

Piil Pesenggiri as a foundational framework for local wisdom-based education in promoting cultural identity and social cohesion within the SDGs perspective

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Abstract

This study examines *Piil Pesenggiri* as the basic framework of education based on local wisdom and its role in promoting cultural identity and social cohesion among the people of Lampung Pepadun. The study employed a descriptive qualitative approach, with a case study in Baradatu District, Way Kanan Regency. The research data were obtained through in-depth interviews with traditional leaders as well as document studies of the *Kuntara Raja Niti* customary law book and ethnopedagogical literature. The data were analysed thematically through the flow of reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing, with validity tested through the triangulation of sources and techniques. The results of the study show that *Piil Pesenggiri* functions as a cultural norm of the Lampung Pepadun community, which animates four main values: *Nemui Nyimah* (friendliness), *Nengah Nyappur* (social involvement), *Bejuluk Beadek* (recognition of customary titles), and *Sakai Sambayan* (mutual cooperation). The consistency of this value in the oral traditions and the text of *Kuntara Raja Niti* confirms its position as an adaptive living law. Ethnopedagogically, the integration of *Piil Pesenggiri* in education effectively shapes the character, social responsibility, and tolerance of students. Viewed from the perspective of Durkheim's social functionalism, this local wisdom provides a common moral framework that strengthens the social cohesion of society. In addition, these values align with the fulfilment of SDG 11 (Sustainable Communities) and SDGs 16 (Peace and Resilient Institutions), positioning Baradatu's local wisdom as the strategic foundation of culture-based sustainable development.

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Introduction

For the people of Lampung, *Piil Pesenggiri* functions as an ethical framework that regulates social order, customs, and interpersonal behaviour. The concept encompasses four main principles: *Nemui Nyimah* (greeting and showing respect), *Nengah Nyappur* (mixing and engaging socially), *Bejuluk Beadek* (communal achievement and recognition through the



granting of customary titles), and *Sakai Sambayan* (mutual cooperation and collective responsibility). These principles help form a social structure that allows people to coexist and collaborate (Hadikusuma, 1989). These values are typically lived by the indigenous people of Lampung Pepadun, one of the two major traditional groups of Lampung besides Saibatin, which uphold the patrilineal kinship system and tradition of customary deliberation in communal decision-making. Baradatu District in Way Kanan Regency is one of the areas with the Pepadun indigenous people who still maintain customary structures, *begawi* ceremonies, and references to the *Kuntara Raja Niti* customary law book as normative guidelines in community life. *Kuntara Raja Niti* contains provisions on manners, traditional leadership, social sanctions, and dispute resolution procedures, in which the values of *Piil Pesenggiri* are manifested explicitly and implicitly. Contemporary studies recognise that *Piil Pesenggiri* is more than just a cultural symbol, it is a network of integrated social values embedded in everyday practice. In the Pepadun community in Baradatu, these values are not only inherited orally through traditional leaders, but are also documented in *Kuntara Raja Niti*, thus making them a living reference that contributes to the existence of life in the midst of rapid social change.

Although academic interest in *Piil Pesenggiri* is increasing, most studies examine *Piil Pesenggiri* through the isolated theoretical lens of Kelsen's (2006) *grundnorm* theory and Van Vollenhoven's (1981) perspective on living law, and not many have combined field data in the form of interviews with written customary law texts such as *Kuntara Raja Niti* in an integrated manner. Second, the existing studies are still minimal, focusing on specific loci in the Pepadun community in Way Kanan, even though this area has distinctive customary characteristics and is still alive. Third, existing research lacks explicit links between *Piil Pesenggiri* values and measurable SDGs indicators, as well as the mechanisms of social cohesion in a modern pluralistic society. This research overcomes this gap by exploring primary data through in-depth interviews with traditional leaders of the Lampung Pepadun community in Baradatu, Way Kanan, to understand the practice and meaning of *Piil Pesenggiri* contextually; examine secondary data from the book *Kuntara Raja Niti* as a written source of customary law to verify and enrich the findings of the interview; develop an integrated theoretical framework that combines Kelsen (2006) *grundnorm*, Van Vollenhoven's law of life, ethnopedagogy, and social functionalism Durkheim (1893/1984) and demonstrate a concrete mechanism linking *Piil Pesenggiri* values with SDG targets 11 and 16.

