

A Study on Insight of Customers towards Medical Tourism in Tamil Nadu

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Abstract:

Tamil Nadu is the main attracting place for medical tourism for domestic and international customers due to its advanced medical facilities, qualified doctors and supporting staff and cheaper medical services. More than two fifth of customers possess moderate level of insight towards medical tourism. Significant difference exists amongst profile of customers and their insight towards medical tourism. Insight of customers towards medical tourism is positively, moderately and significantly related with their intent to visit. To improve insight of customers towards medical tourism, medical tourism should have rational price and it must offer best food mix and it should be popularized very well amongst customers domestically and globally.

Keywords: Customers, Insight, Intent to Visit, Medical Tourism

1. INTRODUCTION

In present times, medical tourism is considerably growing across the globe including India. The recent advancements in medical tourism in India have occupied as one of the most preferable place for medical treatments. India is dominating in medical tourism because of cheap and skilled labour, outstanding medical amenities, superior quality of healthcare services, competent doctors and nurses and infrastructure facilities (Rao et al 2006). Medical tourism in India is anticipated to grow by around US \$ 8 billion in 2022 and it is one of the major contributors to Indian economy (Sagar and Latha, 2014) and India is in better position for attracting various segments of customers for their healthcare and medical treatments through superior services and brand value (Pruthi, 2016). Amongst different states in India, Tamil Nadu is the main attracting place for medical tourism for domestic and international customers due to its advanced medical facilities, qualified doctors and supporting staff and cheaper medical services. Therefore, it is important

to study insight of customers towards medical tourism in Tamil Nadu.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Eman (2011) found that medical facilities, tourism activities and travel services were influencing insight of customers on medical tourism. Marie and Swain (2012) concluded that customers had moderate level of insight on amenities, activities of tourism, medical treatments, interaction with staff members and formalities.

Gan and Frederick (2013) revealed that consumers were highly sensitive to risk and low sensitive to social factors and significant difference existed amongst profile of consumers and risk and social factors related to medical tourism. Meghann et al (2014) showed that information, amenities, services and strategies were affecting insight of customers towards medical tourism.

Abinama and Jafari (2015) indicated that technical amenities, medical infrastructure facilities and personal interaction with people were affecting insight of customers about satisfaction of medical

tourism. Nazem and Mohamed (2016) stated that lack of proper procedures, insufficient infrastructure, lack of information and guidance and poor services were affecting insight of customers on medical tourism.

Rao and Choudhury (2017) found that atmosphere, healthcare amenities and quality of services were affecting insight of customer on performance of medical tourism. Kaboor and Somashekar(2018) concluded that customers were having high degree of insight on health tourism and significant difference was there amongst demographic profile of customers and their insight on health tourism.

3. RESEARCH GAP AND RESEARCH PROBLEM

By reviewing earlier research studies, the research gap is discovered and included in the present study and it is insight of customers towards medical tourism and its relation with intention to visit of customers. Medical tourism in India is slowly getting momentum, where, large number of customers is traveling to avail best medical amenities and health care services. Nowadays, health care is an inseparable component of tourism activities as it is a flourishing industry in the era of liberalization and globalization. Travel for health is a mean of life in recent times and Tamil Nadu is well established destination for medical tourism. In order to absorb customers towards medical tourism, their insight is playing an important role as it affects their intention to visit for their health care and treatments.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To examine insight of customers towards medical tourism.
2. To inspect difference amongst profile of customers and their insight towards medical tourism.
3. To study relation amongst insight towards medical tourism and intent to visit of customers.

5. HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

1. There is no significant difference in insight towards medical tourism amongst profile of customers.
2. There is no significant relation amongst insight towards medical tourism and intent to visit of customers.

6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present research is done in Tamil Nadu and convenience sampling method is employed to choose customers and data are collected from 250 customers by using questionnaire. Percentages are used to study profile of customers and mean and standard deviation are worked out to understand their insight towards medical tourism. t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test are done to find any difference amongst profile of customers and their insight towards medical tourism. Simple correlation analysis is carried out to study relation amongst insight towards medical tourism and intent to visit of customers.

