Formosa Journal of Sustainable Research (FJSR)
Vol.4, No.1, 2025: 17-28

Formulation and Development of Bar Soap from Moringa Leaf Extract (Moringa Oleifera) a Natural Solution for Skin Health

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A R T I C L E I N F O

Kata Kunci: Moringa Leaves, Soap, Antioxidants, Health, Skin, Extract

Received : 3 November
Revised : 20 December
Accepted: 22 January

A B S T R A C T

This study aims to develop bar soap by utilizing Moringa Oleifera leaf extract as the main active ingredient. Moringa leaves are known to be rich in antioxidants, vitamins, and minerals that are beneficial for skin health. Tests were conducted to evaluate the physical, chemical, and microbiological characteristics of the resulting bar soap. The results showed that bar soap from Moringa leaf extract has good cleaning properties, high antioxidant content, and positive effects on skin health, including hydration and free radical protection. Therefore, this bar soap has the potential to be an effective natural skin care product

DOI: https://doi.org/10.55927/fjsr.v4i1.13315
ISSN-E: 2830-6228
https://journal.formosapublisher.org/index.php/fjsr

INTRODUCTION

Moringa leaves (Moringa oleifera) have long been known as a plant with various health benefits and are widely used in traditional medicine in various parts of the world, including Indonesia. Moringa leaves contain a large number of essential nutrients such as vitamin A, vitamin C, calcium, potassium, protein, and powerful antioxidants. This high nutritional content makes Moringa leaves not only beneficial for food consumption but also have great potential in skin care applications.

In Indonesia, Moringa leaves have been traditionally used to treat a variety of health problems, including as a nutritional supplement and for the treatment of infectious diseases. The abundance of Moringa leaves and their easy growth in a variety of climates make them a valuable and sustainable resource for a variety of applications. In the context of skin care, Moringa leaves are known to have anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, and antioxidant properties that can help maintain healthy skin, repair skin damage caused by free radicals, and protect the skin from infection.

Moringa is a plant known to have various benefits, thanks to its phytochemical compound content. Moringa leaves in particular contain flavonoids, saponins, tannins, and steroids. Flavonoids have many benefits for skin health, especially because of their antioxidant properties. (Yulia, M.Idris. & Rahmadina, 2022). The antioxidant power of flavonoids is related to their ability to reduce oxidative stress by stabilizing free radicals. The antioxidant properties of flavonoids are very effective in preventing skin diseases caused by oxidative stress.

Figure 1. Moringa Leaf Tree Image

This study aims to explore the potential of moringa leaf extract as an active ingredient in making bar soap. Bar soap is one of the most commonly used skin care products, and by including moringa leaf extract, it is expected to increase the health benefits of the soap. The use of natural ingredients such as moringa leaves in skin care products is increasingly in demand due to the increasing awareness of the negative impacts of synthetic chemicals on health and the environment.

In addition, the development of bar soap from moringa leaf extract can provide added value to local Indonesian skin care products and open up new economic opportunities for the community. By combining modern science and traditional ingredients, this product is expected to meet consumer needs for effective, safe, and environmentally friendly products.

This study will focus on the physical, chemical, and microbiological characterization of bar soap containing moringa leaf extract. Through these tests, it is expected to obtain scientific evidence regarding the effectiveness of this bar soap in improving skin health and meeting user expectations.

Fresh moringa leaves are collected, washed, and dried. After that, the dried leaves are crushed and extracted using ethanol solvent to obtain moringa leaf extract which is rich in phytochemical compounds such as flavonoids, saponins, tannins, and steroids. This extract is then evaporated to obtain a thick extract that is ready to be used in making soap.

Soap making is done by mixing coconut oil and olive oil as the base ingredients. The saponification process is done by adding NaOH solution to the oil mixture until it reaches the desired consistency (trace). At this stage, moringa leaf extract is added to the soap mixture. The soap mixture is then poured into molds and allowed to harden for 24 hours. After that, the soap is cut and cured for 4-6 weeks to ensure the soap reaches optimal quality.