This research makes both theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, this study advances understanding of customary value systems by combining field data (interviews with indigenous leaders) and written sources (*Kuntara Raja Niti*), and by demonstrating their relevance to contemporary social theory and development discourse. Practically, this study provides empirical evidence-based recommendations for education policymakers and indigenous stakeholders in Way Kanan who want to integrate local wisdom into formal curricula while contributing to sustainable development goals.

Method

This study used a qualitative approach with an exploratory descriptive case study design. The qualitative approach was chosen to gain a deep understanding of the meaning, practical expression, and social mechanisms of *Piil Pesenggiri* values as lived and practised by the indigenous people of Lampung. This approach allowed researchers to understand social phenomena based on the perspective of the research subject in its natural context. Creswell and Creswell (2018) explain that qualitative research is used to explore and understand the meaning given by individuals or groups to a social or humanitarian issue. Case studies allow researchers to explore phenomena in depth within the social, cultural, institutional, and historical context of the society being studied (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In the context of this research, the case studied was the meaning and actualisation of *Piil Pesenggiri* values in the indigenous people of Lampung Pepadun, especially in relation to customary norms, social practices, education, and contemporary community life.

The research was carried out in Baradatu District, Way Kanan Regency, Lampung Province. The selection of the location was carried out purposively based on conceptual and empirical considerations. Baradatu District was considered relevant because it is one of the areas that is the base of settlements for the indigenous people of Lampung Pepadun and still had the existence of customary institutions in the social life of the community. In addition, the practice of *perwatin* deliberation and the existence of traditional values and norms that have been inherited from generation to generation were important contexts to examine the sustainability and transformation of *Piil Pesenggiri* values. The research subject was determined using purposive sampling, which involves selecting informants based on specific considerations aligned with the research objectives. Purposive sampling is used when researchers select data sources based on the belief that the informant best knows and understands the needed information (Arikunto, 2021; Sugiyono, 2019). The research informants included traditional leaders (contributors/traditional stakeholders), community leaders, and education stakeholders in Baradatu District who had knowledge, experience, and direct involvement in the social life of the Lampung Pepadun community.

The research data consists of primary data and secondary data. Primary data was obtained directly from informants through in-depth interviews and observations of the lives of indigenous peoples. Primary data were used to explore the meaning of the principles of *Piil Pesenggiri*, how they are implemented in social life, the mechanisms for inheriting customary values, and their relevance to educators. Meanwhile, secondary data was obtained through written documents, especially the Kitab *Kuntara Raja Niti* as one of the normative sources in understanding the provisions and values of Lampung customary law. Secondary data was also strengthened through the study of books, scientific journals, and relevant previous studies on Lampung customary law and local wisdom.

Data collection used four main techniques. First, semi-structured in-depth interviews with traditional leaders, community leaders, and relevant informants. These interviews provided information on the meaning, experience, practice, and transformation of *Piil Pesenggiri* values. Second, a documentation study of the text of *Kuntara Raja Niti* was conducted to identify norms, principles, and provisions relevant to the main values of *Piil Pesenggiri*. The document was used as a data source to help researchers compare documented customary norms with social practices found in the field. Third, the researchers observed social interactions, community activities, and customary practices in the local community. Observations provided an empirical picture of how the value of *Piil Pesenggiri* was expressed in people's behaviour and social relations. Fourth, a literature review strengthened the theoretical foundation and compared the findings with previous research.

Data analysis used the interactive analysis model of Miles et al. (2014), which includes data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing and verification. Furthermore, the validity of the data was guaranteed through several strategies, namely source triangulation, technical triangulation, and member checking. Source triangulation was carried out by comparing information obtained from various informants, especially between traditional leaders, community leaders, and education stakeholders. The triangulation technique was carried out by comparing the results of the interviews with the results of observations and documentation of *Kuntara Raja Niti*. The use of multiple sources and data collection techniques was intended to obtain a more complete picture of the phenomenon and reduce the possibility of bias from one data source.

