

Analysis of Cultural Communication and Public Perceptions of Traditional Parafu Medicine in Bima from an Islamic Perspective

Anggun Hidayah Putri

Muhammadiyah University of Mataram, Indonesia
anggunhidayah05@gmail.com

Sukarta

Muhammadiyah University of Mataram, Indonesia
sukarta.kpi@ummat.ac.id

Suhadah

Muhammadiyah University of Mataram, Indonesia
suhadah@ummat.ac.id

Badlihisam Mohd Nasir

Universiti Teknologi Malaysia
badlihisam@utm.my

Received: 8 December 2025, Revised: 25 January 2026, Accepted: 27 January 2026 Available online: 31 January 2026

Abstrak

Pengobatan tradisional Parafu di Desa Diha, Bima, merupakan praktik budaya yang memiliki nilai sejarah, sosial, spiritual, dan religius yang kuat. Praktik ini tidak hanya menjadi bagian dari identitas masyarakat, tetapi juga berfungsi sebagai sarana komunikasi budaya yang mentransmisikan nilai-nilai leluhur dan norma sosial. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis hubungan antara komunikasi budaya, nilai keagamaan, dan opini masyarakat terhadap praktik Parafu. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan pengumpulan data melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur terhadap enam informan kunci, meliputi tokoh adat, tokoh agama, tokoh masyarakat, dan tenaga kesehatan, serta observasi partisipatif. Analisis data dilakukan secara tematik untuk mengidentifikasi pola komunikasi, pengalaman empiris, dan nilai sosial-spiritual yang mendasari praktik Parafu. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa praktik Parafu melibatkan proses doa, mandi di sumur suci, dan makan bersama sebagai simbol kebersamaan, yang mencerminkan harmoni antara nilai budaya dan prinsip Islam, di mana kesembuhan diyakini berasal dari Allah SWT. Dinamika pemahaman terkait keistimewaan lokasi menunjukkan adanya variasi interpretasi di masyarakat. Temuan penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa komunikasi budaya, pengalaman empiris, dan nilai sosial-spiritual menjadi landasan kuat dalam mempertahankan praktik Parafu. Selain itu, hasil penelitian ini juga mendukung pelestarian warisan budaya, penguatan identitas masyarakat, serta perencanaan strategi komunikasi kesehatan yang menghormati nilai lokal dan prinsip keagamaan, sehingga praktik Parafu tetap relevan di era modern.



Kata Kunci: Komunikasi budaya, Parafu, Opini Masyarakat, Islam

Abstract

Traditional *Parafu* medicine in Diha Village, Bima, represents a cultural practice with strong historical, social, spiritual, and religious significance. This practice is not only part of the community's identity but also serves as a form of cultural communication that transmits ancestral values and social norms. This study aims to analyze the relationship between cultural communication, religious values, and public perceptions of *Parafu* practices. A qualitative approach was employed, with data collected through semi-structured interviews with six key informants, including traditional leaders, religious figures, community representatives, and healthcare practitioners, complemented by participatory observation. Data were analyzed thematically to identify patterns of communication, empirical experiences, and socio-spiritual values underlying *Parafu* practices. The findings reveal that *Parafu* rituals, such as prayers, bathing in sacred wells, and communal meals, symbolize togetherness and reflect the harmony between cultural values and Islamic principles, where healing is believed to come from Allah SWT. Variations in understanding of sacred locations indicate diverse interpretations within the community. The study confirms that cultural communication, empirical experience, and socio-spiritual values form a strong foundation for sustaining *Parafu* practices. Moreover, the findings support the preservation of cultural heritage, strengthening of community identity, and the design of health communication strategies that respect local cultural norms and Islamic principles, ensuring the continued relevance of *Parafu* practices in the modern era.

Keywords: Cultural Communication, Parafu, Public Perception, Islamic Perspective

Introduction

Indonesia has a rich cultural diversity deeply ingrained in people's daily lives. One example is traditional medicine, which differs across regions due to biodiversity, indigenous knowledge, and historical traditions (Setiawan et al., 2017; Lesmana et al., 2018). Traditional medicine aims to heal the body and conveys social, spiritual, and religious values that shape community behavior and identity. Some people view it as cultural heritage that must be preserved, while others express doubts from an Islamic perspective. This divergence highlights the complexity of cultural communication and calls for scientific examination to objectively understand traditional practices, especially *Parafu* healing in Bima.

Cultural communication plays a central role in social interactions and influences how people interpret information (Novita et al., 2023). In traditional medicine, local values are transmitted through symbolic language and meaningful interactions between healers and patients. Public opinion forms through experience, knowledge, and social influence, producing both support and skepticism (Anshori, 2019). For example, the *Parafu Ro Waro*

belief system recognizes ancestral spirits in sacred springs. Spiritual leaders, Ncuhi and Ndoi, guide healing rituals (Bayunsyah, 2023).

Islamic teachings promote seeking treatment, as all healing is believed to come from Allah SWT. The Prophet Muhammad SAW underscored this in the *Musnad of Ahmad ibn Hanbal* (Hadith no. 12873): "Seek treatment, O servants of Allah, for indeed Allah does not send down a disease without also sending down its cure." This guidance affirms the permissibility of traditional medicine if it aligns with Sharia. Practices such as *Thibb an-Nabawi* and *Ruqyah Syar'iyah* exemplify the harmony between Islamic values and local healing traditions (Noviana et al., 2022; Imzastini et al., 2019).

