



Research Article

GREEN HEALTHCARE SERVICES FOR MALAYSIA’S TOURISM INDUSTRY: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

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ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received 4th September, 2019

Received in revised form 25th

September, 2019

Accepted 18th November, 2019

Published online 28th December, 2019

Key words:

Green Healthcare, Medical Tourism, Service Quality, Patients Satisfaction

ABSTRACT

The good services quality will lead to the patient’s satisfaction, which will contribute to the medical tourism industry. The purpose of this paper is to explore the determinants of GREEN healthcare service quality to the patient’s satisfaction. The conceptual framework of this paper construct based on the literature review was identifies five factors to investigate medical industry in Malaysia perceived service quality and satisfaction. The finding of this paper has provide evidence that Hospital Accessibility, Medical cost, Quality of administrative, Quality of healthcare personnel and Green Awareness has a significance relationship with the patient’s satisfaction. This study has managed to study on the elements of services quality that will influence satisfaction of medical tourist in Malaysia.

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INTRODUCTION

Medical nowadays started act as competitor to tourism industries. Medical Tourism involved the patient who’s leaving his or her own country to get the medical treatment abroad (Johnson, Anderson, &Fornell, 1995). Medical tourism also involved the process of patients’ travelling and providing the medical service at the particular destination or country (Ormond, Mun, &Khoon, 2014). Patients from developing countries starting went to developed countries in the century of eighteenth to twentieth for medical services (Rahman, 2019). Therefore, the developed countries such as Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia and India starting to attract the international tourist by providing the good medical services to them via good physicians and nurses as well as the good facilities (Johnson *et al.*, 1995).

The statistics of Medical Tourism in Malaysia is increased recently. As referred to the report of Medical Tourist from 2011 to 2016, (The Edge Financial Daily, 2018) the number of healthcare traveller and revenue were increased significantly (Quoquab, Mohamed Sodom, and Mohammad 2019). This is show that tourist nowadays do not visit other countries only for vacation purposes, but to look for the best healthcare treatment. It is then gave a signal to healthcare and medical industries to improve their service quality, to ensure they are capable to capture many potential medical tourist.

might be difference way of perception and judge of the service provider’s as well as the quality provided (Muhammad Khalilur&Suhaiza, 2016).

Globalization helps people obtain information about various field and study. People nowadays started enjoy the globalization of information. It is also enable people to move from one place to another, gaining new knowledge and experience. In business, globalization helps them increasing revenue by expanding business and offered products beyond the local market. On top of that, green environment issue rise up due to globalization. People started to concern on green environment and green awareness, especially those relating to health and environmental issue (Widyastuti *et al.*, 2019).

To cope with these scenarios, it is the company’s responsibility to create green products, since it will help the companies supporting sustainable growth and gain competitive advantages. In the healthcare industries, hospitals as a major contributor should carry this responsibility towards attracting medical tourist to visit hospital and get treatment. It is essential in boosting the revenue of the company (Widyastuti *et al.* 2019).

To remain this trend, the study on quality services provided by the healthcare provider was conducted to ensure the high level of satisfaction among the patients. Therefore, the researcher identified the determinants of the good quality services towards the patient’s satisfaction. In this study, the researcher has included the green healthcare as one of determinant that

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may give the impact to the services quality provided towards the patient's satisfaction.

Literature Reviews

Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction can be refer as positive feeling or response about the specific situation (Thanh, Thi, and Mai 2014). Customer satisfaction is important in measuring the company's performance. Same as in the healthcare tourism industry, patient satisfaction play a major role in evaluating the hospital's performance (Khosravi and Anvari 2013). There are factors that contribute to patient satisfaction. Patient either among local citizen or medical tourist, usually look into the facilities, service quality, environment and previous patient's review of the hospital before take it as a consideration to come for the treatment (Juhana *et al.*, 2015).

Up to current trend and demand, green element started to take place as a value added for the hospital in attracting medical tourist. Patients now started to look at green elements practices in the hospital. With the green element such as zero waste, safety friendly, environmentally friendly and other green elements practices can increase level of satisfaction of the patients (Yazdanifard and Mercy 2011). Green element is essential in capturing satisfaction from the patients especially who practicing green lifestyles. It will create long term behaviour which patient will come for repeating treatment by the hospital (Chen, Lin, and Weng 2015).

