

## Strategies for Herbal Knowledge Inheritance Through Non-Formal Education in Traditional Villages

### Strategi Pewarisan Pengetahuan Herbal Melalui Pendidikan Non-Formal di Kampung Tradisional

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#### **Abstract**

*In the current context of globalization, the process of passing on traditional knowledge, particularly in relation to medicinal plant applications, faces significant hurdles. Kampung Adat Dangieng, facing this challenge, has initiated the establishment of Sekolah Adat as a non-formal education initiative aimed at the conservation and transmission of cultural and traditional knowledge to the next generation. This research investigates Sekolah Adat in Kampung Dangieng as an institution that plays an important role in knowledge preservation, where traditional healing principles and ritualistic practices are passed on across generations. Qualitative methodology, specifically case studies, was adopted in this research, providing a more narrative and exploratory approach to data collection. Through direct interaction, observation of daily rituals, and literature review, the research gathered information enriched by snowball sampling techniques from informants. The results reveal Sekolah Adat as an entity steeped in traditional values, functioning not only as an educational institution but as a living repository of medicinal plant knowledge and ritual practices. The Sekolah Adat introduces a unique pedagogical approach, combining lectures, demonstrations and practical applications, which overall enriches the spiritual existence of learners. The program creates a synergy between traditional herbal wisdom, modern chemical principles, and deep inner healing techniques. Although this integration of tradition and modernity poses challenges, especially in the aspect of scientific validation of ancestral practices, a strong commitment to the efficacy of traditional medicine, supported by generations of knowledge and anecdotes, continues to overcome such obstacles. In conclusion, Sekolah Adat Dangieng stands as a testament to the resilience of traditions that are able to adapt elegantly amidst the changing modern world. It signifies the importance of local wisdom in keeping cultural heritage alive and relevant amidst fast-changing global dynamics.*

**Keywords:** *Dangieng traditional school, knowledge inheritance, local wisdom, non-formal education, traditional medicinal plants*

## Abstrak

Dalam konteks globalisasi saat ini, proses pewarisan pengetahuan tradisional, khususnya terkait dengan aplikasi tanaman obat, menghadapi berbagai rintangan signifikan. Kampung Adat Dangiang, menghadapi tantangan ini, telah memprakarsai pendirian Sekolah Adat sebagai inisiatif pendidikan non-formal yang ditujukan untuk konservasi dan transmisi pengetahuan budaya dan tradisi kepada generasi berikutnya. Penelitian ini menginvestigasi Sekolah Adat di Kampung Dangiang sebagai institusi yang berperan penting dalam pelestarian pengetahuan, dimana prinsip-prinsip penyembuhan tradisional dan praktik ritualistik diwariskan lintas generasi. Metodologi kualitatif, khususnya studi kasus, diadopsi dalam penelitian ini, memberikan pendekatan yang lebih naratif dan eksploratif dalam pengumpulan data. Melalui interaksi langsung, observasi terhadap ritual sehari-hari, dan review literatur, penelitian ini mengumpulkan informasi yang diperkaya oleh teknik sampling bola salju dari para informan. Hasilnya mengungkap Sekolah Adat sebagai entitas yang sarat dengan nilai-nilai tradisi, berfungsi bukan hanya sebagai lembaga edukasi tetapi sebagai repositori hidup dari pengetahuan tentang tanaman obat dan praktik ritual. Sekolah Adat ini memperkenalkan pendekatan pedagogis yang unik, menggabungkan ceramah, demonstrasi, dan aplikasi praktis, yang secara keseluruhan memperkaya keberadaan spiritual peserta didik. Program ini menciptakan sinergi antara kearifan herbal tradisional, prinsip-prinsip kimia modern, dan teknik penyembuhan batin yang mendalam. Meskipun integrasi antara tradisi dan modernitas ini menimbulkan tantangan, terutama dalam aspek validasi ilmiah dari praktek-praktek ancestral, komitmen kuat terhadap efikasi obat tradisional, yang didukung oleh generasi pengetahuan dan anekdot, terus mengatasi hambatan tersebut. Kesimpulannya, Sekolah Adat Dangiang berdiri sebagai bukti ketahanan tradisi yang mampu beradaptasi dengan elegan di tengah perubahan dunia modern. Ini menandakan pentingnya kearifan lokal dalam menjaga warisan budaya tetap hidup dan relevan di tengah dinamika global yang cepat berubah.

**Kata Kunci:** *kearifan lokal, pendidikan non-formal, pewarisan pengetahuan, sekolah tradisional Dangiang, tanaman obat tradisional*

## Introduction

A COVID-19 pandemic that struck all facets of people's lives at the end of 2019 caused widespread panic until the government finally stepped in and instituted several measures, including vaccinations, social restrictions, and lockdowns that forbade people from leaving or entering their communities. Putting in place a lockdown and social restriction was one of the first tactics. The goal of this strategy was to reduce the spread of the virus by requiring people to stay at home, avoid needless travel, and minimize social gatherings. Not only did the tragedy have a negative impact on health, but it also had negative social, economic, and psychological effects. This invisible enemy didn't just bring illness; it reshaped economies, stirred social and political dynamics, and transformed the way we interact, work, and learn (Telaumbanua, 2020).

