

Student shares interesting findings at a regional research symposium

The leaves of the *Moringa oleifera* tree have been proven to show anti-microbial properties. These were part of the findings shared by Year 4 College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences' (CMNHS) Bachelor of Medical Laboratory Sciences student, Shweta Shivanghi in a presentation during the 7th Pacific Islands Health Research Symposium (PIHRS) held at the Pearl Resort in Pacific Harbour on August 29-30.

The lab sciences student stated that her experiment demonstrated that heating the extract contributed to the active constituent of the leaf and further enhanced its antimicrobial properties.

Through her findings, Shivanghi now hopes to pursue her research extending to the other parts of the *Moringa oleifera* leaves (Saijan in Hindi and Boro ni Idia in i-taukei).

"I pursued this research out of inquisition, and I found out that there were anti-fungal and anti-bacterial properties present and the results were more promising when compared to other studies," she said.

"I hope that the research will lead me to a point where the *Moringa oleifera* plant could be substituted for commercial medicine," added the Fiji National University (FNU) student.

She acknowledged her supervisor, Sakiusa Cabe, for his guidance and support during her research.

Meanwhile, the Ministry for Health and Medical Services Director for Research and Innovation, Dr Eric Rafai shared his appreciation on the quality of student research and result presentations.

"I would like to encourage all you students to continue with your work because this is just a start of your research journey," Dr Rafai said.



Shweta Shivanghi (1st right) after her presentation during the PIHRS.

He added that any research starts with a small idea but later develops into groundbreaking findings.

"I would like to thank all our students who have contributed to this Symposium, and we look forward to collaborating with your research."

"I am amazed to see how bold you are. Being able to stand up, present and answer questions from our senior consultants, academic and international presenters speaks volumes," Dr Rafai commented.

Note: *Moringa oleifera* is a fast-growing, drought-resistant tree of the family Moringaceae, native to tropical and subtropical regions of South Asia. [Source: Wikipedia.](#)



Other student presenters during the Symposium.