



## Pangean Silat in the Gen Z Era

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### **Abstract**

The Indonesian archipelago is home to a number of intangible cultural heritages, including Silat. In Indonesia, Silat comes in a variety of forms which is unique to a particular region. Silat prevails in every region and embodies history and values. It is well-liked by people of all ages, particularly Gen Z and younger generations. The primary explanation for this is that the principles outlined in Silat are thought to influence how students develop their views. One of the areas in Indonesia that has Silat culture is Pangean, a sub-district in Kuantan Singingi district, Riau Province. Pangean is also a home for traditional martial arts and helps enrich Indonesian culture.

**Keywords:** *Silat Pangean; Culture; Gen Z Era*

### **Introduction**

Indonesia is an archipelago of thousands of islands spread from Sabang to Merauke. Thousands of islands in Indonesia have their characteristics and cultures that are strongly embraced by the community, even some people believe that the culture that appears and grows in the archipelago will bring goodness to human life. Culture appears, grows, and develops in a certain area and occurs from generation to generation. It indirectly forms a pattern that humans can give meaning and perception to every event, action, or object related to thoughts, ideas, and emotions. (Geertz, *The Interpretation of Culture*, 1973).

According to Alexander Uhi (2015), the word culture is derived from the Sanskrit word *buddhayah*, which is the plural of the concepts of *budi* and *daya*, or the outcomes of human reason. Furthermore, according to Talcott Parsons and Al Kroeber, Koentjaraningrat makes a distinction between the form of culture as a collection of human behaviors and activities and the form of culture as a system of ideas or concepts in his book "Introduction to Anthropology." Culture is the whole of the results of human behavior obtained by learning, and all of them are arranged in the life of society. Culture has three forms, namely: 1) the form of culture as a complex of ideas, concepts, values, norms, regulations, and so on; 2) the form of culture as a complex of patterned behavioral activities of humans in society; and 3) the form of culture as objects of human work (Koentjaraningrat, 1990: 180-225).

The culture that originates, develops, and flourishes in a location becomes a feature that sets that region apart from others. The culture that emerges in the area is the source of the difference. The symbols

of values that emerge from the foundation of a culture's evolution. According to Garna (2008), these cultural symbols have a one-way impact on social life by influencing and shaping culture in a social and normative manner as well as by supplying information.

The Pencak Silat culture, which is present in practically every area of the archipelago, is one of them. Pencak silat is a self-defense method that was passed down from ancestors as part of the Indonesian nation's culture, and as such, it must be maintained, promoted, and improved, claim Kamarudin, Yahyar, and Zulrafla (2023). Pencak silat has historically been used as a self-defense technique that adapts to the demands of its users when dealing with a variety of difficulties, particularly those posed by people, animals, and the natural world. This explains why the movements in pencak silat frequently mimic those of animals, such as monkey moves, pecking snakes, and flying tigers (Sukowinadi, 1989).

The Silat Pangean, one of the irreversible cultural heritages granted to the Pangean community by UNESCO, is no exception. This is because a martial art that originated in the Pangean sub-district and continues to be performed today, identified as the Silat Pangean, has fascinating characteristics. From the beginning of the Silat Pangean in the 17th century till the present, it has been passed down from generation to generation as one of the good moral builders for the students of the silat because it is a sport with artistic value and other wonderful attributes.

The original purpose of Silat Pangean was to uplift the morality of the egocentric and extremely hideous Pangean community. In addition, it was believed that silat pangean had the ability to bring out the strength in every student who learned silat pangean thoroughly, beginning with the oath and continuing through the process of cutting and mixing *limau kene'* (small limes), and *limau godang* (limes).

## **Discussion**

The first known instance of Silat Pangean was in the Pangean sub-district, which is also referred to as Tanah Pangean. This particular sub-district is well-known for its martial arts, and it flourished and played a significant part in the lives of the Pangean people throughout the 17th century. Silat Pangean, according to the Pangean community, is one of the things that can improve the ill manners and behavior of the Pangean people. In order to avoid hurting other people, the Pangean group is notorious for its terrible behavior and tendency to pursue its ego.