But peel back the layers, and you'll see that this global challenge doesn't weigh evenly on everyone's shoulders. Dive into the details, and disparities emerge—some communities stand better equipped with medical resources, while others find themselves more vulnerable to the economic and social upheaval. Factors like how closely we live together, our access to health knowledge, and the

strength of our public health defenses can greatly influence how we weather this storm (Chadijah, 2020). Every group, particularly the indigenous Dangieng population in South Garut, has a unique plan in place to combat this pandemic. According to Zahrotunnimah (2020), each community has a unique strategy for addressing this dilemma, which is determined by the socioeconomic and cultural makeup of the community. Individuals with self-education, for instance, adapt to it by making a point of exercising, tanning, eating well, leading a healthy lifestyle, and finding strategies to maintain a high level of immunity. For those who reside in rural areas, the situation is different, as though they are not concerned about the pandemic since, because of incomplete knowledge, the symptoms closely resemble those of a regular cold. The native population of Dangieng regards this illness as a test, and they have developed a unique method of treatment that involves using medicinal herbs to counteract the effects of COVID-19.

Kampung Adat Dangieng Garut, located in West Java Province, Indonesia, is one of the communities that has been affected by the pandemic in a unique way. As a village that still upholds indigenous traditions and culture, this community relies heavily on social interactions, traditional rituals, and co-operation between community members to continue their daily lives and maintain cultural preservation (Rostiyati, 2011). In traditional societies, knowledge of medicinal plants is often considered one of the important aspects of cultural heritage (Awalludin et al., 2017). This knowledge is usually acquired from generation to generation through oral, practical, and direct experience (Radcliffe & Colleta, n.d.). Medicinal plants are an integral part of people's lives, both as a source of medicine and as part of rituals and traditions (Asfaw et al., 2023). The elders of Dangieng, for example, have in-depth knowledge of the different types of medicinal plants and how to use them. They understand the properties of the plants, the right dosage, and the correct way of processing. Their fear is that this valuable knowledge could be lost if not properly passed on to the next generation. Especially in the current era of globalisation, many young people are more interested in chemical medicines than traditional medicinal plants.

In the contemporary pharmaceutical context, the presence of medicinal plants offers an interesting and potential alternative. According to research Rahman (2022), medicinal plants are not only a cultural heritage but also have specific pharmacological and therapeutic advantages. Compared to synthetic drugs derived from chemical compounds, medicinal plants are known to have a milder side effect profile (Muis & Biopsi Puji, 2020). Then Santhyami & Sulistyawati (2021) asserted that the natural origins of medicinal plants contribute to their more biodegradable nature, resulting in minimal negative impact on the environment.

Furthermore, one of the advantages that cannot be ignored from medicinal plants is their economic aspect and availability. Many medicinal plants thrive in various regions and can be found in people's neighborhoods. This makes medicinal plants often more affordable in terms of cost and more accessible than synthetic drugs that require complex production processes (Kumlaga et al., 2015) strengthens this argument by identifying those medicinal plants, especially in developing countries, are often the first choice in treatment due to availability and financial aspects.

In the era of globalization, information flows and intercultural interactions are fast and dynamic. This is something that deserves careful attention, because with the amount of information coming in, especially with the existence of social media and the interaction of indigenous peoples with outside communities, there will be a clash of cultures. The impact of the meeting of different cultures plus the exposure to such dense information through social media will inevitably have an unexpected impact on traditional values in indigenous communities. The undesirable impact is the shift in community pride and understanding of the importance of their own cultural identity and heritage (Setyawati et al., 2014). For example, the treatment of diseases that have been relying on herbal plants as the main suberm of their treatment will be displaced by information from outside that shows modern and more reliable medical treatment because it has gone through a series of tests in the laboratory and is recognised by government agencies. In line with what was said by Marpaung (2013), who argued that currently the interaction of indigenous peoples with outsiders through visits and social media tends to blur the understanding and pride of the community in their own identity and cultural heritage, even distrust of the medicinal knowledge that has been passed down from generation to generation with modern medical treatment.

In some cases, in indigenous communities, local wisdom in the form of knowledge of herbal plants for treatment is now starting to be replaced by modern medical treatment, if in the past they felt a fever, cough and cold enough to eat honje plants and kencur, nowadays people prefer to buy chemical drugs at stalls because of the instant effect. Therefore, the current challenge is how local wisdom that includes knowledge, traditions and health practices using herbal plants is maintained and valued, because if not, the knowledge will gradually disappear.

The knowledge of using herbal plants for health is a wisdom of the Dangi community that has been passed down from generation to generation. A traditional medicine approach that is different from modern medical treatment, which is believed to be able to treat and cure various diseases, this local wisdom is the result of the interaction of previous ancestors with their environment for centuries, giving birth to the view that humans must live with nature, if humans protect nature, then nature will protect humans (Komariah & Subekti, 2016). In other words, with this view, the Dangi community believes that everything is already available in nature including medicine for all types of diseases.

However, at present, such local wisdom is in danger of being lost to rapid globalisation because the younger generation is not interested in learning such knowledge. Not only is this a loss of such a unique and indigenous culture, it will also diminish the cultural identity of the indigenous people themselves (Susanti et al., 2022). It is therefore important to instill in the younger generation an understanding of the uniqueness and authenticity of local wisdom, and even if it can be packaged well, it will bring social and economic benefits. It is necessary to think about the steps that must be taken to maintain, preserve and even promote local wisdom during modernization so that people do not forget their own cultural roots.

