

The Role of Cultural Beliefs in Shaping Generation Z's Healthcare Choices in Indonesia and Malaysia



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ABSTRACT: This study examines how cultural beliefs shape healthcare choices among Generation Z in Indonesia and Malaysia, focusing on the coexistence of traditional and modern practices. Despite globalized influences, traditional medicine like "jamu" in Indonesia and "urut" in Malaysia remains integral, rooted in familial and societal norms. Using a qualitative approach, this research highlights gender dynamics, with women favoring traditional methods for holistic care and men preferring modern treatments for acute conditions. The 4I model (Integrity, Information, Intelligence, Inspirational) provides a framework for understanding these preferences. Integrity reflects trust in generationally passed practices, Information emphasizes the role of digital platforms in healthcare decisions, Intelligence captures the blend of traditional and modern approaches, and Inspirational aspects highlight cultural pride. The study underscores the importance of culturally sensitive healthcare policies that integrate traditional and modern practices to meet Generation Z's evolving needs, offering actionable insights for providers and policymakers.

KEYWORDS: Generation Z, Traditional medicine, Modern healthcare, Gender dynamics, Cultural beliefs.

1. INTRODUCTION

Healthcare decisions are never made in a vacuum. They are the result of complex interactions between individual experiences, societal norms, and deeply ingrained cultural beliefs. In Southeast Asia, particularly in Indonesia and Malaysia, cultural values significantly shape how healthcare is perceived and accessed. Despite rapid modernization and globalization, traditional practices continue to play a critical role in influencing healthcare decisions. For Generation Z, a cohort defined by their digital fluency and global connectivity, these traditional beliefs present a unique intersection with modern healthcare choices. This study examines how cultural beliefs, gender, and societal norms intersect to shape healthcare preferences among Generation Z in Indonesia and Malaysia.

Cultural beliefs have always been central to healthcare practices in Southeast Asia. In Indonesia, the use of jamu (herbal remedies) has long been a hallmark of traditional medicine. More than just a healthcare choice, jamu reflects Indonesia's cultural heritage, with the Ministry of Health actively promoting its use through initiatives such as "Back to Nature" campaigns (WHO, 2018). Similarly, in Malaysia, traditional healthcare methods such as urut (massage therapy) and reliance on bomoh (traditional healers) remain prevalent. A 2020 report from Malaysia's National Institute of Health highlighted that 55% of Malaysians had used traditional medicine at least once, underscoring its relevance even in urbanized areas with easy access to modern medical facilities.

Traditional medicine's resilience is not merely a matter of accessibility but also trust. In both nations, familial and communal recommendations often take precedence over clinical advice. According to a study by Lim & Suhaila (2019), nearly 60% of respondents in Malaysia cited cultural values as a primary reason for using traditional medicine. Similarly, in Indonesia, surveys indicate that over 70% of rural households incorporate herbal medicine into their regular healthcare routines, reflecting the deep societal trust in these practices.

Generation Z, however, faces a duality in their healthcare choices. As digital natives, they are exposed to global healthcare standards, with access to medical information through social media, telemedicine, and online health platforms. Yet, familial influences and societal norms often draw them back to traditional practices, creating a tension between modern and traditional healthcare options. For example, while many young Indonesians recognize the efficacy of modern medicine for acute conditions, they often turn to herbal medicine for preventive care or chronic ailments due to its perceived holistic benefits. Despite this, little research has been conducted to explore how these dynamics specifically influence Generation Z. Most existing studies focus on older generations or rural communities, leaving a significant gap in understanding the preferences of younger, urbanized populations. Moreover, gender as a factor in healthcare decision-making remains underexplored, despite evidence suggesting that women and men often have different healthcare-seeking behaviors influenced by cultural norms.

The interplay between cultural beliefs and healthcare choices has gained significant scholarly attention, particularly in multiethnic and diverse regions such as Southeast Asia. This study explores the healthcare preferences of Generation Z in Indonesia

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and Malaysia, focusing on the influence of cultural beliefs, barriers to modern healthcare, gender dynamics, and the role of digital health platforms. Using the 4I framework—Integrity, Information, Intelligence, and Inspirational—as a lens for analysis, the research provides a multidimensional understanding of healthcare decision-making processes.

Integrity emerges as a foundational principle in Generation Z's adherence to traditional practices, such as jamu in Indonesia and urut in Malaysia. These practices are deeply embedded in cultural pride and familial trust, reflecting the community's commitment to authentic and reliable healthcare solutions. Participants emphasized that their trust in these practices is rooted in the perceived alignment between cultural identity and health integrity. Information plays a pivotal role, particularly with the growing reliance on digital health platforms. Generation Z utilizes social media, health apps, and online reviews to make informed decisions, blending traditional remedies with modern healthcare advice. This study demonstrates how access to diverse sources fosters a hybrid approach to healthcare, enabling this generation to navigate both traditional and modern systems effectively.

Intelligence is reflected in the strategic decision-making of participants, who often weigh the costs, accessibility, and perceived risks associated with modern healthcare against the safety and natural appeal of traditional remedies. This analytical approach highlights their capacity to critically assess healthcare options while maintaining cultural coherence. Inspirational factors are evident in the role of influencers, family members, and cultural narratives that shape healthcare preferences. Participants frequently cited family traditions and endorsements from trusted sources as motivating factors in their healthcare choices. The inspirational dimension underscores how cultural heritage and digital influence converge to guide Generation Z towards healthcare solutions that align with their values and aspirations. The findings build on prior research by illustrating how the 4I framework provides a nuanced understanding of healthcare preferences in a rapidly modernizing yet culturally rooted context. This study contributes to the broader discourse on hybrid healthcare models, emphasizing the need for culturally sensitive and integrative approaches to address the evolving needs of Generation Z in Southeast Asia.

Building on the author's previous work on the 4I framework—Integrity, Information, Intelligence, and Inspirational—this study integrates these dimensions into the analysis of healthcare decision-making. Integrity, examining the trustworthiness of traditional and modern healthcare practices. Information, investigating how Generation Z accesses and uses healthcare information through digital platforms and familial knowledge. Intelligence, understanding the critical thinking process in evaluating healthcare options. Inspirational, highlighting how cultural pride and heritage inspire preferences for traditional practices. By leveraging the 4I framework, the study not only provides a structured lens to analyze the findings but also enriches the understanding of how cultural and technological factors converge to shape healthcare behaviors in Indonesia and Malaysia.

This study stands out by addressing these gaps. It provides a comparative analysis of Indonesia and Malaysia, two nations with shared cultural legacies yet distinct healthcare systems. By focusing on Generation Z, it captures the preferences of a demographic that is both rooted in tradition and shaped by globalization. Additionally, the integration of a gendered perspective allows for a deeper understanding of how men and women within this generation navigate their healthcare choices, offering insights into the intersections of culture, gender, and modernity. This research adopts a qualitative approach to delve into the complexities of cultural and gendered influences on healthcare preferences with Generation Z individuals aged 18–27 from urban and rural areas in both countries. To capture contextual and non-verbal factors influencing healthcare decisions and to identify patterns, variations, and key themes in the data. Through this approach, the study offers a comprehensive understanding of how cultural beliefs shape healthcare decisions, paving the way for more adaptive and inclusive healthcare systems that balance tradition and modernity.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A. Health Belief Model (HBM)

The Health Belief Model (HBM) is a psychological framework that explains and predicts health-related behaviors by focusing on individual attitudes and beliefs. Developed by Irwin M. Rosenstock in the 1950s, it was initially designed to understand why individuals failed to engage in preventive health behaviors, such as vaccination or early screening, despite the availability of health interventions. HBM is now widely used in public health to design interventions and understand the complexities of health behavior decisions. Core Constructs of HBM:

a). Perceived Susceptibility

This refers to an individual's belief in the likelihood of experiencing a health issue or illness. A higher sense of susceptibility often motivates individuals to take preventive actions. For example, in the context of this study, Generation Z individuals who believe they are prone to lifestyle diseases (e.g., due to urbanization or dietary changes) may choose modern medical interventions. Conversely, cultural beliefs may lower perceived susceptibility by relying on traditional practices for prevention.

b). Perceived Severity

This construct addresses the perceived seriousness of a health condition and its potential consequences, such as physical, social, or economic impacts. In Indonesia and Malaysia, cultural narratives may shape perceptions of severity. For instance, illnesses categorized as “spiritual” may be perceived as severe and treated with traditional methods, such as consulting a “bomoh” or using “jamu”, while other conditions may be deemed less severe and handled with over-the-counter medication.

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c). Perceived Benefits

Individuals evaluate the efficacy of a health action or treatment in reducing susceptibility or severity. Cultural beliefs heavily influence this evaluation. Traditional practices such as “urut” or “jamu” are often perceived as more holistic and beneficial for long-term health, while modern treatments may be seen as more effective for acute conditions. Generation Z may integrate both approaches to optimize perceived benefits.

d). Perceived Barriers

These are the obstacles that individuals perceive in adopting health behavior or accessing a treatment. Barriers may include cost, accessibility, or trust in healthcare systems. For Generation Z in Indonesia and Malaysia, the cost of modern medical care, particularly in rural areas, may encourage reliance on affordable traditional remedies.

While the four primary factors are central to HBM, the model also incorporates:

1. Cues to Action: External triggers that motivate health behaviors, such as recommendations from family or social media influences among Generation Z.
2. Self-Efficacy: Confidence in one's ability to take the necessary health action, which is crucial for younger generations navigating healthcare independently.