Patient satisfaction is when the patients extremely happy with the services provided by healthcare provider. According to (Quoquab *et al.*, 2019), the core business of healthcare provider must be patients oriented in order to maintain the customer loyalty and interest. Therefore, the healthcare providers' management should find the factors, which can contribute to the customers' satisfaction. The patient's expectations were extended as they expect to receive the personal experience as at home for the care and support for the service provider (Zineldin, 2006).

In this study, the researcher using 5 dimensions that will be included in the study

1. Hospital accessibility
2. Medical cost
3. Quality of administrative
4. Quality of healthcare personnel
5. Green awareness

Service Quality

According to the study, service quality judgement is based on patient's perception towards the service provided in the hospital (Amin and Nasharuddin, 2013). Service quality has being design by using the model SERVQUAL which based on five dimensions; tangible, responsiveness reliability, assurance and empathy. This model has provided the comprehensive conceptualisation of service quality. In the healthcare industry, service quality plays it roles in capturing patient's satisfaction and loyalty (Mohd Isa, Lim, and Chin, 2019). A good of service quality is when the hospital able to deliver service which can match with patients' expectation and requirement. Additional elements of empathy, fast respond given by the doctors and nurses will lead to good service quality (Anand and Dwivedi, 2019).

The aspect of perceive of service quality involving the process of evaluating the products of services offered by the particular company, In this study, the service offered is concerns on treatment and healthcare services delivered to the patients in the hospital (Rahman 2019). Study also has found that service quality is defined as differences between patient's observation and belief of the facility and the actual services provided to them and it have effect on patient's satisfactions and behavioural intentions. By improving the service quality, it will lead to increasing of patient's satisfaction and continue visit the hospital (Mohd Isa *et al.*, 2019).

A good service quality will lead to the customer's satisfaction. A customer is a very important person in a business. They didn't dependent on us, but we dependent on them (Amankwah, Choong, & Mohammed, 2019). This statement emphasizes that, as a service provider, we must ensure the customers satisfied with our services and relevant to them. To provide good quality services, the service provider needs to understand the customers' needs and want as well as what they didn't favour to.

According to Zahari Wan Yusoff, Ismail, & Shah Ali (2010), the services quality was identified as the most influences concept for services provider. In order to survive in competitive market, the service provider needs to ensure they provide the good quality service, which can be improved and measured in timely manner (Lee, Lee, & Yoo, 2000). Basically, most of the hospitals offered the similar services however; only the quality of services will be differentiated (Zahari Wan Yusoff *et al.*, 2010).

Quality of Healthcare Personnel

Personnel quality can be defined as the quality of the personnel involved in delivering services. Personnel involved in the hospital namely doctors, nurses, paramedical and support staff. The quality of their service is measured from the way they offering treatment, greets and assist patients and guest, provide useful information related to healthcare and responsive to patient requirement. A good personnel quality is determine when they can offering service that meet patient's expectation and demands (Padma, Rajendran, and Lokachari, 2010).

Study has found that personnel quality play an important role in improving performance quality in the hospital. This is because, personnel in the hospital act as an icon in delivering hospital's product besides bring out the good image of the hospital (Padma *et al.*, 2010). Personnel quality also can be defined as the ability and skill of the service provider when dealing the customer (Amin and Nasharuddin 2013). Good interaction between doctors and patient will increase satisfaction and lead to patient's loyalty. Patient who satisfied with professional relationship practicing by the staff of the hospital tend returning to the hospital for treatment (Amin and Nasharuddin, 2013).

Quality of Administrative Process

Hospital management involve a standard rules and regulation, procedures that will help for better performance. Administrative process including the procedure of admission, stay and discharge patients (Fröst, 2016). Practicing a good of administrative procedure will increase of patient's satisfaction. Ease of setting an appointment, simplicity process of stay and discharge will help in increasing the satisfaction. Patients tend to return visits the hospital due to quality of administrative

process. Thus, good of administrative process is required in increasing level of satisfaction among the customers (Padma *et al.*, 2010).

Hospital Accessibility

Accessibility refers to the ability of searching for information by one person via easy way or platform. In this study, hospital accessibility refers to the ability of the patient in gaining information, set an appointment, seeking, for consultation and other healthcare problems with an easy platform. Good hospital accessibility is when the patient feel easy in making appointment, searching for doctors’ contact, get faster responds from the doctors and nurses and so forth. These will lead in increasing their satisfaction (Thanh *et al.*, 2014).