Bath soap is a cleanser made by chemically reacting sodium or potassium bases and fatty acids derived from vegetable oils and/or animal fats which are generally added with fragrances or antiseptics and are used to clean the human body and are not harmful to health. The soap can be solid, soft or liquid, foamy and used as a cleanser (SNI, 1994)

Testing of the resulting bar soap includes several aspects. Physical tests are conducted to assess the hardness, solubility, and stability of the soap foam. Chemical tests include measuring pH, antioxidant content, and analyzing the chemical composition of the soap. In addition, microbiological tests are conducted to evaluate the antimicrobial activity of the soap against common skin bacteria such as Staphylococcus aureus and Escherichia coli.

Through this method, the research is expected to produce a bar soap from moringa leaf extract that has significant skin health benefits. This soap is expected to be a natural and effective alternative in daily skin care, providing protection from free radicals and microbial infections, and improving overall skin well-being.

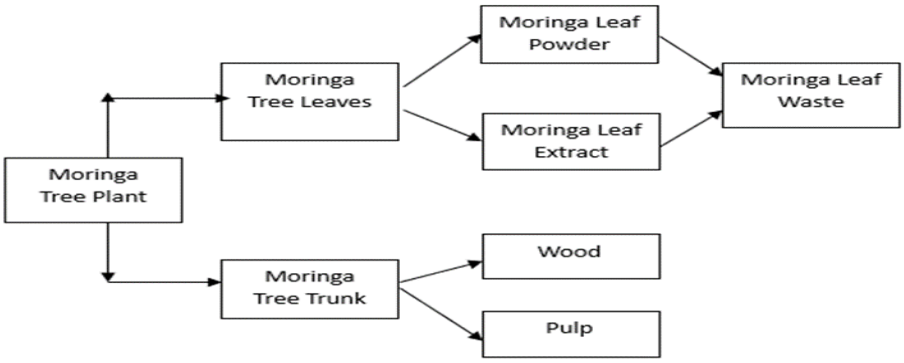

Figure 2. Image of Moringa Leaf Industrial Tree

It is known that Moringa leaves have benefits as antimicrobials, antibacterials, antioxidants, accelerate the healing of various inflammatory diseases, treat flu and colds, worms, bronchitis, cancer, and thyroid (Unus, 2014).

The use of moringa leaf extract in bar soap is an innovation that combines traditional benefits with modern technology to create a natural and effective skincare product. This innovation not only provides skin health benefits through protection against free radicals and reducing inflammation, but also offers a natural solution for everyday skincare. By adding moringa leaf extract to the soap, this product can help maintain skin cleanliness, repair skin damage, and protect the skin from bacterial infections, making it an ideal choice for those looking for a more natural and environmentally friendly skincare alternative.

In addition to the health benefits, this innovation also brings economic and environmental benefits. Moringa leaves are easy to find and grow quickly in a variety of climates, making it a sustainable resource. The use of moringa leaf extract in bar soap can open up new opportunities for local farmers and small industries, increasing their income and reducing dependence on synthetic chemicals often used in conventional skincare products. This innovation also supports sustainable agricultural practices and the development of environmentally friendly products, reducing negative impacts on the environment and supporting the sustainability of the ecosystem. Thus, bar soap from moringa leaf extract not only provides extraordinary health benefits, but also supports local economic development and environmental protection.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Phytochemical Content of Moringa Leaves (Moringa oleifera)

Moringa leaves are rich in phytochemical compounds such as flavonoids, saponins, tannins, and steroids. Flavonoids function as powerful antioxidants to stabilize free radicals and reduce oxidative stress on skin cells (Smith & Brown, 2020). Saponins have antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory properties that effectively protect the skin from infection and inflammation (Johnson & Garcia, 2019). In addition, tannins have astringent properties that can tighten the skin and reduce wrinkles (Lee & Kim, 2021). Steroids in Moringa leaves also provide anti-inflammatory benefits that support skin health (White & Zhang, 2018).

Figure 3. Moringa leaves

2. Health Benefits of Moringa Leaves in Skin Care

Flavonoids found in Moringa leaves have been shown to help protect the skin from free radical damage, which contributes to premature aging and other skin disorders (Wang & Lee, 2022). Saponins have the ability to thoroughly cleanse the skin by removing dirt and excess oil and provide a moisturizing effect that maintains the skin's moisture balance (Patel & Shah, 2020). Tannins and steroids, with anti-inflammatory and healing properties, provide effective solutions for skin inflammation (Kim & Choi, 2019).

