



INTEGRATING TRADITIONAL MEDICINE TO ACHIEVE UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE: A SCOPING REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

One way to maintain health is by using traditional medicine. WHO recommends that traditional medicine be integrated into health care systems to achieve universal health coverage, but most countries have not adopted the recommendation. In this study, we will observe the implementation of the integration of traditional medicine in the health service system that supports universal health coverage. In this study, a scoping review was carried out by searching for articles from the Pubmed and Scopus databases with appropriate keywords, in English that can be fully accessed by Diponegoro University students from 2013 - 2024. The result, 39 journals were obtained from Scopus and Pubmed which were then screened with inclusion and exclusion criteria. From the screening process, 3 journals were obtained that were suitable for the integration of traditional medicine in the health service system to support the achievement of universal health coverage. Conclusion: The government needs to regulate the use of traditional medicine in the health service system based on scientific evidence, carried out by competent personnel, standardization of product and service quality, service evaluation, continuing education to achieve universal health coverage.

Keywords: health care system; integration; traditional medicine; universal health coverage

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INTRODUCTION

Improving and maintaining health is essential for well-being and sustainable economic and social development (WHO, 2010). One way to maintain health is to use traditional medicine. Traditional medicine is the knowledge, skills and practices based on different theories, beliefs and cultural experiences, whether explainable or not, that are used in the maintenance of health as well as in the prevention, diagnosis, repair or treatment of physical and mental illnesses (Lange et al., 2022). According to the World Health Organization (WHO), 60%-90% of the population in developing countries uses traditional medicine for primary health care, and at least more than 40% of the population in developed countries such as the United States, Australia, France, and Germany use traditional medicine once a year (Payyappallimana & Serbulea, 2013).

WHO recommends that traditional medicine be integrated into the health care system so that it is expected to support Universal Health Coverage (Mutola et al., 2021). Universal Health Coverage (UHC) is a system that is expected to improve the quality of health services for all levels of society, anywhere and anytime without experiencing financial constraints. The goal of UHC is for everyone to be expected to have access to promotive, preventive, curative and rehabilitative health services, of adequate quality effectively, and financially affordable (Payyappallimana & Serbulea, 2013). Traditional medicine needs to be developed because it

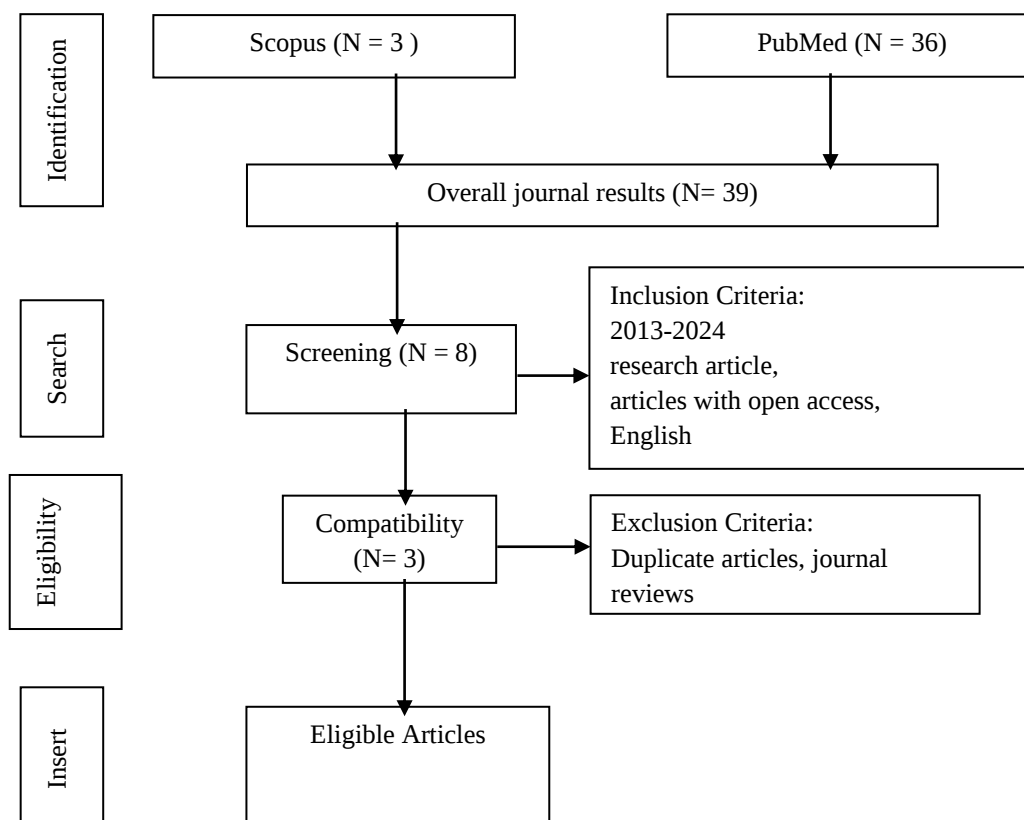
is easily accessible to the community (Lange et al., 2022), found in almost every country in the world, used by many people, can complement modern medicine in treating various diseases (Mutola et al., 2021), offers an alternative approach that allows patients to choose a method according to their needs (Pelkonen et al., 2014).