In line with what was said by Sukmayadi (2016)) and Marjanto (2019), that currently traditional knowledge, especially related to medicinal plants, is now

endangered due to the lack of effective inheritance to the younger generation. The younger generation prefers modern medical knowledge and treatment compared to using herbal plants for their health needs. This is a result of sophisticated communication and information technology that provides many sources of information, especially related to modern medical treatment, so that many of the younger generation tend to turn to modern medicine rather than using herbal plants inherited from their ancestors.

The more sophisticated the means of communication, the easier it is for people to find information and exchange information, especially the younger generation who use social media and digital media as their main source of information (Müller et al., 2018). This dynamic is both an opportunity and a challenge, because with the convenience provided by modern communication tools, it can easily educate and reach out to young generations among indigenous peoples. According to Makulua (2021), the use of digital media as a communication strategy tool is the right way to transfer knowledge about medicinal herbal plants. With digital media, information about medicinal herbal plants can not only be presented quickly but can be packaged through audio-visual so that the information is interesting and relevant for the younger generation who are accustomed to digitalization today. With the right approach, we can ensure that this precious medicinal plant heritage is not only kept alive, but also continues to evolve and is being recognized and applied to meet the health needs of people in the modern era.

Recognizing this opportunity, the Indigenous People of Kampung Dangieng responded by establishing Sekolah Adat, a unique non-formal educational institution specifically established to preserve the knowledge of herbal medicinal plants by combining traditional methods with modern educational methods. Through the establishment of the Dangieng Customary School, it is sought to preserve and pass on knowledge of herbal medicinal plants to the younger generation, especially so that young people in Dangieng village do not forget their cultural roots and traditions.

In addition, another goal is to provide young people with an understanding of the values and philosophies contained in the traditions of each existing custom. This is in line with research conducted by N. Rahayu et al. (2014), who conducted research on the importance of Javanese traditional ceremonial rituals as a method of inheriting cultural values. Thus, the establishment of Sekolah Adat by Kampung Adat Dangieng is not only an answer to the challenges of cultural inheritance, but also a reflection of adaptation and innovation efforts to maintain the relevance and sustainability of traditional knowledge in the midst of changing times.

In the context of non-formal education, the Kampung Dangieng Indigenous School has shown that local knowledge such as tradition and culture, in this case the knowledge of medicinal herbs, is not only passed on through oral transmission and direct practice but can also utilize social media platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, etc. So that the inclusion of these two approaches is expected to be beneficial for the local community. So that by including these two approaches, it is hoped that it can preserve this knowledge which is one of the original and distinctive cultural wealth of the Indonesian nation.

This is in line with research conducted by Windia et al. (2020), which conducted research in traditional Balinese schools although the focus of the research was more on how traditional schools support and support tourist villages in Bali. However, this research has the same thing in common, namely the same aim to preserve and pass on local cultural values, through non-formal education to the younger generation and introducing it to a wider audience through social media. Interestingly, the dynamics of inheritance and preservation of local culture are also highlighted in research conducted by Nurdiansah (2017), which confirms that local culture-based education can be used as an effective tool to be able to preserve and introduce the local wisdom of an indigenous community to a wide audience, apart from inheritance in the younger generation among them. In Nurdiansyah's research, it is said that the principles of Sundanese culture (in this case, pamali culture) can be integrated into the curriculum of elementary school children, so as to teach students from an early age to understand, appreciate and preserve their local wisdom.

These methods show that there is a strong push in education to combine traditional principles with modern learning approaches. This increases the younger generation's understanding and appreciation of cultural heritage so that they are willing and able to implement their knowledge, especially regarding medicinal herbs for health.

Sekolah Adat in Kampung Adat Dangieng uses this approach of integrating traditional and modern education by utilizing digital media to help the younger generation understand and appreciate cultural heritage. Through this approach, the younger generation is taught to value and continue long-established practices in their community, such as melak tandur, treatment using wirid and jampe, and other customary rituals.

The use of herbs in adat-based medicine reflects an approach to health that incorporates the natural and spiritual resources of the community as an important component of their cultural structure. In the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, treatment by utilizing natural resources is one of the local wisdoms of indigenous peoples, especially when access to health facilities is limited due to regional restrictions, making knowledge of these medicinal plants very important (Sumartias et al., 2019). So in this case the traditional school is not only a means of non-formal learning but also as a health communication center by disseminating information about the use of herbal plants for health as first aid when someone is sick.

Apart from being a means of passing on knowledge of medicinal herbs, the Dangieng Customary School is also a non-formal educational institution for indigenous people regarding philosophy, the way of life of the community with a curriculum of history, mythology, values, the benefits of each plant and how to use it, the value of water and land in the customary view. Thus, the community not only understands and is able to practice the use of medicinal herbal plants for health but also the background and philosophy behind it. In this era of modernization and digitalization, one of which is marked by the increasingly modern modern medical treatment, it is a threat to the sustainability of cultural wisdom and traditions, especially regarding health. Seeing this phenomenon, Kampung Adat Dangieng,

through the establishment of Sekolah Adat, is one of their efforts in preserving and enriching cultural heritage so that it is not forgotten and eroded.