Health behavior is influenced by thoughts, feelings, social references, support resources, and community culture. Traditional medicine combines knowledge, skills, and practices from theories, beliefs, and experiences developed across cultures (Wahyuni, 2021). Belief in local culture is an important factor in community health behavior (Guspianto et al., 2020). Sociocultural influences—including traditional medicine beliefs and environmental conditions—affect values, perceptions, preferences, and behavior (Widiyastuty et al., 2023). Communication, shaped by cultural context, determines how messages are sent, received, and interpreted (Novita et al., 2023). This cultural influence is especially apparent when therapeutic principles are applied in alternative medicine, which relies heavily on community beliefs and spirituality (Andriani, 2022). In such practices, empathetic healer–patient relationships are built on emotional attentiveness and trust in customs, as seen in traditional *Parafu* medicine in Bima. Here, spiritual meaning is reinforced through prayer and Islamic symbols. Thus, communication in traditional medicine not only provides medical information but also reinforces connections among culture, religion, and community health behaviors.

Several previous studies have shown that public opinion on traditional medicine is strongly influenced by attitudes, empirical experience, and socio-cultural background. Sintia et al. (2024) explain that, in the context of health and traditional medicine, socio-cultural dynamics play a significant role because traditional medical practices are rooted in cultural values and can adapt to changing health needs and scientific developments. Internal factors influence how individuals use medicines. For example, factors such as knowledge, attitudes,



motivation, intentions, beliefs, and socio-cultural factors influence decisions in the use of traditional medicines (Widayati et al., 2021). In addition, beliefs about the validity of religion influence how people accept traditional medicine. Iqbal et al. (2022) found that people's decisions to choose traditional or modern medicine are closely related to information sources from family, friends, and social media, as well as to socio-cultural and economic contexts. Similarly, Bachri et al. (2025) showed that local wisdom, which inherits the values, traditions, and beliefs of the community, also plays a major role in shaping patterns of traditional medicine use. This is evident among the Bima community, which continues to preserve *Parafu* medicine as part of its cultural traditions and spiritual beliefs. They believe that the healing process is not only about medicine but also involves religious and social values

In Islamic tradition, traditional medicine practices include those based on religious values such as *Thibb an -Nabawi* (medicine taught by the Prophet), *Ruqyah Syar'iyah* (healing performed by reciting verses from the Qur'an and prayers), and various other alternative methods that are analyzed not only from a medical perspective, but also from a theological and Islamic legal perspective. Noviana et al. (2022) state that Muslims need to be aware of the halal status and quality of medicines, and understand that Allah SWT, as “*Asy-Syâfi*”, is the source of healing. Ali. (2015) also emphasizes that traditional or alternative medicine must be in line with the Qur'an and Sunnah.

There are restrictions on permissible and impermissible practices from a fiqh perspective. In fact, the Qur'an and Sunnah contain hints and meanings that can serve as guidelines and practices for treating various illnesses, including psychological (mental) and physical (bodily) illnesses. Imzastini et al. (2019) revealed that Islamic medical practices that have developed in Indonesian society often represent an acculturation of Islamic values into local culture.

The study explains that Islamic healing has two forms: normative Islam and cultural Islam, both of which are part of religious and cultural practices in the context of health. Neither can be ignored as variants of religious and cultural practices in the context of health. These findings are relevant to the analysis of cultural communication and public opinion because this form of healing is not only medical in nature but also reflects the communication of religious values and beliefs. Through the interplay among Islamic principles, cultural

symbols, and direct experience, public perceptions and acceptance of traditional Islamic medicine are shaped.

Although many studies have examined traditional healing practices and the influence of culture on community health behaviors, there are still limitations in understanding how cultural communication and religious values simultaneously shape community perceptions and acceptance of traditional medicine, particularly in local contexts such as the *Parafu* practice in Bima. Research by Sintia et al. (2024) reveals that socio-cultural dynamics play a significant role in traditional medicine practices, as these practices are not only rooted in cultural values but are also able to adapt to changing health needs and scientific developments. In addition, the use of traditional medicine in society is influenced by socio-cultural factors, such as belief in natural ingredients and sources of information from print or electronic media.

This study examines the *Parafu* traditional medicine practice in Bima holistically as a multidimensional phenomenon, covering medical, social, cultural, and religious aspects. Furthermore, this study highlights the role of cultural communication in shaping people's beliefs and understanding of traditional medicine, while filling a gap in previous studies with a more comprehensive and contextual analysis of the interactions among culture, religion, and community health behavior.

This study aims to identify and analyze the relationships among cultural communication, religious values, and public opinion in the practice of traditional *Parafu* medicine in Bima, and to understand how these factors influence perceptions and acceptance of traditional medicine methods. Unlike previous studies, which generally emphasized only the socio-cultural impact or community health behaviors on the use of traditional medicine, this study presents a more comprehensive, contextual approach by examining the relationships among cultural communication, religious values, and public opinion simultaneously.

The significance of this study lies in providing a deep scientific understanding of the dynamics of traditional medicine in Bima, assisting health practitioners and policymakers in designing health approaches that respect local wisdom and religious values, and enhancing public understanding of the relationship between culture, religion, and health practices. The



research results can also serve as a basis for developing effective communication strategies for traditional medicine, ensuring these practices are preserved while remaining in line with Islamic principles and health standards.

Research Method

This study employs a qualitative approach to describe and analyze cultural communication and public opinion regarding *Parafu* traditional medicine in Bima from an Islamic perspective. The qualitative method was chosen because it allows the exploration of subjective experiences, meanings, and perceptions that cannot be captured through quantitative methods. Data collection was conducted through semi-structured interviews with six key informants, consisting of two community leaders (CL), two religious leaders (RL), one traditional leader (TL), and one health service staff member (HSS) who were considered to have insight and experience related to the practice of *Parafu* medicine in Diha Village, Belo District, Bima Regency, West Nusa Tenggara. With this composition of informants, this study is expected to provide a comprehensive picture of the informants' understanding, experiences, and opinions regarding *Parafu* traditional medicine, as well as how this practice is influenced by Islamic values and local culture.