Although the WHO provides a framework or strategy through the publication of the "WHO Traditional Medicine Strategy 2014-2023" to integrate traditional medicine into the health care system, most countries have not adopted recommendations to support universal health coverage (Kasilo dkk., 2019). Therefore, it is necessary to conduct research on the application of traditional medicine with health service systems in various countries to support universal health coverage. In this study, observations will be made in the application of traditional medicine with health service systems in various countries during 2013-2024 so that it is expected to support universal health coverage.

METHOD

This research was conducted using the scoping review method, by thoroughly reviewing the literature from various sources with different research methods and still having a connection with the topic discussed in the research. The study was conducted using two databases, namely Pubmed and Scopus. The strategy used for literature search is to use keywords related to research problems including traditional medicine, integration, universal health coverage, models. The inclusion criteria of this study are limited to publications from 2013-2024, fully accessible to Diponegoro University students, in English, research articles that have been published in international journals. The research of this research is exclusive. The exclusion criteria of this study include duplication of articles and reviews of articles that do not match. The search results of articles from the two databases are filtered according to the PRISMA flow listed as follows :

Figure 1. Stages of Search and Selection of Articles to Become Reviewed Articles



RESULT

Author / Year	Article Title	Method (Design, Sample)	Result	Kesimpulan
Payyappallimana, et al./ 2013	Integration of Traditional Medicine in the Health System of Japan - Policy Lessons and Challenges(Payyappallimana & Serbulea, 2013)	Qualitative research method by conducting a comprehensive literature review and interviews with key informants from various traditional medicine sectors.	Result: 1. Introduction of safe traditional medicine industry production methods. 2. Standardization of the quality of traditional medicines. 3. Ensure competent resources. 4. The systematic training of doctors, pharmacists, and therapists has increased the availability and access to traditional medical knowledge, products, and services. 5. The high interest among doctors, practitioners, and the public indicates the increasing demand for traditional medicine. 6. The process of modernizing traditional medicine makes it easier to integrate it into the healthcare system.	There is awareness of the use of traditional medicine between doctors and the general public. Traditional medicine has been standardized and well integrated. However, the potential of traditional medicine has not been fully explored and utilized.
Mutola, et al./ 2021	Utilization of Traditional Medicine and Its Integration Into the Healthcare System in Qokolweni, South Africa; Prospects for Enhanced Universal Health Coverage (Mutola et al., 2021)	Qualitative research methods with interviews and observations with the community, traditional healers, and nurses in various locations in Qokolweni, Eastern Cape, South Africa.	Traditional medicine is widely used in Qokolweni because of its easy access and long-established trust, doctors practice easily and are not certified.	Efforts to integrate traditional medicine into the conventional health system can be implemented if the government shows political will by preparing regulations, along with scientific

				evaluation and certification tools for traditional medicine that can build the trust of health practitioners to use traditional medicine, thereby encouraging collaboration and integration of traditional medicine into the health service system..
Nambiar, et al. / 2024	<i>Experiences and Meanings of Integration of TCAM (Traditional, Complementary and Alternative Medical) Providers in Three Indian States: Results from A Cross-Sectional, Qualitative Implementation Research Study</i> (Nambiar et al., 2014)	The qualitative research method was conducted by interviewing 12 policy makers, 43 administrative officers, 59 traditional medicine practitioners consisting of 37 allopathic practitioners, 7 traditional healers and 38 health workers and community representatives in India.	Influential individual figures tend to facilitate integration. Inhibiting factors include systems that are not connected to each other, lack of trust and awareness of the use of traditional medicine, and inadequate infrastructure and resources for the integration of traditional medicine in the healthcare system	The use of traditional medicine in the health care system needs to be supported by government policies.

