

Analysis of antioxidant and standardisation of ethanol extract of rumput mutiara (*Oldelandia corymbosa* L.)

Irma Erika Herawati^{1*}, Syumillah Saepudin²

¹Departement of Pharmacy, Indonesian School of Pharmacy

Jl. Soekarno-Hatta Number 354, Bandung, West Java, Indonesia

²Departement of Pharmacy, Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Al-Ghifari University

Cisaranten Kulon Number 140, Bandung, West Java, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

The majority of traditional medicinal plants in Indonesia lack scientific validation. Scientific assessment, in conjunction with traditional knowledge, is crucial for acquiring effective pharmaceuticals for commercial use. Rumput mutiara (*Oldelandia corymbosa* L) is a member of the Rubiaceae family and has been utilized as a traditional medicinal plant for the treatment of various ailments. The objective of this research was to assess the quality of both specific and non-specific parameters and to investigate the antioxidant potential of *rumput mutiara*. Antioxidant activity was evaluated with 2,2-diphenyl-1-picrylhydrazyl (DPPH). The findings for non-specific parameters indicated that the shrinkage drying of the extract and the water content were $18.00 \pm 0.000\%$ and $12.20 \pm 0.000\%$, respectively. Simultaneously, particular parameters indicate that the extracts possess a distinct odor, exhibit a blackish-brown hue, and display a viscous consistency. Microscopic parameters of rumput mutiara simplicia showed fragments such as anthers, leaf mesophyll, epidermis and stomata, transport bundles, stem parenchym, and sclerenchyma. Specific parameters, such as the water-soluble content, and ethanol-soluble compounds were $72.00 \pm 0.000\%$ and $35.00 \pm 0.000\%$, respectively. The extract has strong antioxidant activity with IC_{50} value of $14.11 \pm 0.008 \mu\text{g/mL}$.

Keywords: rumput mutiara, specific parameters, non-specific parameters, antioxidant, DPPH

*Corresponding author:

Irma Erika Herawati

Departement of Pharmacy, Indonesian School of Pharmacy

Jl. Soekarno-Hatta Number 354, Bandung, West Java, Indonesia

Email: irmaerika@stfi.ac.id



INTRODUCTION

Rumput mutiara (*Oldenlandia corymbosa* L.) is a member in the Rubiaceae that has been utilized as a traditional medicinal plant. The plant exhibits multiple therapeutic properties, such as detoxification, diuretic stimulation, blood circulation enhancement, and mitigation of urinary difficulties. It has also been applied in the treatment of gastrointestinal cancers, lymphatic tumors, hepatic and laryngeal carcinomas. Moreover, its traditional uses extend to ailments like appendicitis, hepatitis, pulmonary infections, gallbladder disorders, urinary tract infections, soft tissue inflammation, and snakebite management (Al Bashera et al., 2021; Archana et al., 2021; Patel et al., 2014).

To maintain their qualities, medicinal plants need ways to prove their identification, purity, and quality. To maintain the quality of raw plant-derived materials used in medicine, standardization serves as a key regulatory approach. The process from standardisation is a quality assurance technique that ensures that the parameters of medicinal plants remain constant (Muhtadi & Ningrum, 2019).

Despite the widespread traditional use and recognized benefits of rumput mutiara in the community, scientific research regarding its quality parameters remains limited. Therefore, standardization efforts are essential to ensure the consistency, efficacy, and safety of rumput mutiara as a medicinal plant. This study aimed to identify specific and non-specific characteristics of herbal medicinal substances in accordance with the standards set by the Indonesian Ministry of Health and the National Agency of Drug and Food Control (Badan POM RI). Non-specific parameters such as shrinkage drying, and water content were measured. Extract identity and organoleptic evaluation, microscopic identification, determination of compound dissolved in certain solvents, phytochemical screening. The antioxidant activity of the extract was also examined using the DPPH (2,2-diphenyl-1-picrylhydrazyl) assay in this study.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

Materials

Rumput mutiara herbs were collected from Kebun Percobaan Manoko, Cikahuripan, Lembang, Kabupaten Bandung Barat, Jawa Barat. The plants were identified at the Plant Taxonomy Laboratory, Department of Biology, Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Padjadjaran University, Jatinangor, West Java, with number authentication 16/HB/06/2022, which claimed that the plant used was rumput mutiara (*Oldenlandia corymbosa* L.). Ethanol and DPPH were analytical grade and bought from Sigma-Aldrich (St. Louis, USA).