7. FINDINGS

7.1. PROFILE OF CUSTOMERS

The profile of customers is given in Table-1. The findings demonstrate that 57.20 per cent of them are males, while, 42.80 per cent of them are females and 36.80 per cent of them fall to age category of 36 – 45 years, while, 15.60 per cent of them fall to age category of less than 25 years. The findings explicate that 42.40 per cent of them hold college education, while, 26.40 per cent of them hold informal education and 40.80 per cent of them get monthly income of Rs.25,001 – Rs.35,000, while, 13.20 per cent of them get monthly income of above Rs.45,000 and 80.80 per cent of them are married, while, 19.20 per cent of them are unmarried.

Table-1. Profile of Customers

Profile	Number of Customers	Percentage
Gender		
Male	143	57.20
Female	107	42.80
Age Category		

Less than 25 Years	39	15.60
26 – 35 Years	69	27.60
36 – 45 Years	92	36.80
More than 45 Years	50	20.00
Education		
Informal	66	26.40
School	78	31.20
College	106	42.40
Monthly Income		
Below Rs.25,000	42	16.80
Rs.25,001 – Rs.35,000	102	40.80
Rs.35,001 – Rs.45,000	73	29.20
Above Rs.45,000	33	13.20
Marital Status		
Married	202	80.80
Unmarried	48	19.20

7.2. INSIGHT OF CUSTOMERS TOWARDS MEDICAL TOURISM

The insight of customers towards medical tourism is given in Table 2.

Table-2. Insight of Customers towards Medical Tourism

Insight towards Medical Tourism	Mean	Standard Deviation
Medical tourism provides higher quality of health care	3.89	0.91
Medical tourism gives good accommodation facilities	3.87	0.94
Medical tourism is less expensive	3.30	1.14
Medical tourism assures safety	3.80	0.99
Medical tourism provides non conventional treatments	3.83	0.96
Medical tourism has adequate infrastructure	3.72	1.06
Medical tourism offers best food mix	3.34	1.11
Medical tourism facilitates better interaction with doctors	3.78	1.01
Medical tourism ensures privacy	3.76	1.04

Medical tourism is popularized very well	3.39	1.08
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The customers are agreed with medical tourism provides higher quality of health care, medical tourism gives good accommodation facilities, medical tourism assures safety, medical tourism provides non conventional treatments, medical tourism has adequate infrastructure, medical tourism facilitates better interaction with doctors and medical tourism ensures privacy, while, they are unsure with medical tourism is less expensive, medical tourism offers best food mix and medical tourism is popularized very well.

7.3. PROFILE OF CUSTOMERS AND THEIR INSIGHT TOWARDS MEDICAL TOURISM

The distribution of customers on the basis of their insight towards medical tourism is given in Table-3. The insight of customers towards medical tourism is split into low, moderate and high levels on the basis of Mean \pm SD and Mean is 32.81 and SD is 3.65.

Table-3. Distribution of Customers on the Basis of Their Insight towards Medical Tourism

Level of Insight towards Medical Tourism	Number of Customers	Percentage
Low	59	23.60
Moderate	110	44.00
High	81	32.40
Total	250	100.00

Amongst 250 customers, 32.40 per cent of them possess high level of insight towards medical tourism, while, 23.60 per cent of them possess low level of it.

7.3.1. Gender and Insight towards Medical Tourism

The relation amongst gender of customers and insight towards medical tourism is given in Table-4.