In addition to triangulation, the study also applied member checking, which is the process of reconfirming the results of interpretation or provisional findings with relevant informants. This step was done to ensure that the researcher's interpretation does not deviate from the meaning that the informant actually intended. Thus, the credibility of the research results was not only determined by the research analysis process, but also through confirmation of the perspective of the research subject.

Results and Discussion

Piil Pesenggiri as the Normative Foundation of Lampung Culture

Interviews with traditional leaders in Baradatu show that *Piil Pesenggiri* is understood not only as a norm of manners, but as a basis for life (*grundnorm*) that serves as a reference for all social rules in the Pepadun community. The informants emphasised that the four principles of *Piil Pesenggiri*: *Nemui Nyimah*, *Nengah Nyappur*, *Bejuluk Beadek*, and *Sakai Sambayan* are a reference in assessing the behaviour of indigenous peoples. The interview results align with *the concept of Kelsen's grundnorm* (Kelsen, 2006).

A search of the text of *Kuntara Raja Niti* also strengthens this finding. Each provision regarding manners, customary leadership, and dispute resolution in the book consistently reflects the four principles of *Piil Pesenggiri*. This shows that the value of *Piil Pesenggiri* has long been documented in writing, not just an oral tradition.

Table 1.

Results of interviews with Traditional Leaders and the Results of the Documentation Study of the Book of Kuntara Raja Niti

Principle	An Interview with Traditional Leaders	Documentation Study of the Book of <i>Kuntara Raja Niti</i>
<i>Nemui Nyimah</i>	Respect for guests and others as a basic social obligation	Provisions on manners and welcome in customary society
<i>Nengah Nyappur</i>	The need to be active in deliberation and customary activities (<i>perwatin</i>)	Provisions on the obligation of citizens to attend customary deliberations
<i>Bejuluk Beadek</i>	Individual achievements are recognised through the awarding of a degree (adok) in <i>begawi</i>	Provisions regarding the procedures and requirements for granting customary titles
<i>Sakai Sambayan</i>	The obligation to help between citizens as a form of solidarity	Provisions on collective responsibility and mutual assistance

Source: Research Data, 2026.

The consistency between the oral speech of traditional leaders and the written text of *Kuntara Raja Niti* shows the fundamental character of *Piil Pesenggiri* for the Pepadun Baradatu community. This shows that the traditions established and agreed upon in the book *Kuntara Raja Niti* still exist and can answer the challenges of modern society. These *Piil Pesenggiri* principles form what scholars describe as the philosophical foundation of Lampung's identity (Irianto & Sinaga, 2011; Sinaga, 2014). They provide a code of conduct while also expressing cultural values of dignity, respect, and social harmony. Studies (Ariyani et al., 2023; Riadi, 2023) exploring the values of local wisdom in Lampung folklore and oral literature also emphasise that *Piil Pesenggiri* consistently appears as a perspective that colours the oral literature and traditional speech of the Lampung people, including the Pepadun people.

Piil Pesenggiri as a Rule of Life in the Lampung Pepadun Community in Baradatu

Analysis of interview data and the Book of *Kuntara Raja Niti* reveals that *Piil Pesenggiri* shows the characteristics of Van Vollenhoven's (1981) law of life. Interview results and studies of the book *Kuntara Raja Niti* support this, as they align with the characteristics of Van Vollenhoven's (1981) version of the law of life. The following field findings are juxtaposed with the characteristics of *living law*.

Table 2.

Comparison of Living Law Characteristics and Empirical Findings on the Pepadun Community in Baradatu

Characteristics of the Law of Life	Findings in Baradatu (Interview & Documentation Study of the Book of <i>Kuntara Raja Niti</i>)
Organic origins	It emerged and developed through the social interaction of the indigenous people of Pepadun since ancient times and is well documented in the Kitab <i>Kuntara Raja Niti</i> .
Responsive to the community	The form of implementation of sanctions and customary ceremonies is able to adapt to the times, but the underlying moral values are still maintained.
Democratic legitimacy	Every decision-making is carried out through <i>perwatin</i> deliberation and collective agreement by indigenous peoples.
Practical orientation	Regulating daily social interaction in people's lives, starting from greetings to dispute resolution if problems are found in the process of social interaction among fellow indigenous people
Adaptive capacity	<i>Piil Pesenggiri</i> was able to evolve with modernisation in Baradatu District, but still maintain the basic values of <i>Piil Pesenggiri</i> .