Extraction

The herbs of rumput mutiara were macerated using 70% ethanol as the solvent for 3x24 h. The process was applied by changing the solvents every 24 hours. Then, the collected extracts were evaporated in a rotary vaporator at 40–50 °C until the extracts acquired their constant volume (Kusuma et al., 2017).

Shrinkage drying measurement

A closed, preheated weighing container that had been previously weighed while empty was filled with one gramme of extract. With the container's lid removed, the extract was heated in an oven at a temperature of 105 °C. Weighing bottle is positioned in the desiccator until it reaches room temperature. This procedure is performed iteratively until a constant weight is achieved, defined as a variation of no more than 0.0005g between successive weighings (Departemen Kesehatan, 2020).

Water content

An amount of 3 g extract was wrapped in aluminum foil and placed into a dry round-bottom flask. A volume of 50 mL toluene was introduced via a vertical condenser, and the mixture was gently heated for one hour. After this, the condenser was rinsed with toluene, and after the water and toluene layers had fully separated, the volume of the aqueous phase was measured (Departemen Kesehatan, 2020).

Extract identity and organoleptic evaluation of extracts

The extract identification encompasses a nomenclatural description, alternative designations of the plant, including its Indonesian name, and the specific plant parts utilized. The assessed organoleptic qualities encompass the extract's color, aroma, and flavor ([Departemen Kesehatan, 2020](#)).

Microscopic identification of simplicia from rumput mutiara

The powder of rumput mutiara herb were positioned on a glass object, treated with a chloral hydrate solution, and sealed with a cover glass. The substance was further heated using a Bunsen burner with tube clamps, maintained below boiling point, until completely dry. The specimens were subsequently examined under a microscope at a magnification of 10x ([Departemen Kesehatan, 2020](#)).

Identifying the substances that dissolve in particular solutions

The powder of rumput mutiara herb (3 g) were divided equally to obtain two samples named Extract A and Extract B. Extract A macerated in a closed container with 50 mL chloroform water for 24 hours, and Extract B in 96% ethanol under identical conditions. After filtration, 10 mL of each extract was evaporated in pre-weighed dishes at 105 °C until no further weight change was observed ([Departemen Kesehatan, 2020](#)).

Phytochemical screening

Using phytochemical screening, which involves examining alkaloids, flavonoids, saponins, steroids, tannins, triterpenoids, and glycosides, the chemical components in the ethanol extract of rumput mutiara plants are identified ([Nur et al., 2022](#)).

Antioxidant activity assay

To determine antioxidant activity, a 40 ppm DPPH solution was prepared using 96% ethanol and left in the dark for 20 minutes. The absorbance was taken across 400–700 nm. *Rumput mutiara* extract and ascorbic acid were dissolved in 96% ethanol and diluted into five concentrations. Each sample (1 mL) was mixed with 2 mL of DPPH solution, then incubated for 20 minutes. Absorbance was measured at the absorbance maximum, and the inhibition percentage was calculated according to formula (1). A linear regression analysis was performed to calculate the IC₅₀ value from the concentration–inhibition curve ([Saptarini & Herawati, 2018](#)).

$$\%inhibition = \frac{Abs\ DPPH - Abs\ sample}{Abs\ DPPH} \times 100\% \quad \dots\dots\dots (1)$$

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The current research employed maceration method, using 70% ethanol. During maceration process, ethanol will permeate the simplicia cell wall and then penetrate the plant cell cavity, which houses the active constituents. The extraction solution will solubilize the secondary metabolites from the plant. Because of its potential to increase cell wall permeability and make it easier to extract both non-polar and polar components, ethanol was selected as the solvent. The concentrated fluid was expelled from the cell due to the disparity in active component concentration between the intracellular and extracellular environments ([Kusuma et al., 2017](#)). The extract yield from this research was 10.39%.

Non-specific parameters that have been studied in this research include shrinkage drying and moisture measurement from simplicia and extract. The drying shrinkage parameter is used to indicate the range of compound loss that occurs during the drying process. In the meanwhile, simplicia, extract quality, and storage capacity are correlated with water content.

Table 1. The characterization of non-specific parameters from rumput mutiara

Parameters (%)	Specimens	
	Simplicia	Extract
Shrinkage drying	7.5	18.00 ± 0.000
Water content	4.4	12.20 ± 0.000

n=2

Shrinkage drying and water content from simplicia do not surpass 10%, whereas the thick extract category has a water content range no more than 14.00%. According to [Table 1](#), both simplicia and extract comply with the standards set by the Indonesian Herbal Pharmacopoeia ([Kemenkes, 2017](#)).

