



## Public Preferences In Choosing Fracture Treatment In Laucimba Village, Kabanjahe District

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### Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui persepsi dan alasan atau faktor yang mendasari preferensi masyarakat dalam memilih pengobatan patah tulang di Desa Laucimba, Kecamatan Kabanjahe. Penelitian ini dilakukan di Desa Laucimba menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif, dengan teknik pengumpulan data meliputi observasi, wawancara mendalam, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pengobatan tradisional memiliki persepsi positif yang lebih dominan dibandingkan pengobatan modern, pengobatan tradisional dianggap lebih terjangkau dari segi biaya, kenyamanan, dan proses penyembuhan yang relatif lebih cepat. Sementara itu, pengobatan modern dianggap sebagai pengobatan yang lebih pasti dan aman karena didukung oleh pemeriksaan medis dan tenaga kesehatan profesional, tetapi sebagian orang menganggap pengobatan ini mahal dan berisiko tinggi karena membutuhkan pembedahan. Preferensi masyarakat umumnya dipengaruhi oleh faktor-faktor seperti biaya, jarak dan aksesibilitas, pengalaman pribadi, dan pengaruh keluarga serta lingkungan sosial. Pengambilan keputusan masyarakat dalam memilih pengobatan patah tulang merupakan tindakan rasional yang disesuaikan dengan kondisi, kebutuhan, dan kepercayaan.

**Kata Kunci :** persepsi, masyarakat, pengobatan patah tulang, preferensi, pilihan rasional

### Abstract

*This study aims to determine the perceptions and reasons or factors underlying community preferences in choosing fracture treatment in Laucimba Village, Kabanjahe District. The study was conducted in Laucimba Village using a qualitative descriptive method, with data collection techniques including observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The results of the study indicate that traditional medicine has a more dominant positive perception compared to modern medicine, traditional medicine is considered more affordable in terms of cost, comfort, and a relatively faster healing process. Meanwhile, modern medicine is perceived as a more certain and safe treatment because it is supported by medical examinations and professional health workers, but some people consider this treatment expensive and high risk because it requires surgery. Community preferences are generally influenced by factors such as cost, distance and accessibility, personal experience, and the influence of family and social environment. Community decision-making in choosing fracture treatment is a rational action that is adjusted to conditions, needs, and beliefs.*

**Keyword :** perception, society, fracture treatment, preference, rational choice

## INTRODUCTION

Folk medicine, or traditional healing, is a health practice passed down through generations and is still widely used today. Kleinman (Arisnawati & Iskandar, 2019) defines folk medicine as a healing system that grows out of local culture, is based on empirical experience, and is maintained through social inheritance. One of the most well-known forms is the treatment of fractures by traditional healers who use massage, bandages, herbal concoctions, and specific rituals. For some people, this option is considered more practical, affordable, and in line with cultural values, although medically it carries the risk of complications such as misalignment or disability. This suggests that decisions regarding fracture treatment are influenced not only by medical considerations but also by cultural values and beliefs.

The public's tendency to choose traditional or modern medicine is related to the concept of preference. According to Kotler (Ariyani & Susilo, 2020) preference is a person's tendency to prefer a product or service over other alternatives because it is perceived to provide satisfaction. Engel, Blackwell, and Miniard (Bupu & Longa, 2023) add that preferences are formed through experience, knowledge, and cultural and social influences. In the context of fracture treatment, public preference is determined not only by medical effectiveness but also by economic, social, cultural, and belief factors that shape their choice between seeking treatment from a traditional healer or a modern healthcare facility.

In addition to preference, perception also plays a crucial role in determining fracture treatment options. Robbins (Creswell, 2016) states that perception is the process by which individuals organize and interpret sensory information to give meaning to their environment. If people have a positive perception of traditional healers due to their experiences



being considered successful, they are more likely to choose traditional medicine. Conversely, if people perceive medical services to be more favorable, their preference will shift toward modern medicine. Thus, perception significantly influences the formation of preferences in determining fracture treatment.