The study was conducted in Diha Village, Belo District, Bima Regency, West Nusa Tenggara, which is known for maintaining strong *Parafu* medicine traditions and unique socio-cultural interactions. Data were gathered through semi-structured interviews, with each session lasting approximately 45–60 minutes. Interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim with each participant's informed consent. Observational notes on rituals and social interactions were also collected to enrich the data. Ethical considerations, including voluntary participation and confidentiality, were strictly observed.

Data were analyzed using the Miles & Huberman (1994) model, which includes three main stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. During data reduction, researchers filtered and organized the data into meaningful themes related to cultural communication, religious values, and public opinion. Data display involved presenting the findings in charts, tables, and descriptive narratives to facilitate interpretation. In the conclusion and verification stage, triangulation across informants and critical reflection on social, cultural, and Islamic contexts were conducted to ensure validity and depth of understanding. This approach enables not only a descriptive account of *Parafu*

traditional medicine practices but also an interpretation of their social, cultural, and religious significance, providing a holistic understanding of the phenomenon.

Research Finding

Origins, Cultural Values, and Communication Processes in *Parafu* Practices

The results of interviews with traditional leaders (TA) in Diha Village indicate that the origins of the *Parafu* traditional healing practice cannot be separated from the historical story of the local community's ancestors, namely La Raji, also known by his full name Muhammad Raji. This story forms the spiritual and cultural basis behind the emergence of the *Parafu* tradition as a form of respect for ancestors and their legacy. This phenomenon reflects how ancestral heritage forms the foundation of traditional medicine culture, as explained in the study by Ahsan et al. (2025), which found that traditional medicine in Indonesian coastal communities is deeply rooted in spiritual values and ancestral legacies.

According to traditional leaders (TL), a couple who were the parents of La Raji once lived in the location now known as *Parafu*. There are relics in the form of a well and stone jars that are believed to have been part of their house. The wife was known as the most beautiful woman of her time, and many people wanted her. One of them was a hunter named Ngaro La Ngawu, who for years hunted solely to see the beauty of La Raji's father's wife.

One day, Ngaro La Ngawu and his companion went hunting and, by accident, found La Raji's father asleep. Driven by evil intentions and jealousy, Ngaro La Ngawu then beheaded La Raji's father and took him away with his wife. At the time of this tragic event, La Raji was still very young. After the incident, La Raji grew up and lived in exile in a cave now known as Karombo La Raji. There, he lived with a black dog and a spear that symbolized his power.

As time passed, the local kingdom took the initiative to reduce the territory of all *Ncuhi* (a term for figures with spiritual power and influence in Bima society) by holding a large meeting at *Mbata Mboha*, located on the border between the Monta and Tangga subdistricts in Bima regency. The meeting was attended by all the *ncuhi* in the Bima region. However, according to the community's beliefs, the *ncuhi* present had such high spiritual abilities that they knew there was still one *ncuhi* who had not yet arrived, namely La Raji.



On several occasions, royal envoys summoned La Raji to attend the meeting, but he refused, citing injuries to his legs that were festering and preventing him from walking. After being summoned three times, La Raji finally agreed to attend the meeting. At the meeting, the royal leader announced that whoever succeeded in killing Ngaro La Ngawu would be rewarded with a beautiful woman. Many people tried to carry out this order, but no one succeeded except La Raji himself. At the next meeting, many people claimed to have successfully killed Ngaro La Ngawu, causing debate among the participants. To ascertain the truth, the king summoned a supernatural being believed to be able to distinguish between truth and lies. After being examined, the creature approached La Raji and revealed that he had killed Ngaro La Ngawu.

This event is considered the starting point of the *Parafu* tradition in Diha Village. The name *Parafu* is believed to be closely related to La Raji, who is a central figure in this history. In the eyes of the local community, *Parafu* is not just a historical site, but also a sacred place with high spiritual value because it is where traces of their ancestors' lives remain. The *Parafu* site, located on a mountain called Doro Ndaja, with relics including wells and stone jars, has become a symbol of cultural heritage and ancestral power that has been passed down to the people of Diha Village to this day. In addition, the people of the village believe that when they pray for healing at this place, their prayers will be answered more quickly by Allah SWT. Figure 1 shows the stone jars and ancestral wells that are still preserved today.



Figure 1: Stone barrel & Well

In the practice of traditional *Parafu* medicine, the communication process between the healer and the patient demonstrates a relationship that is not only therapeutic but also rich in symbolic and social value. This reflects that traditional medicine is also a medium of cultural and spiritual communication, not merely a medical act. This aligns with the findings of

Kartika et al. (2023), who argue that the use of herbal medicine in Indonesia is enriched by aspects of health communication and cultural philosophy.

According to interviews with traditional leaders (TL), before undergoing treatment, patients are required to prepare several requirements, namely betel leaf, *karodo* (pounded sticky rice mixed with grated coconut), chicken, and rice. These requirements are believed to be a form of respect for ancestors and a way to ask for blessings so that the treatment process runs smoothly.

Once all requirements have been met, patients, their families, and other residents depart for *Parafu* in stages. This tradition of departing together reflects the community's social values of togetherness and cooperation. Upon arrival at the entrance to *Parafu*, the community first greets their ancestors with the words, “*Assalamualaikum ya Muhammad Raji.*” After arriving at *Parafu*, the procession began with the slaughter of chickens, which were then cooked. After that, a healer led a prayer as an intermediary between humans and Allah SWT. After the prayer, the procession continued with a communal meal using items brought beforehand, such as betel leaves, *karodo*, chicken, and rice. This activity symbolizes togetherness and expresses gratitude for the healing efforts made. Next, patients will bathe using water from the *Parafu* well, which is believed to cleanse the body and soul of disease. After the entire procession is complete, they then return to their respective homes with the hope of recovery. Figure 2 is included to help readers understand the *Parafu* treatment process in the village of Diha.

