

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE UTILIZATION OF ACUPUNCTURE THERAPY AMONG PATIENTS AT THE ACEH PATIENT CARE FOUNDATION (RAPA) ACUPUNCTURE CLINIC, BANDA ACEH CITY

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ABSTRACT

Acupuncture therapy in Indonesia, including Aceh, has long been used as an alternative or companion to modern medical treatment. However, the level of utilization still varies and is influenced by patient knowledge, the availability of health facilities, and the professional and empathetic attitude of the acupuncture therapist. This study aims to determine the factors associated with the utilization of acupuncture therapy by patients at the Acupuncture Clinic of the Aceh Patient Care Foundation in Banda Aceh City in 2025. **Methods:** This study is a quantitative study with a cross-sectional design. The sample of 99 respondents was selected using convenience sampling techniques. Data analysis was carried out univariately and bivariately using the chi-square test.

Results: This study shows a relationship between knowledge and the utilization of acupuncture therapy ($p = 0.002$), health facilities with the utilization of acupuncture therapy ($p = 0.006$), and the attitudes and behavior of acupuncture therapists with the utilization of acupuncture therapy ($p = 0.002$). **Conclusion:** Knowledge, health facilities, and attitudes and behavior of acupuncture therapists are significantly related to the utilization of acupuncture therapy by patients.

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INTRODUCTION

Acupuncture is a form of traditional medicine that has been globally recognized as a complementary therapy for promotive, preventive, curative, and rehabilitative efforts. In Indonesia, including Banda Aceh, acupuncture therapy is becoming known and used by the public as an alternative or complement to modern medical treatment. However, the level of public acceptance of acupuncture therapy varies widely, influenced by various factors, such as level of knowledge, cultural and religious values, perceived benefits, and perceived risks. Therefore, some people view it as a safe and natural alternative treatment,

while others remain hesitant due to limited knowledge, cultural beliefs, or a preference for modern medical care.

Public knowledge about acupuncture plays a crucial role in shaping attitudes and acceptance of this therapy. Individuals who have a better understanding of the mechanism of action, benefits, and safety of acupuncture tend to have positive perceptions and are more open to using the therapy. Conversely, a lack of information and understanding can lead to doubt, negative perceptions, and even rejection of acupuncture. Furthermore, the value system developed within the Banda Aceh community, including religious, cultural, and lifestyle values, also influences acceptance of traditional treatments like acupuncture. Communities with values aligned with the concept of natural and holistic medicine tend to be more receptive to acupuncture as part of their health care efforts.

According to (Noer et al., 2025) acupuncture is able to provide positive effects because it can overcome various complaints of diseases related to the stomach, nerves, digestion, back pain (lowback pain), insomnia, cigarette, alcohol and drug addiction, besides that it can also accelerate healing, and improve the quality of life, then interest in utilizing this therapy will increase. Perception of benefits is also a key factor in public acceptance, but on the other hand, perceptions of risks such as concerns about pain, side effects, sterility of tools, and accuracy of treatment can be obstacles in accepting acupuncture (Kadek Buja Harditya, 2022). The availability of adequate facilities, complete equipment, comfortable treatment rooms, and easy access are determinants in a person's decision to utilize a healthcare service. Inadequate facilities can be a barrier to service utilization, even if the community has good knowledge and interest in the therapy. In the health behavior theory proposed by (Zaini et al., 2022), healthcare facilities are among the enabling factors that enable health behaviors.

Furthermore, the attitudes and behaviors of acupuncture therapists also determine the community's utilization of acupuncture therapy. The interaction between healthcare professionals and patients significantly influences the patient's perception, comfort level, and trust in the services provided. A therapist with a friendly, communicative, empathetic, and professional attitude will increase patient satisfaction and encourage continued utilization of services. Conversely, a less positive attitude can decrease patient interest in returning to acupuncture therapy (Oktavilantika et al., 2023). While acupuncture therapy is gaining popularity among the Acehnese population, the percentage remains low, as

evidenced by the presence of acupuncture clinics in several districts/cities, such as Banda Aceh, Lhokseumawe, Aceh Jaya, Aceh Besar, North Aceh, and others. This is undoubtedly due to the perceived benefits.

Considering the dynamics between knowledge levels, availability of healthcare facilities, and acupuncture therapist attitudes, comprehensive research is needed to analyze the factors associated with patient utilization of acupuncture therapy. This research is crucial for the Aceh Patient Care Foundation (RAPA) in Banda Aceh to gain a clear understanding of the determinants of acupuncture service utilization and to provide a basis for formulating strategies to improve the quality and access of services. The results are expected to inform the development of higher-quality, safer, and more responsive acupuncture services to the community's needs, as well as provide input for policymakers in increasing the utilization of traditional health-based complementary medicine.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study is a quantitative study with a cross-sectional design to analyze the relationship between independent and dependent variables. The study was conducted in Banda Aceh from November to December 2025. The study population was all patients who received treatment at the Aceh Patient Care Foundation (RAPA) Acupuncture Clinic for one month, a total of 320 people. The sample was taken using a convenience sampling technique with a total of 99 respondents. Data analysis used included univariate and bivariate analysis.

