

The Relationship Between the Motivation of Medical Visits among Millennial Tourists in Penang and Revisit Intention

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Abstract: This study focuses on the relationship between millennial medical tourists' motivations for visiting Penang and their intention to revisit. This study seeks to discover major variables of satisfaction and loyalty within this market group by investigating the factors that influence millennials' choice of Penang for medical tourism. Data were collected via Google Form surveys from millennial medical tourists in Penang. The findings will provide a comprehensive understanding of this demographic. The findings will also identify the relationship between the motivation of medical visits among millennial tourists in Penang and revisit intention.

Keywords: *Medical tourism, Millennial tourists, Motivation, Revisit intention.*

1. Introduction and Background

Medical tourism has emerged as a key segment of the global tourism business. Understanding the elements that drive medical tourists' decisions is critical for countries hoping to recruit and maintain this demographic. This study focuses on millennial medical tourists visiting Penang, Malaysia, to examine the relationship between their motivations for choosing Penang as a medical tourism destination and their intention to revisit Penang. With Penang evolving into a medical tourism hub, this study aims to provide useful insights into millennial tourist motivations in Penang and their revisit intentions. The millennial tourists are the targeted demographic due to their significant influence on consumer trends and involvement in healthcare decision-making. The findings of this study will add to the knowledge on medical tourism and have practical consequences for healthcare professionals, tourism stakeholders, and Penang authorities.

The factors influencing millennials' choice of Penang for medical tourism are categorized into push and pull factors. Push factors include limited healthcare options at home, affordable treatment in Penang, and a desire for holistic health experiences (Chen & Chen, 2015). Pull factors encompass Penang's reputation for quality medical services, accessibility, cultural appeal, and tourist attractions (Chen & Chen, 2015). Understanding these dynamics is crucial for Penang's medical tourism industry. Teo et al. (2017) found a positive link between destination image, satisfaction, and loyalty, suggesting that tailored experiences could enhance return visits. Khan and Alam (2014) noted the growing demand for comprehensive medical and holistic health services, which Penang uniquely offers.

Ensuring top-tier medical care, efficient service, and patient communication enhances satisfaction and loyalty, pivotal for Penang's medical tourism growth. By understanding millennials' motivations and adapting offerings accordingly, Penang can solidify its position as a preferred destination, fostering loyalty and industry expansion. Success hinges on exceeding expectations, focusing on affordability, quality care, cultural appeal, and overall positive experiences.

Medical tourism in Malaysia has grown into a significant industry, driven by factors such as high costs and long waiting times in wealthier countries, alongside shortcomings in the healthcare systems of less affluent nations. This growth presents opportunities for governments seeking economic benefits. However, Salmi (2019) indicates that challenges persist, including communication issues between patients and doctors, infrastructure deficits in emerging medical tourism destinations like Manipur, India, and varying healthcare standards across hospitals in Malaysia. These issues impact patient satisfaction and trust, influencing the decisions of medical tourists, particularly millennials. Additionally, according to the New Straits Times (2020), COVID-19 has posed further barriers to medical tourism in regions like Penang, underscoring the need for research to explore the motivations and revisit intentions of millennial medical tourists in this context.

2. Literature Review

High-quality healthcare facilities can either meet or exceed the patient expectations of millennial tourists. Meeting or exceeding such expectations leads increase in the probability of return visits (Pulungan, 2021; Kang et al., 2019). Price transparency also significantly impacts millennials' revisit intentions. Recent literature has shown that when tourists perceive they received fair pricing, they are more likely to have positive impressions and consider repeat visits (Cho et al., 2020; Wu et al., 2023). Additionally, tourists who travel for relaxation would likely have positive feedback for destinations with relaxation-focused activities, such as wellness programs, which positively influence revisit intentions (Barnes et al., 2019; Han, Kim, & Kim, 2018; Kim et al., 2011). Millennial tourists often rely on accessibility, as ease of transport contributes to overall satisfaction and trust, ultimately strengthening revisit intentions (Cham et al., 2020). Finally, tangible aspects such as local cuisine and culture also enhance satisfaction, as well as fostering revisit intentions (Chang et al., 2022; Huyghebaert et al., 2020; Lugosi, 2021; Chih et al., 2023). Together, these elements—facilities, price awareness, relaxation, accessibility, and tangible factors—shape millennials' medical tourism experiences and positively influence their intentions to revisit.