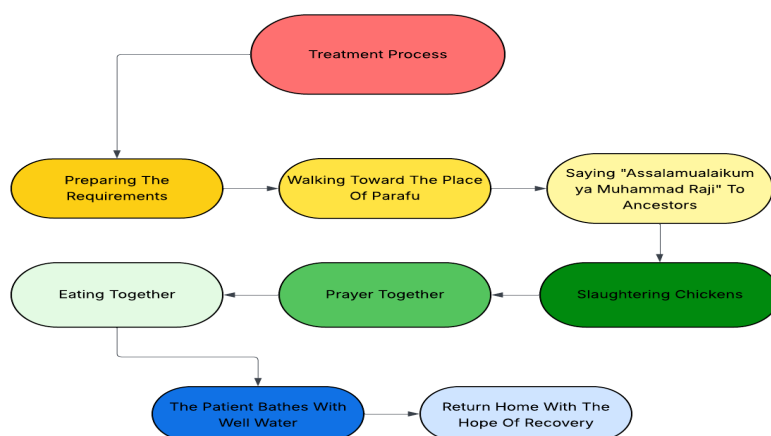


Figure 2: Diagram of the *Parafu* Traditional Treatment Process in Diha Village

The social and cultural values contained in this tradition are very prominent. Joint activities to visit *Parafu* strengthen relationships between residents and demonstrate solidarity and concern for others. In addition, the community has a collective commitment to maintaining and preserving *Parafu* as an ancestral heritage of high historical and spiritual value.

Information about *Parafu* healing practices is usually obtained from people believed to have spiritual abilities. In some cases, individuals who are descendants of the original Diha Village who live outside the area will receive spiritual guidance that their illness can only be cured through treatment at *Parafu*.

In addition to the spiritual and social dimensions, the economic aspect also influences the sustainability of this tradition. Based on interviews with community leaders (CL), *Parafu* treatment is considered more affordable than modern medical treatment. Patients are not burdened with any treatment costs beyond meeting the specified requirements.

Interestingly, modernization has not affected the existence of the *Parafu* tradition. From ancient times to the present, the procedures and processes of treatment have been preserved through inheritance from the ancestors. This shows the cultural consistency and strength of traditional values in Diha Village, making *Parafu* treatment not only a healing practice but also a symbol of identity, spirituality, and social togetherness for the local community. In addition to the spiritual and social dimensions, there is also an economic aspect that influences the sustainability of this tradition. Based on interviews with community leaders (CL), *Parafu* treatment is considered more affordable than modern medical treatment. Patients are not burdened with any treatment costs other than preparing the specified requirements.

Public Opinion on *Parafu* Traditional Medicine Practices

Interviews with various sources reveal that the people of Diha Village have a positive view of the traditional *Parafu* healing practice. The community's positive view of the *Parafu* healing practice demonstrates a close relationship between cultural knowledge and health perceptions. This aligns with the research by Fortuna et al. (2023), which found that community knowledge levels directly influence positive perceptions of traditional medicine in Klaten. According to community leaders (CL), *Parafu* is considered a cultural heritage and ancestral tradition with high historical and spiritual value. This tradition has been passed down from generation to generation and has become an important part of the local

community's cultural identity. This argument aligns with Carlessi's (2024) analysis, which argues that traditional medicine practices are not only medical methods but also manifestations of local cultural identity that have gained legitimacy in the global health arena. Therefore, community leaders (CL) emphasize that the practice of *Parafu* must be preserved and not lost, despite the rapid pace of development and advances in modern medical technology. For them, preserving *Parafu's* existence means helping preserve the heritage of their ancestors, which is rich in meaning and life values.

From the perspective of health institutions, the Bima District Health Office (HO) explained that the treatment patterns of the Diha Village community are quite diverse. Some people prioritize traditional *Parafu* medicine due to trust and empirical experience passed down from generation to generation. However, some people prefer modern medical treatment because it is considered more scientific and measurable. Interestingly, some people also combine both forms of treatment simultaneously, without waiting for the results of either. This shows a form of adaptation and balance between belief in tradition and acceptance of medical advances. This tendency to combine traditional and medical treatments aligns with research showing an increase in public acceptance of complementary health practices (Purboyekti, 2025).

Discussion

Social Legitimacy, Community Trust, and Cultural Integration in Traditional *Parafu* Medicine

The findings indicate the integration of cultural, spiritual, and social dimensions in traditional medicine, highlighting that *Parafu* functions beyond mere physical healing. Rituals, communal activities, and respect for ancestors demonstrate that traditional medicine also serves as a medium of cultural and spiritual communication (Kartika et al., 2023). Public trust in *Parafu* is based on several key factors, primarily its status as an ancestral legacy believed to possess spiritual power and proven effective through empirical experiences. Similar findings by Riris Indriani (2023) emphasize that strong social bonds and trust among community members are crucial for maintaining the continuity of traditional healing practices amid modernization.



Empirical experiences further strengthen the community's confidence in *Parafu*. Interviews with individuals who had previously tried modern medical treatments without significant improvement revealed that participating in *Parafu* rituals—such as chicken sacrifice, communal meals, prayer, and bathing with well water at the sacred site of Doro Ndaja—resulted in noticeable health improvements. These experiences provide direct validation of *Parafu*'s effectiveness, consistent with Putri et al. (2025), who argue that the social legitimacy of traditional healing practices arises from firsthand community testimonies. This illustrates that healing in *Parafu* encompasses not only physical aspects but also spiritual elements and belief in ancestral powers. According to Marques et al. (2022), traditional values, including herbal practices, rituals, and spirituality, reinforce social trust and shape perceptions of effectiveness, while Berhe et al. (2024) emphasize that cultural and spiritual factors are key determinants of access to and use of traditional medicine across populations.