RESUL

The results of research conducted on 99 heads of families in Banda Aceh City, data obtained from the results of primary data tabulation based on questionnaire answers from respondents obtained the following results:

a. The Relationship between Knowledge and the Use of Acupuncture Therapy

Table 1. Relationship between Knowledge and the Use of Acupuncture Therapy

No	Knowledge	Utilization of Acupuncture Therapy						<i>p-Value</i>
		Utilized		Underutilized		Amount		
		f	%	f	%	f	%	
1	Good	70	76,1	22	22,9	92	100	0,002
2	Not Good	1	14,3	6	85,7	7	100	
Amount		21	71,7	28	28,3	99		

The results of the Chi-Square statistical test at a 95% confidence level ($\alpha=0.05$) obtained a p Value = 0.002 ($p<0.05$) which means H_a is accepted and H_o is rejected so it can be concluded that there is a relationship between Knowledge and the Use of Acupuncture Therapy.

b. Relationship of Healthcare Facilities to the Use of Acupuncture Therapy

Table 2. Relationship of Healthcare Facilities to the Use of Acupuncture Therapy

No	Health Facilities	Utilization of Acupuncture Therapy						p-Value
		Utilized		Underutilized		Amount		
		f	%	f	%	f	%	
1	Good	53	81,5	12	18,5	65	100	0,006
2	Not Good	18	52,9	16	47,1	34	100	
Amount		71	71,7	28	28,3	99		

The results of the Chi-Square statistical test at a 95% confidence level ($\alpha=0.05$) obtained a p-value = 0.006 ($p<0.05$) which means that H_a is accepted and H_o is rejected so that it can be concluded that there is a relationship between health facilities and the use of Acupuncture Therapy.

c. Relationship between Acupuncture Therapist's Attitude and Utilization of Acupuncture Therapy

Table 3. Relationship between Acupuncture Therapist's Attitude and Utilization of Acupuncture Therapy

No	Acupuncture Therapist Attitude/Behavior	Utilization of Acupuncture Therapi						p-Value
		Utilized		Underutilized		Amount		
		f	%	f	%	f	%	
1	Good	65	78,3	18	21,7	83	100	0,002
2	Not Good	6	37,5	10	65,5	16	100	
Amount		71	71,7	28	28,3	99		

The results of the Chi-Square statistical test at a 95% confidence level ($\alpha=0.05$) obtained a p Value = 0.002 ($p<0.05$) which means H_a is accepted and H_o is rejected so it can be concluded that there is a relationship between the Attitude/Behavior of Acupuncture Therapists and the use of Acupuncture therapy.

DISCUSSION

The Relationship Between Knowledge and the Use of Acupuncture Therapy

The research results indicate a relationship between knowledge and the use

of acupuncture therapy. This is evident from the p-value of 0.002 ($p < 0.05$). These results align with research conducted by (Hidayah, 2021) There was a relationship between the level of knowledge and family members' attitudes regarding the use of acupuncture therapy in RW 13, Klitren Village, Gondokusuman District, Yogyakarta in 2021, with a p-value of 0.000 and a correlation coefficient of 0.508. Furthermore, a different quote also aligns with research conducted by (Kurniawan et al., 2025) which explains that those with good knowledge of acupuncture tend to adhere to acupuncture treatment (58.8%). The Chi-Square test showed a p-value of 0.000, which is smaller than $\alpha = 0.05$, thus concluding a significant relationship between knowledge and adherence to acupuncture treatment.

In theory, according to (Soekidjo Notoadmojo, 2012) , knowledge is an important domain in shaping health behavior. Someone who has good knowledge about the benefits, procedures, and safety of acupuncture therapy will more easily form a positive attitude, which then encourages concrete actions in the form of utilizing these services. In addition, based on the Health Belief Model theory developed by Irwin M. Rosenstock quoted from the book (Irwan, 2017) , the behavior of utilizing health services is influenced by an individual's perception of benefits (perceived benefits), perception of vulnerability (perceived susceptibility), and perception of barriers (perceived barriers). Good knowledge can increase the perception of benefits and reduce the perception of barriers to acupuncture therapy, thereby encouraging individuals to use it as an alternative or complementary therapy. Thus, increasing education and health promotion regarding acupuncture therapy is an important strategy in increasing the utilization of these services in the community (Ida Ayu Suptika Strisanti, 2022).