HBM serves as a foundational lens to understand how cultural beliefs shape the health behaviors of Generation Z in Indonesia and Malaysia. Cultural beliefs amplify the perceived benefits of traditional practices (e.g., holistic wellness and affordability), which may outweigh the barriers such as lack of scientific validation. Generation Z individuals may experience systemic barriers (e.g., high costs or distrust in modern medical institutions), leading to a preference for traditional or hybrid approaches. Cultural narratives about diseases or wellness, passed through familial and societal channels, act as cues to action that reinforce reliance on traditional practices.

The HBM helps structure the analysis of how Generation Z evaluates healthcare options in terms of susceptibility, severity, benefits, and barriers. The model highlights the tension between modern healthcare's scientific appeal and the cultural trust in traditional remedies, particularly relevant to the duality faced by Generation Z. Insights derived from HBM can guide policymakers in addressing barriers to healthcare access and fostering integration of traditional and modern systems.

B. Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory

Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory, developed by Geert Hofstede in the late 1970s, provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how cultural values shape behaviors, attitudes, and decision-making processes. By analyzing six key dimensions, the theory explains cultural differences and their impact on societal structures, including healthcare preferences. The core dimensions of the theory:

a). Power Distance (PDI)

This dimension reflects the degree to which individuals accept unequal power distribution in society. High PDI cultures, like Indonesia and Malaysia, often exhibit deference to authority figures, such as doctors, traditional healers, or elders in healthcare decision-making. Patients may avoid questioning healthcare providers or prefer hierarchical structures where guidance comes from perceived authority figures.

b). Individualism vs. Collectivism (IDV)

This dimension contrasts cultures prioritizing individual needs versus those emphasizing group harmony. Both Indonesia and Malaysia are collectivist cultures where family and community strongly influence healthcare decisions. Traditional remedies are often valued due to their alignment with communal practices and shared cultural heritage.

c). Uncertainty Avoidance (UAI)

This dimension measures a society's tolerance for ambiguity and uncertainty. High UAI societies tend to favor structured healthcare systems and established practices. Traditional medicine in these cultures may offer a sense of certainty because it is rooted in longstanding cultural traditions.

d). Masculinity vs. Femininity (MAS)

This dimension evaluates the emphasis on competition and achievement (masculine) versus care and quality of life (feminine). Indonesia and Malaysia have relatively feminine cultural tendencies, valuing well-being and interpersonal harmony, which may explain the appeal of holistic and nurturing healthcare practices such as “jamu” and “urut”.

e). Long-Term vs. Long-Term Short-Term Orientation (LTO)

This dimension explores whether cultures prioritize future-oriented practices or focus on immediate results. Long-term orientation, seen in both countries, may support traditional healthcare approaches emphasizing preventative care and holistic well-being.

f). Indulgence vs. Restraint (IVR)

This dimension contrasts cultures allowing for free gratification of desires versus those exercising restraint based on societal norms. Restraint-oriented cultures, like Indonesia and Malaysia, may view healthcare decisions through a moral or religious lens, favoring traditional practices aligned with cultural and religious values.

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Hofstede's dimensions, such as Uncertainty Avoidance and Long-Term Orientation, provide insights into why Generation Z in Indonesia and Malaysia often incorporate traditional medicine into their healthcare routines. Cultural values emphasize trust in longstanding traditions explain why herbal medicine or “bomoh” practices remain relevant. The collectivist nature of these cultures highlights the role of family and community in shaping Generation Z's healthcare choices. For example, parents' or elders' recommendations may outweigh the younger generation's preference for modern medical options. The high-Power Distance index suggests that Generation Z may defer to the authority of traditional healers or medical professionals, even when presented with conflicting information from globalized sources. The interplay between Masculinity and Femininity dimensions helps explain the hybrid healthcare preferences of Generation Z. While exposure to global standards (modern medicine) appeals to their competitive side, the nurturing aspects of traditional practices resonate with the cultural value of interpersonal harmony.

Hofstede's dimensions enable a comparative analysis of how cultural values in Indonesia and Malaysia influence healthcare preferences, offering a nuanced understanding of similarities and differences. Generation Z's healthcare preferences are shaped by their dual exposure to globalized values and deeply rooted cultural norms. Hofstede's theory provides a framework to analyze how these influences converge in decision-making. By identifying cultural dimensions affecting healthcare preferences, this study can guide the design of services and policies that integrate traditional and modern practices effectively. So, Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory provides a robust framework for understanding how deeply ingrained cultural values influence healthcare behaviors in Indonesia and Malaysia. Its relevance to this study lies in its ability to uncover the cultural and generational tensions that shape Generation Z's hybrid healthcare preferences, offering insights into integrating tradition and modernity in culturally appropriate ways.

C. Gender Schema Theory

Gender Schema Theory, proposed by Sandra Bem in 1981, offers a cognitive framework for understanding how individuals process and internalize gender-related information. The theory posits that from an early age, individuals develop gender schemas—mental structures that organize and guide their understanding of behaviors, roles, and expectations associated with being male or female within their cultural context. These schemas influence how individuals perceive themselves and others, as well as how they make decisions and behave in various aspects of life, including healthcare.

Gender schemas begin to develop in early childhood through socialization processes, including parental guidance, cultural norms, media, and education. In Indonesia and Malaysia, for example, traditional gender roles are deeply embedded in societal structures, influencing expectations for men and women. These schemes inform what is considered appropriate behavior for each gender, including preferences for healthcare services. Gender schemas act as filters through which individuals interpret information and make choices. In healthcare, these schemes may dictate who seeks care, the type of care chosen, and the level of autonomy in decision-making. For example, in some Southeast Asian contexts, men may be more likely to avoid seeking healthcare due to societal expectations of masculinity, while women may rely on familial networks for health-related decisions.

Gender schemas are shaped by cultural norms and beliefs. In Indonesia and Malaysia, patriarchal values often influence healthcare access, with men typically being the primary decision-makers in households. Simultaneously, women may be seen as caregivers, which could influence their preference for traditional remedies that align with cultural beliefs in nurturing and holistic care. Gender schemas influence self-concept, leading individuals to adopt behaviors that align with their internalized gender roles. For Generation Z, exposure to global values through digital platforms may challenge traditional schemes, creating a unique intersection of traditional and modern influences on healthcare decisions.

Gender Schema Theory provides a framework to analyze how cultural gender norms influence healthcare choices among Generation Z in Indonesia and Malaysia. For example, traditional male roles may discourage men from seeking modern healthcare, while traditional female roles may encourage women to use alternative or complementary medicine. As Generation Z navigates both traditional and modern cultural influences, their gender schemas may reflect a hybrid model. For example, male participants may prefer modern healthcare for acute conditions but defer to traditional practices for wellness, while female participants may emphasize holistic approaches rooted in caregiving roles. Gender schemas shape perceptions of susceptibility, severity, and benefits in healthcare choices. For example, women may perceive a higher susceptibility to certain illnesses (e.g., maternal health issues) and therefore prioritize routine care, while men may downplay susceptibility and delay seeking medical attention.

The theory allows for an in-depth exploration of how societal and cultural norms influence the healthcare behaviors of men and women within Generation Z. Gender Schema Theory highlights the role of culturally specific gender norms in shaping health behaviors, providing insights into the interplay between traditions and modernization. By identifying gendered patterns in healthcare preferences, this study can guide the development of gender-sensitive healthcare policies that address barriers unique to men and women. In the context of healthcare, gender schemas may determine how men and women perceive traditional and modern healthcare practices. For example, women might lean toward traditional practices due to their cultural association with nurturing and holistic care. On the other hand, men might prefer modern medical treatments, which are often perceived as more "efficient" or "technological." Gender Schema Theory enriches the study by exploring how gender roles shaped by cultural beliefs influence Generation Z's healthcare preferences in Indonesia and Malaysia. This helps in identifying gender-specific patterns in health behavior.

3. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Methodology

The study employs a comparative qualitative approach, a methodology suited to exploring the intricacies of cultural beliefs, healthcare preferences, and gender dynamics among Generation Z in Indonesia and Malaysia. This research design allows for a detailed examination of similarities and differences in healthcare behaviors influenced by cultural and contextual factors across two culturally rich nations. By comparing these two settings, the study captures the nuanced ways cultural beliefs interact with generational and gendered experiences, offering insights that would be less visible through a single-country or quantitative study.

B. Research Design: Comparative Qualitative Approach

The comparative qualitative approach is designed to capture subjective experiences, cultural nuances, and social dynamics that quantitative methods might overlook (Creswell, 2013). Indonesia and Malaysia, as neighboring countries, share traditional practices, such as using herbal remedies and consulting traditional healers. By focusing on these commonalities, the research highlights regional trends among Generation Z in healthcare preferences. Despite shared histories, the healthcare systems and cultural practices in both countries diverge due to factors such as religious influences, government healthcare policies, and levels of urbanization. For instance, Indonesia emphasizes herbal medicine (jamu), while Malaysia has institutionalized traditional practices like “urut” within its healthcare framework (Ministry of Health, 2018; National Institute of Health Malaysia, 2020). The method also explores how culture, gender, and generational identities interact in influence healthcare choices. For example, it examines how young people navigate traditional family expectations alongside modern healthcare options.