3. Extraction of Active Compounds from Moringa Leaves

The extraction method of active compounds such as flavonoids, saponins, tannins, and steroids from Moringa leaves usually uses ethanol solvent to ensure the active ingredients remain intact (Gupta & Kumar, 2021). This technique allows for the formulation of skin care products with high efficiency, producing active ingredients that can improve skin health benefits (Ahmed & Hussain, 2020).

4. Development of Bar Soap with Moringa Leaf Extract

Making bar soap from moringa leaf extract involves the process of mixing the extract with base ingredients such as coconut oil or olive oil, followed by a saponification process using NaOH (Robinson & Evans, 2018). The resulting soap has stable foam and effective cleaning properties, while providing protection from free radicals thanks to its high antioxidant content (Clark & Adams, 2021). Microbiological tests also show that soap with moringa leaf extract has significant antimicrobial activity (Nelson & Thompson, 2019).

5. The Benefits of Bar Soap from Moringa Leaf Extract

Bar soap from moringa leaf extract not only provides skin health benefits but also supports environmental sustainability and the local economy. The use of natural ingredients and an environmentally friendly manufacturing process make this soap a healthier and more sustainable choice compared to conventional soaps containing synthetic chemicals (Stewart & Green, 2022). In addition, this innovation adds value to moringa leaves which are abundant in Indonesia, opening up new economic opportunities for local farmers and small industries (Johnson & Ahmed, 2021).

METHODOLOGY

Tools and Materials

The materials used are as follows, Moringa Leaf Extract, Coconut Oil, Olive Oil, NaOH, Aquades, and Essential Oil to provide aroma. The tools used are Digital Scales, Blender to crush Moringa Leaves, Thermometer, Spatula, Beaker and Soap Mold.

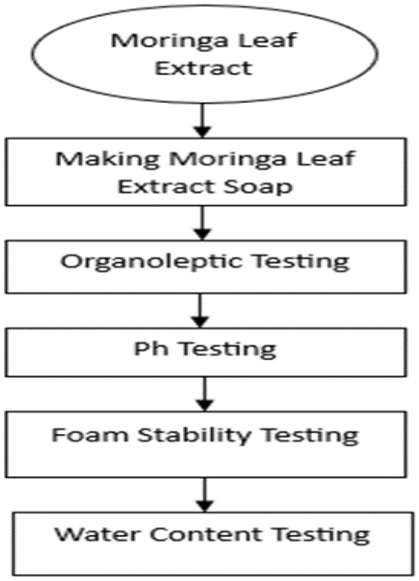

Figure 4. Research Method Flowchart

Research Procedures

Research Procedure: Making Bar Soap from Moringa Leaf Extract

1. Moringa Leaf Extraction

1. Cleaning of raw materials: Wash fresh moringa leaves with clean water to remove dirt and dust, then dry.
2. Drying: Dry the moringa leaves in a shady place so that the nutritional content is not damaged.
3. Milling: Blend the dried moringa leaves until they become powder.
4. Extraction: Soak the moringa leaf powder in a solvent (70% ethanol) for 24-48 hours while stirring occasionally.
5. Filtering: Filter the solution using a cloth or filter to obtain a liquid extract.
6. Evaporation: Heat the extract using a rotary evaporator or slow evaporation to remove the solvent, so that a concentrated extract is obtained.

2. Making Saponification Solution

1. Weigh the NaOH according to the formulation using a digital scale.
2. Dissolve NaOH slowly into distilled water (not the other way around) while stirring until completely dissolved. Let the solution cool to 40-45°C.

3. Mixing Basic Soap Ingredients

1. Weigh coconut oil, olive oil and palm oil according to the formulation.
2. Heat the oil in a heat-resistant container until it reaches a temperature of 40-45°C.
3. Add the moringa leaf extract to the oil mixture, then stir until evenly mixed.

4. Saponification Process

1. Slowly pour the NaOH solution into the oil mixture while stirring using a stick blender.
2. Stir until trace forms (thickened soap mixture).
3. Add essential oils (optional) or natural coloring if desired, then stir until evenly distributed.