A broken bone, or fracture, occurs due to very strong pressure or a direct impact on the bone. Many traditional healing practices can be used to heal broken bones. Traditional fracture treatment typically utilizes natural concoctions created by local communities. Unlike traditional medicine, modern fracture healing utilizes sophisticated and modern equipment.

Previous research conducted by Lontoh et al. (Fadhila, 2015) revealed that traditional medicine differs from medical or modern medicine. Traditional healing systems tend to develop from spiritual or religious belief systems, and even further, from animist or other traditional beliefs (Foster & Anderson, 1986).

Muhsin et al. ((Giana, 2023) revealed that many people prefer traditional medicine for treating bone fractures because they consider it more practical, economical, effective, and efficacious. Furthermore, people choose to develop local wisdom in treatment. Therefore, traditional bone disease treatment is no longer an alternative but rather a primary and first choice.

Furthermore, research conducted by Pitang et al. (Hafizah, 2018) stated that in this study, people's decisions in choosing bone fracture treatment were not influenced by economic, educational, or family environmental factors.

Although previous studies have provided a wealth of information regarding fracture treatment, they have focused primarily on traditional medicine. Most studies focus solely on people's reasons for choosing traditional medicine, failing to address the reasons for choosing or not choosing modern medicine. Furthermore, these studies have not addressed public perceptions of both traditional and modern fracture treatment (Hiliya, 2016).

Based on observations, researchers found that in Laucimba Village, Kabanjahe District, many traditional bone fracture treatments are still practiced, and there are also hospitals that provide modern bone fracture treatment. Researchers also found that some traditional bone fracture treatments require or utilize medical treatment. However, although many traditional bone fracture treatments, which are local knowledge (local wisdom), are still found in the community, some people prefer modern medicine for bone fracture healing (Hurmaryanto, 2019).

Therefore, this study will delve deeper into public perceptions of traditional and modern fracture treatment and the reasons why people choose traditional and modern fracture treatment (Irawan, 2021). This study does not compare traditional and modern treatments, but rather examines both to understand public preferences in choosing the healthcare services they prefer or are interested in, particularly in fracture treatment.

## METHODS

To ensure a successful proposal, a research method appropriate to the problem being studied is required. In this case, the research method serves as a means of obtaining research data that aligns with the research problem formulation the researcher wishes to address.

The research method used by the researcher is descriptive research with a qualitative approach and data collection methods through observation, interviews, and documentation. According to Creswell (Keytimu, 2021) qualitative research is the methods used to explore and understand the meaning that individuals or groups ascribe to social or humanitarian issues. The qualitative research process requires significant effort, such as asking questions and following procedural protocols, collecting specific data from informants, inductively examining data that expands from specific themes to universal themes, and interpreting the meaning of words. The researcher's reason for using a qualitative research approach is to obtain more in-depth research results regarding community preferences in choosing fracture treatment (Kusbari & Sitompul, 2023). In this study, the location to be studied is Laucimba Village, Kabanjahe District, Karo Regency. The researchers chose this location because it has informants who can provide information relevant to the research problem formulation (Kurnia, 2012).

Informants are individuals who possess insight or information related to the problem being studied. Informants in this study are individuals who can provide information relevant to the research problem formulation (Lontoh et al., 2022). Informants were selected based on individuals deemed capable of providing relevant information, enabling data collection. The informant criteria for this study were individuals who had previously undergone traditional and modern fracture treatment (Kusbari & Sitompul, 2023).

Data collection techniques are the techniques used to gather data obtained from research results. In this study, three types of techniques will be used to obtain research data: observation, interviews, and research documentation (Lontoh et al., 2022).

Data analysis is the process of systematically collecting and comparing information through interviews, field notes, documentation, and literature studies by organizing data into categories, then sorting them into manageable units, synthesizing them, and combining them into a template, and selecting and capturing relevant information for analysis, exploring and drawing conclusions in a way that we and others can understand.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### History of Laucimba Village

Laucimba Village is a sub-district in Kabanjahe District, Karo Regency, North Sumatra Province. Geographically, Laucimba Village is located in the Karo highlands, which has a cool climate and an environment characterized by dense residential areas and some land used for small-scale agriculture (Maelissa et al., 2020).