This approach delves into the cultural environments of Indonesia and Malaysia, examining how historical, familial, and societal norms influence healthcare behaviors. By situating research in specific cultural contexts, the study provides insights into how traditions and modernity coexist differently across the two nations. Generation Z, with their exposure to both traditional values and digital globalization, represents a demographic uniquely positioned to navigate hybrid healthcare models. This study examines how cultural and technological influences shape their healthcare decisions. Using interviews and observations, the research gathers detailed accounts of participants' experiences with healthcare systems and practices. This narrative-based approach is crucial for understanding the complexity of cultural beliefs and their impact on healthcare behaviors (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The research investigates the role of traditional beliefs, such as “jamu” in Indonesia and “urut” in Malaysia, in shaping healthcare decisions. It also examines how modern medical systems interact with these traditional practices. Gender is considered a critical factor in healthcare preferences. For example, traditional midwives (“bidan” in Indonesia and “bomoh” in Malaysia) are often consulted by women for maternal care, reflecting gendered healthcare practices rooted in cultural norms. The study compares healthcare behaviors across rural and urban settings, addressing questions such as whether rural individuals rely more on traditional healthcare due to accessibility issues and how urban participants integrate modern options with cultural traditions. Open-ended interviews allow participants to share personal experiences, helping to reveal cultural influences on their healthcare decisions. Observing healthcare settings, including clinics and traditional healer locations, provides context for understanding how individuals interact with healthcare providers.

This methodology respects and reflects the diverse cultural practices of the two countries, ensuring that findings are authentic and relevant. By focusing on narratives and observations, the research provides a deeper understanding of cultural and generational influences on healthcare choices. The comparative nature of the study highlights shared and unique patterns in healthcare behaviors, offering actionable insights for healthcare providers and policymakers. The method captures how shared and distinct cultural beliefs shape Generation Z's healthcare preferences in Indonesia and Malaysia. It provides insights into how healthcare behaviors differ between genders within specific cultural frameworks. The comparative framework identifies trends such as the blending of traditional and modern healthcare practices among Generation Z.

C. Data Collection

The study employs a multi-method data collection approach, integrating semi-structured interviews and a secondary data review to comprehensively explore healthcare preferences and cultural beliefs among Generation Z in Indonesia and Malaysia. These methods collectively ensure a nuanced understanding of both self-reported attitudes and observed behaviors, grounded within the broader cultural and policy context of each country. Semi-structured interviews serve as the study's primary method for gathering in-depth, qualitative data. This technique allows participants to articulate their personal healthcare experiences and preferences while enabling researchers to probe deeper into specific themes or patterns.

Semi-structured interviews are particularly suited to exploring complex, subjective phenomena like healthcare decision-making influenced by cultural beliefs, familial expectations, and societal norms. By engaging directly with Generation Z participants, the study captures authentic narratives that reflect both individual and shared generational experiences. For example, participants may explain why traditional healers are preferred over modern clinics, citing factors like cultural identity or perceived effectiveness. Insights into how technology, such as telemedicine or health apps, is reshaping healthcare preferences within a culturally specific framework. The interview structure balances consistency and flexibility, ensuring core themes are addressed

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while leaving room for participants to introduce new perspectives (Creswell, 2013). Open-Ended Questions, designed to elicit detailed responses about healthcare attitudes, perceived barriers (e.g., cost or stigma), and the influence of cultural traditions.

The secondary data review situates the study's findings within the broader cultural, historical, and policy contexts of healthcare in Indonesia and Malaysia. This method involves analyzing government health reports, academic literature, and previous studies to validate primary data and provide a macro-level perspective. Secondary data enriches the research by offering a contextual backdrop against which individual and observed behaviors can be interpreted. For instance, The Ministry of Health promotes traditional medicine (jamu) as a cornerstone of national identity, reflecting its deep cultural and historical significance (Ministry of Health, 2018). On the other hand, Reports from the National Institute of Health emphasize the coexistence of traditional and modern healthcare systems, supported by government policies that integrate traditional practices like "urut" into formal healthcare frameworks (NIH Malaysia, 2020).

By integrating interviews, observations, and secondary data, the study ensures a robust and multidimensional understanding of healthcare preferences. This triangulation minimizes biases and enhances the reliability of findings (Patton, 2002). Each method respects and reflects the unique cultural contexts of Indonesia and Malaysia, ensuring that insights are authentic and grounded in local realities. The comprehensive approach provides policymakers and healthcare practitioners with actionable recommendations for designing culturally sensitive healthcare policies and services.

D. Sample Selection

Participants in this study will be selected through purposive sampling, ensuring they meet specific criteria that align with the research objectives and methods outlined. This approach allows for a targeted and meaningful exploration of healthcare preferences among Generation Z in Indonesia and Malaysia. Participants must be aged 18 to 27 years, representing Generation Z as defined in the study. This age group reflects the transitional phase between traditional values and globalized modernity, making them ideal subjects for understanding evolving healthcare preferences.

Participants must reside in Indonesia or Malaysia, enabling a comparative analysis of healthcare behaviors in two culturally rich yet distinct nations. Participants should have experience using both traditional and technology-based healthcare services, such as consulting traditional healers, using herbal medicine (e.g., jamu or urut), and engaging with digital health platforms like telemedicine or health apps. This ensures insights into how individuals navigate the interplay between traditional and modern healthcare systems.

Participants will be selected to represent a range of social, cultural, and gender backgrounds, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of healthcare preferences. Participants must be willing to share their experiences openly in interviews and allow researchers to observe healthcare interactions where applicable. This purposive sampling strategy is designed to ensure that the sample reflects the diversity and complexity of cultural beliefs and healthcare practices in both countries. By including individuals with varied experiences, the study aims to uncover nuanced patterns and themes relevant to Generation Z's healthcare preferences.

E. Data Analysis

The study adopts a robust data analysis approach to extract meaningful insights from qualitative data collected through interviews, observations, and secondary sources. Two key methods—thematic analysis and cross-cultural analysis—are employed to ensure a comprehensive understanding of Generation Z's healthcare preferences in Indonesia and Malaysia. Thematic analysis is a widely used method for identifying, analyzing, and interpreting patterns (themes) within qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This approach is especially suitable for this study, as it helps distill the complex and diverse experiences of participants into cohesive themes that reflect cultural, generational, and gendered influences on healthcare preferences.

The process begins with transcribing all interview recordings and organizing observation notes. Researchers immerse themselves in the data by repeatedly reading transcripts and field notes to gain a deep understanding of the content. This step ensures that subtle nuances, such as tone or emphasis in participants' responses, are not overlooked. Codes are labels assigned to segments of data that represent recurring ideas or concepts. For example, a participant's statement about trusting herbal remedies over pharmaceuticals might be coded as "traditional healthcare trust."

Codes are data-driven (emerging from the data itself) and theory-driven (informed by the Health Belief Model and cultural dimensions frameworks). Codes are grouped into broader themes that capture overarching patterns. For instance, the theme "modern skepticism" might encompass codes like "distrust of pharmaceutical companies" and "concerns about over-medication." Similarly, "family influence" could combine data about parental advice and communal decision-making. The themes are refined and validated to ensure they represent the data accurately and comprehensively. The final step involves interpreting the themes in relation to the research objectives. Themes are contextualized within the cultural and generational frameworks of Indonesia and Malaysia to provide actionable insights.

Cross-cultural analysis is essential in comparative qualitative research, as it identifies both shared patterns and unique cultural variations across different contexts. This method enriches the study by uncovering the cultural nuances that influence Generation Z's healthcare behaviors in Indonesia and Malaysia. The analysis highlights commonalities between the two countries,

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such as the widespread reliance on traditional medicine for minor ailments or the role of family in healthcare decisions. These shared patterns reflect regional trends that might be rooted in shared historical and cultural influences.

Differences are identified to highlight how local contexts shape healthcare preferences. For example, Malaysia's stronger emphasis on religious healers (e.g., bomoh) reflects the integration of Islamic practices into healthcare, while Indonesia's promotion of jamu underscores its nationalist push for traditional herbal medicine. Themes derived from the thematic analysis are compared across the two countries. For instance, the theme "digital health adoption" might show greater prevalence in urban Malaysia than in rural Indonesia due to differences in digital infrastructure and healthcare access. Findings are interpreted in light of national health policies, such as Indonesia's "Back to Nature" program and Malaysia's integration of traditional medicine into public healthcare systems.

Thematic analysis captures the depth of individual experiences, while cross-cultural analysis provides a broader understanding of cultural and contextual differences. The combination of these methods ensures that the study accounts for both micro-level (individual narratives) and macro-level (cultural and policy influences) perspectives. These methods align with the study's objectives by systematically linking cultural beliefs and healthcare preferences among Generation Z in two distinct but interconnected settings.

F. Data Validity and Reliability

The research employs three complementary strategies for analyzing qualitative data: triangulation, member checking, and reflexivity. These approaches ensure the analysis is rigorous, trustworthy, and sensitive to the cultural contexts of the study. The combination of triangulation, member checking, and reflexivity strengthens the overall rigor and trustworthiness of the study. Triangulation ensures that findings are robust and grounded in diverse sources. Member Checking validates that participants' experiences are authentically represented. Reflexivity ensures that researchers remain aware of and address their own biases, especially in culturally sensitive settings.

Triangulation refers to the use of multiple data sources, methods, or perspectives to enhance the validity and reliability of research findings (Patton, 2002). In this study, triangulation involves integrating data collected through semi-structured interviews, participant observations, and secondary data reviews. Cross-referencing information from different sources ensures findings are consistent and well-supported. For example, participants' claims about family influence on healthcare decisions during interviews can be validated through observed interactions in healthcare settings. By incorporating diverse data types, the risk of relying on a single perspective or source is minimized. Triangulation allows the study to encompass the multifaceted nature of healthcare preferences by combining subjective narratives, real-world practices, and contextual information from official reports. Data from interviews (e.g., participants' attitudes toward traditional medicine) is compared with observations (e.g., how they interact with traditional healers) and secondary data (e.g., national health policies promoting traditional medicine). For example, a participant's preference for jamu in Indonesia might align with the government's promotion of herbal remedies, reinforcing the cultural significance of traditional medicine.

