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## TERMINATING FACTORS FOR ACUPUNCTURE TREATMENT IN THE 333 CLINICS

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### ABSTRACT

This research aims to identify the factors influencing patients' decisions to undergo acupuncture treatment at 333 clinics. The method used in this research is qualitative with a Phenomenology approach. The data was analyzed using thematic analysis of the interactive model by Miles & Huberman. The results showed that Internal factors include health conditions, personal decisions, and a loss of motivation for previous treatment; external factors include recommendations from employers, doctors, colleagues, and others with experience with acupuncture treatment. The Patient's history of illness is as follows: headache from being hit by an iron, back pain due to sitting too much, working too much, not exercising, feeling pain in the area of the injury, and some nerves do not function properly because of the disaster. Feel tired and stressed because they are busy with work. The treatment model of patients are: hit by iron, treated by taking x-rays and taking headache medicine, disaster or fall treated by taking medicine, rubbing of skin and taking x-rays, back pain is treated by giving people chews or chewing, taking medicine, injection only, and taking x-rays, back pain, headache, feeling tired, and stress, treatment by taking medication, compressing, improving eating and drinking, and doing gymnastics.

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## INTRODUCTION

The most common reason for seeking treatment to recover is illness. Recently, Society has encountered various diseases, which are caused by the more modern

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lifestyles of communities today. According to Fithrotin et al. (2024), these technological developments affect human life in meeting its life needs. This results in changes in people's behaviors that tend to be unhealthy, such as the habit of eating fast food, smoking, drinking alcoholic beverages, and a lack of exercise.

To treat diseases, the community, Whether Willing or not, must undergo treatment in hospitals or clinics, both public and private, especially in places where patients feel comfortable receiving treatment. Currently, especially in private clinics, patients can access a range of treatments, both modern and traditional. A well-known and popular traditional treatment is acupuncture.

Acupuncture is a treatment method in which needles are inserted into specific points on the Patient's body (Shafira, 2022). Acupuncture treatment is also one of the frequently performed, inexpensive, safe complementary medicine techniques (Alivian & Pratama, 2022), with minimal effects (Strisanti et al., 2022), in addition to being one of the alternative treatments and has been widely applied to address various health issues (Komariah et al., 2021).

Researchers have conducted numerous studies on acupuncture, and the results show that acupuncture is effective for treating various diseases. For example, stroke (Lilianti & Priskila, 2024), anxiety, depression, headaches (Hidayah, 2021), hypertension, impotence, deafness (Ariyanti et al., 2020), bronchial asthma, insomnia (Ariyanti et al., 2020; Hidayah, 2021), diabetes (Ariyanti et al., 2020), dysmenorrhea (Strisanti et al., 2022), postoperative nausea and vomiting (Firdaus & Setiani, 2020), and effective in reducing musculoskeletal pain for the elderly (Purwanto et al., 2024).

According to studies, patients' interest in acupuncture treatment is motivated by various factors. According to the research findings of Ariyanti et al. (2020), internal factors include beliefs/traditions, perceptions, and knowledge. In contrast, external factors are economic, cultural, employment, income, and family support.

Neither researchers nor academics in East Timor have ever researched acupuncture. However, acupuncture treatment has attracted the attention of many patients. Clinic 333 serves patients seeking acupuncture treatment. Data at the 333 clinic shows that the volume of acupuncture treatments is very high, and there are always patients undergoing treatment. Data on this treatment showed that in 2016, there were two patients; in 2017, there were seventeen patients; in 2018, there were one hundred and thirteen patients; in 2019, there were one hundred and sixty-seven patients; in 2020, there were one hundred and fifty-eight patients; in 2021, there

were 149 patients, 2021 there were 223 patients. The data shows that the number of patients seriously interested in this treatment is increasing.

## **METHOD**

This research applies the qualitative method. Qualitative research is implemented to investigate the conditions of natural objects, and the researcher is the key instrument (Fadli, 2021). The purpose of qualitative studies is to describe and understand the phenomenon or reality under study. In relation to these definitions, this research employs a qualitative method to investigate factors enabling patients to undergo acupuncture treatment in 333 clinics.

The study was conducted in 333 clinics in Fatu-Hada village, Dom Aleixo administrative post, Dili municipality. The data in this study were collected through interviews conducted with patients undergoing acupuncture treatment. The interview is a data collection technique that uses a one-way question-and-answer process, in which the interviewer poses questions and the informant provides answers (Cairns-Lee et al., 2022).

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS**

This section describes the information and discusses the theory and findings of some studies.

Based on patients' experiences, the researcher found that the factors that make patients undergo acupuncture treatment are not separate from internal and external factors. Bungsu & Rosadi (2020) stated that internal factors are those originating from the individual, while external factors are those originating outside the individual.

Factors identified in this research include health conditions or illnesses such as headache and back pain, and the decision to seek treatment and loss of motivation for previous treatment, grouped as internal factors. In addition, there are external factors, such as recommendations from superiors, doctors, colleagues, and patients, as well as information from others who have experience with acupuncture treatment. Related to this finding, some references state that fundamental issues in the aspect of health are the concept of illness and disease (Suryanti, 2021) because the quality of life of a person is greatly influenced by health, both physical, mental, and social health

(Yasipin et al., 2020).