Geographically, Lau Cimba Village is located in the Tanah Karo highlands, at an elevation of approximately 1,000–1,100 meters above sea level. The area's hilly to relatively flat topography, along with a cool climate with low average temperatures, makes it suitable for agricultural and organizational activities (Monica & Hidir, 2019). The relatively high rainfall throughout the year also supports soil fertility, allowing the area to develop as a residential area and a buffer zone for agricultural and commercial activities in the sub-district center (Rachman et al., 2020).

Demographically, Laucimba Village is the most populous village in Kabanjahe District, with a population of approximately 12,300 to 12,400 people, according to Statistics Indonesia (BPS) data for 2022-2023 (Purnaning et al., 2020). Population growth in this area is influenced by urbanization and the mobility of residents from surrounding villages to the sub-district center for work, education, and access to public facilities. The population density is quite high, reflecting its position as an urban area and center of community activity (Safitri, 2022). The population of Lau Cimba Village comprises various age groups, with a predominance of productive-age residents who actively participate in economic and social activities.

The population of Laucimba Village is predominantly Karo, the largest ethnic group in Karo Regency. However, many immigrants have also settled in Laucimba Village, including Toba Batak, Javanese, Simalungun, Malay, and other ethnic groups from other regions, although in smaller numbers (Slam, n.d.). Religiously, Laucimba Village is predominantly Protestant, followed by Catholicism, Islam, and a minority of Buddhists, Hindus, and other local beliefs (Pudyastuti et al., 2022).

From a socio-economic perspective, the residents of Laucimba Village make their living as farmers, traders, police officers/military personnel, teachers, private sector employees, and healthcare workers (Saleh, 2017). Furthermore, many residents of Laucimba Village choose to work as daily laborers, known in the Karo language as Aron. These laborers are usually called upon by landowners to assist them with their work. Furthermore, some Laucimba residents have opened private businesses, such as traditional healing centers, modern health practices, pharmacies, and other types of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

#### **Public perception of traditional fracture treatment and modern/medical fracture treatment in Laucimba sub-district**

A bone fracture is a condition where the bone is damaged, possibly caused by impact, pressure, or an accident. Fractures can occur in various parts of the body and vary in severity, from minor cracks and dislocations to severe or severe fractures. These conditions generally cause pain, swelling, limited mobility, and, in some cases, can disrupt daily activities (Sovia et al., 2020).

In terms of treatment, this type of fracture can be managed using two methods: modern/medical treatment and traditional medicine. Modern/medical treatment is performed in healthcare facilities such as hospitals or clinics, managed by professional medical personnel. Modern fracture treatment generally includes supporting examinations such as X-rays, the application of a cast or pins, and surgery for severe or advanced fractures. These procedures aim to ensure the injured bone can return to its normal position and minimize the risk of complications (Syabariyah et al., 2016).

In addition to modern medicine, fractures can also be treated with traditional medicine. In today's society, especially in Laucimba Village, Kabanjahe District, many traditional healers still offer fracture treatment. This treatment is generally performed by traditional healers using massage techniques, acupressure, bandaging, and the use of traditional herbs or specific oils. Traditional medicine is generally considered more affordable and is believed to aid the recovery process without the need for surgery, making it more time-efficient due to its faster process (Umboh et al., 2021).

The existence of these two types of treatment provides people with options in determining how to treat their fractures. This choice is influenced not only by the individual's medical condition but also by economic factors, treatment experience, and prevailing beliefs within the community. Therefore, understanding fractures and their treatment options is crucial as a basis for determining community preferences in this study.

This research was conducted in Laucimba Village, Kabanjahe District, using qualitative research methods. Seven informants participated in this study, including people who had experienced fractures or bone injuries and had undergone fracture treatment, both traditional and modern/medical. These informants were selected to obtain in-depth data regarding community preferences in fracture treatment (Umar et al., 2020).