Member checking is a process where researchers share preliminary findings or interpretations with participants to validate their accuracy and authenticity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This collaborative approach ensures that the analysis genuinely reflects participants' perspectives. Participants can confirm or clarify the researchers' interpretations, ensuring that their voices are accurately represented. Involving participants in the analysis fosters transparency and mutual trust, particularly in culturally sensitive studies. It reduces the likelihood of researcher bias by allowing participants to correct any misunderstandings or misrepresentations. After identifying initial themes (e.g., "digital health adoption"), researchers present these findings to participants, asking for feedback. For instance, if a participant believes their emphasis on family decision-making was understated, researchers can revise their analysis to better capture this aspect.

Reflexivity involves researchers critically reflecting on their positionality, assumptions, and potential biases throughout the research process. Reflexivity is particularly crucial in cross-cultural studies to maintain objectivity and cultural sensitivity (Creswell, 2013). Reflexivity ensures that researchers acknowledge their own cultural backgrounds and biases, which might influence data collection and interpretation. By being reflexive, researchers respect the cultural norms and values of participants, ensuring that interpretations remain contextually grounded. Maintaining a reflexive journal documents the researchers' evolving understanding and decisions, adding transparency and depth to the analysis.

4. RESEARCH FINDINGS

A. Trust in Traditional Healthcare Practices

The study reveals that cultural beliefs significantly shape Generation Z's preference for traditional healthcare practices in Indonesia and Malaysia. This inclination is driven by a combination of historical continuity, family traditions, and cultural pride, underscoring the complex interplay of personal, familial, and societal factors in healthcare decision-making.

In both Indonesia and Malaysia, traditional healthcare practices, such as jamu (herbal remedies) and urut (therapeutic massage), are deeply embedded in cultural identity. For Generation Z, these practices symbolize a connection to their heritage and

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a continuation of ancestral wisdom. Participants expressed pride in maintaining these traditions, which are often seen as more aligned with nature and the body's natural processes.

Jamu is a centuries-old herbal remedy rooted in Javanese culture. Its use for general well-being and minor ailments like fatigue, colds, or digestive issues resonates with younger generations who value natural and sustainable approaches to health. Similarly, urut serves as a holistic practice for addressing muscle pain, stress, and circulation. Its popularity is enhanced by its incorporation into everyday life, such as post-childbirth recovery or injury management, and the trust placed in experienced practitioners.

“Drinking jamu is not just about health; it’s about respecting my family’s traditions.” – **Indonesian Participant.**

“My family has always used urut for muscle pain. It’s something we trust, especially when recommended by someone in the community.” – **Malaysian Participant.**

One of the most cited reasons for preferring traditional medicine among Generation Z is the perception of safety. Unlike modern pharmaceuticals, which are often associated with side effects and chemical compositions, traditional remedies are viewed as natural and gentle on the body. Participants in both countries reported using traditional medicine as a first line of treatment for minor ailments, reserving modern healthcare for more severe conditions. This decision reflects a risk-averse approach, particularly for non-urgent health concerns.

“I always start with jamu for small things like colds. Medicine from the doctor feels too strong.” – **Indonesian Participant.**

“I use natural oils and massages first before thinking about going to the hospital. It feels safer and doesn’t give me side effects.” – **Malaysian Participant.**

Family plays a pivotal role in shaping healthcare preferences. Older generations, particularly parents and grandparents, often act as gatekeepers of traditional knowledge, passing down remedies and practices that have been trusted for generations. For Generation Z, the trust in traditional medicine is reinforced by their elders' endorsement. This familial guidance not only provides a sense of security but also strengthens cultural continuity. In Malaysia, mothers and grandmothers are often custodians of knowledge about urut for postnatal care, while fathers or grandfathers might guide spiritual healing practices.

“My grandmother makes jamu at home, and she always says it’s better than medicine from the pharmacy.” – **Indonesian Participant.**

“My parents trust traditional healers because they’ve seen them work for others in the family. That’s why I also believe in them.” – **Malaysian Participant**

In Malaysia, the role of religious and spiritual beliefs enhances trust in traditional healthcare. Islamic healers or bomoh often integrate spiritual practices into treatment, addressing not only physical but also emotional and spiritual well-being. This holistic approach resonates with cultural values that prioritize balance and harmony. The involvement of religious figures in healthcare decisions adds an additional layer of legitimacy and comfort for many participants. Spiritual practices, such as recitations of prayers or blessings, are seen as complementary to physical remedies.

“When I’m unwell, my family calls a bomoh to recite prayers. It makes me feel better, emotionally and physically.” – **Malaysian Participant.**

“I believe that prayers from the imam help in recovery, even when combined with natural remedies.” – **Malaysian Participant.**

The findings highlight how traditional healthcare practices remain a cornerstone of Generation Z's healthcare choices in Indonesia and Malaysia. Cultural pride, perceived safety, familial influence, and spiritual beliefs all contribute to the enduring trust in these practices. This deep-rooted reliance not only preserves cultural heritage but also demonstrates the adaptability of traditional medicine in a rapidly modernizing world.

Aspect	Indonesia	Malaysia
Cultural Identity	Jamu symbolizes heritage and ancestral wisdom.	Urut is integral to everyday life and holistic care.
	Associated with pride in natural and sustainable health.	Embodies trust in experienced practitioners.
Safety & Natural Solution	Preferred for minor ailments like colds and fatigue.	Viewed as gentle, safe, and free of side effects.

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	Avoids reliance on strong pharmaceuticals.	Used for muscle pain, stress, and minor health issues.
Family Influences	Elders, especially grandmothers, are gatekeepers of <i>jamu</i>	Mothers/grandmothers pass down knowledge of <i>urut</i> .
	Family guidance reinforces trust in traditional methods.	Fathers guide spiritual healing practices (<i>bomoh</i>).
Religious/Spiritual Aspects	Limited spiritual association in traditional remedies.	Islamic healers (<i>bomoh</i>) integrate prayer with care.
	Primarily focused on natural and cultural traditions.	Spiritual elements provide emotional and physical comfort.

This table condenses the findings, highlighting the similarities and differences between Indonesia and Malaysia regarding cultural beliefs and healthcare preferences among Generation Z.

Cultural beliefs strongly guide healthcare choices, with Generation Z in both countries maintaining a deep respect for traditional practices such as *jamu* and *urut*. This reflects integrity, as their choices align with their cultural identity and values, honoring familial traditions and heritage. The inspirational dimension arises from the pride associated with these practices, motivating younger generations to preserve and advocate for their cultural heritage. Integrity shows in how the continued use of traditional medicine, even in urban areas, indicates a commitment to cultural authenticity and ethical alignment with inherited values. Further Inspirational, also shows in the pride participants feel in maintaining these practices serves as a source of cultural empowerment and inspiration for their communities.

4I Dimension	Application
Intelligence	Gendered preferences reflect practical decision-making based on specific needs.
Inspirational	Women's traditional health practices preserve culturally significant knowledge.

B. Barriers to Modern Healthcare Adoption

While Generation Z in Indonesia and Malaysia recognizes the value of modern healthcare, several barriers limit its widespread adoption. These barriers are interlinked with socioeconomic conditions, perceptions of pharmaceuticals, and accessibility issues, particularly in rural areas. The findings highlight a preference for traditional medicine in cases where modern healthcare is perceived as less viable due to cost or trust issues.

Modern healthcare services, including consultations, diagnostics, and medications, are often perceived as prohibitively expensive. For many participants, the financial burden of visiting a hospital or clinic discourages them from seeking treatment unless absolutely necessary. In Indonesia, participants expressed concerns about the cost of routine consultations and medication prescriptions, particularly in urban centers where prices are higher. In Malaysia, while government-subsidized healthcare exists, private clinics are viewed as more reliable but costly, creating a divide based on socioeconomic status.

“Going to the doctor costs too much, especially when they prescribe so many medicines. It's easier and cheaper to drink *jamu*.” – **Indonesian Participant.**

“Even with subsidies, there are still extra costs at the hospital, and private clinics are too expensive.” – **Malaysian Participant.**

There is a notable skepticism regarding pharmaceutical products, driven by concerns about potential side effects, over-reliance on medications, and mistrust of pharmaceutical companies. This skepticism fuels a preference for traditional remedies that are perceived as safer and less invasive. In Indonesia, participants mentioned fears of over-medication and the lack of transparency about drug compositions. In Malaysia, similar sentiments were expressed, with some participants stating that they avoid taking pills unless necessary.

“I've heard stories about people getting sick from taking too many pills. I prefer natural treatments like herbal drinks.” – **Indonesian Participant.**

“I don't like relying on medicine for everything. Sometimes it feels like doctors prescribe too much without explaining why.” – **Malaysian Participant.**

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Participants from rural areas in both countries emphasized the challenges of accessing modern healthcare facilities. Traditional medicine, being locally available and often home-based, fills the gap where modern clinics are scarce or far away. In Indonesia, the availability of jamu vendors and herbalists in rural communities makes traditional medicine more accessible. In Malaysia, traditional healers or “bomoh” provide care in areas where public transportation to clinics is limited.

