

# Value as a medical tourism driver

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## Abstract

**Purpose** - This study contends that customers' perceived value can drive medical tourism. To demonstrate this, the purpose of this paper is to propose and test a research model capturing elements of perceived benefits and sacrifice that, by affecting the perceived value of medical tourism products, influence the buying intention of potential customers.

**Design/methodology/approach** - Potential medical tourists from China are tapped due to their cultural similarity to Taiwan, and the absence of a language barrier. Data from 301 usable questionnaires were tested against the research model using the structural equation modeling approach.

**Findings** - The results indicated that perceived value was a key predictor of customer intentions. As for benefits, perceived medical quality, service quality and enjoyment were critical components that significantly influenced the perception of value. Regarding sacrifice, the effects of perceived risk on perceived value were significant.

**Research limitations/implications** - This study targeted potential medical tourists. Therefore, a validation using another large sample gathered elsewhere is required to generalize the findings.

**Practical implications** - The findings can assist governments in developing policies that promote medical destination and provide insights into research on how destination countries can make medical tourism a win/win option for themselves and international patients.

**Originality/value** - The proposed model is original; unlike most prior papers which take a conceptual approach to medical tourism, this study contributes to an understanding of the factors that influence the travel intentions of medical tourists through its empirical investigation, and especially in its targeting of customers' value perception.

Keyword : Medical tourism, Perceived value, Perceived benefits, Perceived sacrifice, Customer intention, Tourism, Consumer behaviour, China