Today scenario is where digital platform started to replace the traditional way of doing service. With the enhancement of Internet, hospital can use website and email to improve performance. Patient now can reach to their doctors via email, SMS or searching health information through hospital’s website. It will reduce time for the patient to come over to the hospital, for non-serious incidents. Communication now can be done anywhere without focusing on face-to-face only. Patients feel more comfortable and it will increase their satisfaction (Bala and Deepak Verma, 2018).

Medical Cost

Costs are the factors that will influence numbers of medical tourist. Cost is important since the medical expense is increasing from time to time. Unlike other countries, Malaysia’s hospital still is being subsidies by the government. The medicines and medical fees still charge in lower amount. However, patients are looking for the cost fairness. This is because there are differences of amount charge between local citizen and foreign medical tourists. International charge is seems extremely higher as compared fees charged to local citizen. Hospitals have to concern on this issue, since cost is one factor that contributes to patient’s satisfaction. Assistance from Non-Government Agencies and medical insurance can help in reducing cost paid by the patient. Presenting of these agencies can help them in get treatment from the hospitals (Rahman, 2019).

High quality medical care with reasonable cost will increase satisfaction among customers. Patients sometimes feel disappointed when they were given uncomfortable room when stay, poor consultation from the doctors, but being charged with the higher fees. Role of cost charged to the patient should be reasonable to increase their satisfaction and make them return visit the hospital.

Green Awareness

A green element in the hospital’s service is related to environment friendly, zero waste and noise, and other related green activities. The implementation green awareness in the services activity will increase the patients’ satisfaction. This is because patients nowadays started concern in green lifestyle (Azmi *et al.*, 2017).

Reducing papers usage for documents and medical report is one the green activities should be included in hospital’s daily routine and activities. Other than that, proper disposal procedure of medical equipment and waste, using easy compose of glove and plastic, creating park with little noises and many more. Green elements do not concern on saving the

environment. User friendly and keeping a professional relationship between staff and patient are part of practicing green elements. Patient will more satisfy when this element is implementing in hospital’s daily business operation (Widyastuti *et al.*, 2019).

Green healthcare industry is considering the eco and environment when delivery the healthcare service to the patients. It is to ensure the environment remain in good situation. It is included the running of cafeteria and cleaning activities of the healthcare venue as well. According to Kim & Osmond, (2014) the quality environment will be the factor for the healthcare building been choosing. Not many studies have recently tended to green activities procedure; these investigations have detailed just the green technique of the assembling area. Only a few examinations have surveyed the effect of key hierarchical direction on the green administration of the store network (Migdadi&Omari, 2019).

Conceptual Frame work

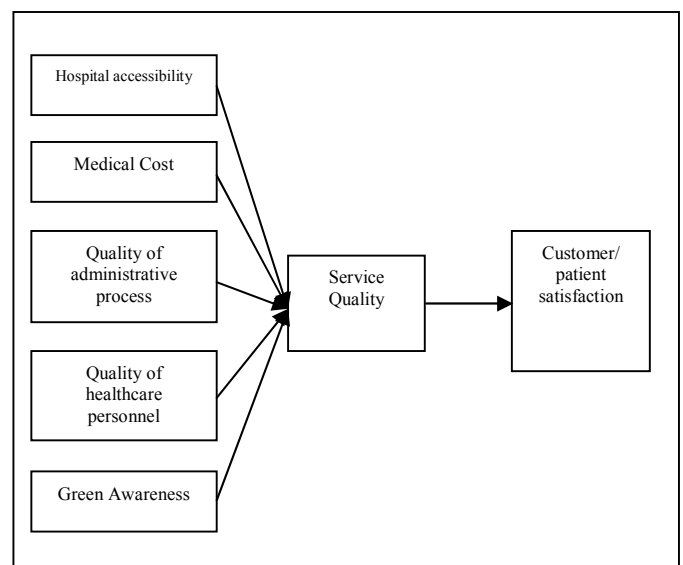


Figure 1.0 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework is adapted and adopted from Amankwah, Choong, and Mohammed (2019) and Rahman,(2019) to study the relationship between elements of service quality and patient satisfaction by the healthcare industry. The independent variables are the features or elements that perceive service quality such as green awareness, quality of healthcare personnel, and quality of administrative process, medical cost, and hospital accessibility. The dependent variable in this study is the patient’s satisfaction towards the quality elements practicing in the healthcare industry. This conceptual framework is including the mediator which is the perceive service quality in the hospital.