“In my village, the nearest clinic is hours away, but the herbalist is just around the corner.” – **Indonesian Participant.**

“Traveling to the hospital takes time and money. It’s easier to go to the local bomoh for small issues.” – **Malaysian Participant.**

Barrier	Indonesia	Malaysia
High Healthcare Cost	High cost of consultations and medications.	Private clinics are preferred but costly; subsidies insufficient.
Skepticism About Drugs	Concerns about over-medication and side effects.	Avoidance of over-reliance on pills; mistrust of pharmaceuticals.
Accessibility Issues	Rural areas lack clinics; <i>jamu</i> vendors fill the gap.	Limited transport to clinics; <i>bomoh</i> readily available in rural areas.

The high cost of modern healthcare and concerns about over-medication underscore a critical gap in information and perceived integrity within the modern healthcare system. Generation Z’s skepticism about pharmaceutical solutions reflects their demand for more transparent, ethical practices. Traditional medicine fills this gap by being perceived as safer and more accessible, particularly in rural areas. Information shows how participants lack trust in modern medicine due to limited understanding of pharmaceutical safety and potential side effects. Further, Integrity shows in how traditional medicine’s perceived naturalness and alignment with ethical principles attract those wary of over-commercialized healthcare systems.

4I Dimension	Application
Intelligence	Gendered preferences reflect practical decision-making based on specific needs.
Inspirational	Women’s traditional health practices preserve culturally significant knowledge.

D. Gender Dynamics in Healthcare Choices

Gender differences play a critical role in shaping healthcare preferences among Generation Z in Indonesia and Malaysia. Cultural norms and traditional gender roles influence decision-making, leading to distinct patterns in healthcare-seeking behavior between men and women. These differences reflect both societal expectations and practical considerations regarding health needs.

Women in both Indonesia and Malaysia are more likely to seek traditional care, particularly for maternal health, fertility, and postpartum recovery. These preferences are often guided by familial traditions and the perceived personal nature of traditional practices. Traditional healers, such as “dukun bayi (midwives)” in Indonesia and “bidan kampung” (village midwives) in Malaysia, are trusted for their hands-on, culturally sensitive approaches to women’s health. Many women rely on traditional massages, herbal treatments, and dietary regimens for postnatal recovery. These practices are seen as safer and more attuned to their specific needs than modern medical alternatives.

“After childbirth, my mother insisted I get a massage from a traditional midwife. It helped me recover faster.” – **Indonesian Participant.**

“For fertility issues, my grandmother recommended a traditional healer. It’s something that has been done in our family for generations.” – **Malaysian Participant.**

In contrast, men tend to rely more on modern healthcare, particularly for acute conditions such as injuries, infections, or illnesses requiring immediate attention. This preference reflects practicality, as men are often expected to recover quickly to fulfill societal roles as providers or protectors. Men often prioritize efficiency and effectiveness, making hospitals or clinics the preferred

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choice for urgent treatment. For fevers, infections, or other conditions requiring swift medical intervention, men are more likely to consult a doctor or visit a hospital rather than relying on traditional remedies.

“When I hurt my leg playing soccer, I went straight to the hospital because I needed an X-ray.” – **Indonesian Participant.**

“If I get a fever, I don’t wait. I go to the clinic and get medicine right away.” – **Malaysian Participant.**

Cultural norms regarding gender roles heavily influence healthcare choices. Women often adhere to family traditions, especially when it comes to reproductive health, while men exercise more individual autonomy in seeking modern care. Women are typically guided by female family members, such as mothers or grandmothers, in choosing traditional care options. Men, by contrast, are less bound by tradition in healthcare decisions and prioritize practical, results-oriented solutions.

“My mother and grandmother always remind me to follow traditional practices for my health. It’s part of being a woman.” – **Indonesian Participant.**

“When it comes to my health, I decide based on what works best, and modern medicine is usually faster.” – **Malaysian Participant.**

Aspect	Women	Men
Common Healthcare Focus	Maternal health, fertility, and postnatal care	Acute injuries, illnesses requiring urgency
Preferred Type of Care	Traditional healers and practices	Modern hospitals and clinics)
Influence	Family traditions and cultural norms	Individual choice
Common Practices	Postnatal massages, herbal remedies	Use of diagnostics and pharmaceuticals

Gender roles shape healthcare choices, with women gravitating toward traditional care for reproductive health and men prioritizing modern healthcare for acute issues. These choices reflect intelligence, as they are based on practical, context-driven needs. Women, for instance, see traditional remedies as more holistic and emotionally supportive, while men prioritize speed and efficiency. Intelligence shows in how gendered preferences illustrate an adaptive, context-sensitive approach to healthcare. Further, Inspirational shows how Women’s reliance on traditional practices for maternal health inspires continuity in gender-specific healing traditions.

4I Dimension	Application
Intelligence	Gendered preferences reflect practical decision-making based on specific needs.
Inspirational	Women’s traditional health practices preserve culturally significant knowledge.

E. Impact of Digital Platforms on Healthcare Decisions

Digital health platforms are becoming increasingly influential in shaping the healthcare decisions of Generation Z in both Indonesia and Malaysia. The rise of mobile apps, social media, and online health communities has created new opportunities for young people to access information, compare treatment options, and make informed decisions. These platforms provide a blend of traditional and modern healthcare options, often combining the advice of herbal practitioners and physicians with the latest medical treatments and technologies. This accessibility is especially important for bridging gaps in healthcare access, particularly in rural areas where traditional remedies might still be more prevalent than modern medical facilities.

Generation Z is using digital platforms to access a mix of traditional and modern healthcare solutions. This approach allows young people to explore a wide array of options, from herbal remedies and natural treatments to the latest medical advancements. Social media and health apps act as a bridge between these two approaches, with platforms offering both types of advice, often in the form of blogs, video tutorials, or expert Q&A sessions. Participants report following health influencers who discuss both traditional practices, such as herbal treatments, and modern medical insights, allowing them to make more holistic decisions about their healthcare. Many participants rely on digital platforms to validate traditional remedies by cross-reference with modern medical advice. They seek a balanced approach that acknowledges the efficacy of both systems in treating minor and major ailments.

I follow a health influencer on Instagram who talks about both jamu and modern medicine. It helps me decide what’s best for me.” – **Indonesian Participant.**

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“Sometimes I check health apps to learn about herbs and modern treatments. It gives me more confidence in the decisions I make about my health.” – **Malaysian Participant.**

Online reviews and influencer endorsements play a significant role in shaping Generation Z's trust in healthcare products and services. Participants frequently mentioned using platforms like Instagram, YouTube, or Facebook to discover new healthcare products or services, often relying on the experiences of others. Influencers who endorse or recommend health-related products or treatments are viewed as trusted figures, and their endorsements can heavily influence purchasing decisions or the choice of healthcare providers. The concept of social proof—relying on the opinions and experiences of others—has become a major factor in decision-making. Participants reported looking at online reviews of clinics, health supplements, and wellness products before making decisions.

“I check the reviews on health apps or Instagram before I try new supplements. If the reviews are good, I'm more likely to trust it.” – **Indonesian Participant.**

“I trust health influencers who talk about products they've used. It makes me feel like I'm making the right choice.” – **Malaysian Participant.**

Digital health platforms have also played an important role in bridging the healthcare access gap between rural and urban areas. In rural regions, where healthcare infrastructure might be limited, young people turn to the internet for advice, health information, and even telemedicine services. The widespread use of smartphones and internet access in both countries has enabled young people to access healthcare information and connect with health professionals they might not otherwise have access to. In areas where modern healthcare facilities are far away, digital platforms allow young people to learn about both traditional and modern remedies, providing them with healthcare knowledge that might not be readily available through local providers.

“I live in a rural area, so I often use health apps to get information. There's not a lot of healthcare here, so I rely on digital platforms for advice.” – **Indonesian Participant.**

“In my village, there aren't many clinics. I look up online consultations or check reviews about hospitals to decide where to go.” – **Malaysian Participant.**

Aspect	Indonesia	Malaysia
Blend of Traditional and Modern Care	Health influencers share tips on both jamu and modern medicine	Health apps provide access to both herbal and medical treatments
Use of social media	Instagram, YouTube, and WhatsApp are used for health advice	Instagram, Facebook, YouTube used for health tips and reviews
Role of Reviews and Endorsements	Trust in online reviews and influencer endorsements	Trust in recommendations from influencers and reviews
Accessibility in Rural Areas	Health apps used due to limited healthcare access in rural areas	Digital platforms provide access to information and consultations

Digital health platforms empower Generation Z by providing information and fostering inspirational community support through social media. The ability to integrate traditional and modern healthcare options through digital means demonstrates how these platforms bridge the rural-urban divide and enhance decision-making capabilities. Information shows in how participants use digital platforms to compare traditional remedies with modern healthcare solutions, ensuring well-informed choices. Further, Inspirational shows in how social media influencers and online communities inspire trust and foster shared cultural knowledge, reinforcing the hybrid model of healthcare.

4I Dimension	Application
Information	Digital platforms enhance access to a blend of modern and traditional healthcare advice.
Inspirational	Online communities and influencers inspire confidence and hybrid approaches to health.

5. RESEARCH DISCUSSION

The findings of this research underscore the profound influence of cultural beliefs on healthcare preferences among Generation Z in Indonesia and Malaysia, while also highlighting key barriers to the adoption of modern healthcare. The study explored various factors, such as trust in traditional healthcare practices, the barriers hindering modern healthcare adoption, gender dynamics, and the role of digital health platforms. This discussion draws on these findings and compares them with previous literature to identify key patterns, contradictions, and contributions to the field.