Identifying extract and organoleptic properties is a particular criterion that aims to provide objective information about material identity by just introducing materials. The parameter must be determined to provide an objective identify based on the compound's name and specific identity. The organoleptic features of the ethanolic extract of rumput mutiara were studied. [Table 2](#) presents the outcomes of assessments on form, color, aroma, and flavor.

Table 2. The identification and organoleptic characteristics of rumput mutiara

Parameters	Characteristics
Identity	
Scientific name for plants	<i>Oldelandia corymbosa</i> L.
Used parts	Whole parts
Indonesian name plants	Rumput mutiara
Organoleptic	
Form	Thick
Color	Blackish-brown
Smell	Specific
Taste	Bitter

The objective of utilizing a microscope to analyze rumput mutiara plant powder is to identify the characteristics of herb identification pieces. The chloral hydrate solution is designed to eliminate cellular components including protein and starch, hence enhancing the visibility of cellular identifying fragments in the herbs under a microscope ([Fatmawati et al., 2022](#)). [Table 3](#) illustrates the existence of anthers, leaf mesophyll, epidermis and stomata, vascular bundles, stem parenchyma, and sclerenchyma in the simplicia of rumput mutiara plant.

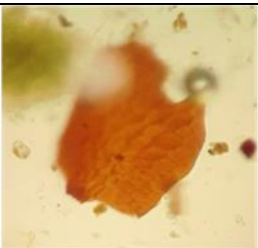
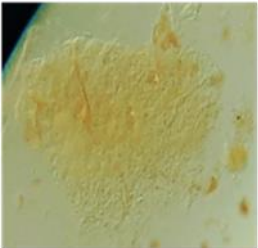
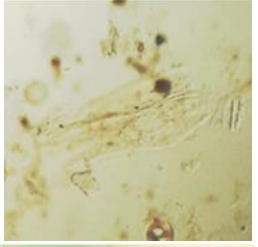
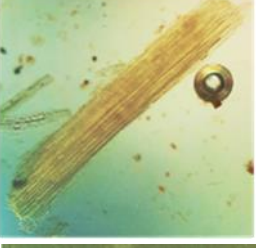
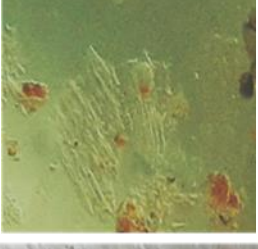
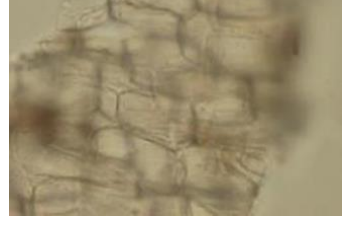
Assessing dissolved compound levels helps in determining the nature of the chemical components within the extract. Water and ethanol are utilized as solvents, with water targeting polar substances and ethanol being effective for semi-polar and non-polar compounds ([Muhtadi & Ningrum, 2019](#)).

[Table 4](#) indicates that rumput mutiara exhibits greater solubility in water compared to ethanol. The findings indicated that the compounds present in rumput mutiara extract are polar. The polar extract of rumput mutiara contains compounds including flavonoids, tannins, and anthraquinones ([Ezeabara & Egbuoba, 2016](#); [Palanivelu et al., 2014](#)).

Phytochemical screening reveals the constituents of plant extracts, identifying predominant components, and aids in the discovery of chemical compounds suitable for the development of effective pharmaceuticals. The color changes resulting from a reaction with a particular response are observed qualitatively during phytochemical screening. The objective of this phytochemical screening is to determine secondary metabolite of both simplicia and extracts.

[Table 5](#) presents the findings of the phytochemical screening. Phytochemical screening results indicate that rumput mutiara exhibits antioxidant activity owing to the presence of phenolic and flavonoid components.

Table 3. Microscopic fragments from rumpu mutiara

Microscopic Parameter	Observation	Citation (Herbal Pharmacopoeia of Indonesia, 2017)
Anthers		
Mesophyll of leaves		
Epidermis and Stomata		-
Transport bundles		
Stem parenchyma		
Sclerenchyma		-

Secondary metabolites such as flavonoids, alkaloids, saponins, terpenoids and glycosides, are abundantly present in medicinal plants and are recognized for their significant bioactivity. The chromatographic method is the most often employed technique for the separation of plant constituents among the several accessible approaches.