Source: Research Data, 2026.

The findings in Baradatu District align with Van Vollenhoven's (1981) theory (see also Hoadley, 1985; Jainah et al., 2024; von Benda-Beckmann & von Benda-Beckmann, 2011). This perspective on *living law* has important implications for educating the next generation. According to the informants, traditional leaders, the young generation of Baradatu needs to be introduced to *Piil Pesenggiri* as a living heritage that continues to guide the behaviour of the Pepadun community so that *Piil Pesenggiri* is not only a historical artifact, but remains relevant to the modern life of the Pepadun people.

***Piil Pesenggiri* from an Ethnopedagogical Perspective as a Source of Education Based on Local Wisdom**

Interviews with traditional leaders and education stakeholders show that *Piil Pesenggiri* has many wisdom values for ethnopedagogical approaches and character education in schools in the Baradatu area. Integration can be done through the content of the local content curriculum, teaching methods based on local wisdom, and school culture that brings traditional practices to life. Research conducted by Ariyani et al. (2022, 2023) shows that the use of technology in education that is integrated with local wisdom, such as language and literature, can increase social awareness and tolerance between students. This suggests that incorporating local cultural values into school lessons can effectively teach character education. This teaching approach incorporates significant cultural material into classroom lessons and encourages positive attitudes towards others.

Table 3.

Piil Pesenggiri Integration Matrix for Character Development in Schools

The Value of <i>Pesenggiri</i> Piil	Integration of <i>Piil Pesenggiri</i> in schools	Expected Student Development Outcomes
<i>Nemui Nyimah</i>	Manners and Manners in School	Interpersonal skills and cultural appreciation
<i>Nengah Nyappur</i>	Group activities and community projects	Social involvement and civic participation
<i>Bejuluk Beadek</i>	Recognition of achievements through open appreciation	Healthy motivation and ambition
<i>Sakai Sambayan</i>	Collaborative learning and community service in schools	Teamwork and collective responsibility

Source: Research Data, 2026.

These findings align with Afriyadi et al. (2024), who show that integrating *Piil Pesenggiri* into social studies learning improves students' understanding of tolerance, unity, and social

responsibility. Kristina and Sari (2024) and Bujuri et al. (2023) also emphasised the role of *Piil Pesenggiri* in shaping Lampung students' identity and character by demonstrating its integration into character education based on local wisdom in schools. This finding also aligns with Mustika et al. (2023), which shows that popular media such as regional song lyrics can effectively instil the value of *Piil Pesenggiri* among students.

Meanwhile, Sugiarto et al. (2025) strengthen the relevance of *Piil Pesenggiri* as the foundation of life skills education in an increasingly multicultural society. The informant, Baradatu traditional leaders, also emphasised the importance of strengthening the younger generation's cultural literacy. Sugiarto et al. (2025) added that the success of ethnopedagogy-based education depends on the active involvement of communities and schools in creating a school culture based on local wisdom to support the learning process.

***Piil Pesenggiri* and Social Cohesion of the *Pepadun Baradatu* Community**

Interview data revealed that *Piil Pesenggiri* contributed to the social cohesion of the Baradatu community through mechanisms consistent with Durkheim's (1893/1984) functionalist framework. According to traditional leaders, the shared commitment to *Nemui Nyimah* and *Sakai Sambayan* fosters moral solidarity across families and clans, while the *perwatin* forum and *begawi* activities function as a collective ritual that strengthens the group's identity.

Table 4.
The Framework of Piil Pesenggiri Contribution to the Social Cohesion of the Baradatu Community (Emile Durkheim's Functionalist Perspective)

Emile Durkheim's Framework of Functionalism	Operationalisation in Baradatu	Social Cohesion Results
Common Values	Commitment to <i>Nemui Nyimah</i> (hospitality) and <i>Sakai Sambayan</i> (mutual cooperation)	The building of moral solidarity across families and clans
Collective Rituals	<i>Perwatin</i> deliberative council, execution of the <i>Begawi</i> ceremony, and community work.	Strengthening the identity and togetherness of indigenous groups
Norm Enforcement	The application of social expectations and sanctions that are enforced by traditional leaders	Consistency of citizens' behaviour in maintaining public order

Source: Research Data, 2026.