A. The Influence of Cultural Beliefs on Healthcare Choices

Generation Z in both Indonesia and Malaysia exhibits a robust attachment to traditional healthcare practices, which can be largely attributed to deep-rooted cultural pride, familial influence, and a strong sense of identity. These generational preferences not only reflect the historical and cultural significance of traditional healing practices but also highlight the evolving dynamics of healthcare choices in a rapidly modernizing society. In particular, the continued use of jamu in Indonesia and urut in Malaysia reflects the enduring importance of these practices in maintaining health and wellness across generations.

In Indonesia, jamu refers to a variety of herbal concoctions made from roots, leaves, and other natural ingredients, commonly used for treating ailments such as fatigue, digestive problems, and minor skin conditions. Jamu has been practiced for centuries, especially within Javanese culture, and remains a significant part of everyday health practices. Despite the growing presence of modern medical treatments, many young people still prefer jamu for minor health issues due to its perceived natural qualities and the belief that it aligns with the body's natural processes. Additionally, jamu serves as a symbol of cultural continuity and respect for traditional knowledge passed down through generations.

Similarly, in Malaysia, urut (traditional massage therapy) plays a vital role in maintaining health, especially for managing stress, muscle pain, and circulatory problems. Traditionally, urut is seen as a holistic treatment that can also aid in postnatal recovery, adding to its cultural significance. The practice of urut is often seen as a family tradition, with older generations passing down techniques and wisdom to younger members. For Generation Z, these practices offer a sense of cultural identity and a connection to the past, while also serving as a safe, natural alternative to modern pharmaceutical treatments.

The attachment to these traditional practices reflects a broader cultural pride, as participants in this study expressed that using these remedies was not merely a health choice but also a way of honoring their heritage and family traditions. This strong connection to cultural identity is one of the most significant factors shaping healthcare choices among younger generations in both Indonesia and Malaysia. One of the primary reasons why Generation Z gravitates towards traditional healthcare options is the perceived safety and naturalness of these remedies. Participants consistently mentioned that traditional treatments like jamu and urut are seen as safer and more in tune with the body's needs compared to pharmaceutical products. Many young people are wary of the potential side effects of modern medications, which they associate with chemical compositions and long-term health risks. For minor ailments, traditional remedies are often preferred as they are considered gentler and free from the potential harms that modern pharmaceuticals might entail.

Moreover, the growing emphasis on sustainability and natural products has made traditional practices even more attractive to Generation Z, who are generally more conscious of the environmental and ethical implications of their consumer choices. The use of locally sourced herbs for jamu and natural techniques for urut not only appeals to their health-consciousness but also aligns with broader societal trends favoring eco-friendly, sustainable practices. This study reveals an important shift in healthcare preferences: while traditional practices like jamu and urut continue to hold cultural significance, Generation Z in urban areas is also increasingly exposed to modern healthcare through social media, digital health platforms, and greater access to advanced medical facilities. This urban exposure creates a hybrid healthcare model, where Generation Z blends both traditional and modern practices, depending on the situation and their personal preferences.

For instance, many young participants mentioned using jamu as a first line of defense for minor ailments like colds or fatigue but turning to modern medicine or clinics for more severe or urgent health issues. This approach suggests that traditional and modern healthcare are not mutually exclusive; rather, they coexist in a complementary manner. Generation Z is not rejecting modern healthcare altogether but rather adapting it to fit their values, which include cultural pride, natural living, and skepticism about over-reliance on pharmaceutical drugs. This dual approach to healthcare reflects a broader societal trend in Southeast Asia, where traditional medicine is being integrated with modern medical practices rather than replaced by them. This trend is particularly notable in urban settings, where access to both healthcare systems is more readily available. The ability to choose between both options enables Generation Z to make more informed and personalized decisions about their health.

The findings of this study align with previous research by Chia et al. (2018) and Anderson et al. (2020), which found that traditional medicine continues to be an essential part of Southeast Asian cultures, particularly in rural areas. These studies emphasize that traditional medicine provides a sense of cultural continuity and remains an accessible option for many individuals, especially in regions where modern healthcare services may be scarce. However, this study goes beyond these findings by demonstrating that traditional medicine is not only favored by rural populations but is also a prominent choice among urban Generation Z. This marks a notable shift in healthcare preferences, suggesting that while modern healthcare is readily available, traditional remedies continue

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to hold cultural and practical value in urban areas. This hybrid approach, where traditional and modern healthcare coexist, represents a growing trend towards integrating cultural practices with contemporary medical advancements.

Traditional practices like jamu and urut are integral to the cultural identity of Generation Z in both Indonesia and Malaysia. These practices are viewed as a means of preserving cultural heritage and honoring family traditions. Generation Z's preference for traditional remedies is driven by the belief that these practices are safer and more natural alternatives to modern pharmaceuticals, which are often associated with side effects. A significant finding is the growing trend of a hybrid healthcare model, where Generation Z in urban areas blends traditional and modern healthcare practices based on the situation. This reflects a broader societal trend towards integrating modern medicine with traditional healing. There is a strong sentiment of skepticism towards modern pharmaceutical products, particularly in relation to their side effects and over-medication. Traditional remedies are often preferred for minor ailments due to this skepticism.

Cultural beliefs form the foundation of healthcare preferences, particularly in Indonesia and Malaysia. Generation Z's reliance on traditional practices like jamu and urut showcases their commitment to integrity, as their healthcare decisions align with deeply ingrained cultural values. These practices are not only functional but also serve as a source of inspiration, fostering pride in cultural heritage. Integrity shows in how traditional medicine reflects ethical alignment with natural, holistic health practices that resonate with the community's values. This integrity sustains the intergenerational transfer of knowledge, as seen in families where older generations encourage younger members to embrace traditional remedies. Further, Inspirational shows in how pride of cultural heritage inspires the younger generation to maintain and adapt these practices in modern contexts. The integration of traditional methods into daily life signifies the emotional and cultural attachment to these practices. For Example, An Indonesian participant remarked, "Drinking jamu is not just about health; it's about respecting my family's traditions." This statement underscores how traditional healthcare acts as a bridge between personal health and collective identity.

4I Dimension	Application
Integrity	Upholds ethical and cultural alignment in healthcare decisions.
Inspirational	Preserves cultural pride and motivates younger generations to maintain traditions.

B. Barriers to Modern Healthcare Adoption

One of the most significant barriers to the adoption of modern healthcare, particularly among Generation Z in rural areas of Southeast Asia, is the high cost of medical services and medications. This financial challenge is compounded by several factors, including the high cost of treatments, diagnostic services, and pharmaceuticals, which can make modern healthcare inaccessible for many individuals, particularly those in rural or less-developed regions. Generation Z participants frequently cited affordability as a key concern, often expressing that they would prefer to seek medical attention through traditional means because of the financial burden posed by modern healthcare.

Another notable barrier is skepticism toward over-medication and the perceived side effects of pharmaceutical products. Many participants expressed concerns about relying on chemical-based treatments, fearing that such medications might have harmful long-term effects on their health. This skepticism was particularly pronounced among Generation Z members who prefer natural remedies, as they perceive traditional treatments to be safer and more aligned with their health-conscious values. Furthermore, traditional medicine is often seen as more accessible than modern healthcare, particularly in rural areas. This accessibility is not only due to lower costs but also because traditional medicine practices, such as herbal remedies and massage therapy, are widely available within communities. In many rural or remote areas, where modern clinics may be far away or difficult to access, traditional medicine is a vital alternative that helps bridge the gap in healthcare services.

The cost of modern healthcare services is a significant barrier to its adoption, especially in rural areas. Medical treatments, doctor consultations, and pharmaceutical products can be prohibitively expensive, making them inaccessible for individuals from lower-income households. This issue is further exacerbated by the lack of adequate health insurance coverage in certain regions, which forces people to pay out of pocket for treatments. Consequently, many Generation Z individuals, especially those from rural areas, view modern healthcare as a luxury rather than a necessity.

In addition to cost concerns, there is a growing skepticism among Generation Z about the overuse and reliance on pharmaceutical products. Many participants expressed concerns that modern medicine often leads to over-medication, which can result in long-term health complications or dependency. This skepticism was particularly evident in relation to painkillers, antibiotics, and other commonly prescribed medications, which some participants viewed as harmful when overused. This wariness about over-medication is linked to a broader cultural shift towards more holistic and natural health practices. Traditional remedies, which are often perceived as more natural and less invasive, are viewed as safer alternatives to pharmaceutical drugs. As a result, many young people in both Indonesia and Malaysia are opting for natural treatments, such as herbal medicine and massage therapy, as an alternative to modern medicine.

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In rural and remote areas, traditional medicine often remains more accessible than modern healthcare. Many rural communities lack modern healthcare infrastructure, such as hospitals, clinics, and pharmacies, making it difficult for residents to receive timely medical care. In these settings, traditional medicine plays an essential role in addressing health issues, offering remedies that are locally available, cost-effective, and often administered by family members or community practitioners. Participants from rural areas emphasized that they often turn to traditional healthcare options not just for cultural reasons but out of necessity. Traditional healers and herbal medicine are more readily available in many rural areas, and the treatments are often inexpensive or free, making them the preferred option when medical costs are prohibitively high.