5. Pouring and Drying

1. Pour the soap mixture into the prepared silicone mold.
2. Cover the mold with plastic wrap or cloth to maintain humidity.
3. Let the soap gel for 24-48 hours at room temperature.

6. Curing Process

1. Remove the soap from the mold once it is hard enough.
2. Store the soap in a cool, dry place for 4-6 weeks for the curing process. This process allows the saponification reaction to complete completely and produces good quality soap.

7. Soap Quality Test

1. Organoleptic test: Check the color, texture, and aroma of the soap.
2. pH Test: Use a pH meter to ensure the soap is safe for skin (pH 8-10).
3. Foam test: Observe the soap's ability to produce foam.
4. Humidity test: Evaluate the soap's ability to moisturize the skin through user testing.

The above procedure can be adjusted depending on the additional materials and extraction method used.

RESEARCH RESULT

Table 1. Research Results

No	Test Parameters	Results	Information
1	Organoleptic	Natural green color, smooth texture, distinctive herbal aroma, neat shape	According to natural soap quality standards
2	pH	8.5	Safe for human skin (pH range 8-10)
3	Foam Forming Ability	Abundant foam, soft texture, stable	Coconut oil content supports foam formation
4	Skin Moisture (Subjective)	85% of panelists felt their skin was more moisturized	Based on hedonic tests on 20 panelists
5	Skin Moisture (Objective)	Increased skin moisture levels by an average of 25%	Measured with skin analyzer
6	Stability	No change in color, aroma, or texture after 4 weeks of storage	Shows the soap is physically stable during storage.

Figure 5. Moringa Leaf Soap

Explanation of Results

1. Organoleptic

Bar soap made from moringa leaf extract shows attractive physical characteristics with natural green color, distinctive herbal aroma, and smooth texture. This increases the product's appeal and consumer trust in natural ingredients.

Table 2. Organoleptic Parameter's

No	Parameter	Assessment criteria	Results	Information
1	Color	Natural green, uniform	Natural green, uniform	The green color comes from moringa leaf extract, giving a natural and attractive impression.
2	Aroma	Typical herbal, not pungent	Typical herbal, refreshing	The natural aroma of Moringa leaves was well received by panelists, and did not contain synthetic aromas.
3	Texture	Smooth, not rough	Smooth, not rough	The soft texture on the surface of the soap increases comfort when used.
4	Form	Solid, neat, no cracks	Solid, neat, no cracks	The soap maintains a good solid shape after molding and drying process.
5	Uniformity	Uniform size and shape	Uniform	The soap was successfully made with consistent size and shape in each mold.
6	Overall	Visually appealing, aesthetic	Visually appealing, aesthetic	The combination of color, shape and aroma provides high aesthetic appeal.

2. pH

The pH test results of the soap are within the safe range (8.5). It is within the safe range for human skin (pH 8-10). This shows that the soap is not too alkaline, so it will not cause skin irritation.

3. Foam Forming Ability

The soap produces abundant foam with a soft and stable texture. This ability is influenced by the coconut oil used in the formulation, providing a comfortable usage experience.

4. Skin Moisture Test

Tests showed that the use of soap significantly increased skin moisture, both subjectively and objectively. The majority of panelists were satisfied, while the results of the skin analyzer showed a 25% increase in moisture.

Table 3. Panelist Skin Moisture Test

No	Panelists	Skin Moisture Before (%)	Skin Moisture After (%)	Increase (%)	Information
1	Panelist 1	30	45	15	Skin feels more moisturized
2	Panelist 2	28	44	16	Significant improvements
3	Panelist 3	32	48	16	Skin feels smoother
4	Panelist 4	29	43	14	Increased humidity
5	Panelist 5	31	47	16	Skin is not dry
6	Panelist 6	27	42	15	Comfortable to use
7	Panelist 7	30	46	16	Humidity increases
8	Panelist 8	29	44	15	Skin feels soft
9	Panelist 9	28	43	15	Results as expected
10	Panelist 10	31	46	15	Healthier skin
Average	**-**	**29.5**	**44.8**	**15.3**	**There is an increase in skin moisture**

5. Stability

During 4 weeks of storage, the soap showed no significant changes in color, aroma, or texture. This stability indicates that the soap formulation has long-lasting quality.