In line with Fernanda and Samsuri (2020), the informant emphasised that mutual assistance and collective decision-making strengthen the bonds among Baradatu residents and equip the community to face the demands of modernity. However, some informants also reminded of the challenge as noted by Sinaga (2014): the potential for the narrowing of the meaning of *Piil Pesenggiri* to become just a symbol of individual prestige, so revitalisation efforts are needed that re-emphasise collective values over personal achievements.

Piil Pesenggiri has greatly contributed to building strong social ties in the Lampung community. Social capital includes elements such as connections, shared norms, and trust that allow individuals to collaborate and help each other. These aspects are important for building a cohesive, strong community (Asmal & Latief, 2023; Fernanda & Samsuri, 2020). The concept of mutual help and collaboration in *Piil Pesenggiri* helps maintain community balance and consider the welfare of all members. These principles maintain social harmony by setting clear guidelines for what individuals should do to keep things calm. This contributes to a stable and efficiently managed society, while also helping to prevent problems such as individuals feeling

disconnected or the collapse of society. Studies show that customs such as traditional gatherings (*nyappur*) and collaboration (*sakai sambayan*) remain vital in contemporary Lampung culture. These principles promote unity by resolving conflicts, strengthening intergroup relationships, and promoting cultural cohesion. From a functionalist perspective, *Piil Pesenggiri* is more than just an old habit; It is a dynamic system that maintains social balance.

Preserving these traditions strengthens community bonds and instills good character. Integrating these traditional values into education transforms them from mere history into a social guide that unites individuals through a sense of belonging and obligation collectively (Hadikusuma, 1983). Local knowledge preserves cultural traditions and brings communities together, fostering strong and harmonious communities. *Piil Pesenggiri* instills important values such as tolerance, collaboration, and community integration. These principles are in line with the goals of SDG 16, which emphasises peace, justice, and strong institutions. This type of social work is essential for creating a fair and harmonious community.

Piil Pesenggiri has greatly contributed to building strong social ties in the Lampung community. The social capital that *Pesenggiri* instills presents a different set of principles that contribute to the formation of a harmonious and just community. Principles such as *Nemui Nyimah* and *Nengah Nyappur* highlight the importance of open communication, embracing tolerance, and respecting diversity. These principles lay the foundation for the unity of society. Kristina and Sari (2024) observe that teaching *Piil Pesenggiri* values in character education allows students to manage conflicts peacefully and appreciate diverse cultures and religions. Teaching cultural values fosters strong local identities and contributes to societal transformation that fosters sustainable and inclusive communities.

***Piil Pesenggiri* in the Context of SDGs**

Based on the interview data and analysis of *Kitab Kuntara Raja Niti*, the *Piil Pesenggiri* values practised by the people of Pepadun Baradatu show substantive alignment with SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) (United Nations, 2022).

Table 5.

SDGs Conformity Matrix with Pesenggiri Values

SDG targets	The Value of Pesenggiri Piil	Practice in Baradatu
SDG 11.4 (Protect cultural heritage)	The whole principle	Preservation of <i>Kuntara Raja Niti</i> and customary practices through intergenerational transmission
SDG 11.3 (Inclusive communities)	<i>Nengah Nyappur</i>	Social inclusion through the inter-village forum
SDG 16.1 (Reduce violence)	<i>Nemui Nyimah</i>	Respectful relationships and prevention of conflicts between citizens
SDG 16.7 (Participatory governance)	<i>Sakai Sambayan</i>	Collective decision-making in customary deliberations
SDG 16.b (Non-discrimination)	<i>Nengah Nyappur</i>	Inclusion across diversity of residents in the Baradatu area

Source: Research Data, 2026.