DISCUSSION

Integration of traditional medicine into the health care system, in order to achieve Universal Health Coverage (UHC) presents a number of complex challenges. Some of these challenges include :

Standardization and Quality

One of the challenges in integrating traditional medicine in the national health service system is the lack of standardization in traditional medicine practices. Different methods and herbs can have different qualities and authenticity. In a highly regulated health system, clear

standards are needed to ensure the safety and effectiveness of treatment. Standardization is one of the main factors in the integration of traditional medicine in the health care system, where it is necessary to standardize practices, ensure the quality and safety of drug products and treatment procedures (Payyappallimana & Serbulea, 2013). Supervision and evaluation of the quality of traditional medicine services need to be carried out regularly to ensure its safety (Mutola et al., 2021). One of the countries that has successfully developed traditional medicine is China. This can happen because Chinese herbal products have clinical trials for safety, efficacy, and/or effectiveness that can be explained scientifically, standardized, and quality controlled (Pelkonen et al., 2014). In addition, the country that has integrated traditional medicine in health services is India. India has a traditional medicine called Ayurveda. To globalize the Ayurvedic medicine system and products, India also established the Ministry of Ayush to focus its attention on standardization and quality control of Ayurvedic medicines with Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP). This is done to give a greater boost to consumer awareness, consumer and physician suitability, acceptance in the global market and to ensure safety which is a major concern when using Ayurvedic medicines (Katoch et al., 2017). In addition to India and China, traditional medicine has also contributed to the achievement of universal health coverage in Africa. In Africa, traditional medicine is quality assured, traditional health practitioners are provided with training, a place to carry out accredited and licensed traditional medicine which is expected to increase the availability of more human resources and contribute to the provision of a quality patient-oriented system of essential services (Kasilo et al., 2019). Ensuring quality and safety in traditional medicine health services is indispensable to improve public health and achieve UHC (Y. L. Park & Canaway, 2019), (Geck dkk., 2020). By paying more attention to the quality and safety of traditional medicine to make it more professional, the process of integrating national medical practices into the national health system becomes easier (J. E. Park et al., 2022).

Education and Training

Education and training are important aspects of the integration of traditional medicine into the healthcare system. With traditional medicine knowledge training, it can bridge the understanding between traditional and modern medicine (WHO, 2013). Lack of understanding of how traditional medicine affects the disease and recovery process, hindering progress in integrating western medicine with traditional medicine (Fu et al., 2021). Some countries have implemented the practice of providing training education to traditional medicine practitioners, such as in Japan (Payyappallimana & Serbulea, 2013), Ghana (Ampomah et al., 2022), China (Zhou et al., 2024), (Ren et al., 2023), Afrika (Kasilo et al., 2019). Systematic training between doctors, pharmacists and therapists can increase the availability and access to safe and quality traditional medicine knowledge, products and services (Payyappallimana & Serbulea, 2013).

Competent Human Resources

The lack of human resources who understand traditional medicine and conventional medicine is one of the obstacles to the integration of traditional medicine into the health care system. Therefore, it is recommended to create opportunities for western medicine practitioners to learn from their traditional medicine counterparts, encourage the involvement of western-trained personnel in traditional medicine services, and improve the diagnostic and traditional medicine capabilities in primary health care settings. (Zhou et al., 2024). Qualified and competent practitioners of traditional medicine are a fundamental requirement to support inter-professional collaboration to provide integrated healthcare services to meet the health needs of individuals and communities (Y. L. Park & Canaway, 2019).

