

**An Examination of Bangladeshi Patients' Loyalty towards a
Private Hospital in Bangkok, Thailand**

Syeda Israt Afroz

Graduate, Masters of Tourism and Hospitality Management
Assumption University of Thailand

Apichart Intravisit, Ph.D.

Lecturer, Graduate School of Business
Assumption University of Thailand

Abstract

The study aims to understand what influence medical tourists, more precisely, Bangladeshi medical tourists' loyalty towards a private hospital. By considering four variables, which are: satisfaction, perceived value, trust, and destination image, this study conducts a survey-based research with 356 Bangladeshi patients who came to the hospital for medical treatment. The questionnaire, containing 42 items, covered the essence of four variables and the loyalty of the patient towards the hospital. The questionnaires were distributed from 1st April to 30th April, 2013. The results of the questionnaires were analyzed and interpreted in detail using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 20.0. Descriptive analysis section applies mean score, frequency, and percent to summarize data. To prove the hypotheses, Pearson correlation coefficient was used to find the relationship among satisfaction, perceived value, trust, destination image, and loyalty toward medical tourism in the private hospital. The result shows that medical tourists' satisfaction, perceived value, trust, and destination image, all have a significant influence on tourists' loyalty towards medical tourism at this private hospital. The findings from this study should help all parties concerned not only in realizing the ongoing trends of medical tourism but also it will help them to plan their future to acquire the best outcome. Recommendation has been proposed for the hospital management, Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), medical tourism sector for further action.

Keywords: *medical tourists, satisfaction, perceived value, trust, destination image*

Introduction

Tourism has long been perceived to be for recreational purposes and pleasure. Recently, many visitors have found traveling for medical or health purposes a part of tourism. Thus, the term medical tourism comes to existence with an increasing number of patients with their accompanying relatives or partners, traveling far and wide to destination where they find medication and health improvement packages satisfactory. Unlike tourism in general, medical tourism barely brings happy moments. However, those who travel far to seek better medical treatment in another country would certainly find such destination the better—if not the best—resort for their health improvement. Despite communication barriers, expenses, cross-cultural