In this context, the school is not only an educational institution, but also a platform for knowledge transfer that combines traditional and modern methods in the teaching and learning process. The curriculum content in these indigenous schools is designed to transmit information about the use of herbal medicinal plants but also includes learning about the cultural and historical context of each medicinal plant studied. One of the pedagogical approaches applied in the Indigenous School is "Experiential Learning", which is a hands-on learning approach. Learners are invited to mingle with nature, interact directly with medicinal plants and directly practice the preparation of medicinal plants until they can be consumed. The benefit of this pedagogical technique is that learners gain direct sensory and cognitive experience (Mulyono, 2012). This process helps them to understand the types of plants and direct applications related to the treatment procedures, along with direct narration from the teachers about the philosophical values behind the treatment procedures.

Kampung Dangiang Indigenous school education is a local culture-based learning approach that aims to preserve local knowledge about herbal medicine without forgetting the cultural identity and philosophical values behind it. In addition, by combining traditional methods through lectures and direct practice but also combined with modern methods using digital media (Luji, 2020). By using digital media, information can be presented in the form of audio-visual digital broadcasts which are of course more interesting to see, and can be known by the public, not only the Dangiang Indigenous people. In this reality, the view of traditions and cultural customs clashing with modern culture can be broken, instead they can complement each other so that the goal of preserving cultural customs, especially knowledge of medicinal plants, is still well implemented.

From the above reality, non-formal education can be used to preserve cultural wealth while bridging between tradition, culture and modernity so that the result is that in addition to preserving culture, it can also promote the culture to a wider audience. So, it is necessary to think about how an effective communication strategy that combines tradition and modernity in exploring the inheritance of medicinal plants during this era. Based on this background, the purpose of this research is formulated as how the reality of non-formal education and custom-based health communication can survive during a pandemic and how solutions are offered in facing these challenges.

## **Methods**

This research uses a qualitative method with a case study approach from (Creswell, 2002), which is an appropriate method to describe and understand complex socio-cultural phenomena such as the reality that exists in Kampung Adat Dangiang. Through this approach, the researcher can freely explore the meanings, perceptions and experiences of the Dangiang indigenous people who receive non-formal education regarding treatment using herbal plants. This approach allows researchers to mingle, interact with them to conduct direct observations, direct

interviews and try to understand the meanings hidden behind all their actions. In addition, by interacting directly and mingling with the community, it allows researchers to ask directly with informants, extracting information can occur in a dialogical and two-way manner and if there is unclear data, it can be directly confirmed. In addition, interacting directly will build trust between researchers and informants so that the data generated can be authentic. Subject of Research is The Dangiing indigenous people who receive non-formal education regarding treatment using herbal plants. Object of Research is The communication strategy of inheriting medicinal knowledge using herbal plants at the Dangiing Traditional School.

The choice of case study according to Creswell & Creswell (2018) is the right choice so that researchers can focus on a particular case. In the context of this research, the case is the communication strategy of inheriting medicinal knowledge using herbal plants using non-formal education at the Dangiing Traditional School. Through the case study approach, researchers can deeply examine and understand how traditional schools can play a role in preserving and transferring knowledge to the younger generation who prefer modern medical treatment. As well as researchers can understand and study the learning methods used by the Dangiing Traditional School to keep it interesting and effective in the learning and knowledge transfer process.

The sampling technique used in this research is snowball sampling technique (Bajari, 2015). The selected key informant is the head of the Dangiing Village Customary School who knows thoroughly about the non-formal education of the customary school because he is directly involved and is a teacher at the school. Based on the direction of the Adat leader, the researcher was then directed to interview the elders of the adat institution, teachers at the adat school, students at the adat school and other indigenous people.

Data were collected through several methods: 1) in-depth interviews with all selected informants to gain an understanding of their experiences, their perceptions and their opinions regarding the indigenous school; 2) the researcher conducted direct observation by participating in teaching and learning activities at the indigenous school, interacting with teachers and students at the indigenous school, observing practical activities and attending lectures related to the process of transferring local wisdom knowledge; 3) then the researcher conducted a literature study to be able to provide understanding and views from various relevant scientific literature (Moleong, 2000).

After the data were collected, the researchers took several steps starting from data reduction and data classification to facilitate further analysis. The findings of the field findings are then carried out data validation, namely through source triangulation, this is done by comparing data from various informants, then conducting discussions and confirming with informants whether the data is correct or not. With this method, it is hoped that it can provide a clear picture of the reality of non-formal education and custom-based health communication in the midst of a pandemic.



## Results and Discussion

One of the characteristics of indigenous villages is their efforts to maintain local traditions and wisdom so that they are not forgotten and lost to external influences (Tramontane, 2017). Kampung Adat Dangieng, like other indigenous villages, is doing the same thing, maintaining the customs of cultural heritage and trying to adapt to technological advances without losing the identity and traditions of their heritage.

One of the efforts made to survive in this globalization era, inevitably every indigenous village is required to be able to adapt for the preservation of their cultural identity (Boiral et al., 2020). Adaptation here means adjusting relevant customs and traditions, for example, treatment using medicinal plants whose efficacy in the past only adhered to the belief in stories from ancestors (parents), now with the development of modern media technology medicinal plants can be proven through laboratories. Thus, although the Dangieng indigenous people follow and adapt to the development of the times, they do not forget the heritage of their ancestors, but can strengthen their belief in the efficacy of medicinal plants by borrowing modern medical technology (L. M. Rahayu et al., 2010). Thus, customs and traditions that have been passed down from generation to generation will not be lost in time and can reinforce the beliefs of the people who believe in them.