The availability of high-quality healthcare facilities is a critical factor influencing millennials' decisions to return to a medical tourism destination. Facilities offering advanced treatments or specialized care that are unavailable or inaccessible in the tourists' home countries contribute significantly to patient satisfaction and loyalty. Studies indicate that meeting or exceeding tourist expectations in healthcare services can lead to increased satisfaction, strengthening revisit intentions (Kang et al., 2019). This relationship underscores the importance of high-quality healthcare facilities in fostering millennials' intentions to return for follow-up treatments or other healthcare needs (Pohan, 2015; Pulungan, 2021).

H1: There is a positive relationship between facilities and revisit intention among millennial medical tourists to Penang.

Additionally, price transparency and awareness significantly impact revisit intentions among millennial medical tourists. Millennials are more likely to form positive impressions and consider repeat visits when they perceive that they have received good value for their money (Cho et al., 2020). Research suggests that higher prices often lead to higher perceived value. Good perception of value often leads to tourist loyalty, as they feel as if they are receiving worthwhile experiences (Wu et al., 2023). This perception of value and fair pricing leads to favorable memories, which further increase the likelihood of revisiting the destination (Eugenio & Mody, 2022).

H2: The relationship between price awareness and revisit intention among millennial medical tourists to Penang.

Providing relaxation-oriented activities, such as wellness programs such as spa treatments are positively associated with revisit intentions in medical tourism. Millennials increasingly seek destinations that promote physical and mental well-being, as relaxation effectively reduces stress and anxiety, thus enhancing overall satisfaction (Barnes et al., 2019; Han, Kim, & Kim, 2018). These factors contribute significantly to fostering a sense of well-being and encouraging future visits. Additionally, millennials have diverse preferences for relaxation. Many millennials favor calm environments and others prefer active wellness activities, making it essential for service providers to cater to varied relaxation needs (Hashemi et al., 2015).

H3: The relationship between relaxation and revisit intention among millennial medical tourists to Penang.

Transportation infrastructure and cultural inclusivity, significantly shape millennial tourists' revisit intentions for medical tourism destinations. Well-connected destinations with reliable transport networks and culturally sensitive communication, such as language translations and religious accommodations, enhance tourist satisfaction and build trust among millennials, which strengthens their revisit intentions (Marrocu & Paci, 2013; Massidda & Etzo, 2012). This approach reduces anxiety and fosters a sense of being valued, which, as studies suggest, encourages return visits (Aref & Gill, 2009; Goffi, 2013).

H4: The relationship between accessibility and revisit intention among millennial medical tourists to Penang.

Tangible elements—such as local cuisine, traditional crafts, and culturally significant architecture—play an influential role in millennials' intentions to revisit a destination. Research indicates that these physical

aspects evoke emotional responses and help form lasting memories, fostering a desire to return (Chang et al., 2022; Huyghebaert et al., 2020). Studies from other sectors demonstrate that tangible factors, like souvenirs and distinctive environments, enhance satisfaction and loyalty, ultimately encouraging repeat visits (Lugosi, 2021; Chih et al., 2023).

H5: The relationship between tangible and revisit intention among millennial medical tourists to Penang.

3. Research Methodology

This study investigates the relationship between the motivations for medical visits among millennial tourists in Penang influence their revisit intentions. This study employs quantitative methods to gather and analyze empirical data through surveys. Specifically, the study uses correlation analysis to examine the relationship between these motivations and revisit intentions. It uses a cross-sectional approach to collect data from individual tourists visiting hospitals in Penang at a single time point. To collect data, Google Forms surveys were utilized due to their accessibility on mobile devices, which encourages higher participation rates. The survey questions will be adapted from previous studies relevant to our research topic.

Quantitative studies depend on accurate generalizations from population and sampling data. Penang's medical tourism has shown substantial growth, with a 138% increase in Long Term Activity Pass (LTAPP) arrivals in the first half of 2023 compared to 2022. This study focuses on millennial tourists aged 28-43 who engage in medical tourism in Penang. Snowball sampling was used to gather data from at least 314 respondents visiting Penang hospitals through self-administered questionnaires.

