

Straightening Nutritional and Food Misconception in Javanese Local Knowledge

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Abstract. Local knowledge is one of the riches of cultural heritage in every community. Local knowledge is widely used as a way of life because it has been attached to the values of the community. Unfortunately, not all local knowledge is good to maintain. This article aims to correct misconceptions about nutrition and its central nutrition in Javanese society. The research method used in this study is traditional literature review (TRL). The researcher uses four TRL steps: designing a review, conducting a review, analyzing, and writing a review. Misconception is a negative side of local knowledge that emerges as one of the consequences of oral transmission. Misconceptions can be categorized as misinformation that appears along with myths in a society. Researchers' research shows that misconceptions about nutrition and food are widely circulated among the Javanese people. An interesting finding is that almost all food and nutrition misconceptions target women, while it is almost not found in men. It takes a massive role of the government to correct misconceptions that occur in society, especially in the health sector, and to stop misinformation from occurring by disseminating correct information through the educational, health, social, and cultural sectors.

Keywords: misconceptions; local knowledge; health misconception; Javanese culture; misinformations

1 Introduction

Indonesia has more than 1,300 ethnic groups [1]. The many ethnic groups owned by Indonesia give rise to various cultures. Culture is an object that the Indonesian government widely studies because culture is a nation's identity. Based on Law No. 5 of 2017 concerning the Promotion of Culture, one of the objects of cultural studies is local knowledge [2]. Local knowledge includes knowledge, beliefs, and traditions that are contextualized, communicated and preserved over time and from generation to generation to the community group that holds that knowledge [3].

Local knowledge is still often used as a way of life for the community because local knowledge has been internalized. Local knowledge (LK) includes human history, cosmology, timing for specific events or activities, modes of communication and symbols, agriculture, livestock, hunting, knowledge about ecosystems, social order,

health, food, education and arts [3],[4]. Local knowledge is often inherited from generation to generation only through oral and minimal written records so that it can be known precisely how LK can appear and live amid society [5]. Some scientific articles note that local knowledge is often helpful or has a positive impact, and it is based on the scientific studies carried out by scholars. However, sometimes, local knowledge also contradicts the results of scientific studies. Local knowledge that is considered wrong and incompatible with scientific theories is called misconceptions [6].

Based on the researcher's initial observations, misconceptions about local knowledge occur a lot in the realm of health, especially regarding nutrition and food. This article intends to investigate and correct the misconceptions that exist in the local knowledge of the Javanese tribe. The Javanese are the largest ethnic group in Indonesia, with a total of 95,217,022 people or about 40.22% [7] of the total ethnic groups owned by Indonesia. The existence of misconceptions about nutrition and food in Javanese society will undoubtedly have a significant impact on government programs, especially on stunting prevention programs in children, so this article is intended to provide scientific information related to misconceptions that exist and are still developing in the community.

2 Methods

The research method used in this study is a traditional literature review (TLR). TLR is the proper research method to clarify myths or substantive domains and show the latest field review [8]. Four stages refer to the TRL Snyder stage [9]: designing a review, conducting a review, analyzing, and writing a review. Researchers search for articles through Google Scholar, the most extensive research database anyone can access. The articles used in this study are limited to the following provisions: 1) are journal articles published in 2019 - 2024; 2) It is an open-access journal that can be read in full text. The initial search retrieved 34 articles. After reviewing and analyzing, only nine articles were retained for use in this study. The analysis aimed to ascertain whether the articles discussed food misconceptions prevalent in local knowledge in Java. Other supporting articles were also consulted to provide valid evidence of misconceptions and correct misconceptions that have already gained traction in the community.

3 Result and Discussion

3.1 The Emergence of Misconceptions in Local Knowledge

Local knowledge is often used overlappingly with other terms, namely indigenous and traditional knowledge [10]. In the realm of local knowledge, myths often appear. The myth itself is a narrative or narrative that is compiled anonymously to tell younger people about the creation or prohibition of something [11]. Because it is not documented in writing, people are free to exaggerate, add irrational things or use an analogy so that the listener believes the information they convey. So, it is expected to find several circulating myths related to the same study.