The continued acceptance of *Parafu* across generations underscores its role in maintaining cultural identity, social cohesion, and spiritual connection. Both younger and older generations value this tradition as part of their ancestral heritage, making it relevant alongside modern medical treatments. Purboyekti (2025) notes that combining traditional and modern medical practices reflects an adaptive strategy and balance between ancestral beliefs and contemporary healthcare services. Furthermore, Indriyani et al. (2023) confirm that cultural heritage and ancestral beliefs remain dominant factors influencing community choices regarding traditional medicine in Indonesia. Overall, the social legitimacy, empirical effectiveness, and cultural embeddedness of *Parafu* indicate that this tradition is not merely a health practice but also a symbol of cultural preservation, spiritual expression, and community cohesion (Marques et al., 2022; Berhe et al., 2024; Ahsan et al., 2025).

The Islamic Perspective on Traditional *Parafu* Medicine

Interviews with religious leaders (RL) in Diha Village indicate that the practice of traditional *Parafu* medicine does not conflict with Islamic teachings. As in this healing practice, the community does not worship other beings, objects, or ancestral spirits; instead, it prays directly to Allah SWT. This is because throughout the entire process, the community believes that Allah SWT is the only true source of healing. Meanwhile, the healing practice is only an intermediary through which to receive healing from the illness.

Religious leaders (RL) explained that the people of Diha Village only respect and honor their ancestors who once lived in *Parafu*, but do not worship them. The place is considered sacred for its high historical and spiritual value, not because it is believed to possess powers beyond those of Allah SWT. Thus, healing activities in *Parafu* are understood as a form of effort and prayer to Allah SWT. As mentioned in the accounts in Sahih Bukhari, Muslim, and Sunan an-Nasai, there is a hadith that explains the Prophet's habit when his companions were sick. Every time the Prophet received complaints from his companions because of illness, the Prophet offered prayers as narrated by Sofyan bin Uyainah below:

رَوَتْ عائشة رضي الله عنها أنه عندما كان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يرى مريضاً أو مُصاباً، كان يقول " شيناً بأصابه، كما فعل سفيان بن عُيينة – راوي هذا الحديث – حيث كان يضع إصبعه السبابة على الأرض ثم يرفعها ويقول: باسم الله، تُزبَةُ أَرْضِنَا، وَبِرَاقَةِ بَعْضِنَا، يُشْفَى بِهَا سَقِيمُنَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّنَا "

Meaning: "Aisha RA narrated that when the Prophet SAW saw someone sick or injured, he would say something with his fingers, as exemplified by Sufyan ibn Uyainah, the narrator of this hadith, who would place his index finger on the ground, then lift it and say a prayer, 'In the name of Allah, may the dust of this floor and the saliva of some of us heal our illnesses by the permission of our Lord'".

In practice, the entire *Parafu* treatment process incorporates elements of prayer and Islamic symbols. The treatment process always begins with a prayer to Allah SWT, accompanied by a request for the patient's illness to be cured immediately. This shows that Islamic values have been internalized in the traditions of the Diha Village community. They believe that praying in a place considered sacred, such as *Parafu*, is a form of spiritual effort to strengthen their request to Allah SWT.

Religious leaders (RL) also emphasize that the people of Diha Village have a good understanding of the boundaries between respect for ancestors and worship, which is prohibited in Islam. The community fully realizes that healing comes only from Allah SWT, while *Parafu* is only an intermediary place of prayer, believed to have blessings because it is part of their ancestors' history. This belief is also reinforced by the views of community leaders (CL), who state that the community never considers *Parafu* a source of supernatural

power, but rather a place of religious and spiritual significance as a means of getting closer to God.

In addition, in *Parafu* medical practice, there is no use of amulets, spells, or mystical rituals that contradict Islamic teachings. All prayers recited are derived from Islamic teachings and are directed solely to Allah SWT. Religious leaders (RL) also convey that the elements in this treatment have positive values, as they foster an attitude of *tawakal* (trust in God), patience, and belief in the power of Allah SWT.

However, interviews with other religious leaders revealed different views regarding the traditional *Parafu* healing practice. These religious leaders said that the belief of some people in Diha Village that *Parafu* is a sacred place and that prayers offered there are more likely to be answered could cause problems with their faith. Although the community continues to pray to Allah SWT and does not worship anyone other than Him, the belief that a place has spiritual privileges that can accelerate the granting of prayers without a shar'i basis is seen as a form of minor shirk (syirk asghar). From an Islamic doctrinal perspective, designating a place as a source of blessings or a mediator for accelerating prayers is not justified if it lacks a basis in the Qur'an, hadith, or the practices of the companions. This view shows that the practice of *Parafu*, even though it does not involve worshiping anyone other than Allah, can still contradict the principle of tawhid if the community attributes certain spiritual virtues to that location that lack valid shar'i arguments. Thus, the differences in views among religious figures show the dynamics of religious understanding in society regarding the limits of effort, local traditions, and the firmness of the principle of tawhid in Islam.

Furthermore, the *Parafu* traditional healing process is similar to Ruqyah Syar'iyah, a healing method performed by reciting verses from the Qur'an, praying to the Prophet, and seeking help only from Allah SWT. The similarity lies in its main objective: to use prayer as a means of healing, without relying on any power other than Allah SWT. In the practice of *Parafu*, the prayers recited by the healer and the community's belief that healing comes only from Allah show that the healing process is carried out in accordance with the principle of tawhid, as taught in Ruqyah Syar'iyah. This harmony is supported by academic findings that Ruqyah Syar'iyah is a healing method that combines recitations from the Qur'an, the prayers of the Prophet, and direct supplications to Allah without involving elements of shirk. In his analysis, Hajaj. (2024) explains that Ruqyah Syar'iyah is understood as “a spiritual

and physical remedy rooted in Qur'anic recitations and prophetic supplications,” so that prayer-based healing practices can be accepted as part of religious efforts. This finding reinforces that the *Parafu* healing pattern, which relies on prayer and submission to Allah SWT, is within the corridor of Islam.

