

Traditional Treatment of *Tawar Penggel* in Karo Community

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Abstract: This study examines the traditional treatment of *Tawar Penggel* from the Karo community which is still used today. The purpose of this study is to determine the process of inheritance and traditional treatment of *Tawar Penggel* and how to maintain it so that it is preserved as a culture, and to find out why people choose this treatment, especially the people of Jinabun Village, Kutabuluh Simole District. The method used is an ethnographic method with data collection techniques through in-depth interviews and observation, where researchers go directly to the field and live with the community to obtain accurate information. The results showed that *Tawar Penggel's* treatment process for patients from the beginning of treatment until they recovered without experiencing disabilities so that people still believed in traditional treatment. In addition, it also shows the history and descent from ancestors until now, where traditional medicine begins with traditions derived from habits by previous ancestors and also a culture.

1 INTRODUCTION

This study discusses the traditional treatment of *Tawar Penggel* in the Karo community. In modern times, there are still many people who use alternative treatment or commonly called traditional medical treatment to cure a disease, including the Karo community who use a lot of traditional medical treatment through experienced teachers /shamans /physicians. In Karo people there are several diseases that are considered/believed to be cured by traditional medicine, such as broken bones, meat grows like fat that usually occurs in the stomach (biomedically calls it cancer/tumor), descending intestine, multiple intestines, having no offspring and so on. However, this study only focuses on discussing fractures. Researchers will find out how the bargaining history of gelling is and why people believe in the treatment.

The aim of the researcher is to write about the Traditional *Tawar Penggel* treatment so that it is maintained and not lost, because it is one of the cultures of our ancestors that must be preserved, where nowadays people are starting to leave traditional medicine. Another researcher's goal is for the community or government to maintain and preserve forests which are still overgrown by plants

used as spices for traditional medicine. Due to the dense population, people began to use the forest as a place to grow crops, as a result the plants used as herbal medicine began to disappear. This must be overcome so that it does not disappear, such as making forest borders as protected forests to preserve plants that can be used as natural medicines.

Tawar Penggel treatment itself is usually carried out by a *penggel pertawar*, which is a nickname by the Karo tribe for someone who has the expertise to treat broken bones or is often also dubbed a teacher or *Pertawar Penggel*. This *Pertawar Penggel* also includes the treatment of various types of diseases related to tendons, muscles, and bones such as sprains, sprains, shifted bones, wrong tendons, fractures to crushed bones. For patients who have broken bones or crushed bones, the treatment process is carried out without being as complicated as in the hospital where X-rays are required or if it is deemed impossible to help, then amputation is performed.

Pertawar Penggel or the teacher generally only looks at the problem bones, then applies a secret massage oil that is made by himself, accompanied by special massage techniques. When the treatment process is carried out regularly within a few days,



the presence of crushed or broken bones will heal and return to normal as usual. Because the existence of *Tawar Penggel* is indeed proven to be efficacious for treating fractures, it is not surprising that its existence is still highly trusted by the public.

Apart from being proven to be able to heal broken bones, the price factor which is considered cheaper than modern medical treatment is also one of the main reasons why the Karo fractured shaman is still in demand today. As for the existence of *Pertawar Penggel* who has knowledge to treat fractures, in general so far this is knowledge that is passed down from generation to generation, especially in the family environment or at the neighboring level in the Karo community.

In this paper, researchers will also find out how the lineage in passing on the traditional treatment of *Tawar Penggel*, and how many generations have been until now. In addition, researchers will also find out what should be done to continue the inheritance of *Tawar Penggel*. As for the existence of *Pertawar Penggel* who have knowledge to treat fractures, in general, so far this is knowledge that is passed down from generation to generation, especially in the family environment in Karo community. The researcher will also explain that the treatment is not against religion because it can be seen that now people have thoughts where traditional treatment is called violating religion because it considers worshiping or worshipping evil spirits. In this paper it will be explained that the treatment does not worship evil spirits.

According to the knowledge of the researchers, *Tawar Gersing* is one of the most important ingredients in the treatment of fractures or *Tawar Penggel*. Here researchers will find out the ingredients, how to make it, functions and efficacy.

Tawar is a traditional herb made from spices and is useful for curing internal and external ailments. *Tawar* itself comes from the Karo language which means medicine or herbal medicine. In the past, before we were introduced to sophisticated technology like today, many of our families consume traditional medicine. In its use, maybe many do not like the taste and smell which is quite pungent. Therefore, there is a better way without having to eliminate its efficacy. Almost the same as other herbal ingredients, we take a little ingredient with the size of a corn kernel and put it in tea or soup. Use can be done 2 times in 1 day.