Evidence of Effectiveness and Scientific Evidence

Evidence-based care is needed to ensure patients receive appropriate and quality care (García Rodríguez & Pérez Gutthann, 1998). Traditional medicine is scientifically accepted by health workers and the wider community if it has evidence-based research regarding its safety and effectiveness (Von Schoen-Angerer et al., 2023). In Africa, quality assurance of research and evaluation of traditional medicines, as well as the development of traditional products, are carefully studied. Medical research and development in Africa focuses on the safety, efficacy, quality, strength, reliability, and durability of medical products. Registration of traditional medicine products is a mandatory requirement before medical products can be accessed by the public. Research and development of traditional medicines leading to standardized and quality-assured phytomedicines has a positive impact on achieving universal health coverage in Africa (Kasilo et al., 2019). Low research rates have slowed down the development of national standards and efforts to integrate traditional medicine in the healthcare system (Unnikrishnan Payyappallimana, 2009). Many world scientists are researching and developing the efficacy and safety of herbal products in the treatment of COVID-19 (Osterhaus et al., 2020), (Deng et al., 2020). To address the growing health challenges in the current era, traditional medicine must evolve to meet the demands of the times. The foundations of traditional medicine need to be rooted in education, research, and academic medicine practice. (Dzau dkk., 2022). Evidence-based research is needed to minimize herbal medicine interactions and achieve better health outcomes for patients (Tan et al., 2021). The integration of traditional medicine with national health care systems allows for transparent monitoring and evaluation of the use and impact of traditional medicine to make evidence-based policy decisions. (Y. L. Park & Canaway, 2019), (Kadetz, 2013). Evidence-based traditional medicine contributes to achieving UHC which can influence consumers' choice of health services (Geck et al., 2020).

Rules and Policies

Regulation of traditional medicine is needed to ensure that the practice is safe and effective. Many countries still do not have adequate regulation for traditional medicine. This can result in unstandardized practices and risks for patients. Policies that support safe and effective integration are urgently needed. Unclear regulatory systems or lack of policies that support the integration of traditional medicine into national health systems can hinder such efforts (Payyappallimana & Serbulea, 2013). Regulations can strengthen the assurance of quality, safety, proper use and effectiveness of traditional medicines used in the health care system (Nambiar et al., 2014). The government needs to demonstrate the political will to implement the integration of traditional medicine into the conventional health care system, by preparing regulations, evaluation methods and scientific certification of traditional medicine that can build trust in health practitioners who use traditional medicine, which can encourage collaboration and integration of traditional medicine into the health care system (Mutola et al., 2021), (Nambiar et al., 2014). To better integrate traditional medicine with the health care system, it is necessary to focus on enforcing appropriate laws and regulatory frameworks, investigating the pharmacological mechanisms of traditional medicinal preparations, and increasing public recognition and acceptance of traditional medicine (Zhou et al., 2024). Major reforms are needed in medical education to instill among medical students and providers attitudes that support both biomedicine and traditional medicine. Introducing the benefits of traditional healing systems into the school curriculum would be an important step to reduce miscommunication in achieving health goals (Chaturvedi et al., 2023). The traditional medicine regulatory system can be strengthened by improving and maintaining the quality of traditional medicine practitioners and the safety of traditional medicine products (YL Park & Canaway, 2019).

Traditional Medicine Supports Universal Health Coverage

Collaboration between various parties is needed to integrate traditional medicine into the national health system. (Nambiar et al., 2014). In China, Traditional Chinese and Western Medicine Integrates (ITCWM) have been widely promoted and studied, demonstrating distinctive advantages and significant contributions to achieving universal health coverage (Zhou et al., 2024). Introducing traditional medicine systems into the school curriculum would be an important step to reduce the information gap regarding traditional medicine so that traditional medicine can be an option to achieve health goals (Chaturvedi et al., 2023). Incorporating traditional medicine products or services with national health insurance can increase trust in using traditional medicine, which can even save costs (Park & Canaway, 2019). Legal regulation in education, training, practice, and professional development of traditional medicine, can protect consumers and health workers in using traditional medicine (Amaral & Fronteira, 2021). Quality of service needs to be considered in integrating traditional medicine into the health care system. Starting from good quality, trained, accredited, and licensed personnel from legal traditional health practitioners. This is expected to increase the availability of human resources that contribute to providing quality health services that are patient-oriented, effective and responsive with a holistic approach. Collaboration between traditional health practitioners and conventional health workers is needed to promote the knowledge and skills of traditional health practitioners, especially in terms of hygiene, proper diagnosis, health promotion, and evaluation. Investment in the integration of traditional medicine into the health care system can document the use and evaluation of traditional medicine that is financially affordable, easily accessible, and of good quality, which will contribute significantly to achieving universal health coverage. (Kasilo et al., 2019).

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the scoping review, it can be concluded that in integrating traditional medicine into the health service system to support the achievement of universal health coverage, there are several things that need to be done including the importance of collaboration between traditional health practitioners and health service personnel to improve knowledge and skills in diagnosis, health promotion, and evaluation of traditional medicine services. This requires a commitment from the government to regulate traditional medicine carried out by educated, trained, competent practitioners in their fields, standardized based on scientific evidence, affordable, quality, which can ultimately contribute to the achievement of universal health coverage

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