Primary data were collected using questionnaires adapted from existing research. These surveys were tailored to the variables identified in our literature review framework. Both the independent and dependent variables were based on previous studies and adjusted to suit the study's objectives. The table below outlines the dimensions that were applied to the questionnaire.

Table 1: Instrument Questions

Dimensions	Items	Sources
Demographic profile	5 items	Researcher
Independent Variable		
Relaxation	5 items	(Ashton, 2018)
Accessibility	5 items	(Cham et al., 2020)
Facilities	5 items	(Cham et al., 2020)
Price Awareness	5 items	(Cham et al., 2020)
Tangible	5 items	(Lee and Kim, 2019)
Dependent Variable		
Revisit Intention	5 items	(Cham et al., 2020)

The pilot test involved millennials between the ages of 28 to 43 years old engaged in medical tourism in Penang to assess their relevance to the research goals. Starting with 52 respondents for the pilot test, following G-Power software guidelines allowed for focused observation and data collection without the risks and costs of a larger rollout. The sampling technique used was snowball sampling, where respondents were recruited through referrals from existing participants. Upon collecting the responses, the data were tested using Cronbach's Alpha to test reliability before the actual study began. Additionally, descriptive analysis, focusing on mean scores and standard deviation, and regression analysis were used as needed to address the study's objectives, research questions, and hypotheses.

4. Results

This section presents sets of results relating to the profile of respondents who took part in the study by answering the online questionnaire. The statistics include the total sample and the comparison of participants

regarding their experience based on the demographic and geographic characteristics (gender, age, level of education, and region).

Profile of Respondents: Table 2 displays the demographic information of respondents who participated in the study.

Table 2: Demographic and Geographic Information About the Study

VARIABLE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
GENDER		
Male	181	57.6
Female	133	42.4
Total	314	100%
AGE		
28-35	28 - 35	191
35-43	35 - 43	123
Total	314	100%
OCCUPATION		
Government Sector	70	22.3
Private Sector	125	39.8
Private Business	25	8.0
Entrepreneur	37	11.8
Other	57	18.2
Total	314	100%
MARITAL STATUS		
Single	163	51.9
Married	151	48.1
Total	314	100%
CONFIRMATION OF MEDICAL VISIT TO PENANG		
Yes	314	100.0%
No	0	0%
Total	314	100%
STATE OF ORIGIN		
Johor	12	3.8
Kedah	98	31.2
Kelantan	7	2.2
Kuala Lumpur	1	0.3
Melaka	7	2.2
Negeri Sembilan	1	0.3
Penang	73	23.2
Perak	50	15.9
Perlis	15	4.8
Selangor	40	12.7
Terengganu	4	1.3
Pahang	6	1.9
TOTAL	314	100%

Descriptive Statistics: The descriptive statistics for the variables Facilities, Price Awareness, Relaxation, Accessibility, Tangible, and Revisit Intention in the context of Medical Tourism provide the level of participation from respondents in answering the survey, as well as the variability in their perceptions.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics		Mean	Std. Dev.
Variable			
IV1	Facilities	4.2100	0.7300
IV2	Price Awareness	4.3300	0.7270
IV3	Relaxation	4.3700	0.7420
IV4	Accessibility	4.3900	0.7230
IV5	Tangibles	4.4100	0.7240
DV	revisit intention among millennial medical tourists to Penang.	4.3100	0.7310

The descriptive statistics for Facilities, Price Awareness, Relaxation, Accessibility, Tangible, and Revisit Intention in the context of Medical Tourism display a high level of satisfaction among respondents overall. The mean scores indicate that, on average, respondents agreed with the items in the research instrument, falling on the scale of 4. This suggests a positive reception across the various factors assessed, indicating that respondents feel positive about the services and facilities offered during their medical tourism experience.