The customary chief of Dangieng gave an analogy that customary heritage is like a very large tree that has many branches and roots. The roots reflect a firm belief in tradition and custom, although many customs cannot be explained using logic, all aspects of customary traditions are interrelated to support the welfare and harmony of indigenous peoples, both with nature and with fellow communities. The roots, although having different pathways and characteristics, come together with the single purpose of providing stability and strength for the tree (indigenous culture) to grow and flourish.

The Sekolah Adat in Kampung Dangieng Garut reflects the local community's commitment to maintaining their ancestral heritage during changing times. Built on a strong desire to revive and preserve traditional rituals such as 'melak tandur', traditional medicine, behavioral science, and weton science, Sekolah Adat is a place where the younger generation is taught values and wisdom that have been passed down for centuries.

One of the important aspects taught at Sekolah Adat is traditional herbal-based medicine. The people of Dangieng Garut have a holistic view of health, where medical intervention is not the only solution. Herbal plants, in their view, have two main functions: 1) First Aid: In emergency situations, such as when someone is suddenly sick in the middle of the night, herbs become the first solution. Being easily accessible and widely recognized by the community is an advantage in providing a quick response; 2) Alternative to Chemical Medicine: There is a deep concern among indigenous peoples regarding the side effects of excessive use of chemical medicines. According to them, chemical drugs tend to only relieve symptoms without curing the source of the problem. On the other hand, herbs are seen as having the ability to get to the root of the disease, although the healing process may take longer (Amrati et al., 2021).

However, this community remains humble in their knowledge. They recognize that the effectiveness of herbs, from a contemporary scientific perspective, may yet to be fully proven through laboratory tests. Their knowledge so far is based more on oral traditions and empirical experiences passed down through generations. The Dangieng Garut indigenous people believe that the true source of healing and health comes from the Almighty. In their view, every treatment effort, whether through herbs or prayers, is only a means to get closer to His will. While chemical drugs may provide a quick solution, they believe that herbs have the power to heal the disease to its roots, not just relieve symptoms. As such, Sekolah Adat is not only a place of knowledge transfer, but also a custodian of the deep values and philosophy of life of the Dangieng Garut indigenous people, who view the balance between body, mind and spirit as the key to true well-being.

Continuing the effort to preserve local wisdom that has been initiated, the Indigenous School in Kampung Dangieng Garut does not only serve as a place of education on traditional medicine. More than that, the school is a comprehensive education center that educates the younger generation about the intricacies of village culture and customs. History of Dangieng Village: Understanding the origins and history of the village is an important foundation for every individual in Dangieng. Through this knowledge, the younger generation is taught to honour the footsteps of the ancestors and understand the context in which customs and traditions developed; 1) Sekolah Adat also teaches kasepuhan sciences, such as wirid and jampe. These are an integral part of the spiritual life of the Dangieng people, being the bridge that connects them to the Almighty and the surrounding nature; 2) Rituals are a concrete expression of the community's values and beliefs. At Sekolah Adat, students are introduced and trained to perform various rituals related to the customs and beliefs of the Dangieng community, so that they can continue this tradition in the future.

One of the important innovations undertaken by Sekolah Adat is the systematic documentation of traditional medical knowledge. Knowledge that has been passed down orally from generation to generation is now collected, documented and booked. This not only ensures the sustainability of the knowledge, but also facilitates the learning process for the younger generation (Radha et al., 2022). When it comes to the veracity or efficacy of medicinal plants, Sekolah Adat emphasizes the direct experience of elders as its main indicator. This trust stems from the belief that knowledge that has been applied and provided tangible benefits for centuries has its own basis in truth, even though it may not have been fully validated by contemporary science.

As such, education at the Sekolah Adat reflects a combination of traditional customary traditions and modern innovations, emphasizing that tradition and progress and change are not contradictory but rather complementary. This is what creates a balance for the Dangieng Indigenous community to maintain their cultural identity without being in the midst of the times.

In addition to non-formal education through the Dangieng Garut Traditional School, they also take independent steps to preserve medicinal plants that have become part of their lives in the context of health. When people suffer from illnesses such as headaches, diarrhea, dizziness, malaise, etc., they will first use herbal plants

for initial treatment because medicinal plants must be easily accessible. The concrete effort is for each community to plant medicinal plants in their home environment such as cikur, koneng, ginger, kirinyuh, jambe, cat whisker leaves, betel nut, lemongrass etc. This is not only a form of their commitment but also a form of their commitment to the community. This is not only a form of their commitment to the preservation of medicinal plants but also a guarantee of the availability of herbal resources if needed at any time.

Before delving further into Sekolah Adat and the education it provides, it is important to understand the basic conceptual framework of adat in the view of the people of Dangieng Village. For them, adat is not just a set of traditional rules, but also a representation of the noble values that form the foundation of their socio-cultural life (Rostiyati, 2020). Customs for the Dangieng community can be interpreted as rules that must be obeyed to get blessings and pleasure from God Almighty. In practice, adat has a deeper dimension, reflecting three basic principles:

**Obedience:** Customs are respected and carried out with full awareness that behind every rule and tradition, there is a deep essence or meaning given by the elders. For example, the tradition of melak tandur, which must be done on odd dates, has its own philosophy that is believed to bring blessings. Adherence to customs is not just an adherence to norms, but also a form of respect for ancestral heritage.