In the beginning, Silat Pangean was introduced to Pangean by a Sheikh named Maulana Ali, who was trading and evangelizing in Indonesia. Ali was from an Arab nation. The establishment of Silat Pangean was initially one of the strategies selected by Sheik Maulana Ali. It was tailored to the social circumstances of the local community, which tended to enjoy physical strength exercises, so that many individuals who were unable to fight would eventually lose and face physical and psychological harassment. This establishes the idea that the purpose of Silat Pangean is to defend oneself against hostile assaults.

In general, there are several philosophical values in the Silat Pangean.

### **1. Religious Principles**

In Silat Pangean, the Islamic faith is highly valued. This is due to the fact that, according to widely acknowledged history, silat pangean is one of the media utilized to promote Islam and uphold moral principles.

### **2. Social Principles**

Since Silat Pangean strictly upholds the inculcation of monotheism in its teachings, social values arise in this religion. This is made clear by the requirement to say the two phases of the shahada when one is ready to become a silat student.

### 3. Artistic Value

In silat pangean, as in most other silat, artistic value is one of the values that are present. However, due to the delicate, deft, yet lethal movements, Silat Pangean has a very high artistic value. This is thus because the goal of Silat Pangean is to evade the enemy by using feminine evasive motions, not to harm them. Hence, "women's silat" is another moniker for Silat Pangean, as women are naturally submissive and conflict-averse. She will, however, turn rebellious when confronted with a variety of situations. This is portrayed by the soft yet lethal movements of Silat Pangean, which elevate it to a lovely aesthetic value that can be appreciated both orally and visually.

### 4. Social Values

The relationship with nature is the root source of the social ideals of Silat Pangean. These ideals are supposed to bring back the traditional practices of teens sleeping in prayer rooms, which could foster camaraderie and elevate social standards. It is also possible to retrieve the values by searching for the limes, which is a challenging task because the limes cannot fall to the ground. These standards make it clear that everyone must work together. Additionally, it is demonstrated during the practice field's upkeep, where children collaborate to clean and maintain it.

### 5. Magical Value

The community's belief that those who have practiced and adhered to silat pangean will always prevail in conflicts over those who do not stems from the magical value. This occurs because the training method for silat pangean is often tiring and can only be followed after combining the second *limau godang* using the "*padam palito*" (blackout) technique. Only men are permitted to blend limes; women are not permitted to do so since it is thought that doing so will harm their femininity. Since limes play a significant role in silat pangean, the limes that will be blended need to be kept above the kitchen fireplace in order to preserve their freshness for a long period. When the limes are mixed, there is sometimes an illusion of a centipede, snake, or scorpion and it is said that the person will face a difficult life and need vigilance. For those who do not get those illusions, it is considered that they will encounter a satisfying life in the future.

The values derived from these traditional martial arts gradually alter the behavior of the community. Every practice of this traditional martial art embodies societal principles that improve the Pangean community. The process of changing these mindsets is undoubtedly a lengthy one. As a traditional art, Silat Pangean is always good and beneficial to individuals who use it in daily life, regardless of whether they are practitioners or not. In addition to the values discussed above, there are other values including artistic and religious values.

In addition to being highly developed inside the Pangean region, Silat Pangean has expanded outside the boundaries of the province of Riau. In the 17 villages that make up the Pangean sub-district, this martial is present in practically every village. The 17 settlements are separated into two sizable regions, each of which is bounded by the Batang Kuantan River. In addition to the villages of Pulau Rengas, Pematang, Padang Kunik, Teluk Pauh, Padang Tanggung, and Tanah Bekali, there are eleven other villages across the Batang Kuantan River: Koto Pangean, Pasar Baru Pangean, Pulau Kumpai, Pulau Deras, Teluk Pauh, Pulau Tongah, Pulau Rengas, Rawang Binjai, Sungai Langsung, Pauh Angit Hulu, and Sako.