#### **Reasons/factors behind people choosing bone fracture treatment in Laucimba Village**

Based on interviews with seven informants, the Laucimba Village community's choice of fracture treatment facility is not arbitrary, but rather a deliberate process. Decision-making is the result of various considerations related to economic conditions, personal experiences, influences, and social environment (Wijaya, 2016). These factors are interconnected and shape community preferences in determining the most appropriate treatment facility (Wahyu et al., 2020).

One of the reasons or factors influencing people's choice of treatment for fractures is cost. Most informants stated that traditional medicine is much more affordable than modern treatment. The cost of traditional fracture treatment is generally not fixed but is voluntary. This approach is considered to be cost-effective, as it can be tailored to each informant's financial capabilities. This approach can provide a sense of relief and ease of burden for the community, especially those with limited financial resources (Utami, 2015).

As stated by an informant named Kembaren Sembiring (37 years old), he said;

“That’s for sure. That’s why I don’t choose modern medicine. Traditional medicine doesn’t charge a fixed fee; it’s just up to us. So, whatever we can afford, that’s what we pay. Whereas, if we go to the hospital, the costs are many



times higher: X-rays, casts, surgery, and even more consultations. Personally, I wouldn't be able to afford that. If we go to the hospital, we'll only have to pay extra for oil, and even that's not too expensive, my dear. The cost of treatment from start to finish is a one-time payment, and there's no fixed fee, so it lightens our burden, my dear. To put it bluntly, we're already tired of worrying about our illness, and then we get even more worried about the cost of treatment. It makes us twice as tired, my dear. So, if there's something cheaper, why choose the expensive one?"

This was also added to the opinion of an informant named Raymonda Bukit (21) who said;

"I think the cost is very influential. Especially for me, sis. I've been treated at two places at once. But fortunately, I got treatment at both traditional medicine, but if I had been treated at the hospital, sis, I definitely wouldn't have been able to afford it. This is because I got treatment at a traditional medicine, so even though I've been treated at two places, the costs haven't been that much. The most I've had is transportation costs, sis. But even that isn't too heavy in my opinion, sis."

Based on the interview excerpt above, both informants expressed similar views regarding the influence of cost on the choice of fracture treatment. Mr. Kembaren Sembiring emphasized that traditional medicine is considered much more affordable compared to modern/medical treatment. This is because modern treatment in a hospital is expensive and is considered to worsen the condition. According to Mr. Kembaren Sembiring, every treatment process carried out by the hospital always incurs costs, such as x-rays, plaster casts, and surgery. This makes Mr. Kembaren Sembiring feel burdened by the costs.

On the other hand, Raymonda Bukit also revealed that cost was a significant factor in her choice of treatment. This was because she had already received treatment at two different facilities, both of which were traditional treatments. She stated that if she had sought treatment at a hospital, the costs would have been substantial, and she wouldn't have been able to afford the costs (Yuliani et al., 2020).

In addition to personal experience, the influence of family and social environment can also be factors for informants in making decisions about choosing treatment. Some informants stated that their decision to choose a treatment center was based on recommendations from family, relatives, or neighbors who had previously undergone bone fracture treatment and achieved satisfactory results. As stated by an informant named Emmia Arbina (23), she said:

"This treatment center is quite well-known in the area where I live, and from what I know, many people have come here for treatment and recovered. That's why my parents brought me here for treatment."

Added to the opinion of informant Mr. Kembaren Sembiring (37) who said:

"From our relatives/family. He had also been treated here before us. My relatives said the recovery process wasn't long, so I thought, 'I'll give it a try,'"

In agreement with informant Mr. Kembaren Sembiring, there were also four other informants who also had almost the same experience as Mr. Kembaren Sembiring, where treatment decisions were made based on suggestions from family and neighbors in the surrounding area. Below I add an interview excerpt from Mr. Priasen Tarigan (54) who said:

"At the time of the incident, my family and I were actually confused about where to go for treatment. There are actually many traditional treatments for broken bones in Tanah Karo. However, because my family and I had never had bone treatment before, we were confused about where to go. Finally, I remembered my neighbor who had a broken bone before, so I asked him where he had been treated yesterday, and he told me to go here."