Researchers will also find out why the *Tawar Penggel* treatment at the research site is not traded, because we know that in some places where traditional medicine is used as a profession and

livelihood, this will also be a problem that must be solved by researchers. Researchers will observe and see firsthand the traditional traditional treatment method of "*Tawar Penggel*" from the beginning to recovery and also see firsthand how to make the ingredients used and the taboos that should not be done while undergoing treatment. Then, researchers will also ask the local community directly how to maintain traditional medicine so that it does not disappear with the arrival of modern medicine today, because traditional medicine is also part of culture in society and must be disseminated so that it is maintained and preserved.

2 RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach, with the stages of pre-field research, field work, data analysis, and ends with the stage of writing a research report. The collection of data obtained from the field through observation and interviews is referred to as primary data. While secondary data obtained from the literature, as well as reading materials related to research problems.

In qualitative research begins in the field which is based on natural environments, not theory. The data and information that have been obtained from the field are taken for the meaning and concept, presented in descriptive analytic and generally without using numbers, because they prioritize the processes that occur in the field. In general, this type of research includes information about the main phenomenon that is being explored in a study, research participants, and the location of a study. Qualitative research can also state the research design chosen.

Participatory observation is one of the data collection techniques by participating in it, where researchers find many things, such as how to carry out traditional traditional healing treatments, what are the ingredients and ingredients, how do patients feel while undergoing treatment, and what -what can and can't be done during treatment. While interviews are considered more efficient to obtain accurate information about things that happen in the field related to the problems studied. The location of the research was carried out in Jinabun village, Kuta Buluh district, Karo regency. The distance from Medan to the research location must take approximately 4 (four) hours.



3 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

According to Boedhihartono, traditional treatment is a service that develops in the community which is known to be still in the "*gemeinschaft*" stage, with patterns of relationships between residents based on reciprocity and interpersonal. One of traditional treatment that nowadays much in demand by the public is the traditional treatment of fractures. In Indonesia, there are still quite a lot of fans of traditional fracture treatment (Mulyono, Agus, Umboh, Razak, 2001:17).

In Health Anthropology, the study of medicinal plants and herbs is an important study because it is related to ethnomedicine. Ethnomedicine is beliefs and practices related to disease that are the result of indigenous cultural developments and which are explicitly not derived from the conceptual framework of modern medical treatment (Foster and Anderson, 2009). Ethnomidisin is manifested in traditional treatment carried out by local healers/shamans and the practice is a traditional medical/non-western medical system.

Healing of a disease in a community is carried out in ways that apply according to the beliefs of the community. Like fractures, the average community chooses traditional treatment that has been carried out by professionals so that they do not experience paralysis or disability. Traditional treatment and medical treatment work together to cure a disease. For example, some hospitals or clinics in Karo Regency if they get a patient with a broken bone/fractures, the hospital team will call someone who can treat it the traditional way while taking medicine from a doctor to relieve pain. Likewise with the traditional healer for fractures or *Pertawar Penggel* that the researchers observed, if the patient who comes in has an abnormality after treatment, it must be mixed with medical treatment. Thus, the combination of medical and traditional medicine to gain knowledge in curing patients.

In this traditional medicine, there are herbs in it. When doing treatment to Mr. Rasseh Perangin-angin (56 years), apart from the repositioning massage, the medicine that must be used during healing are *Dampel*, *Sembur*, and *Tawar Gersing*. *Dampel* functions as an external medicine which is used the same way as using oil, which is applied to the sore or broken bone/fractures. The materials of the ingredients used are derived from natural plants found in the forestry of a village, for example in the village of Jinabun, then processed naturally to

produce medicine. If there are materials that are not collected, then processing into drugs cannot be done.

There are 10 (ten) kinds of spices used for this *Dampel*, some of which can be purchased at the *Kem-Kem* and some must be picked up in the forest. Of the ten ingredients, 8 (eight) of them are boiled until they are cooked and the two types are put in by the *Pertawar Penggel* when stirring and given a spell. How to use it also cannot be arbitrary, so the *Pertawar Penggel* will tell you how to use it so that when you use it it can be useful.

While the function of *Sembur* besides healing broken bones, sprains, and crushed bones, it can also heal wounds on the body by using it 3 times a day. How to use it by chewing the spray until you have to, after it is smooth it is sprayed onto the sick part. Then, *Tawar gersing* is also very important in the treatment of any disease that can be cured by Rasseh Perangin-angin, namely *Karat Batu Keling*, can't have children, stomach ailments, and backaches. *Tawar gersing* can be consumed every day by mixing it with a drink or vegetable gravy to increase stamina and endurance. There are also those who make it *kuning/Param*, which is how to use it, *Tawar Gersing* is mixed with water and applied to all parts of the body. At the time of making this gersing bargain, there are also many conditions, namely the grinder must be an odd number, there should be no pregnant women, there should be no small children who do not have teeth, and the grinders must also use trade cloth (white cloth).