The study proposes a conceptual framework that aims to investigate medical industry in Malaysia perceived service quality and satisfaction. Based on the literature, the conceptual was identifies five factors hospital accessibility, medical cost, quality of administrative process, quality of healthcare personnel, and green environment to determine customer satisfaction at healthcare Industry in Malaysia hospital. According to Oliver (1993, 1980) to construct of satisfaction as in the case of service quality has been discussed broadly within the *expectation-disconfirmation theory*. However, Johnston (1995) argued that the difference between previous

perception and reliability of product/service delivery affects consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction. External determinants of customer satisfaction perceived quality was established. In the context of medical tourism, the expectations of medical tourists regarding the perceived quality of medical services may have an impact on the satisfaction of the hospital in providing health care. Satisfaction is refers to the assessment of the importance or lack of importance of medical tourism products and services. Based on the conceptual framework, this study identified five hypotheses that examine the relationship between perceived service and satisfaction.

The relationship between perceived quality of medical service and satisfaction has been identifying by various researchers (Rahman *et al.*, 2017a, 2017b; Zailani *et al.*, 2016). Zailani *et al.* (2016) was found that the quality of halal medical services has a significant relationship with patient satisfaction. As medical care service is considered to be high-quality service, due to a high level of uncertainty, danger and a high level of confidence among medical tourists in the hospital's ability to provide medical tourism services (Rahman and Zailani, 2017; Mudarri and Fisk, 2007). As far as the as the practical side of the medical tourism sector is concerned, patients have a lack of knowledge and expertise to properly assess the performance of medical services, such as diagnostic ability or surgeon skills. According to Suki *et al.* (2011) argued that medical tourism evaluations of the medical services provided by hospitals that relate to the interaction between physicians and patients seeking help, caring and welcoming physicians and nurses. The relationships make it easier to develop a sense of security and confidence among medical tourists, leading to greater satisfaction. Figure 1 shows the proposed comprehensive framework that includes elements of how the equality of medical services perceived by medical tourists can influence their satisfaction. According to Linder-Pelz (1982) argued that patients' perceived medical services refer to the assessment as a large or poor and as significant or insignificant in the quality of the delivery of medical services.

Therefore, the following are the hypotheses that been proposed

H1: Hospital accessibility mediates the relationship between services quality and patient's satisfaction

H2: Medical cost mediates the relationship between services quality and patient's satisfaction

H3: Quality of administrative mediates the relationship between services quality and patient's satisfaction

H4: Quality of healthcare personal mediates the relationship between services quality and patient's satisfaction

H5: Green awareness mediates the relationship between services quality and patient's satisfaction

METHODOLOGY

For further research purposes, this study can used survey method, using a questionnaire to gain information and test the conceptual model and developed hypotheses. The questionnaire will distribute to hospitals, where the respondents will select randomly among the patients in the hospitals. Data collected will edit, clean, filter and analyse by using the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS).

DISCUSSION

The findings of the structural model offer proof that the medical tourists' satisfaction dependent on the medical tourists' perceived services quality. The medical tourists' satisfaction should perceive inside the context of the medical tourists' perceived values that are sequential. The proposed conceptual model infers an ordered order within the distinctive two stages. In the first stage, take a look investigates the important success factors (e.g; health facility accessibility, clinical charges reasonableness, health-care technicality and interpersonal behaviour) that have an impact on medical tourists' perceived services greater. Borg *et al.* (2006) find that the easy of hospital accessibility influence patients' perceived services quality. In the second stage, the study examines the medical tourists' satisfaction that attributed to their, perceived service quality. That eventually suggests their prospective future medical care at the hospitals. The final results confirm the sturdy findings that advise a high-quality and direct relationship must coherently exist among the medical tourists' perceived services best and their delight entity. Cole and Scott (2004) hypothesize that perceived medical services quality are highly related to medical tourists' satisfaction for further travel to hospitals of their choice for medical care services.