**Unison:** In line with the concept of togetherness, customs also teach the importance of doing activities together. Through unison, such as in farming activities, the Dangieng community can build solidarity and strengthen the bonds of brotherhood. These benefits not only impact on crop yields, but also on the harmony of social relations among community members.

**Traditional Agriculture:** Customs also include agricultural procedures that have been passed down through generations. From crop selection, to seeds, to irrigation techniques, all aspects of agriculture are reflected in customs. This not only ensures the sustainability of farming practices, but also preserves local ecological knowledge that has proven effective over the centuries.

Continuing with the discussion on Sekolah Adat, it is understood that this school is one of the main platforms for teaching and preserving the concept of adat to the younger generation. Thus, Sekolah Adat ensures that the essence and nature of customs continues to be passed down and applied, making the people of Kampung Dangieng remain strong in the midst of changing times.

At Sekolah Adat Kampung Dangieng, education focuses not only on the transmission of knowledge, but also on the internalization of values and principles that underpin local wisdom. Various methods are taught to ensure the effectiveness of teaching and to ensure learners gain in-depth understanding and practical application of the material taught. The following are the educational methods used:

**Table 1.** Educational methods used

Education Methods	Description
Lecture	Lectures are a common method, usually in places considered sacred or historical such as jami mosques or traditional school halls. In these lectures, elders share their experiences and wisdom on the use of medicinal plants. They also provide explanations about the types of plants, their benefits,

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	and treatment procedures, accompanied by certain prayers and jampe.
Demonstration	Demonstrations are carried out to ensure that the participants have a direct practical understanding by seeing the teacher practice the procedures for gathering and using medicinal plants, so that the process of transferring knowledge can be directly carried out.
Direct Practice	Direct practice is carried out by participants/students after seeing demonstrations carried out by their giri, so that they can immediately practice how to concoct and use medicinal plants. For example, they were given the task of making concoctions for several diseases such as diarrhea, headaches, flatulence, etc.
Sharing	Sharing This method is a method of sharing experiences after making and consuming medicinal plants so that the knowledge can be spread and checked along with its efficacy.
Role Model	This is a very effective method, because by setting an example, parents and elders show that they use medicinal plants as first aid instead of modern medical treatment. They also show that most of the people who are sick recover after receiving treatment and concoction of medicines from them. This will strengthen the belief in the younger generation that medicinal plants really can cure no less than modern medical drugs.

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Source: research results 2023

Based on Table 1, the various methods applied at the Dangieng Traditional School ensure that knowledge about medicinal plants and how to use them is not only understood by participants but can also be practiced directly. From the above methods, there are several advantages and strengths, including learning to combine theory and practice so that participants not only get cognitive knowledge but can immediately apply it.

The second method, namely role modelling, is an effective method because it shows that teachers also implement the use of medicinal plants in their daily lives. In addition, Sekolah Adat ensures the sustainability of medicinal plant knowledge by providing opportunities for students to share knowledge received from elders or family. Moreover, in contrast to conventional formal education, education in Sekolah Adat shows adaptation and flexibility, adjusting methods and materials to the needs and context of the community (Windia et al., 2020). For example, when providing the benefits of medicinal plants they not only provide material but also show it with their daily lives.

The educational method applied by the Kampung Dangieng Traditional School, which combines theoretical and practical knowledge, because they realize that lectures without being accompanied by demonstrations and direct practice will be less effective for students, especially children (Sukmadinata, 2009). Therefore, a combination of lecture, demonstration and hands-on practice is applied to ensure

better internalization of knowledge (Sudarsana, 2015). Interestingly, to preserve and pass on knowledge, this community also utilizes technology, especially social media such as YouTube.

Through this platform, they can search, compare and share information about traditional medicine. Then, the information obtained is deliberated upon to be scrutinized and corrected together. Thus, apart from teachers at Sekolah Adat, learners also obtain comparison from external references via the internet. However, there is an obstacle faced by this community, which is the lack of laboratory facilities to conduct medical examinations of the efficacy of herbal plants. This represents a challenge in verifying the veracity of the therapeutic claims taught.

Storytelling techniques are also one of the key methods in passing on knowledge (Bassano et al., 2019). Through the narratives and experiences of parents, traditional leaders and elders, learners are introduced to the procedures, rituals and beliefs related to traditional medicine. For example, the method of using plants based on weton shows how culture and traditional knowledge are intertwined. Although these traditional methods may take longer to show efficacy than chemical drugs, they are still valued and trusted based on the experiences of previous generations and the collective agreement within the community.

In the indigenous community of Kampung Dangieng Garut, the approach to medicine and health care goes deeper than conventional understanding. According to them, aspects of one's health are not only related to the physical condition, but also to the state of one's mind and heart. This reflects their holistic view of individual well-being, where a balance between the physical and psychic is seen as the key to optimal health.

They believe that illness, in some cases, can originate or be influenced by a person's emotional state or inner conflict (Basit, 2017). For example, if a person experiences disharmony in interpersonal relationships, the solution may not be just in medication, but in an approach that involves friendship, communication, and empathy. This shows a deep understanding of how mental and emotional health can affect physical health.