Table 4. Water and alcohol soluble compounds of rumput mutiara

Parameter	Characteristics
Water soluble compounds	72.00 ± 0.000 %
Ethanol soluble compounds	35.00 ± 0.000 %

n=2

Phytochemical analyses of *Rumput Mutiara* have revealed the presence of several bioactive constituents, including polysaccharides, proteins, polyphenols, flavonoids, tannins, glycosides, saponins, steroids, and triterpenes (Ghosh et al., 2018). According to (Ghosh et al., 2018), a study on *Rumput Mutiara* revealed variations in total plant pigments, including chlorophyll and carotenoids across different herbal samples.

Table 5. Results of identification of secondary metabolites of rumput mutiara

Phytochemical Test	Simplicia	Extract
Alkaloids	+	+
Phenolics	+	+
Flavonoids	+	+
Tannins	+	+
Saponins	+	+
Steroids	+	+
Glycosides	+	+

*(+) = positive test (exist); (-) = negative test (not exist)

Alkaloids are mainly produced through the biosynthetic pathways of amino acids. Alkaloids, which constitute nearly 20% of the identified plant secondary metabolites, are essential to both biological defense systems and human pharmacotherapy. Their well-documented therapeutic effects include anesthetic, cardioprotective, and anti-inflammatory properties. Clinically relevant alkaloids include nicotine, morphine, quinine, strychnine, and ephedrine (Badri et al., 2019; Heinrich et al., 2021).

Polyphenols comprise a broad group of secondary metabolites distributed widely in the plant. This group includes polyphenolic acids, flavonoids, coumarins, stilbenes, and lignans, along with polymeric forms like tannins. These compounds contribute to the sensory attributes—such as color and aroma—of plant-derived foods, including fruits, vegetables, seeds, and nuts. Their biological significance is increasingly recognized due to their antioxidant activity and potential roles in the prevention of cancer, inflammation, cardiovascular disorders, and neurodegenerative diseases (Hano & Tungmunthum, 2020).

Flavonoids exemplify secondary metabolites found in various herbs, vegetables, fruits, flowers, stems, and seeds. Flavonoids possess biochemical and antioxidant properties that are advantageous in several diseases, including cardiovascular disorders, cancer, and neurological ailments. Flavonoids are scientifically associated with numerous health advantages and are vital in various nutraceutical, pharmacological, therapeutic, and cosmetic uses. This is primarily attributable to their antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, anti-carcinogenic, and anti-mutagenic properties, together with their capacity to regulate essential cellular enzyme activities (Chen et al., 2023; Ekalu & Habila, 2020).

Tannins are astringent polyphenolic compounds derived from plants, commonly located in different parts of herbs. As a polyphenol, tannin has a variety of therapeutic and medical uses, in addition to its antioxidant capabilities, thereby demonstrating a range of pharmacological effects, including anti-toxic,

anticancer, anti-inflammatory, antiallergic, antimicrobial, anthelmintic, antiviral, wound healing, and dysentery treatment, among others (Sharma et al., 2021; Timilsena et al., 2023).

Saponins, a class of glycosides found extensively in plants, are recognized for their foaming behavior in water, reminiscent of soap. These compounds play various biological roles and possess of many pharmacological effects, including hemolysis, anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, cytotoxic, anticancer, and lipid-lowering activities. Evidence also supports their ability to reduce serum cholesterol (Ashour et al., 2019).

In plants, steroids represent a class of unique molecules that significantly influence physiological functions such as growth, development, and reproduction. Steroids found in plants are a class of bioactive secondary metabolites defined by their 5α and 5β gonane carbon backbones. They are categorized according to their structural features, biological functions, and biosynthetic pathways. All subtypes' antiviral, anti-inflammatory, immunomodulatory, and anti-cancer characteristics have been investigated (Yerlikaya et al., 2023).

Plants synthesize a diverse array of secondary metabolites that may be glycosylated. The glycosylation of metabolites in plants fulfils many tasks. Hydrophobic metabolites exhibit increased water solubility following glycosylation, enhancing their biodistribution and metabolic processes. Improved solubility and amphiphilic characteristics resulting from glycosylation may assist glycosylated compounds in crossing cell membranes more efficiently. Glycosylation can generate a non-toxic molecule that may subsequently be reactivated and employed as an aglycone for protection against parasites and herbivorous organisms (Kytidou et al., 2020).