The Relationship between Health Facilities and the Use of Acupuncture Therapy

The research results indicate that health facilities utilize acupuncture therapy. This is evident from the p-value of 0.006 ($p < 0.05$). Furthermore, of the 99 respondents with good health facilities, 53 (81.5%) utilized acupuncture therapy more often, while 12 (18.5%) utilized less. Meanwhile, among respondents with poor health facilities, 18 (52.9%) utilized acupuncture therapy, while 16 (47.1%) utilized less. These results align with research conducted by (Ayupia, 2020) , which found that the availability and quality of health care facilities were significantly associated with the use of

complementary therapies. Respondents with access to adequate facilities were more likely to utilize these services. This research is also supported by the results of a study by Firman et al., 2024. This indicates that service accessibility, completeness of facilities, and comfort of the service location are determining factors in people's decisions to utilize traditional and complementary medicine.

Theoretically, according to (Febriati, 2022), health facilities are included among the enabling factors that facilitate the occurrence of health behavior. The availability of complete facilities, competent health workers, and easy access will increase the likelihood of individuals utilizing available health services. If facilities are inadequate, even if individuals have good knowledge and attitudes, utilization of health services may be hampered. Therefore, improving the quality and availability of acupuncture therapy facilities is an important strategy in increasing the utilization of acupuncture services in the community.

The Relationship between Acupuncture Therapist's Attitude and the Use of Acupuncture Therapy

The research results indicate a relationship between acupuncture therapist attitudes/behaviors and acupuncture therapy utilization. This is evident from the p-value of 0.002 ($p < 0.05$). Furthermore, of the 99 respondents, it was found that 65 (78.3%) respondents with good acupuncture therapist attitudes/behaviors utilized acupuncture therapy more often, while 18 (21.7%) respondents with poor acupuncture therapist attitudes/behaviors utilized acupuncture therapy. Meanwhile, in the poor acupuncture therapist attitude/behavior category, 6 (37.5%) respondents utilized acupuncture therapy, while 10 (62.5%) respondents utilized it less. This indicates that the better the therapist's attitudes and behaviors in providing services, the higher the level of acupuncture therapy utilization by patients.

These results align with research conducted by (Ariyanti, 2021) which states that the quality of healthcare provider-patient interactions is significantly related to patient decisions regarding the use of complementary therapy services. Furthermore, research by (Fitroti, 2015) also found that the quality of healthcare provider-patient interactions is significantly related to patients' decisions to utilize complementary therapy services. also shows that a friendly, communicative, and professional attitude from healthcare workers increases public trust and interest in using healthcare services. In theory, according to (Lesmana, 2024) , attitude predisposes a person to action. In the context of healthcare services, the attitudes

and behaviors of healthcare workers serve as external stimuli that can influence patient perception, satisfaction, and ultimately, the patient's decision to reuse the service. Therefore, improving communication competency, service ethics, and the professionalism of acupuncture therapists is crucial in increasing the use of acupuncture therapy in the community.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the results of a study of 99 respondents, it can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between knowledge, health facilities, and attitudes/behaviors of acupuncture therapists and the utilization of acupuncture therapy. Overall, predisposing factors (knowledge), supporting factors (health facilities), and reinforcing factors (therapist attitudes/behaviors) contribute to the utilization of acupuncture therapy. Therefore, increasing public education, improving service facilities, and enhancing the quality of therapist services are important strategies in increasing the utilization of acupuncture therapy in the community.

SUGGESTIONS

1. For Healthcare Institutions

Healthcare institutions are expected to improve the quality and availability of acupuncture therapy facilities, both in terms of facilities, equipment, and the comfort of the service rooms. Providing adequate facilities will facilitate public access to and use of acupuncture therapy.

2. For Acupuncture Therapists

Acupuncture therapists are expected to continuously improve their professional competence, therapeutic communication, and empathetic attitude in providing services. A friendly, informative, and professional attitude can increase patient trust and satisfaction, thereby encouraging continued use of therapy.

3. For Educational Institutions

Educational institutions, particularly those specializing in acupuncture and public health, are expected to improve their education and health promotion regarding the

benefits of acupuncture therapy to the public. Evidence-based outreach and promotion programs need to be strengthened to increase public knowledge.

4. For the Public

The public is expected to be more active in seeking accurate and scientifically based information about acupuncture therapy so they can make informed health decisions.

5. For Future Researchers

Further research is recommended to include other variables such as family support, cultural factors, service costs, and perceived benefits to obtain a more comprehensive picture of the factors influencing acupuncture therapy utilization. Furthermore, research with a more robust design, such as a cohort study or a multivariate approach, is also recommended to identify the most dominant influencing factors.

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