In addition, their approach to individuals who are considered to deviate from social norms (delinquents), such as those involved in criminal behavior, delinquency or drunkenness, the right approach is not to ostracize them, but to embrace them. This shows that with the right social support, individuals can change for the better. In traditional medicine, the methods used are very intuitive and usually not the same for patients with the same illness. For example, if someone is sick, they will first be asked about the patient's habits, behavior and daily life to find the relationship between these behaviors and the disease. This belief is based on hereditary experience from their ancestors, and the community has validated the effectiveness of this method over the years (Firmansyah et al., 2017). In other words, the disease has something to do with behavior, if an individual has a chronic disease that does not heal, it means that it is a form of karma or retribution for his bad behavior in the past, so the treatment also requires tracing the patient's past. After remembering which behaviors are not in accordance with norms and religion, then the patient is told to repent and regret his actions and then the treatment can continue with the help of medicinal plants and prayers.

The ability to 'read' a person's illness or condition according to the customary leader is not the result of formal education but a gift from God Almighty. For example, when dealing with someone who is suffering from an illness, there is a "kereteg hate" or whisper in his heart about the illness and its source. This is difficult to explain using logic and science, but the reality exists among indigenous people (Rennie, 2009).

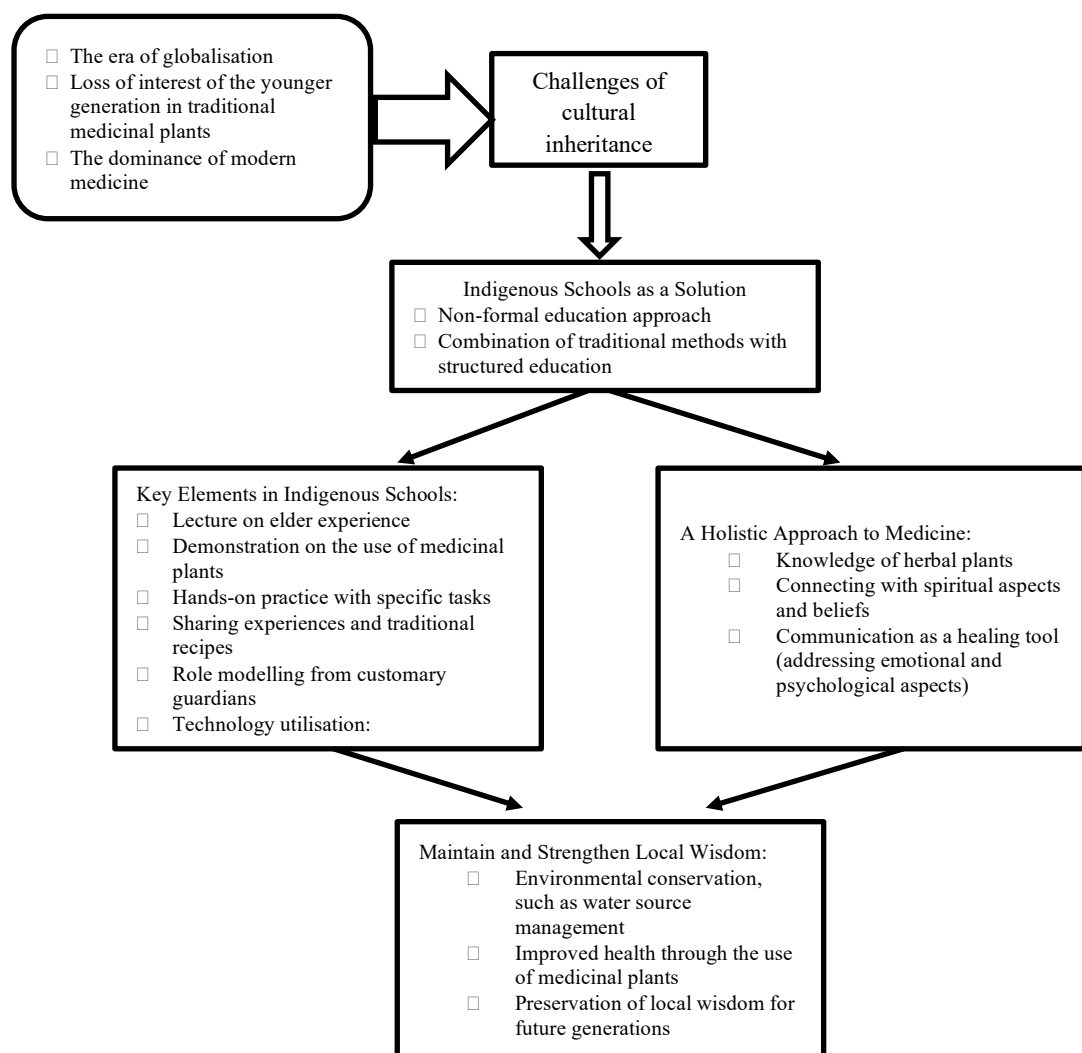
The Dangiing Indigenous People have a belief in modern medical treatment that although modern medical drugs have strong and effective properties in curing diseases, they believe that there are other unknown side effects when using unnatural chemical drugs. They also realize that under certain conditions, conventional medical treatment may be the best option for patients, if herbal treatment is no longer effective (Perbawasari et al., 2023). However, daily, herbs are still the mainstay of the Dangiing indigenous medical tradition. With in-depth knowledge passed down from generation to generation, they understand the various properties of plants and how to use them to treat various ailments. Herbal plants, in most cases, are chosen for their minimal side effects, relatively lower cost, and abundant availability in their neighborhood (Batool et al., 2023).