According to research by Muhammad et al. (2024), Ruqyah Syar'iyah is understood as an Islamic method of treatment that emphasizes the recitation of prayers and Qur'anic verses and avoids elements of shirk. This aligns with *Parafu's* practice, which does not use amulets, shirk mantras, or spirit summoning but focuses on prayers and direct supplications to Allah. This principle is also reinforced by Ilyas et al. (2021), who state that any traditional treatment is permissible as long as it does not involve elements of shirk and remains based on the Qur'an and Sunnah.

In addition to similarities in prayer and belief in Allah SWT, the practice of *Parafu* also resembles Ruqyah Syar'iyah through its bathing ritual, which is believed to cleanse the body and soul of physical and spiritual ailments. In Ruqyah Syar'iyah, bathing or water that has been prayed over is also one of the permitted methods of healing, as mentioned in several Thibbun Nabawi practices: water can serve as a medium of healing when verses from the Qur'an are recited over it. Research by Abidin et al. (2022) explains that in Sufi healing practices, water recited with prayers or verses from the Qur'an serves as an instrument of spiritual and physical cleansing, a method also found in several forms of thibbun nabawi. This shows that the bathing process in *Parafu*, which is carried out as part of efforts to seek treatment and purify oneself, aligns with spiritual healing practices in Islam.

The harmony between *Parafu* and Ruqyah Syar'iyah lies in three main aspects: first, the use of prayer as a means of healing; second, the belief that healing comes only from Allah SWT; and third, the bathing process as a form of spiritual and physical cleansing. In addition, Rizqi. (2022) research emphasizes that the recitation of verses from the Qur'an in traditional medicine is seen as a form of Qur'anic immunity, a spiritual healing mechanism that is believed to provide psychological calm and religious strength to patients. Therefore, the use of prayers and verses from the Qur'an in *Parafu* practices shows that this tradition is not only in line with Islamic values but also reflects the internalization of the concept of Qur'anic medicine.

Efforts to Preserve the Traditional Medicine Practices of *Parafu* in Diha Village

Efforts to preserve the traditional *Parafu* healing practices in Diha Village are the result of collaboration between traditional leaders, community leaders, local communities, and non-interventional support from the government through the Health Office. Based on interviews with traditional leaders, the preservation of *Parafu* cannot be separated from efforts to maintain the community's emotional and spiritual connection to its ancestors. Traditional leaders (TL) emphasized that the community continues to be taught that wherever they go, their bond with their ancestors remains intact and is part of their identity. This understanding is considered important because *Parafu's* history is deeply rooted in ancestral narratives, especially the story of La Raji, a figure believed to have played a major role in the practice's emergence. By preserving the collective memory of their ancestors, the community also maintains the cultural values associated with the *Parafu* practice. This finding aligns with Nisfiyanti. (2012) research, which shows that traditional medicine in various regions of Indonesia is generally preserved through the inheritance of ancestral values and cultural identities that bind the community.

In addition to cultural education, *Parafu* preservation is also carried out through community activities. In Diha Village, a youth group called Pemuda La Raji actively participates in preserving the *Parafu* site. This community not only serves as a forum for the younger generation to understand history and customs, but also maintains the *Parafu* site, keeping it clean, safe, and suitable for visitors who wish to perform healing rituals. They work with traditional leaders to carry out community service, improve access to the site, and ensure there are no activities that could damage the site. In fact, there are special guards in the *Parafu* area who ensure that the site is well maintained and protected from actions that could potentially damage its sacred value. The active role of the younger generation aligns with the findings of Lirim et al. (2025), which confirm that youth involvement is a key factor in the successful preservation of cultural heritage at the village level.

Community leaders (CL) also said that *Parafu* is preserved through the passing down of values from one generation to the next. Each generation is reminded to respect their ancestors' legacy and keep this practice alive as a local tradition. The values of togetherness, following customs, and respecting ancestors are the main principles in passing on the *Parafu* practice to their descendants. Thus, preservation is not only physical at the site but also includes the preservation of the community's values, knowledge, and collective beliefs. This

is reinforced by Harahap. (2021) research, which explains that the success of preserving traditional healing practices is highly dependent on the process of passing down cultural values from generation to generation within the community.

From the government's perspective, the Bima District Health Office has not issued a ban on the practice of *Parafu* traditional medicine. According to them, this practice is the community's right as long as it does not endanger health. The Health Office explained that the *Parafu* procession does not involve any risky medical procedures, as the community only prays together and then bathes at the site. From a medical perspective, this activity does not conflict with health principles, so the community is welcome to carry out the tradition in accordance with their respective beliefs. The Health Office (HO) also stated that, to date, there are no regulations or government policies specifically governing the practice of traditional *Parafu* medicine.

In addition, the Health Office (HO) acknowledged that they did not yet have definitive data on the level of public trust in traditional medicine compared to medical treatment. However, based on general observations, they assessed that public trust in both forms of treatment was relatively balanced. The community uses medical treatment when they need clinical care, while at the same time maintaining their trust in *Parafu* as part of their cultural identity and spiritual practices. These findings show that the preservation of *Parafu* coexists with modern health services without any conflict between tradition and the formal medical system.

Overall, the preservation of *Parafu* in Diha Village is the result of a synergy among the inheritance of ancestral culture, the involvement of the younger generation, the commitment of the indigenous community, and the government's understanding of the local community's cultural values. These efforts ensure that *Parafu* continues to exist, not only as a traditional form of medicine but also as a symbol of local wisdom and the cultural identity of the Diha Village community.

