malaysia, and krakhob barang in Cambodia (Ilkafah, 2018; Nurholis & Saleh, 2019). Usually used as shade along roadsides, this tree proliferates from wild seedlings. Its soft and quick-drying wood is often used as firewood, while the bark can be used for rope and cloth. The leaves, however, can be processed into tea bags with health benefits.

Cherry leaves contain phytochemicals such as flavonoids, saponins, tannins, triterpenoids, and polyphenols, showing antimicrobial and antioxidant activities. The flavonoid content includes flavones, flavonones, flavans, and biflavans, which have antidiabetic and cytotoxic activities (Puspitasari & Wulandari, 2017). The flavonoid level in cherry leaves is high compared to other plants. Flavonoids are beneficial for health, treating hypertension, acting as antiviral, antimicrobial, antihypertensive, and antioxidant agents, treating liver disorders, and stimulating estrogen production (Nilai et al., 2019). Flavonoids also prevent the binding of carcinogenic molecules to DNA, preventing DNA damage (Walid et al., 2019). Tannins in cherry leaves can inhibit bacterial growth and eliminate toxins. The leaves saponins and flavonoids inhibit blood sugar absorption from the intestines, which is beneficial for diabetes patients (Reski et al., 2020). Saponins also lower blood cholesterol and limit tumor cell growth. These compounds damage bacterial structures, denature bacterial wall proteins, increase membrane permeability, and inhibit nucleic acid synthesis (Nawir et al., 2021).

Research on the utilization of cherry leaves includes studies on their content and benefits: Yuli Eka Rachmawati found phenolic compounds with antiseptic properties; Yuniar Puspita Arum (2010) discovered antibacterial flavonoids; and Aziamanda (2013) explored their use in food and drink preparations, including tea by Lathif (2016) and snacks by Laswati et al. (2017). Training in making tea from cherry leaves can enhance entrepreneurial creativity in the community. If this tea is developed into a business, a strategy is necessary. The strategy involves long-term planning to achieve goals, considering internal and external factors (Yulia, 2021). Inspired by physics lecturer Sudarmanto (2015), who trained people in Semarang on making cherry leaf tea bags, we, KKN Mandiri Misi Khusus Group 53 UIN Walisongo Semarang, provided entrepreneurial ideas to PKK women in Krandon village, Guntur district, Demak. This activity aimed to foster creativity in entrepreneurship by turning cherry leaves into attractively packaged tea bags with high selling value.

Methods

The training subjects were PKK women in Krandon village, Guntur district, Demak. The method included observation and information gathering about the community's use of cherry trees. Initial observations showed that the community only used the fruit, leaving the trees after fruiting. With many cherry trees in the village, it is a waste not to utilize the leaves, which have health benefits. Therefore, we introduced the idea that cherry leaves can be made into high-value herbal tea bags. The initial observation revealed a lack of knowledge and skills in utilizing cherry leaves, prompting a positive and interested response to the training.

The training included socializing the benefits of cherry leaves and hands-on practice in making tea bags. Training increases knowledge and skills and improves member performance (Saktiarsih,

2015). The KKN Universitas Islam Negeri Walisongo Semarang students introduced cherry trees and their fruit and leaf health benefits, followed by a Q&A session. The aim is to gather information and address the participants' health concerns, hoping the training will benefit them.

Results and Discussions

Figure 1 shows the outreach and training activities on making tea bags from kersen leaves. The outreach and training activities involved educating participants on the health benefits of cherry leaves and demonstrating the process of making herbal tea bags. The benefits of cherry leaves include lowering cholesterol, reducing uric acid levels, alleviating fever, maintaining heart health, boosting the immune system, reducing high blood pressure, and aiding in cancer treatment (Meiliza, 2013; Mahardika et al., 2014). The steps for making cherry-leaf tea bags were thoroughly demonstrated and practiced.

Figure 1. Outreach and Training on Making Tea Bags from Kersen Leaves

Steps to make cherry leaf tea bags:

1. Take fresh, healthy cherry leaves.
2. Wash the leaves to remove dust and fine hairs.
3. Place the washed leaves in a large container and dry for 5-6 hours until wilted.
4. Store the wilted leaves for 2 days before further drying.
5. Dry the leaves for 3-6 days.
6. Grind the dried leaves into a fine powder using a coffee grinder.
7. Put the ground leaves into tea bags.
8. Seal the tea bags using an impulse sealer.
9. Pack the tea bags into standing pouches and label them attractively to increase selling value.

Materials and equipment used:

1. Cherry leaves
2. Coffee grinder
3. Root food for tea bags
4. Tea bags
5. Standing pouches
6. Impulse sealer

The resulting herbal tea bags from cherry leaves have a unique taste similar to everyday green herbal tea, slightly bland to astringent, likely due to tannin content. The brewed tea's color ranges from brown to yellowish-brown. The aroma is similar to ordinary tea. Most participants liked the tea and

showed interest in utilizing cherry leaves for food preparations, including herbal tea. The tea bags, sealed and packed in brown standing pouches with labeled stickers, aim to attract buyers.

Conclusion

The training on making cherry leaf tea bags positively impacted the local community by providing information on the health benefits of cherry leaves and motivating entrepreneurial efforts. The process is simple, and raw materials are readily available. Post-training, the community showed an increased understanding of herbal plants' health benefits and preservation and enhanced creativity and motivation among women to develop tea-making businesses.

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