Table-4. Gender and Insight towards Medical Tourism

Gender	Level of Insight towards Medical Tourism			Total	t-Value	Sig.
	Low	Moderate	High			
Male	27 (18.88)	66 (46.15)	50 (34.97)	143 (57.20)	2.571	.011
Female	32 (29.91)	44 (41.12)	31 (28.97)	107 (42.80)		
Total	59 (23.60)	110 (44.00)	81 (32.40)	250 (100.00)	-	-

The figures in the parentheses are per cent to total

Amongst 143 male customers, 34.97 per cent of them possess high level of insight towards medical tourism, while, 18.88 per cent of them possess low level of it. Amongst 107 female customers, 28.97 per cent of them possess high level of insight towards medical tourism, while, 29.91 per cent of them possess low level of it.

The t-value of 2.571 explains that significant difference is prevailing in insight towards medical tourism amongst gender of customers at one per cent

level. In this view, the null hypothesis is not accepted.

7.3.2. Age Category and Insight towards Medical Tourism

The relation amongst age category of customers and insight towards medical tourism is given in Table-5.

Table-5. Age Category and Insight towards Medical Tourism

Age Category	Level of Insight towards Medical Tourism			Total	F-Value	Sig.
	Low	Moderate	High			
Less than 25 Years	4 (10.26)	21 (53.84)	14 (35.90)	39 (15.60)	6.043	.001
26 – 35 Years	19 (27.54)	34 (49.27)	16 (23.19)	69 (27.60)		
36 – 45 Years	29 (31.52)	32 (34.78)	31 (33.70)	92 (36.80)		
More than 45 Years	7 (14.00)	23 (46.00)	20 (40.00)	50 (20.00)		
Total	59 (23.60)	110 (44.00)	81 (32.40)	250 (100.00)	-	-

The figures in the parentheses are per cent to total

Amongst 39 customers fall to age category of less than 25 years, 35.90 per cent of them possess high level of insight towards medical tourism, while, 10.26 per cent of them possess low level of it. Amongst 69 customers fall to age category of 26 – 35 years, 23.19 per cent of them possess high level of insight towards medical tourism, while, 27.54 per cent of them possess low level of it.

Amongst 92 customers fall to age category of 36 – 45 years, 33.70 per cent of them possess high level of insight towards medical tourism, while, 31.52 per cent of them possess low level of it. Amongst 50 customers fall to age category of more than 45 years, 40.00 per cent of them possess high

level of insight towards medical tourism, while, 14.00 per cent of them possess low level of it.

The F-value of 6.043 explains that significant difference is prevailing in insight towards medical tourism amongst age category of customers at one per cent level. In this view, the null hypothesis is not accepted.

7.3.3. Education and Insight towards Medical Tourism

The relation amongst education of customers and insight towards medical tourism is given in Table-6.

Table-6. Education and Insight towards Medical Tourism

Education	Level of Insight towards Medical Tourism			Total	F-Value	Sig.
	Low	Moderate	High			
Informal	19 (28.79)	33 (50.00)	14 (21.21)	66 (26.40)	7.072	.000
School	20 (25.64)	24 (30.77)	34 (43.59)	78 (31.20)		
College	20 (18.87)	53 (50.00)	33 (31.13)	106 (42.40)		
Total	59 (23.60)	110 (44.00)	81 (32.40)	250 (100.00)	-	-

The figures in the parentheses are per cent to total

Amongst 66 customers hold informal education, 21.21 per cent of them possess high level of insight towards medical tourism, while, 28.79 per cent of them possess low level of it. Amongst 78 customers hold school education, 43.59 per cent of them possess high level of insight towards medical tourism, while, 25.64 per cent of them possess low level of it. Amongst 106 customers hold college education, 31.13 per cent of them possess high level of insight towards medical tourism, while, 18.87 per cent of them possess low level of it.

The F-value of 7.072 explains that significant difference is prevailing in insight towards medical tourism amongst education of customers at one per cent level. In this view, the null hypothesis is not accepted.

7.3.4. Monthly Income and Insight towards Medical Tourism

The relation amongst monthly income of customers and insight towards medical tourism is given in Table-7.