Lastly, and perhaps most prominently, is the inner approach to medicine. The Dangiing people believe that many illnesses originate or are exacerbated by emotional imbalances or inner disturbances (Farhan, 2008). In this case, communication is considered an essential medicine. Through in-depth dialogue, patients are given the opportunity to express their feelings and concerns, which is often the first step towards recovery. In this process of communicating, the patient and practitioner jointly seek solutions, and in many cases, simply talking and being heard can have a profound therapeutic effect. This reflects the understanding that one's wellbeing consists not only of physical condition, but also emotional and spiritual balance.

The approach to health in Kampung Adat Dangiing combines modern and traditional methods. They understand that health is not just about physical condition, but also involves emotional and spiritual balance. The community highly values the environment and understands the importance of maintaining a balance with nature. One aspect that is of particular concern is water. For the Dangiing community, water is not just seen as an ordinary natural resource. Water has a very deep value both in terms of spirituality and culture (Oktaviani.J, 2020). This is in line with the findings of Aulia & Dharmawan's research in 2011 which examined the views of the Kuta Traditional Village community towards water and water conservation efforts (Aulia & Dharmawan, 2011). Because of this deep understanding, the Dangiing community is very careful in managing their water sources, guided by existing customary norms.

They understand the importance of water quality in supporting public health. By dividing water sources into three categories based on their uses, the Dangiing community demonstrates their wisdom in maintaining water quality and minimizing the risk of pollution. Water intended for consumption, referred to as "cai kahuripan" or the source of life, is kept strictly clean and free from pollution. The existence of customary rules prohibiting the mixing of water sources shows the seriousness of the Dangiing community in ensuring the quality of water consumed.

In addition, their policy towards waste management reflects their awareness of the importance of protecting the environment. They understand the adverse impact of poorly managed waste, especially on the water system. Hence, there is a customary norm that prohibits littering, especially near water sources. By separating organic and inorganic waste, the Dangiing community also ensures that organic waste can be utilized to fertilize the soil, while inorganic waste is managed in a more responsible manner. This shows that, although the Dangiing community holds on to traditions and customary norms, they still have a progressive outlook towards environmental and health issues. This awareness creates harmony between tradition and contemporary needs, ensuring that future generations can enjoy a healthy environment and sustainable resources.



**Figure 1:** Flowchart of Knowledge Transmission Method via Indigenous Schools  
 (Source: author's analysis 2023)

The chart above explains the challenges and solutions in passing on cultural knowledge, especially about traditional medicinal plants, in the era of globalization. The lack of interest among young people in Dangiing Traditional Village is a challenge to the preservation of medicinal plant knowledge. In addition, their level of trust in traditional medicine is starting to be replaced by modern medical treatment. In this case, Sekolah Adat emerged as a solution to this challenge by passing on medicinal plant knowledge through various teaching methods ranging from lectures, demonstrations, role models, and assignments given at school time.

## **Conclusion**

In an era of rapid globalization and during a pandemic, the inheritance of local cultural knowledge, especially regarding herbal plants, is very important. Kampung Adat Dangiing, with all its distinctiveness and local wisdom, faces significant challenges in passing on this knowledge to the younger generation. To bridge the gap between tradition and modernity, and ensure the continuity of this knowledge transmission, Sekolah Adat Dangiing was established as a form of non-formal education.

The educational methods at Sekolah Adat are designed in a way that combines cultural, historical and practical aspects. In addition, by utilizing means of communication, including social media and the internet, the Dangiing indigenous community can expand access and enrich reference sources in learning. This not only strengthens traditions, but also provides opportunities for the younger generation to understand and appreciate their cultural heritage in a broader and more relevant context.

However, challenges remain. While Sekolah Adat has been successful in its mission of passing on medicinal plant knowledge, there is still a need for scientific validation of the efficacy of herbal plants, as well as integration with modern medical approaches. On the other hand, the Dangiing community's awareness of the importance of maintaining the balance of nature and environmental quality, particularly in terms of water source and waste management, shows that they have a deep understanding of the relationship between environmental health and human health.

Overall, this research shows that through non-formal education such as that implemented at the Dangiing Traditional School, the inheritance of knowledge and traditions, especially regarding medicinal plants, can continue with adaptive methods that are relevant to the needs of the times. As a reflection, the importance of appreciating and preserving local wisdom must continue to be instilled in the younger generation as part of the nation's identity and cultural heritage.

Based on the conclusion, the recommendation is to conduct further scientific research to prove the effectiveness of medicinal plants used by the Dangiing community. Collaboration with academic institutions and medical laboratories can help provide strong scientific evidence. The importance of communication between researchers, academic institutions and indigenous communities needs to be emphasized to ensure transparency and data accuracy.



### **Limitation**

This research has several limitations that need to be considered. Firstly, this research focuses on Kampung Adat Dangi and may not fully reflect conditions or practices in other indigenous communities. Therefore, the findings from this research may have limitations in terms of generalizability. Secondly, although qualitative methods have been used to gain an in-depth understanding of cultural contexts and nuances, the subjectivity bias of both researchers and respondents may affect the interpretation of the results. Furthermore, limitations in the scientific validation of the efficacy of herbal plants may affect the objective understanding of the actual benefits of these plants. Lastly, although this study attempted to incorporate multiple sources of information, the absence of laboratories or other research facilities for verification of medicinal plant efficacy may lead to potentially unexplored information. In addition, the use of communication technologies such as social media may affect the quality and accuracy of information obtained and shared among community members.

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