Added to the interview conducted with an informant named Raymonda Bukit (21) who said:

"From my parents and family, sis. Since many of my family members live in this village, they suggested I be taken here for treatment."

Furthermore, the answer from the informant named Kevin Situmorang (20) said:

"Because my parents brought me here for treatment, yes... so I got treatment here."

And finally, the opinion of an informant named Mr. Desy Sianipar (52) who said:

"Because it happened that yesterday I was in a village in Sidikalang, so coincidentally, my son said that there was an orthopedic specialist at this hospital, especially since this hospital was the closest to my location."

Based on the answers from the six informants above, it can be concluded that, decision-making in choosing treatment by informants is not always done directly by informants, sometimes decision-making is done after getting advice from family relatives or neighbors from the surrounding environment. Satisfactory results that have previously been experienced by family or neighbors can grow the informant's confidence and trust to choose the same treatment place (Coleman, 1990). On the other hand, there are also informants who choose a treatment place because they have family ties with traditional healers or healers. As the opinion of an informant named Patin Sitepu (49) said (Zakaria et al., 2019):

"The doctor here and I happen to be related, so we naturally knew each other, and I knew he ran this bone-fracture business. Furthermore, because I already knew the doctor, I felt more confident and confident about seeking treatment here."

Based on the informants' responses above, it is known that kinship and social closeness with traditional healers or healers can be factors in their choice of treatment for fractures (Zubir, 2019). This closeness can shape their trust and confidence in seeking treatment. From a rational choice perspective, this decision can be understood as a rational action because the informants chose treatment that was perceived as having a lower risk and a higher level of trust based on their social relationships.



## CONCLUSION

Based on research conducted by researchers regarding community preferences in choosing fracture treatment in Laucimba Village, Kabanjahe District, it can be concluded that the Laucimba Village community has various different perceptions regarding traditional fracture treatment and modern/medical fracture treatment. Community perceptions are formed from personal experiences, experiences from family and the surrounding environment, as well as economic and social considerations that develop in the community. The Laucimba Village community generally perceives traditional fracture treatment as a treatment that is considered more affordable, does not burden the community in terms of costs, and provides comfort for patients during the treatment process. The Laucimba community also considers traditional medicine as a treatment that has a relatively faster healing process and minimizes risks, because it does not involve surgery. In addition, the close and relaxed relationship between the doctor and the patient, as well as the voluntary treatment fee so as not to burden the patient in the payment process, also strengthens the community's trust and positive perception of traditional fracture treatment. However, people also recognize the shortcomings of traditional medicine, particularly the lack of medical examinations, such as X-rays, that would help both the doctor and the patient determine the condition and position of injured bones. This situation has raised doubts among some people and led to the adoption of a combination of treatments, where people first undergo a medical examination and then proceed with traditional treatment.

Meanwhile, modern/medical fracture treatment is perceived as offering a higher level of certainty and safety than traditional medicine, as it is supported by medical examinations and handled by professional healthcare professionals. The public believes that modern medicine is more appropriate for treating severe or major fractures. However, modern medicine is also perceived as burdensome in terms of costs and raises concerns due to the need for surgery. The preferences of the Laucimba Village community in choosing fracture treatment are influenced by various interrelated factors, such as cost, distance and accessibility, personal experience, and the influence of family and social environment. Cost is one of the most dominant considerations, especially for people with limited income. Distance and accessibility play a situational role depending on the condition of the injury and the need for treatment. Previous healing experiences and recommendations from family and the surrounding community also contribute to community trust and confidence in choosing treatment. Furthermore, kinship ties and social closeness with traditional healers also strengthen community preferences for certain treatments. Overall, community preferences for fracture treatment in Laucimba Village are not solely based on medical considerations but are also influenced by various other factors. Community decisions regarding treatment can be understood as rational actions tailored to specific needs and beliefs.

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