In the process of *Tawar Penggel* treatment which was carried out by Mr. Rasseh Perangin-angin, the tools used to treat patients were not too many, only a few tools for fractures, namely white bandages, splints (made from the studio), *bulong mbako* (tobacco leaves) the three tools is called by *Pertawar Penggel "kubia"*. Of the three tools, there are also the most important tools, namely *gersing*, *dampel*, and *sembur* /spray. Meanwhile, if there are no broken bones such as frozen blood, hinges shifting, etc., there is no need for splints (which are made from studios) only white bandages and tobacco leaves.

According to the informant, Mr. Rasseh Perangin-angin, when the patient came to his house, he did not immediately treat him, but told him to take a bath and drink egg tea. The function of bathing, if the patient is suitable for treatment with him, he will feel excessive cold and shiver and when he is shivering, the muscles and the problematic ones will begin to occupy their respective places. Then, after the patient drinks egg tea, wait for 15 minutes, then he will ask the patient if there is



nausea or vomiting, if there is he does not dare to treat it because of the *Tawar Penggel* belief that has always been done, if the patient drinks egg tea vomiting will not be helped anymore and until now the one who vomit will die.

According to informant Romendro Ginting (44 years old), he went to Mr Rasseh for treatment because of a sprained leg, and he believed in Mr. Rasseh because from the first if any of his family were injured, they were immediately taken to Mr. Rasseh's house. Some of his family who went to Mr. Rasseh did not have any disabilities, even everything was normal as usual. Usually, he will give a pack of cigarettes and sometimes if there is sustenance, he gives Rp 50,000.

Furthermore, according to informant Raina Kristi Tarigan (24 years old), that she went to Mr. Rasseh for treatment because she had an accident. Previously, he had been treated with a broken healer in Kabanjahe where his right leg was straight and could not be bent, so he had to undergo surgery. Then someone ordered him to go to Mr. Rasseh for treatment in Jinabun Village. After four days of treatment, his leg was able to bend even though it was not completely healed, but Mr. Rasseh assured her that her leg would be completely healed. Every time she finished treatment, her mother always gives Rp100,000 in cash.

Every traditional treatment there will be taboos given to the patient for a faster recovery. As for the taboos given by the *Pertawar Penggel* Rasseh Perangin-angin, namely, it is forbidden to eat dog meat, pork, it is forbidden to eat preserved food such as salted fish, it is forbidden to eat cooked food such as reheating rice or vegetables, it is forbidden to step over *bahian* that is sick and to step over medicine, it is prohibited go to the place of misfortune like the custom of death.

All treatments carried out by Rasseh Perangin-angin do not use payment rates, only voluntarily from the patient's side. This is done from the first generation to him because this skill is not to earn money but to find and add family, friends, friends, and to help person. It's just that all patients after recovering are required to give *Rimo Panger* as debt. The contents of the *rimo panger* are rice, free-range chicken eggs, white cloth (if you don't have a long white cloth, you can), two kinds of oranges (kaffir lime and sweet orange), a collection of when eating betel (belo, areca nut, lime, gambler) and some people put money voluntarily. According to Rasseh, if there are patients who do not pay *Rimo Panger*, the impact can be on his family and himself. It's like his son is sick with high fever. This happens because

his ancestors thought he didn't appreciate it even though it was his patients who didn't care about the payment of *Rimo Panger*.

Then, *Pertawar Penggel* there is also a process of giving offerings to express gratitude to their ancestors, which is commonly called *Nini Bulang* to the Karo Community which is always done by Rasseh after every patient recovers. He considered that the offering was obligatory after the patient gave his *rimo panger*. The method of offering is that the *rimo panger* given by the patient must be left for four nights in a closed room, when placing it Mr. Rasseh prays to God Almighty and carries his ancestral spirit. After four nights, he did *erpangir* (bathing to clean himself using kaffir lime which was given by the patients and thanked the universe, such as God and Ancestor).

Furthermore, all the ingredients used and given to the patient, *Pertawar Penggel* never forgets to treat it which will affect its use against the disease. Because when he healed him he asked God for help, his ancestors and gave thanks so that the medicine he used could cure the disease. Asking for help from the ancestors according to him is only a condition to respect them and not to ignore them, just as the use of spells is also a condition, it can also not use spells and there are no sanctions. However, because this has been done since the existence of the traditional treatment of *Tawar Penggel*, the chanting of the spell has been carried out, the *Pertawar Penggel* also uses it and does not dare to change it.

