

**HEALTH TOURISM:
A STUDY ON TOURISTS'
MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS IN
CHOOSING MELAKA AS A HEALTH
TOURISM DESTINATION**

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**A research project submitted in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the B.Sc. (Hons) in Tourism
Management**

**FACULTY OF HOTEL AND TOURISM
MANAGEMENT
UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA**

**Independent Study (HTM 650)
JULY 2013**

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ABSTRACT

Travelling around the globe for health treatment is becoming more and more prevalent these days. The fundamental premise of health tourism is that the same care, or even better quality of care, may be available in other countries, and obtained at a more affordable cost than in the home country (Medical Tourism Association, 2008). Although many theories on the potential of health tourism in Malaysia have been reported in the general media, there is a lack of adequate empirical evidence on the subject. Melaka, as one of the several major destinations in health tourism industry that is rapidly developing, is creating worldwide trademark as “The Medical Hub of Asia”. The objective of this study is to identify the motivational factors that motivate tourists to choose Melaka as a health tourism destination. Health tourism is largely a consumer-driven trend and in order to survive and thrive, the health-delivery industry must keep up with its consumers' demands and needs (Nakra, 2011). This study was carried out at three private hospitals around Banda Hilir and Ayer Keroh with a sample size of 120 health tourists. The six motivational factors identified and ranked according to importance are products offerings, demographic profiles, hospital services, hospital facilities, medical expertise and health service costs and cultural similarity. Simultaneously, the findings can be used by the hospitals, Melaka State Government and tourism related organizations in order to develop successful marketing strategies that further promote Melaka as a chosen health tourism destination. Further exploration is required in the area of health tourists' motivational factors. In this study, it was found that the most influencing motivational factor is products offerings. However, the contributing factors that motivate tourists in choosing Melaka as a health tourism destination are hospital services and hospital facilities.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	i
ABSTRACT	ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iii
LIST OF TABLES	vi
LIST OF FIGURES	vii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	viii

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Background of Study.....	1
1.1.1 Health Tourism in Melaka.....	2
1.2 Problem Statement	7
1.3 Significance of Study.....	8
1.4 Research Objectives	10
1.5 Research Questions.....	10
1.6 Summary.....	11

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW	12
2.1 Introduction	12
2.2 Health Tourism.....	13
2.3 Motivation.....	15
2.3.1 Demographic Profiles	17
2.3.2 Hospital Facilities.....	19
2.3.3 Product Offerings.....	21
2.3.4 Hospital Services.....	23

2.3.5 Medical Expertise and Health Service Costs	24
2.3.6 Cultural Similarity.....	27
2.4 Tourist’s to Choose Melaka as a Health Tourism Destination	29
2.5 Theoretical Framework	31
2.6 Summary.....	32

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 33

3.1 Introduction	33
3.2 Research Design.....	34
3.3 Questionnaire Designs.....	35
3.4 Population and Sampling	38
3.5 Data Gathering Process.....	41
3.6 Data Analysis	42
3.7 Summary.....	44

CHAPTER 4..... 45

RESULTS FINDING..... 45

4.1 Introduction	45
4.2 Reliability Test.....	45
4.3 Respondents Demographic Profiles.....	46
4.4 Melaka as a Health Tourism Destination.....	49
4.5 Health Tourists’ Motivational Factors	50
4.5.1 Respondents’ Demographic Profiles	51
4.5.2 Other Motivational Factors.....	53
4.6 The Most Agreeable Motivational Factors Which Motivate Health Tourist To Melaka.....	55
4.7 The Contributing Motivational Factors Towards Choosing Melaka as a Destination For Health Tourism.....	57
4.8 Summary.....	58