Conclusion

This study confirms that the practice of *Parafu* traditional medicine represents a harmonious integration of cultural, spiritual, and empirical dimensions that consistently shape positive



perceptions and acceptance within the community. The deep-rooted cultural and spiritual values, combined with an Islamic understanding that places Allah SWT as the sole source of healing, demonstrate that *Parafu* not only functions as a medium of healing but also serves as a socio-cultural space that strengthens the identity and solidarity of the Diha Village community. These findings highlight the dynamic, mutually reinforcing relationship among culture, religion, and public opinion in maintaining the continuity of the *Parafu* practice.

However, this study has several limitations. The research focuses exclusively on Diha Village, with data derived primarily from qualitative interviews, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other communities or cultural contexts. In addition, participants' reported experiences are subjective and may be influenced by personal beliefs or social desirability.

Despite these limitations, this study suggests the importance of balanced cultural and religious education to help the community understand the boundaries between respect for tradition and the principles of monotheism. It also highlights the need for collaboration among traditional leaders, religious authorities, and government institutions to ensure that the practice aligns with both health and Sharia values. The implications indicate that *Parafu* can serve as a model for culturally sensitive health communication and as a foundation for policies that integrate cultural and religious values to preserve traditional practices and develop community health strategies.

Bibliograph

- Abidin, Z. M., Assya'bani, R., Arni, A., & Mulyani, M. (2022). The dimensions of Sufi healing in traditional medication of the Islamic-Banjar community. *Teosofia: Indonesian Journal of Islamic Mysticism*, 11(2), 163–182. <https://doi.org/10.21580/tos.v11i2.13721>
- Ahmad ibn Hanbal. (2001). *Musnad al-Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal*. Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah.
- Ahsan, Z. R., Samnuzulsari, T., & Niko, N. (2025). Ancestral heritage in traditional medicine among coastal communities in Indonesia: Spiritual practices and modern integration. *Ilomata International Journal of Social Science*, 6(3), 868–880. <https://doi.org/10.61194/ijss.v6i3.1670>
- Ali, S. (2015). Pengobatan alternatif dalam perspektif hukum Islam. *Al-'Adalah*. <https://doi.org/10.24042/adalah.v12i2.218>
- Andriani, A. D. (2022). Therapeutic communication of health workers with patients in complementary and alternative medicine. *Communicatus: Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi*, 6, 233–248. <https://doi.org/10.15575/>
- Anshori, A. (2019). Opini masyarakat Kota Medan terhadap pemilihan serentak presiden dan legislatif tahun 2019. *Jurnal Interaksi: Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi*. <https://doi.org/10.30596/interaksi.v3i2.3352>
- Bachri, S., & Pannyiwi, R. (2025). Pengaruh kearifan lokal terhadap pola pengobatan tradisional di masyarakat. *Barongko: Jurnal Ilmu Kesehatan (BaJIK)*, 4(1). <https://doi.org/10.59585/bajik.v4i1.848>

- Bayunsiyah, J. (2023). *Peran masyarakat dalam menjaga bentuk asli rumah adat Ncuhi di desa Mbawa kecamatan Donggo kabupaten Bima* (Undergraduate thesis, Universitas Islam Negeri).
- Berhe, K. T., Gesesew, H. A., & Ward, P. R. (2024). Traditional healing practices, factors influencing access to the practices, and its complementary effect on mental health in sub-Saharan Africa: A systematic review. *BMJ Open*, *14*(9). <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2023-083004>
- Carlessi, P. C. (2024). Instituting traditional medicine: Changes to identity and legitimacy in global health. *Social Theory and Health*, *22*(4), 269–284. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41285-024-00213-6>
- Febriyanti, M., Saefullah, K., Susanti, R. D., & Lestari, K. (2024). *Knowledge, attitude, and utilization of traditional medicine within the plural medical system in West Java, Indonesia*. *BMC Complementary Medicine and Therapies*, *24*, 64. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12906-024-04368-6>
- Fortuna, T. A., Wahyuni, A. S., & Putri, N. T. (2023). The relationship between the level of knowledge and perception of the use of traditional medicine in the people of Klaten city in 2022. *Jurnal Farmasi Sains dan Praktis*, 160–167. <https://doi.org/10.31603/pharmacy.v9i2.8647>
- Guspianto, Asparian, & Wisudariani, E. (2020). Studi kualitatif: Faktor predisposisi sebagai upaya pencarian pengobatan pada komunitas adat terpencil di Desa Bukit Suban, Air Hitam Sarolangun, Jambi, Indonesia. *Jurnal Kesmas Jambi*, *4*(2). <https://doi.org/10.22437/jkmj.v4i2.10568>
- Hajaj, J. (2024). Ruqyah shariah: An analytical exploration. *Journal of Adventist Mission Studies*, *20*(1), 203–239. <https://doi.org/10.32597/1553-9881.1564>
- Harahap, J. (2021). Herbal medicine fosters community creativity in preserving traditional plants. *Berita Kedokteran Masyarakat*. <https://journal.ugm.ac.id/v3/BKM/article/view/1705>
- Ilyas, A., & Ismail, L. (2021). Medical disease treatment by the Prophet SAW. *Turkish Journal of Computer and Mathematics Education*, *12*(14). <https://doi.org/10.17762/turcomat.v12i14.10661>
- Imzastini, N. Q., & Simatupang, G. R. L. L. (2019). Ideal type of Islamic healing in Indonesia: A case study on Pak Endog alternative Islamic-type medication. *Jurnal Penelitian*, *113*. <https://doi.org/10.28918/jupe.v16i2.1943>
- Indriyani, Y., Tenrisau, D., Nippanon, P., Kuster, A. T., & Suswardany, D. L. (2023). Socio-culture and health problem factors on traditional medicine use among Indonesian adults: A cross-sectional analysis from national survey. <https://doi.org/10.1590/SciELOPreprints.5769>
- Iqbal, M., Aulia Ramdini, D., & Triyandi, R. (2022). Preferensi penggunaan obat tradisional dan obat modern pada masyarakat Desa Umbul Natar Lampung Selatan. <https://juke.kedokteran.unila.ac.id/index.php/JK/article/download/3159/3045>
- Kartika, T., & Suharti, B. (2023). Jamu as herbal medicine: A study of health communication and philosophy as cultural identity. *Komunika*. <https://doi.org/10.24042/komunika.v6i1.16247>
- Lesmana, H., Ayu Utami, P., & Retnowati, Y. (2018). Pengobatan tradisional pada masyarakat Tidung Kota Tarakan: Study kualitatif kearifan lokal bidang kesehatan. *MEDISAINS: Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu-ilmu Kesehatan*, *16*(1). <https://doi.org/10.30595/medisains.v16i1.2161>
- Lirim, A., Habibi, M., Eryani, T. W. R., & Pratama, P. Y. (2025). Preserving cultural heritage through traditional institutions and youth engagement. *Academia Open*, *10*(2). <https://doi.org/10.21070/acopen.10.2025.11419>
- Marques, B., Freeman, C., & Carter, L. (2022). Adapting traditional healing values and beliefs into therapeutic cultural environments for health and well-being. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, *19*(1). <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19010426>