The DPPH assay offers a sensitive, rapid, and simple approach for evaluating the antioxidant capacity of plant extracts. Antioxidant activity is indicated by the transformation of the DPPH solution, which changes color from purple to yellow, reflecting the amount of stabilized free radicals. The literature indicates that maximum wavelength of the DPPH solution is 515.0 nm (Figure 1). Transmitted color at this wavelength is green (500-520 nm) (Saptarini & Herawati, 2018).

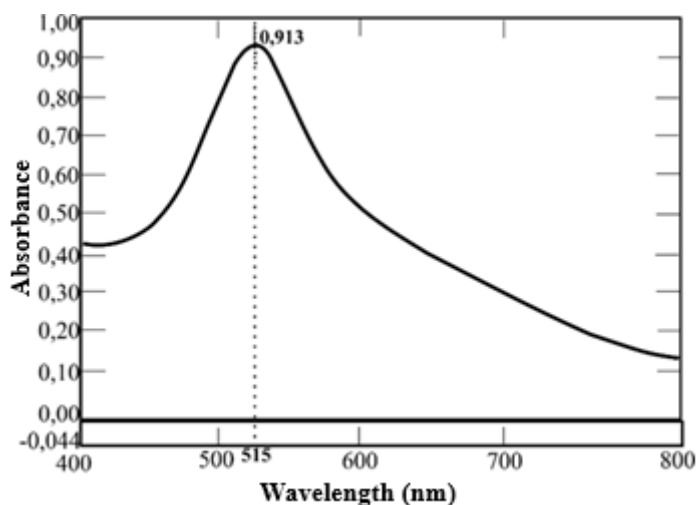


Figure 1. DPPH Wavelength in Spectrophotometer UV-Vis

Vitamin C was chosen as the control in this study because of its proven antioxidant capabilities, primarily through electron donation and radical scavenging mechanisms. It effectively neutralizes reactive species such as oxygen, nitrogen, and sulfur radicals, and plays a role in regenerating other endogenous antioxidants. Additionally, studies in human plasma have shown that vitamin C significantly reduces lipid peroxidation triggered by peroxide radicals (Caritá et al., 2020).

Table 6. Results of the antioxidant activity of rumput mutiara extract

Sample	Concentration (ppm)	Absorbance $\pm$ Standard Deviation (SD)	Inhibition (%)	Linear Regression	IC ₅₀ (μ g/mL)
Vitamin C (standard)	1	0.462 $\pm$ 0.006	49.39	$y = 4.6025x + 44.593$	1.17 $\pm$ 0.016
	2	0.408 $\pm$ 0.023	53.78		
	3	0.359 $\pm$ 0.003	58.21		
	4	0.321 $\pm$ 0.034	62.63		
	5	0.275 $\pm$ 0.004	67.99		
Extract	10	0.468 $\pm$ 0.011	48.74	$y = 0.235x + 46.429$	14.11 $\pm$ 0.008
	30	0.417 $\pm$ 0.005	54.33		
	50	0.375 $\pm$ 0.004	58.93		
	70	0.325 $\pm$ 0.011	64.40		
	90	0.283 $\pm$ 0.004	69.00		

(n=3)

The antioxidant activity of rumput mutiara extract was inferior to that of vitamin C, the positive control, due to the extracts not being pure components, as illustrated Table 6.

(Awe et al., 2013) classify antioxidant activity based on the IC₅₀ with value <50 μ g/mL (very strong), 50-100 μ g/mL (strong), 100-150 μ g/mL (medium), and >200 μ g/mL (weak). Antioxidant activity rumput mutiara extract is exceptionally robust, with an IC₅₀ of 14.11 μ g/mL, equivalent to vitamin C.

Extract's elevated antioxidant activity results from the presence of secondary metabolites, including phenolics and flavonoids (Sasikumar et al., 2010). According to prior research by Sasikumar et al. (2009), antioxidant assays utilizing DPPH exhibited a strong correlation with total phenolic and flavonoid concentration. This study's findings indicate that rumput mutiara possesses the potential to be developed into an antioxidant preparation.

CONCLUSION

The standardisation of rumput mutiara extracts, conducted in accordance with established health department protocols, demonstrated that all metrics satisfied the requisite standards. The TLC examination of rumput mutiara extract revealed the presence of alkaloids, phenolics, flavonoids, tannins, saponins, steroids, and glycosides across several solvent compositions with differing R_f values. The antioxidant activity was demonstrated by IC₅₀ values of 14.11 $\pm$ 0.008 μ g/mL, indicating robust antioxidant efficacy.

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