Myths are passed down continuously over a long period, form the opinion of the times, and then internalize into societal values and beliefs [12]. These values and beliefs then manifest into misconceptions about local knowledge. Misconceptions appear as examples of community misinformation related to local knowledge. The problem that arises from the misconception of local knowledge is that it is challenging to inform the public that the information that has been circulating needs to be corrected to harm them. Because the public already believes the information is wrong and is sceptical of new information, even though it has been scientifically tested.

3.2 Examples of Nutrition and Food Misconceptions in Java

Local knowledge about nutrition and food that develops in Javanese society is very much, but not all of it is documented. The researcher writes down some misconceptions that are very popular among the Javanese people in the table below:

Table 1. Misconceptions of Nutrition and Popular Food in Javanese.

Misconception	Facts
In the coastal areas of Java, consuming fish after giving birth is banned so that breast milk is not fishy.	Fish consumption can support pregnant women's nutritional intake and help them achieve optimal fetal growth and development. Fish contains protein, omega-3 fatty acids, iron, and calcium, which are good for fetal growth and development. In addition, protein in fish is in the form of essential amino acids that are indispensable by the body and can be absorbed optimally because it has a biological value of up to 90%. Therefore, consuming fish is very good for the health of the mother and fetus. Fish consumption can also prevent malnutrition, malnutrition, and stunting. [13] [14] [15]
There is a myth that consuming moringa leaves can weaken or weaken because moringa leaves are commonly used to paralyze supernatural powers.	Moringa leaves are indeed closely related to mystical things. However, from a health perspective, moringa leaves have various benefits for food and medicine. In 100 grams of moringa leaves, vitamins A, B, C, and calcium are suitable for consumption. Consumption of moringa leaves can also increase haemoglobin (Hb) levels, supporting health. In addition, consuming moringa leaves can also increase breast milk production in breastfeeding mothers. [16] [17]

<p>Pregnant women are encouraged to drink young coconut water so that their child's skin is white and clean.</p>	<p>Until now, no research has shown a correlation between drinking coconut water and children's skin colour. So, drinking young coconut water does not make the baby conceived by the mother white. However, drinking young coconut water can replace the missing ions in the mother's body or maintain the balance of body fluids of pregnant women.</p> <p>In addition, the consumption of coconut water can maintain normal blood pressure in the body due to the potassium (K) content contained in coconut water. It is undoubtedly perfect for pregnant women to prevent preeclampsia or high blood pressure in pregnant women. [18] [19]</p>
<p>Throwing out the first breast milk (colostrum) because the breast milk is not suitable for the child.</p>	<p>Colostrum is the first breast milk that comes out of the breast or the first breast milk produced by the breast. Colostrum has a golden yellow colour due to the high content of beta-carotene, fat, protein, and other living cells, which causes many ordinary people to consider it stale breast milk / unsuitable for consumption, so it must be discarded.</p> <p>In fact, in colostrum, there are immunoglobulins and antioxidants that are very good at supporting babies' growth and development and increasing their immunity, so they must be given immediately to newborns. [13] [20]</p>

There are still many misconceptions that the Javanese people believe. These misconceptions include myths about nutrition and food, such as prohibitions and recommendations to consume certain foods or drinks. Many myths should no longer be practised because they are contrary to today's science and health. So, it is necessary to straighten information related to these misconceptions, which can be done with the government's and related agencies' active role. What is quite interesting is that based on the search for misconceptions about nutrition and food, ten referred to as Food Taboo, it is found in many women, especially pregnant and lactating women. Meanwhile, men have almost no misconceptions about nutrition and food.

4 Conclusion

It is not something easy to straighten out misconceptions that occur in society. People have absorbed information and internalized existing knowledge into their lives. Although complicated does not mean impossible, some articles explain that the success of correcting misconceptions is highly dependent on the active role of local governments. Several ways to prevent the continuation of misconceptions about health in Java in the community can be done by collaborating with educational institutions to break the chain of information dissemination through education, both formal (school) and non-formal (library). In addition to educational institutions, the government must collaborate with health institutions such as hospitals, health centres, personnel and other health facilities. The government can also disseminate correct information by collaborating with elders or community leaders to provide accurate and correct information. In addition, counselling can also be provided when the

community is holding a gathering event, for example, during a Neighbourhood or Family Welfare Programme meeting.

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