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The Development and Behavioral Intention in Choosing Malaysia as a Medical Tourism Destination

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Abstract: *Medical tourism has gained huge popularity because it has become a major source of income for most nations. There is a lot of literature available about the tourism industry and the competitiveness of destinations. It is important especially those in emerging countries like Malaysia to look into and put effort in strategizing their capabilities and facilities to respond to the global competition and business opportunities in enhancing their performance. Malaysia has been recognized as the Health and Medical Tourism Development for three consecutive years from 2015 to 2017 by the International Medical Travel Journal. Referring to the National Transformation Programme 2017 Annual Report, Malaysia was targeting to increase the hospital revenue by RM2.8 million by 2020 and the target markets are from Indonesia, Myanmar, China and Vietnam. The industry has shown excellent growth potential ranging between 16-17% every year. As for the year 2016, the healthcare travel industry grew by 23% from 2015, compared to the average growth rate of 15% from 2011 – 2015. Therefore, this research attempts to examine the behavioral intention of the medical tourists in choosing Malaysia as a medical tourism destination. While considering all four variables chosen as having significant impact on behavioral intention of the medical tourists, the result demonstrated that there is a positive relationship between perceived destination image, perceived quality, perceived value and patient satisfaction.*

Keyword: Medical Tourism, Behavioral Intention, Perceived Destination Image, Perceived Quality, Perceived Value and Patient Satisfaction.