The findings of this study resonate with earlier research by Sun et al. (2017), which identified cost and accessibility as significant barriers to the use of modern healthcare in Southeast Asia. This study found that in rural areas, where modern medical facilities are often scarce, traditional medicine remains the most accessible and affordable option for healthcare. Sun et al. (2017) highlighted the role of traditional medicine as a crucial alternative in settings where modern healthcare is not an option. However, this study adds a new dimension to the discussion by emphasizing the growing skepticism among Generation Z toward pharmaceutical products. While previous research has focused primarily on issues of cost and access, the current study delves deeper into the concerns surrounding over-medication and the reliance on chemical-based treatments. The skepticism toward modern pharmaceuticals appears to be increasingly prevalent among younger generations, reflecting a broader trend of health-consciousness and a preference for natural, holistic remedies.

Additionally, the study provides insights into how the accessibility of traditional medicine in rural areas is not merely a matter of preference but a necessity. This is especially relevant because many modern healthcare services, including clinics and hospitals, are located far from rural communities, making them inaccessible to a significant portion of the population. High healthcare costs are a primary concern for Generation Z, particularly in rural areas where financial resources may be limited. The prohibitive costs of modern medical services make traditional medicine a more viable option for many individuals. Generation Z exhibits increasing skepticism toward pharmaceutical products, particularly in regard to their side effects and the over-reliance on chemical treatments. This skepticism drives many young people to seek natural, safer alternatives like herbal remedies and traditional massage therapies. In rural areas, traditional medicine is more accessible than modern healthcare, which is often hindered by a lack of infrastructure and distant clinics. This makes traditional remedies the preferred choice for many in these regions.

The research highlights significant barriers to modern healthcare adoption, such as high costs, accessibility issues, and skepticism toward pharmaceutical products. These barriers are directly tied to information and integrity. Information shows how a lack of transparent communication about the safety and efficacy of modern medicine fosters mistrust. Generation Z's skepticism toward pharmaceuticals often stems from limited access to clear, relatable information about their benefits and risks. This gap in understanding pushes them toward traditional practices, which are perceived as safer and more trustworthy. Further, Integrity shows in how modern healthcare is frequently viewed as overly commercialized, undermining its perceived ethical value. In contrast, traditional medicine, rooted in cultural and ethical practices, is seen as a more sincere and natural approach to health. For example, A Malaysian participant shared, "Modern medicine is so expensive, and you never know what's in it. Traditional remedies feel more honest." This perspective reflects both the lack of accessible information and the perceived integrity of traditional practices.

4I Dimension	Application
Information	Highlights the need for transparent, accessible communication in healthcare.
Integrity	Reinforces the ethical value of natural and culturally aligned practices.

C. Gender Dynamics and Healthcare Preferences

Gender roles play a significant role in shaping healthcare preferences, particularly when it comes to the choice between traditional and modern healthcare practices. In both Indonesia and Malaysia, there is a noticeable pattern in the way men and women approach healthcare, with women showing a stronger inclination towards traditional care, particularly for reproductive health, maternal care, and fertility issues. On the other hand, men tend to prefer modern healthcare, especially when dealing with acute conditions like injuries, infections, or illnesses that require immediate medical attention.

In Southeast Asia, women have long been the primary users of traditional healthcare for reproductive health issues, including maternal care, fertility treatments, and menstrual disorders. In both Indonesia and Malaysia, women often seek out traditional healers or practitioners for advice and treatments related to pregnancy, childbirth, and fertility. This is particularly evident in rural areas, where access to modern healthcare may be limited, but traditional knowledge and remedies are deeply embedded in the community.

For many women, traditional practices are perceived as gentler, safer, and more aligned with their cultural and spiritual beliefs. These practices are often viewed as more holistic, addressing not only the physical aspects of health but also the emotional and spiritual well-being, which is an important consideration for many Southeast Asian women. This preference for traditional care

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for reproductive health is deeply tied to cultural beliefs about the role of women in family life and their connection to traditional practices. For instance, maternal care and fertility treatments have long been passed down through generations, and women in Southeast Asia often trust these practices because they have been tried and tested within their families and communities.

In contrast to women, men are more likely to seek out modern healthcare services for acute conditions, such as injuries, infections, and illnesses that require immediate intervention. Men's preference for modern medicine is often driven by the need for quick, effective treatments, which they perceive modern healthcare can provide more efficiently than traditional remedies. Men are particularly inclined to visit clinics or hospitals for acute conditions, such as fractures, cuts, or infections, where they believe that advanced medical technology and expertise are necessary for proper diagnosis and treatment. For conditions that are perceived as urgent or requiring surgery, men show a clear preference for modern medical services due to the perceived higher success rates and access to specialized care. This pattern can be explained by the different health priorities and social expectations placed on men and women. Men are often expected to be the primary breadwinners and providers for their families, so any health issue that could interfere with their ability to work or perform their duties is more likely to prompt them to seek immediate, professional medical intervention.

While gender dynamics largely dictate healthcare preferences, there is also evidence of a fluid interaction between traditional and modern healthcare options, particularly among younger generations in both Indonesia and Malaysia. As modern healthcare becomes more accessible, there is an increasing trend toward combining traditional remedies with contemporary treatments. For instance, some women who traditionally would have sought only traditional maternal care might now consult both a traditional healer and a modern obstetrician for comprehensive care.

Similarly, men who traditionally relied solely on modern healthcare for acute conditions are beginning to incorporate alternative treatments like traditional massage therapy or herbal remedies as complementary forms of healing for stress relief, muscle pain, or recovery from injuries. This shift indicates that the healthcare preferences of both men and women are evolving, with a growing recognition that both traditional and modern approaches have their merits depending on the situation. This blending of traditional and modern healthcare practices reflects a broader trend toward a hybrid model of healthcare, where cultural and familial traditions are respected alongside advancements in medical technology.

The findings from this study are consistent with those of Van der Veen et al. (2021), who found that women in Southeast Asia tend to prefer traditional healing practices for reproductive and maternal health issues. Van der Veen et al. (2021) also identified a strong connection between traditional healthcare practices and cultural beliefs, which reinforce women's trust in these practices for managing fertility, pregnancy, and childbirth.

However, this study expands upon previous research by exploring how gender dynamics are shifting in contemporary Southeast Asia. Specifically, this study highlights the increasing fluidity in healthcare preferences among Generation Z, who are exposed to both traditional and modern healthcare options. The ability to combine elements of both systems reflects a dynamic healthcare landscape where traditional practices are no longer static but are adapting to modern realities. Women seem to embrace both types of care for reproductive health, while men, although still preferring modern medicine for acute conditions, are beginning to adopt complementary traditional practices. This evolving trend indicates a broader societal shift in which traditional and modern healthcare are seen as complementary rather than mutually exclusive. The flexibility of Generation Z's healthcare choices is indicative of a more integrated approach to health, where both cultural traditions and modern medical advancements coexist.

Gender roles significantly influence healthcare preferences in both Indonesia and Malaysia, with women tending to favor traditional medicine for reproductive and maternal health, while men lean towards modern healthcare for acute health issues. However, there is an emerging trend where both genders are beginning to incorporate both traditional and modern practices into their healthcare routines, reflecting a more dynamic and fluid approach to healthcare. These findings are consistent with previous research but also show how the younger Generation Z is increasingly adopting a hybrid model that integrates the benefits of both systems. As traditional and modern healthcare practices continue to interact, there may be an opportunity for greater acceptance and utilization of both types of care within Southeast Asia.

Healthcare Preference	Women (Indonesia & Malaysia)	Men (Indonesia & Malaysia)
Type of Care	Traditional care for reproductive health, fertility, and maternal care	Modern healthcare for acute conditions, injuries, infections
Preferred Healthcare Providers	Traditional healers, midwives, herbalists, and family practitioners	Doctors, hospitals, and clinics specializing in urgent care
Reason for Preference	Cultural tradition, safety, holistic care, familiarity	Quick and effective treatment, trust in technology and expertise
Shift in Preferences	Some women seek both traditional and modern care	Some men incorporate traditional remedies for complementary care

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Gender differences in healthcare choices underscore intelligence in decision-making and inspiration in preserving gender-specific healthcare traditions. Women and men demonstrate adaptive approaches to healthcare based on practicality and societal expectations. Intelligence shows how women's preference for traditional remedies in maternal and reproductive health reflects a nuanced understanding of healthcare options that align with their specific needs. Men's reliance on modern healthcare for acute conditions shows a pragmatic approach to immediate, efficient solutions. Further, Inspirational shows in how women continued use of traditional maternal health practices inspires intergenerational knowledge transfer, preserving the unique role of women in cultural healthcare traditions. For example, A Malaysian female participant noted, "Traditional healers know exactly what mothers need after childbirth—it's something modern doctors don't fully understand." This highlights both the intelligence of tailored healthcare choices and the inspiration derived from gender-specific traditions.

4I Dimension	Application
Intelligence	Reflects practical, context-sensitive healthcare decision-making.
Inspirational	Sustains gender-specific healthcare traditions and intergenerational knowledge.

D. The Growing Role of Digital Health Platforms

The rise of digital health platforms has fundamentally transformed how Generation Z approaches healthcare, offering an unprecedented level of access to both modern and traditional healthcare practices. As young people become more digitally savvy, they increasingly rely on apps, social media, and other online platforms to make informed healthcare decisions. These platforms provide easy access to information on a wide range of healthcare topics, from medical conditions and treatments to wellness tips and alternative therapies. This access to diverse information sources allows Generation Z to blend traditional and modern healthcare solutions, creating a more holistic approach to their well-being.