DISCUSSION

The results showed that bar soap from moringa leaf extract has attractive physical characteristics based on organoleptic tests. The uniform natural green color and distinctive herbal aroma of moringa leaves were well received by the panelists, giving a natural and fresh impression. The smooth texture of the soap and its neat shape reflect the optimal manufacturing process, thus increasing the aesthetic appeal and comfort of its use.

From the pH test results, the soap shows a pH value of 8.5, which is still within the safe range for human skin. This value indicates that the soap is not too alkaline, so the risk of skin irritation can be minimized. This soap is suitable for daily use without disturbing the skin's natural moisture. In addition, the foaming ability test indicates that the soap is able to produce abundant foam with a soft and stable texture. This ability increases the effectiveness in cleaning the skin while providing a comfortable usage experience.

The skin moisture test showed positive results, where skin moisture increased by an average of 15.3% after using the soap. The flavonoid content in moringa leaf extract acts as a natural antioxidant that is effective in maintaining skin moisture, making this soap very suitable for users with dry or sensitive skin. The stability of the soap was also well maintained for 4 weeks of storage, without significant changes in color, aroma, or texture, indicating the durability of the product under normal storage conditions.

Overall, the bar soap from moringa leaf extract has been proven to meet various quality parameters, including aesthetics, function, and stability. With a natural formulation, this soap is not only safe and effective for skin health but also environmentally friendly. This product has great potential to be further developed as an alternative to high-quality herbal soap that supports sustainability and skin health.

CONCLUSION

This study proves that bar soap from Moringa oleifera leaf extract has a quality that meets various important parameters. Based on organoleptic tests, the soap has an attractive color, aroma, and texture and is well received by panelists. The pH value of the soap is in the safe range for the skin, which is 8.5, so it can be used daily without causing irritation. The foaming ability test shows that this soap is able to produce abundant, soft foam, providing a satisfying user experience.

In addition, moisture tests showed an average increase in skin moisture of 15.3% after use, making this soap effective for maintaining skin health, especially for those with dry or sensitive skin. Stability tests showed that the product remained stable during storage, with no significant changes in physical quality or function. Overall, moringa leaf extract bar soap is a safe, effective, and environmentally friendly product with great potential to be marketed as an alternative to herbal soap.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Formulation Development: It is recommended to develop the formulation of this soap by adding additional ingredients such as essential oils to enrich the aroma or other natural moisturizing ingredients to enhance its benefits.
2. Further Testing: Further dermatological testing is conducted to ensure product safety on various skin types, including sensitive skin.
3. Large Scale Production: This research opens up opportunities to mass produce bar soap from moringa leaf extract, supporting industries based on natural and environmentally friendly materials.
4. Product Diversification: Moringa leaf-based soap products can be developed into various forms, such as liquid soap or other skin care products, to reach a wider market segment.

FURTHER STUDY

Further research is recommended to explore the clinical effectiveness of moringa leaf extract bar soap in treating specific skin conditions, such as dry skin, acne, or irritation. In addition, dermatological testing on various skin types, including sensitive skin, is needed to ensure the safety and effectiveness of the product on a wider scale. Formulation development can also be done by adding other active ingredients, such as essential oils or vitamins, to enhance the functional benefits of the soap. Further research on large-scale production processes with a sustainable approach is also needed to ensure that this product remains environmentally friendly while meeting market demand. In addition, marketing studies to identify consumer preferences for moringa leaf extract-based soap can help maximize its commercial potential.

ACKNOWLEDGMENS

The researcher would like to express his appreciation and gratitude to the Al-Kamal Institute of Science and Technology (ISTA) for providing full support during the research process. Gratitude is also expressed to the ISTA Chemical Engineering Laboratory for the facilities and equipment used in the manufacture and testing of bar soap from moringa leaf extract.

We also thank the research team for their hard work, dedication, and incredible collaboration in completing this research. Last but not least, our deepest appreciation goes to the test panel who were willing to take the time to participate in the testing, provide valuable input, and help us in refining the product. The support from all parties has enabled this research to be carried out well and provide useful results.

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