It is nearly universal among the youth of the Pangean region to pursue Silat Pangean. Silat Pangean itself, however, is not coercive; rather, it is entirely voluntary. However, there are some fascinating aspects to the rules for following Silat Pangean, which are dominated by male teenagers, and the rules applied to male and female students differ. According to its history, Sheikh Maulana Ali brought Silat Pangean while trading and promoting Islam in the Pangean region. Sheikh Maulana Ali had four students during the process, and each of them had a specialty. One of the four students was Datuk Lebar

Dado, who was reported to have a powerful physique that was capable of dissolving steel. Furthermore, there are Datuk Kayo, who has logical thinking and a sharp mind, knowledgeable and dedicated to learn, Si Bidang Tulang Rusuk and the last is Datuk Berdarah Putih claimed the ability to withstand every type of poison, including those of snakes, centipedes, scorpions, and more.

Si Bidang Tulang Rusuk, one of the four learners, went on to become the founder of the Pangean Silat school, which is still in operation today. Si Bidang Tulang Rusuk is home to two exceptional kids who are utilized to create the biggest silat page in the Pangean region. The students are Pendekar Untuik, who was named Laman Silek Pendekar Malin and has the largest silat area in Pematang, and Pendekar Balang, who has a unique silat space in Pulau Kumpai. Silat Pangean was said to give energy when battling opponents in the long run. The primary explanation is its belief that anyone who learns Silat Pangean will always prevail in combat. Additionally, they think that Silat Pangean plays a significant part in bolstering their mystical abilities.

The purpose of Silat Pangean was to both uphold the Pangean community's morality and defend them against attacks, beginning with the mentality that developed among the members of the society in relation to their customs. In the past, the true adversary was a person who engaged in direct combat. However, the term "enemy" has gradually changed in the current day, particularly among younger generations like Gen Z. According to Francis and Hoefel (2018), Gen Z refers to those who were born between 1995 and 2010 and have had exposure to mobile phones and the internet. This change is a result of parents' diminished presence and role as a result of high work demands and unrestrained technology use. Furthermore, Gen Z has been exposed to extensive digitization as a result of improper parenting practices. These factors contribute to the development of bad behaviors, such as their preference for digital media for communication and interaction. As a result of their almost constant interaction, Gen Z is more vulnerable to attacks from all sides. Because of this, it's feasible that adversaries will appear online rather than in the real world, as was the case for earlier generations. This undoubtedly also has an impact on the meaning of Silat Pangean, which was formerly to defend oneself against adversaries but has since evolved. The habits of the people who lived in that time period and the emergence of a specific culture or tradition were the causes of this shift. About this, currently, Silat Pangean has begun to experience a shift in values that could be seen from the function of Silat Pangean to protect oneself from enemies. The human enemies, in the Gen Z era, do not attack in physical form but psychologically.

Nowadays, the shifted values not only happen in the function and aim of the Silat, but also in spiritual beliefs begin to diminish. With the development of technology and changing social culture, the old values are starting to be questioned because society tends to think logically about the practice and prefer to look and seek the truth based on the technology. The logical thinking about this practice is also supported by Palm *et al* (2011) which explains how the decay process can be slowed down by fumigation. It is the same as wrapping limes and putting it over a fireplace in preparation for learning Silat Pangean. Scientifically, the volatile compounds produced by the firewood will go through two stages; hot and cold fumigation. Palm *et al* (2011) also explains that hot fumigation with 70-100°C in two until four hours will disable the enzyme and prevent decayment. Cold fumigation also will disable the enzyme and speed up the cooked fish (Sulistijowati, 2011). This is proof that those values could slowly vanish by critical thinking from modern society and it is feared will eliminate the existing cultural values.

Silat Pangean's development in the Pangean community, in particular, and in general, is undergoing renewal, as seen by the continuous presence of Silat Pangean in the community, both within and outside of Pangean. Teenagers, particularly boys, also follow the Silat Pangean students in large numbers. Even so, a few silat pages permit underage girls.

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