It notes here that the principal limitation of the study entirely considerations the setting of the study in Malaysia, that puts constraints on the generalization of outcomes with totally different countries. Future analysis that recreates this study in numerous connections would be welcome and would facilitate to boost our comprehension on the necessities of the impact that the medical tourists' perceived medical services quality has on their treatment satisfaction through unforgettable, pleasant experiences. The study will facilitate or assist some researchers within the hospitality and those people involved inside the hospital management activity that may use the have a look at findings as an instance for know-how on how perceived medical services excellent have a study effect on the foreign visitors of medical tourist, normative medical tourists who required an ambulatory care service at some point of medical treatment and expats who got sick and required hospitalization for future medical care at hospitals in Malaysia. According to Williams, 2017; Burgess and Radnor (2013), once quality performance has improved, the healthcare organisation will be able to better fulfil patient needs through enhanced quality services.

The moderating variable "medical traveller facilitator" might into future observe how the structural model works significantly. Furthermore, future study is anticipated to think about the vital success issue of low guest bedroom costs in hospitals, sensible worth restaurants in hospitals, price for accommodation, hygiene and cleanliness, which can have an effect on the expectations of foreign travellers with medical tourism for receiving any treatment services in hospitals.

CONCLUSION

It can be stated emphatically that stakeholders of the healthcare industry are aware that good affected patient enjoy that results in affected patient satisfaction is going beyond just the nice of simply the standard of the core provision. There are various factors that come to play and the sort of is healthcare facilities management service quality. This study suggests that the standard of healthcare facilities management services

within the provision of quality healthcare delivery to patient in African country is of significant provided that patient satisfaction ends up in patient loyalty.

This study is very important in this, it confirms that facilities management service quality, that is that the support service incorporates a positive important influence on patients' satisfaction with core health care delivery, particularly within the areas of the standard of provision, quality of health care personnel, the adequacy of health care resources and therefore the quality of health care administrative process.

Medical tourism is a lucrative and fast growing markets in the global that presenting a widespread opportunity for financial growth. Malaysia needs much improvement of medical care services trendy in hospital as to be the regional hub for medical tourism. Medical tourism is a critical a part of the service industry, wherein medical tourism contributing a huge position in developing this tourism market. These observe is good sized take a look at contributes to the theoretical development of the tourism industry and the structured relationship between various aspects contributing to the development of medical services quality in hospital. This study has dedicated to contributory to the relevant body of knowledge, within the sense that, first; this study has clearly set apart the dominant factors related to the medical care services quality. Those invigorate them to travel for medical tourism.

The recognized medical tourists' perceived values with the attendant connected things will be utilized as elements and parcel of the facts and figures to advance the study on medical care services quality in hospital. Exemplary scrutiny on the link between the medical tourists' perceived services of medical care and satisfaction can facilitate in promoting more understanding on the impacts of medical tourists' satisfaction which might somewhat contribute to raised medical tourists' satisfaction. Second, this study has meticulously explored the multidimensional relationships between the medical tourists' perceived services quality and their satisfaction for medical care treatment at hospital. Affirming this relationship may think about as a further empirical confirmation. That underpins the very foundation that medical tourists' perceived services quality influences their satisfaction for future medical aid at hospital of their selection.

To transform right into an incredibly successful health-care tourism marketplace, it requires best strategic planning, great administration, best monitoring, fine equipment, pleasant personnel, exceptional products a high-quality medical services in hospital without compromise. The hospitable local population and economic vitality, the medical tourists' perceived services can smoothly turn the medical tourism industry into a glowing success within the close to and distant future.

Appropriate human resource improvement is a critical issue for the beneficial prosperity of first-rate medical tourism service sector. Didactic medical tourism, specialized education and training, especially, medical ethics and subculture can be inculcated to teach health care providers to provide value-added services to the prospective medical tourists provocatively. Hospital should no longer be overly enthusiastic to focus on profit-oriented factors only. They have to take a step lower back to control medical tourism related charges

with the intention to holistically offer exceptional scientific offerings at reasonable fees to one and all. All these benevolent efforts can make any country to attract medical tourists for treatment services at the hospitals.

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How to cite this article:

Ahmad Auzan Md Noor *et al* (2019) 'Green Healthcare Services for Malaysia's Tourism Industry: A Conceptual Framework', *International Journal of Current Advanced Research*, 08(12), pp. 20819-20824.
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.24327/ijcar.2019.20824.4076>