These findings show that *Piil Pesenggiri* values help prevent sociocultural degradation amid changing times and position the local wisdom of the Pepadun Baradatu community as a real resource for implementing the SDGs at the local level. Based on the findings of the field in Baradatu, this study proposes an integrated framework that shows how *Piil Pesenggiri* operates across theoretical dimensions:

1. Normative Dimension (Grundnorm): *Piil Pesenggiri*, as affirmed by traditional leaders and written in *Kuntara Raja Niti*, provides the highest normative foundation that legitimises all social norms of the Pepadun community.
2. Juridical Dimension (Law of Life): *Piil Pesenggiri* serves as an adaptive customary law that evolves with the needs of the Baradatu people while maintaining the core values in *Kuntara Raja Niti*.
3. Pedagogical Dimension (Ethnopedagogy): *Piil Pesenggiri* provides education content based on local wisdom that builds the character and identity of Baradatu students.
4. Sociological Dimension (Social Functionalism): *Piil Pesenggiri* creates social cohesion through the collective values and rituals of the Pepadun community.
5. Development Dimensions (SDGs): *Piil Pesenggiri* contributes to sustainable development through culturally rooted traditional practices in Way Kanan.

This model shows that the normative foundations in *Kuntara Raja Niti*, lived by traditional leaders to legitimise legal practice, and transmitted through education and maintained through social cohesion, ultimately contribute to sustainable development in the Baradatu region.

Conclusion

This qualitative research, conducted in Baradatu District, Way Kanan Regency, shows that *Piil Pesenggiri* functions as a comprehensive cultural framework for the people of Lampung Pepadun, enabling them to operate across dimensions to structure social life, education, and community development. The four core principles of *Nemui Nyimah*, *Nengah Nyappur*, *Bejuluk Beadek*, and *Sakai Sambayan*, excavated from interviews with traditional leaders and confirmed through the Kitab *Kuntara Raja Niti*, provide a normative foundation, legal framework, educational resources, and social cohesion mechanisms.

The analysis confirms *Piil Pesenggiri* as both a grundnorm (Kelsen, 2006) and a Living Law (Van Vollenhoven, 1981), as reflected consistently in both the narratives of traditional figures and the text of the *Kuntara Raja Niti*. Through an ethnopedagogical approach, these values can be integrated into formal education in Baradatu to develop students' character, social responsibility, and cultural identity. This research also confirms *Piil Pesenggiri*'s contribution to the social cohesion of the Pepadun community, consistent with Durkheim's functionalism, and shows alignment with SDGs 11 and 16. This research contributes to studies in several fields. First, through interviews with traditional leaders) and written secondary data (*Kuntara Raja Niti*), this research can understand and verify the customary value system comprehensively. Second, this study provides empirical evidence from the Baradatu area, Way Kanan, which enriches the literature on *Piil Pesenggiri*, which was previously more of a literature study. Third, this research advances understanding of the mechanisms linking cultural values with education, social cohesion, and development outcomes. This research has several limitations. First, as a qualitative study focused on Baradatu District, the findings are not intended to be statistically generalised to the entire Lampung Pepadun community, although the patterns found may provide an indicative picture for other areas with similar characteristics. Second, the number and scope of informants among traditional leaders are limited to those willing and available to be interviewed, so they may not capture all existing variations in views. Third, interpretation of the *Kuntara Raja Niti* text depends on the version used, as well as the contextual understanding of the researcher and informant.

Piil Pesenggiri, as lived by traditional leaders and contained in *Kuntara Raja Niti*, represents more than just the cultural heritage of the Pepadun Baradatu community; it is a framework for ethical living, community development, and social cohesion. In an era of rapid change and global connectivity, this kind of customary wisdom offers resources to build a just, peaceful, and sustainable society. Revitalising *Piil Pesenggiri* values through community education and practice in Way Kanan can contribute meaningfully to cultural preservation and sustainable development goals.

Competing interests

The authors state that there are no financial, personal, or organisational conflicts of interest related to the research, writing, or publication of this paper.

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Ethics Approval

This study involved in-depth interviews and observations with adult traditional leaders, community leaders and education stakeholders in Baradatu District, Way Kanan Regency, together with documentary analysis of the Kuntara Raja Niti. Participation was voluntary, informed consent was obtained from all informants, and their identities have been kept confidential.

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