*(...) Pain on one side of the head, starting from the nose to the back of the head, but only on the side (...). [A.A., Inf 1]  
The pain is in the back (...). My pain does not recover, the pain is still there, (...) so I make my own decision, (...) get information from colleagues (...) [T.T., Inf 2]  
(...),I hear many people talk about this treatment (...)[A.O.T., Inf 3]  
(...),The Doctor recommends trying acupuncture treatment(...) [A.O.T.,Inf.3]  
I was dealing with all kinds of health issues, like back pain, headaches, feeling tired all the time, and stress because of working too much. (...) The results of previous treatment made me lose motivation to continue treatment (...) [A.A.d.J.B., Inf 4].  
(...) I got information from the doctor at the place where I had previously been treated (...) The doctor suggested acupuncture, and I also got information from other people. (...) From the doctor's recommendation, I also want to try a more natural way and think maybe this can be more effective in treating my health problems, so I want to try a new method and decided to do the treatment at 333 Clinic. [A.A.d.J.B., Inf 4].*

Some other findings related to the history of any disease and its cause. These diseases include headaches caused by being hit by iron and others due to busy work; back pain from sitting too much, sometimes too much work, not standing, not exercising and pain also forces themselves; pain in the area of injury, some nerves do not function properly because of the disaster; busy with work; feeling tired; and stress from being busy with work.

Related to these diseases, some research has found that acupuncture can cure them. According to Agustine & Sholihah (2022), acupuncture has been shown to treat chronic diseases, enhance pain relief, and be effective in treating blood clots. On the other hand, Ariyanti et al. (2020) state that acupuncture can reduce pain, improve physical fitness, accelerate recovery of patient health, and eliminate headaches. Acupuncture is also used to treat diseases related to the nerves (Strisanti & Rastiti, 2022), muscles and bones (Ariyanti et al., 2021), and headaches (Saras, 2023).

*Headache due to being hit with an iron, causing blood clots to form on the outside of the head (...). [A.A., Inf 1]  
(...) My illness was initially caused by too much sitting, sometimes too much work, not standing, not exercising, and even if it hurts, I still force myself to work, (...) [T.T., Inf 2]  
I underwent treatment because I had a motorcycle accident (...)[A.O.T., Inf 3]  
(...), because every day I am busy with a lot of work, (...) [A.A.d.J.B., Inf 4].*

In addition to identifying the factors, history, and causes of the disease, the researcher also identified the treatment model patients had undergone before acupuncture treatment.

These types of diseases and treatments include headaches treated by taking X-rays, compressing with cold or hot water, and taking headache medicine; bones and skin injuries treated through X-ray examination, applying medication, and rubbing medicine.

Some research results also showed that patients who received a blow to the head might need to take X-rays (Silalahi & Mitasari, 2024), take medicine (Astuti, 2021; Martina, 2023), those who fall can also use topical medicine (Maulina et al., 2023), headaches can be compressed with water (Purwandari, 2023), and pay attention to food (Fitriyana & Karunianingtyas, 2022).

Back pain is treated with medication, injections, and massage or therapy. Several studies also report that people with back pain can take medication (Irsadioni et al., 2021), receive massage, and undergo therapy (Masliyah et al., 2024). Meanwhile, for those who are stressed, it can be overcome through exercise (Darminto et al., 2023).

*(...) The first time my head was hit with an iron, we went to have an X-ray (...), doctors prescribed headache pills, (...). [A.A., Inf 1]*  
*(...) have an x-ray (...) give me medicine, injected (...) then I tell people to massage (...) [T.T., Inf 2].*  
*(...) given medicine to drink, rubbed on, until my skin healed, then had an X-ray (...) [A.O.T., Inf 3].*  
*(...) I was given ibuprofen and paracetamol. If I feel pain, I always take it. Sometimes, I try to compress my head with cold or hot water to reduce the pain and try to find out about foods that can relieve pain (...) [A.A.d.J.B., Inf 4].*

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the objectives and the results, the researcher concluded that:

1. Internal factors that influence patients' decisions to seek acupuncture treatment include their health conditions or illnesses, personal choices, and a lack of motivation for prior therapies.
2. External factors that influence patients to undergo acupuncture treatment include recommendations from employers, doctors, and colleagues, as well as information from others with experience with acupuncture.
3. Patients undergoing acupuncture treatment with a history of pain such as (1) headache caused by being struck by an iron, being busy with work, (2) back pain due to sitting too much, sometimes working too much, not standing, not exercising, pain also forced to work, (3) pain at the site of the injury, some nerve damage due to the disaster, (4) feeling

tired and stressed because of busy work,

4. The treatment models that patients have undergone before undergoing acupuncture treatment are (1) Headaches treated with X-rays and taking headache medication, (2) Accidents or falls treated by taking medication, applying medication to the skin, and X-rays, (4) Back pain, headaches, fatigue and stress treated by taking medication, compresses with cold or hot water, improving eating and drinking patterns, exercise, massage, coughing, being injected with medication, and having X-rays.

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