- Matthew B. Miles, A. M. H., & J. S. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Muhammad, F., Pradipta, B. D., & Novian, T. W. (2024). Efektifitas Ruqyah Syar'iyah dan pengobatan medis. *Akhlak: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam dan Filsafat*, 1(4), 179–189. <https://doi.org/10.61132/akhlak.v1i4.110>
- Nisfiyanti, Y. (2012). Sistem pengobatan tradisional (Studi kasus di Desa Juntinyuat, Kecamatan Juntinyuat, Kabupaten Indramayu). *Patanjala: Jurnal Penelitian Sejarah dan Budaya*. <https://doi.org/10.30959/patanjala.v4i1.127>
- Noviana, L., & Awaludin, A. (2022). Health and medicine in the Islamic worldview (study on aqidah and shari'ah perspectives). *Tasfiah: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam*, 6(1), 21. <https://doi.org/10.21111/tasfiah.v6i1.7422>
- Novita Sari, & Jalwis, J. (2023). Nilai dakwah dalam Parno Adat Turun Mandi di Desa Mukai Mudik Kecamatan Siulak Mukai. *Journal of Da'wah*, 2(1), 83–99. <https://doi.org/10.32939/jd.v2i1.2597>
- Purboyekti, S. (2025). Between tradition and modernity: Understanding public perceptions of complementary and alternative medicine. *Journal of Health Innovation and Environmental Education*, 2(1), 76–84. <https://doi.org/10.37251/jhiec.v2i1.2002>
- Putri, L. M., Tjokro, S. H., Widyanto, I. M., & Kurniawan, A. (2025). Pengaruh aspek spiritual dalam preferensi pemilihan pelayanan kesehatan dari perspektif masyarakat Madura, Jawa Timur. *IKESMA*, 21(2), 108–114. <https://doi.org/10.19184/ikesma.v21i2.53032>
- Riris Indriani, R. (2023). Trust and social capital of patients in Engkong traditional medicine in Binjai City. *Journal of Sumatera Sociological Indicators*, 2(1), 153–157. <https://doi.org/10.32734/jssi.v2i1.11704>
- Rizqi, D. I. (2022). Qur'anic immunity as Islamic medicine in the big family of Ruqyah Aswaja. *Aqwal: Journal of Quran and Hadis Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.28918/aqwal.v3i1.5813>
- Setiawan, H., & Kurniawan, F. (2017). Pengobatan tradisional: Sebuah kajian interaktionisme simbolik. *Jurnal Filsafat, Sains, Teknologi, dan Sosial Budaya*, 23(2). <https://doi.org/10.33503/paradigma.v23i2.348>
- Sintia, E., Riansyah, F., Putra, E., & Halizasia, G. (2024a). Dinamika sosial budaya terhadap pengobatan tradisional. *Maret Tahun*, 17(1). <http://ejournal.poltekkesaceh.ac.id>
- Sintia, E., Riansyah, F., Putra, E., & Halizasia, G. (2024b). Dinamika sosial budaya terhadap pengobatan tradisional. *Maret Tahun*, 17(1). <http://ejournal.poltekkesaceh.ac.id>
- Wahyuni Sri Putu Ni. (2021). Penyelenggaraan pengobatan tradisional di Indonesia. *Jurnal Yoga dan Kesehatan*, 4(2). <http://ejournal.ihdn.ac.id/index.php/jyk>
- Widayati, A., Candrasari, D. S., Mariana, L. J., & Veronica, V. (2021). Perceptions of traditional medicines for self-medication among people in Dieng Plateau, Central Java Province, Indonesia. *Jurnal Riset Kesehatan*, 10(2), 132–138. <https://doi.org/10.31983/jrk.v10i2.7692>
- Widiyastuty, F., Suryawati, C., & Pawelas Arso, S. (2023). Hubungan sosial budaya dengan pemanfaatan pelayanan di Puskesmas Entikong. *Jurnal Promotif Preventif (JPP)*, 6(2), 304–310. <http://journal.unpacti.ac.id/index.php/JPP>
- Zheng, T., Yao, D., Chen, W., Hu, H., Ung, C. O. L., & Harnett, J. (2020). *The prevalence, perceptions and behaviors associated with traditional and complementary medicine use: A systematic review*. *BMC Complementary Medicine and Therapies*, 20, 122. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12906-020-02921-8>