The mean scores for Facilities (M=4.21, SD=0.730), Price Awareness (M=4.33, SD=0.727), Relaxation (M=4.37, SD=0.742) Accessibility (M=4.39, SD=0.723), and Tangible (M=4.41, SD=0.724) all indicate a high level of agreement and satisfaction among participants. The same can be said for the dependent variable, Revisit Intention among millennial medical tourists to Penang (M=4.31, SD=0.731). Although the standard deviations show some variability in responses, overall, most respondents expressed positive experiences. These results point to the importance of these factors in shaping tourist satisfaction and potentially influencing their decision to revisit. The positive mean scores for Revisit Intention further underline the likelihood of respondents returning to the medical tourism facility based on their overall positive experience.

The Model Summary shows a robust regression model. The R value of .917 indicates a strong positive correlation between the predictors (facilities, price awareness, relaxation, accessibility, and tangible) and the dependent variable. Based on a R Square of .841, it can be deduced that 84.1% of the variability observed in the dependent variable is explained by the predictors. The Adjusted R Square (.839) accounts for the number of predictors and corrects for possible overfitting. The Standard Error of the Estimate (.26466) displays the average difference between the actual and predicted numbers. Overall, the model has strong explanatory power and prediction accuracy.

Table 4: Regression Analysis

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.917 ^a	.841	.839	.26466

Independent Variables	se	Beta	t	Sig.
Facilities	.040	.003	.047	.941
Price Awareness	.046	.15	3.199	.002
Relaxation	.060	.036	.590	.556
Accessibilities	.063	.318	5.130	.000
Tangible	.056	.460	8.055	.000

(*p<0.05; **p<0.001)

Dependent Variable: Revisit Intention for Medical Tourism in Penang.

Table 4 presents regression coefficients and standard errors. Multiple regressions were run to predict the overall motivation of medical visits among millennial tourists in Penang and revisit intention from four predictors: facilities, price awareness, relaxation, accessibility, and tangible factors. The correlation matrix shows how the variables are related to one another. Significant at the 0.01 level, the DV shows high positive associations with facilities (r = 0.679), price awareness (r = 0.798), relaxation (r = 0.848), accessibility (r = 0.885) and tangible (r = 0.895).

Table 5: Hypotheses Summary

Hypothesis		Result
H1	There is a positive relationship between facilities and revisit intention among millennial medical tourists to Penang.	Not supported
H2	The relationship between price awareness and revisit intention among millennial medical tourists to Penang.	Supported
H3	There is a positive relationship between relaxation and revisit intention among millennial medical tourists to Penang.	Not Supported
H4	There is a positive relationship between accessibility and revisit intention among millennial medical tourists to Penang.	Supported
H5	There is a positive relationship between tangible and revisit intention among millennial medical tourists to Penang.	Supported

Discussion

The first objective of this research is to find out a significant relationship between the motivations of medical tourism and revisit intention among Malaysian millennial tourists in Penang through the factors (Facilities, Price Awareness, Relaxation, Accessibility, and Tangible). Based on the findings obtained through the hypothesis, it is observed that there is a significant relationship between 5 factors (Facilities, Price Awareness, Relaxation, Accessibility, and Tangible) that affect the motivations of medical visits and revisit intention among millennial tourists in Penang.

H1: There is a positive relationship between facilities and revisit intention among millennial medical tourists to Penang.

For the first hypothesis, **H1**, there is no positive relationship between facilities and revisit intention among millennial visitors in Penang. According to (Kang et al., 2019; Pulungan, 2021), the location offers specialized medical centers for a variety of conditions, attracting individuals looking for unique or sophisticated therapies that are not available elsewhere. This can nurture loyalty and encourage return visits for further treatment, or future needs related to the same circumstances. For young tourists, the availability of such facilities can affect their choice of destination (Beladi et al., 2019). In addition, patient satisfaction depends on the performance of the healthcare facility; meeting or exceeding expectations promotes satisfaction, while a deficiency leads to disappointment (Pohan, 2015). Unfortunately, the current study discovered no relationship between facilities and revisit intention among millennial tourists in Penang. In this context, regarding Table 4.4.2, it can be determined that research hypothesis **H1** is not supported because the Facilities coefficient of (0.941, $p > 0.05$) indicates that it does not have a positive relationship that impacts revisit intention on medical visits among millennials in Penang.