Digital health platforms, including health apps and online resources, serve as valuable tools for Generation Z to learn about both traditional and modern healthcare options. The use of apps to track health metrics, find local health providers, or gather advice about common ailments is a growing trend among young people. Social media platforms, such as Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok, have also become popular spaces where healthcare professionals, influencers, and even traditional healers share health-related content, including tips for using herbal remedies, massage techniques, or modern medical treatments.

For example, many participants in both Indonesia and Malaysia reported using apps or online forums to find information on jamu (herbal medicine) or urut (traditional massage therapy), supplementing their knowledge of these practices. Additionally, apps and websites that offer information about medical conditions or treatments are frequently consulted by young people who want to cross-reference traditional remedies with modern medical advice. This hybrid approach, using both traditional knowledge and modern medical advice available through digital platforms, empowers Generation Z to make informed and personalized healthcare decisions.

Online reviews, user testimonials, and influencer endorsements play a critical role in shaping the trust and reliability of healthcare services and products. Generation Z values the opinions of others, particularly those from their peers or influencers they follow, and these opinions significantly influence their decisions regarding which healthcare options to pursue. Participants reported that they often turned to online reviews and social media platforms to gauge the quality of healthcare products or services, such as jamu, urut, or even modern medical treatments.

Influencers, particularly those who focus on wellness, health, and lifestyle, often act as trusted voices, recommending specific healthcare practices, products, or even particular health professionals. These influencers, through their personal experiences and endorsements, have the power to sway Generation Z's healthcare choices, especially in a world where trust in traditional advertising is waning. This trend shows how the younger generation's healthcare decisions are not only shaped by personal experiences or family traditions but also by the online community's collective input. This reliance on digital platforms influences a shift in how healthcare is consumed—no longer limited to traditional media or word-of-mouth recommendations but extended to the vast, easily accessible digital sphere.

Digital health platforms also serve as a bridge between rural and urban areas, where access to modern healthcare services may differ. In rural or less-developed regions, modern healthcare facilities may be sparse or difficult to reach, making traditional medicine the default choice. However, digital platforms provide rural residents with the same access to information and services as those in urban centers. Health apps, telemedicine services, and online forums allow individuals in remote areas to connect with healthcare professionals or find information about both traditional and modern treatment options. This accessibility helps overcome geographical barriers and offers rural dwellers the opportunity to make informed decisions regarding their healthcare. This democratization of healthcare knowledge via digital platforms helps level the playing field between rural and urban populations, providing the former with the tools they need to access both modern healthcare and traditional practices.

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The findings of this study align with those of Kumar et al. (2019), who emphasized the growing influence of social media and digital platforms in shaping the healthcare decisions of young people. Kumar et al. (2019) found that social media platforms were key sources of healthcare information, with users increasingly turning to these platforms for advice and recommendations. However, this study offers a more nuanced perspective by highlighting how digital platforms are not only used to access modern healthcare information but are also playing a critical role in connecting young people with traditional healthcare practices.

While previous research has focused primarily on the role of digital platforms in the dissemination of modern medical knowledge, this study shows that digital health platforms are increasingly being used to share both modern and traditional healthcare information. This hybrid approach reflects a growing trend where modern and traditional practices coexist and influence each other through digital channels. The findings suggest that digital platforms provide a unique opportunity to bridge the gap between these two healthcare paradigms, fostering a more integrated and dynamic approach to health and wellness.

Digital health platforms are becoming a cornerstone of Generation Z's healthcare decision-making, offering access to a wide array of information on both traditional and modern healthcare practices. The rise of apps, social media, and online reviews allows young people to cross-reference different healthcare options, empowering them to make informed decisions. Additionally, these platforms help bridge the rural-urban divide, making healthcare information more accessible to people in remote areas. The findings from this study contribute to existing literature by demonstrating how digital platforms are fostering a hybrid model of healthcare, where traditional and modern practices coexist and influence each other in a digital environment.

Aspect	Finding
Healthcare Information	Participants use apps, social media, and online resources to access both traditional and modern healthcare information.
Influence of Reviews and Influencers	Online reviews and influence endorsements shape trust in healthcare services and products.
Rural-Urban Divide	Digital platforms help bridge the gap, providing rural populations with access to healthcare information and services.
Hybrid Approach	Generation Z uses digital platforms to integrate traditional remedies with modern healthcare practices.

The increasing reliance on digital health platforms among Generation Z illustrates the importance of information and inspiration in shaping healthcare decisions. Information shows how digital platforms provide access to diverse healthcare resources, allowing Generation Z to evaluate both modern and traditional options. This hybridized approach empowers informed decision-making and bridges the rural-urban healthcare divide. Further, Inspirational shows how social media influencers and online communities inspire confidence and trust in healthcare choices. By sharing personal stories and endorsements, they encourage the integration of traditional and modern practices. For example, An Indonesian participant said, "Through social media, I've learned how to combine modern health advice with traditional remedies for the best results." This statement reflects how digital platforms serve as tools for both education and inspiration.

4I Dimension	Application
Information	Enhance access to a mix of traditional and modern healthcare knowledge.
Inspirational	Build trust and confidence through community-driven digital engagement.

5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

A. Conclusion

This study delves into the complex interplay of cultural beliefs, gender dynamics, and digital health influences shaping healthcare preferences among Generation Z in Indonesia and Malaysia. The findings underscore the enduring significance of traditional medicine—such as "jamu" in Indonesia and "urut" in Malaysia—rooted in cultural pride, familial influence, and societal norms. Despite exposure to globalized healthcare practices, these traditional methods remain a cornerstone of health and wellness for Generation Z, coexisting alongside modern medical treatments.

Gender differences emerged as a key factor, with women leaning towards traditional care for preventive and holistic health needs, particularly in reproductive and maternal health, while men demonstrated a preference for modern treatments addressing

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acute conditions. The integration of traditional practices into daily life reflects a strong cultural continuity, reinforced by generational trust and societal expectations. The rise of digital health platforms adds another layer of complexity, bridging traditional and modern healthcare. Generation Z utilizes these platforms not only to access information but also to validate and combine traditional remedies with evidence-based modern practices. This hybridized approach illustrates their adaptive decision-making, shaped by both cultural heritage and technological advancements.

By incorporating the 4I Model—Integrity, Information, Intelligence, and Inspirational—this research contextualizes healthcare preferences within a broader framework. Integrity reflects the deep trust in traditional practices sustained through generational knowledge transfer. Information captures the growing reliance on digital platforms as a tool for comparison and validation. Intelligence highlights the rational blending of traditional wisdom with modern evidence-based approaches. Inspirational elements underscore the cultural pride that motivates the preservation of traditional healthcare amidst modernization.

The findings of this study hold significant implications for healthcare providers and policymakers. To foster inclusive and adaptive healthcare systems, culturally sensitive policies must be developed, integrating traditional and modern practices while addressing the unique needs of Generation Z. By recognizing the role of digital platforms and gender-specific preferences, stakeholders can design more effective communication and healthcare delivery strategies that resonate with this generation's values and expectations. In conclusion, this study reaffirms the importance of traditional medicine in contemporary healthcare landscapes, particularly in multicultural societies like Indonesia and Malaysia. It highlights Generation Z's ability to navigate the intersection of tradition and innovation, offering a model of resilience and adaptability in an era of rapid globalization.

B. Suggestion

Based on the findings of this study, several actionable suggestions are proposed to improve healthcare systems and address the evolving needs of Generation Z in Indonesia and Malaysia. These suggestions are targeted toward healthcare providers, policymakers, and educators, aiming to foster a more inclusive and adaptive approach to healthcare delivery.

Healthcare systems should embrace a hybrid approach, blending traditional medicine with modern practices. Establish partnerships with local herbalists (jamu makers) and massage therapists (urut practitioners) to ensure safe and standardized practices. Hospitals and clinics can offer services like urut or herbal consultations alongside conventional treatments, providing a holistic healthcare experience. Encourage academic and clinical research to validate the efficacy of traditional remedies, building trust among Generation Z and the broader population.

Digital platforms play a pivotal role in shaping Generation Z's healthcare decisions. Policymakers and healthcare providers can harness this trend through Create user-friendly apps that offer information on both traditional and modern treatments, enabling users to make informed decisions. Collaborate with credible influencers and healthcare professionals to counter misinformation about healthcare practices. Expand telehealth services, including access to traditional healthcare practitioners, to reach underserved rural areas.

Policies should reflect the cultural values and healthcare preferences of diverse populations, particularly younger generations. Include cultural competency training for medical professionals to understand and respect traditional healthcare preferences. Address the distinct healthcare needs of men and women by offering targeted programs, such as maternal health support for women and injury rehabilitation services for men. Develop subsidized programs for both traditional and modern treatments to ensure affordability for all socioeconomic groups.

Educating young people on the benefits and limitations of both traditional and modern healthcare can lead to more informed decisions. Design campaigns that highlight the complementary nature of traditional and modern healthcare, addressing skepticism about pharmaceuticals while emphasizing the importance of scientific validation. Incorporate modules on healthcare literacy in school curricula, emphasizing critical evaluation of healthcare information from digital platforms. Conduct community workshops that involve both Generation Z and their families, bridging generational knowledge gaps and promoting dialogue on healthcare preferences.

The 4I framework offers a roadmap for fostering innovation in healthcare systems. Integrity, build trust in both traditional and modern healthcare by ensuring transparency and ethical practices. Information, enhance access to accurate, evidence-based healthcare information, particularly through digital platforms. Intelligence encourage adaptive decision-making by combining traditional wisdom with scientific advancements. Inspirational, promote cultural pride in traditional practices while inspiring confidence in modern healthcare innovations.

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