Tawar Penggel is a traditional treatment for fractures from Karo Land which is still used by the community until now. *Tawar Penggel* treatment itself is usually carried out by a *Pertawar Penggel*, which is the nickname of Karo community for someone who has expertise in treating fractures. The history of the arrival of traditional treatment to Rasseh Perangin-angin is that his ancestor was the first descendant named Pasti Perangin-angin, where as he was looking for gold in the river, a creature named *Umang* (in Karo language means genie or Spirit), who finally gave him expertise in the form of traditional treatment and some immunity to protect himself. It's just that these skills cannot be traded, this is only to increase family, friends, and friends as well as voluntary gifts in the form of money, goods, or pets. *Tawar Penggel* has now reached the sixth generation, at this time it is continued by the sixth generation, namely Rasseh Perangin-angin. The inheritance doesn't have to come from a big family but can come from grandfather who is still a clan group who will be willing to continue the inheritance.



In carrying out inheritance, it is carried out if the beneficiary has got someone who he believes can continue the descent. Like his own child but it must be a boy if the child is willing or not, then a discussion between the families of the grandfather will be carried out and asking who is willing on the condition that they cannot trade must be done wholeheartedly and voluntarily. Any problems that occur must not leave the inheritance, whether in the family or against religion.

As for the inheritance of traditional treatment, *Tawar Penggel* can only be done by two people, namely the previous descendant and someone who will continue the inheritance. The way to pass down his inheritance is that the clothes and knives are handed over to his successors and must be able to keep the knives and clothes. After being handed over the clothes and the knife, from there, they will be taught how to take the treatments and the spell book that will be used is handed over.

Furthermore, there are several reasons people choose traditional medicine, namely:

1. The cost is relatively cheap (economy), where the materials used are natural and easy to obtain and the cost is lighter and affordable by the community.
2. Confidence and trust, where people believe and believe in the success of this traditional treatment they will get help for healing the disease they are experiencing because they see many who recover after doing the traditional treatment.
3. Ease, where patients can be treated immediately without having to wait for X-ray results and laboratory results as well as other files.

Of the three points above as well as the influence of *Tawar Penggel*, it has persisted until now. In addition, because of the influence of people who have used the treatment. For example, someone who has had treatment and recovered automatically if there is a family or other person who has the same illness then he will order treatment to the treatment. Things like this happen so that the treatment continues to this day.

Traditional treatment of *Tawar Penggel* does not conflict with religion. In the treatment process, they believe that during treatment there is help from God Almighty because inside there is a special offering for the creator of nature called *belo bujor*, which is an offering to God to help in the treatment process and give thanks. This is in line with Mallinowski's opinion that religion is a source of strength in dealing with crises, including in terms of treatment. Religious spirituality can affect the healing process.

4 CONCLUSION

Traditional treatment is a health effort in a different way from modern medical science, rooted in traditions originating from the tribe itself or outside the tribe. One of the treatments owned by an ethnic group in Indonesia, namely traditional treatment originating from the Karo land carried out by a *Pertawar Penggel* / teacher, is not always inferior to the treatment applied by doctors. It's just that this treatment system does not involve sophisticated technology tools such as equipment medical. The herbal medicine used by *Pertawar Penggel* are certain types of plants that are still natural. To mix, traditional tools are needed that are useful as a means of treatment that will be carried out by *Pertawar Penggel* to his patient. The treatment process carried out by *Pertawar Penggel* refers to the steps carried out and directed by *Pertawar Penggel* in an effort to help the patient to get cured.

The treatment process carried out by *Pertawar Penggel* only treats diseases that according to him are capable of being treated, such as the diseases described in the previous chapter. Such as diseases related to bones such as fractures, sprains, displaced joints, until the bones are crushed before treating them, *Pertawar Penggel* will bathe the patient so that when they are cold and shivering, it will be easier for the troubled veins to return to their original place. In contrast to patients who want to massage the stomach, patients like this are first asked by the gelling provider, such as consulting first what is his complaint with the stomach. Likewise with rivet rust disease, the disease is usually *Pertawar Penggel* who knows it through the patient's eyes, to treat it there is no need for conditions such as bathing or drinking egg tea, the usual gelling agent treats it immediately if the equipment he gives you is already available. *Pertawar Penggel* also receives a lot of patients from other fractured healers, this is because the patient has not fully recovered, even the injured part cannot return to its original state, such as joints that can no longer be played or bent and the legs are no longer the same length. This is usually the *Pertawar Penggel* is more difficult to treat because the injured part has healed but is healing abnormally. This is usually done in the youth process so that treatment can be carried out from the beginning.



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