H2: There is a positive relationship between price awareness and revisit intention among millennial medical tourists to Penang.

Research hypothesis **H2** has a significant relationship between price awareness and revisit intention. Tourists often cherish revisiting their favorite destinations, driven by their attractions. Understanding how tourists' price sensitivity influences their likelihood of returning is crucial for fostering repeat visits. Research, such as studies by Cho et al. (2020), reveals that when tourists feel they received a fair price or a deal that exceeded expectations, they are more inclined to consider revisiting. Positive perceptions of value enhance their fond memories of the place and increase their openness to future visits. Conversely, feeling overcharged or excluded can deter them from returning. Wu et al. (2023) further support this by demonstrating that tourists who perceive good value, even at higher costs, are more inclined to revisit destinations. In this context, regarding Table 4.4.2, it can be determined that research hypothesis **H2** is supported because it shows the significant coefficients ($p < 0.002$). In this context, the price awareness has a coefficient of 0.145, which will be the motivation for medical tourism and revisit intention among Malaysian millennial tourists.

H3: There is a positive relationship between relaxation and revisit intention among millennial medical tourists to Penang.

For the research hypothesis **H3**, there is no supported relationship between relaxation and revisit intention. Activities such as massages, yoga, meditation, and outdoor experiences (Han et al., 2018; Han et al., 2020) contribute to enhancing relaxation. Medical tourism locations also provide unique cultural exchanges that

foster positive emotions and happiness, ultimately improving mood, reducing anxiety, and promoting overall well-being (Kang et al., 2019). Furthermore, a study adapted from Han et al (2020)) explored the relationship between mindfulness meditation and patient satisfaction, finding that patients practicing mindfulness during hospital stays reported higher satisfaction levels and a greater likelihood of returning to the same hospital for future care. Unfortunately, the current study discovered no relationship between relaxation and revisit intention. In this context, regarding Table 4.4.2, it can be determined that research hypothesis **H3** is not supported because the relaxation coefficient of 0.556, $p > 0.05$, indicates that it does not have a positive relationship that impacts revisit intention on medical visits among millennials in Penang.

H4: There is a positive relationship between accessibility and revisit intention among millennial medical tourists to Penang.

Research Hypothesis **H4** has a significant relationship between accessibility and revisit intention. According to Kang et al. (2019), accessibility encompasses not only physical access but also cultural and linguistic considerations. Offering translated materials, culturally sensitive communication, and religious accommodations builds trust and inclusivity. This reduces anxiety, enhances the overall experience, and makes patients feel valued and supported, thereby increasing the likelihood of them returning for future visits. Additionally, integrating relaxation techniques into accessible healthcare services can reinforce the connection between accessibility and the intention to revisit. In this context, regarding Table 4.4.2, it can be determined that research hypothesis **H4** is supported because it shows the significant coefficients ($p < 0.000$). In this context, the price awareness has a coefficient of 0.318, showing that millennial tourists are looking to put their motivation in accessibility to medical visits in Penang.

H5: There is a positive relationship between tangible and revisit intention among millennial medical tourists to Penang.

Research Hypothesis **H5** has a significant relationship between tangible and revisit intention. The physical aspects of a setting—like its environment, facilities, and amenities—directly influence consumers' experiences and satisfaction, impacting their likelihood to return. Research on fast food restaurants illustrates this connection, showing that high-quality meals, excellent service, and a pleasant environment increase customer satisfaction and the desire to revisit. This suggests that when physical elements, such as delicious food, culturally authentic souvenirs, and a clean, attractive setting, exceed expectations, customers are more satisfied and inclined to return. Another study (Soleimani & Einolahzadeh, 2018) exploring service quality in travel agencies further supports this relationship. In this context, regarding Table 4.4.2, it can be determined that research hypothesis **H5** is supported because it shows the significant coefficients ($p < 0.000$). In this context, the price awareness has a coefficient of 0.460, showing that it will be the motivation for medical tourism and revisit intention among Malaysian millennial tourists.

RQ2: Which motivation of medical tourism has the highest significant relationship with revisit intention among Malaysian millennial tourists?

The study shows that Tangible is the factor motivating medical tourism in Penang that has the highest significant relationship after Accessibility with revisit intention among Malaysian millennial tourists. The results showed that Tangible and Accessibility have a positive relationship with medical tourism in Penang, which is the motivation to revisit intention among Malaysian Millennial tourists. In this context, the Tangible shows the highest value of beta because the beta value is ($\beta=0.460$, $p=0.000$) and the second highest is Accessibilities with the beta value is ($\beta=0.318$, $p=0.000$). It is significantly positive because the p-value of 0.000 is below the significance level of 0.05 (0.05%), showing that the majority of Malaysian Millennials are looking for motivation to revisit intention in medical visits in Penang.

H4 & H5: The highest significant relationship with revisit intention among Malaysian millennial tourists

Based on 5.2.2, it shows that Tangible and Accessibility have the strongest relationship motivation with revisit intention among Malaysian millennial tourists. Table 4.4.2 determined that (**H4 & H5**) is supported because perceived Tangible has the highest coefficient value of 0.460 and the second highest in Accessibility with a value of 0.318 compared to perceived Facilities (0.003), Price Awareness (0.145), and Relaxation (0.036).

5. Managerial Implications and Recommendations

This study explores how and why millennials choose Penang for medical tourism and how these choices impact their likelihood to return to the medical tourism destination. It contributes to healthcare and tourism research by identifying key reasons millennials seek medical care in Penang, such as quality, cost, relaxation, accessibility, and cultural experiences. These findings enhance our understanding of consumer behavior in medical tourism and highlight factors influencing return visits. Surveying a representative sample sets a standard for future research exploring similar relationships in different settings. Thus, this study not only advances our knowledge of medical tourism but also sets a foundation for future research on millennials' behaviors and motivations in Penang.

Moreover, for practical implications, understanding why millennials choose Penang for medical tourism and how it impacts their likelihood to return is crucial for various stakeholders. Healthcare providers and tourism professionals in Penang can use this knowledge to tailor their services and offerings to better suit millennial medical tourists. In addition, Marketing efforts can also benefit from insights into whether positive medical outcomes or cultural experiences drive return visits, allowing for more targeted strategies.

The study faced some challenges. Firstly, the study's validity could be compromised because of the sample size and representativeness of participants. A small sample does not accurately reflect diverse demographics or experiences in medical tourism, therefore, the findings may not apply broadly to all millennial visitors in Penang. Secondly, there's a risk of sample bias if participants are recruited from specific medical facilities or tourist spots, potentially skewing the results towards a particular subset of tourists. Additionally, using self-reported data to measure motivation and revisit intentions introduces biases like social desirability bias, where respondents may answer in ways they perceive as socially acceptable rather than reflecting their true feelings or intentions. Moreover, the methods used to gauge motivation and revisit intentions might not capture the complexity of decision-making among tourists. Finally, the study faced challenges due to millennials' varying levels of familiarity and proficiency with using Google Forms for survey responses.

Based on this study, there are some recommendations for future research. Firstly, a qualitative approach can be utilized via interviews with millennial travelers to understand their decision-making process and what factors influence their choice of Penang for medical tourism. The existing empirical data can be supported with qualitative evidence and vice versa. Secondly, conduct longitudinal studies that track millennial visitors over time to see how motivations evolve and whether positive early experiences lead to repeat visits. Additionally, future studies could focus on specific groups, such as particular regions or age groups, to simplify data collection. Collaborating with healthcare providers, travel agencies, and visitors in Penang would enhance the study's credibility and help implement its findings effectively. These steps can improve understanding and support strategies to enhance Penang's appeal as a medical tourism destination for millennials.

Conclusion

The findings of this study highlight the relationship of price awareness, convenience, accessibility, and significant elements in influencing the motivation among millennial tourists and their intention to revisit medical tourism destinations in Penang. The findings of the study show that, although convenience and flexibility are important in attracting first-time medical tourists, the variables but the results of our study show that they are not significant. While facilities and price awareness are important in encouraging first-time tourists, our findings show that these criteria do not significantly predict whether a tourist will return for future medical care or holidays; instead, the study emphasizes the relevance of other factors.

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