Table-7. Monthly Income and Insight towards Medical Tourism

Monthly Income	Level of Insight towards Medical Tourism			Total	F-Value	Sig.
	Low	Moderate	High			
Below Rs.25,000	7 (16.67)	19 (45.24)	16 (38.09)	42 (16.80)	6.851	.000
Rs.25,001 – Rs.35,000	28 (27.45)	40 (39.22)	34 (33.33)	102 (40.80)		
Rs.35,001 – Rs.45,000	16 (21.92)	36 (49.31)	21 (28.77)	73 (29.20)		
Above Rs.45,000	8 (24.24)	15 (45.46)	10 (30.30)	33 (13.20)		
Total	59 (23.60)	110 (44.00)	81 (32.40)	250 (100.00)	-	-

The figures in the parentheses are per cent to total

Amongst 42 customers get monthly income of below Rs.25,000, 38.09 per cent of them possess high level of insight towards medical tourism, while, 16.67 per cent of them possess low level of it. Amongst 102 customers get monthly income of Rs.25,001 – Rs.35,000, 33.33 per cent of them possess high level of insight towards medical tourism, while, 27.45 per cent of them possess low level of it.

Amongst 73 customers get monthly income of Rs.35,001 – Rs.45,000, 28.77 per cent of them possess high level of insight towards medical tourism, while, 21.92 per cent of them possess low level of it. Amongst 33 customers get monthly income of above Rs.45,000, 30.30 per cent of them

possess high level of insight towards medical tourism, while, 24.24 per cent of them possess low level of it.

The F-value of 6.851 explains that significant difference is prevailing in insight towards medical tourism amongst monthly income of customers at one per cent level. In this view, the null hypothesis is not accepted.

7.3.5. Marital Status and Insight towards Medical Tourism

The relation amongst marital status of customers and insight towards medical tourism is given in Table-8.

Table-8. Marital Status and Insight towards Medical Tourism

Marital Status	Level of Insight towards Medical Tourism			Total	t-Value	Sig.
	Low	Moderate	High			
Married	38 (18.81)	86 (42.58)	78 (38.61)	202 (80.80)	9.006	.000
Unmarried	21 (43.75)	24 (50.00)	3 (6.25)	48 (19.20)		
Total	59 (23.60)	110 (44.00)	81 (32.40)	250 (100.00)	-	-

The figures in the parentheses are per cent to total

Amongst 202 married customers, 38.61 per cent of them possess high level of insight towards medical tourism, while, 18.81 per cent of them possess low level of it. Amongst 48 unmarried customers, 6.25 per cent of them possess high level of insight towards medical tourism, while, 43.75 per cent of them possess low level of it.

The t-value of 9.006 explains that significant difference is prevailing in insight towards medical tourism amongst marital status of customers at one per cent level. In this view, the null hypothesis is not accepted.

7.4. RELATION AMONGST INSIGHT TOWARDS MEDICAL TOURISM AND INTENT TO VISIT OF CUSTOMERS

The relation amongst insight towards medical tourism and intent to visit of customers was studied by employing correlation analysis and the results are given in Table 9.

Table-9. Relation amongst Insight towards Medical Tourism and Intent to Visit of Customers

Particulars	Correlation Co-efficient
Insight towards Medical Tourism and Intent to Visit of Customers	0.54**

** Significance at 1% level

The correlation coefficient amongst insight towards medical tourism and intent to visit of customers is 0.54 and it is explicating that both are moderately and positively related. In this view, the null hypothesis is not accepted.

8. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study disclose that more than two fifth of customers possess moderate level of insight towards medical tourism. Significant difference exists amongst profile of customers and their insight towards medical tourism. Insight of

customers towards medical tourism is positively, moderately and significantly related with their intent to visit. To improve insight of customers towards medical tourism, medical tourism should have rational price and it must offer best food mix and it should be popularized very well amongst customers domestically and globally.

9. IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The findings of this study will be highly helpful for hospitals, tourism department, hotels and transport authorities to realize insights of customers on medical tourism and for improving their services and service delivery mechanisms in a cost effective manner. The outcome of this study will also be greatly useful to revisit existing promotional and marketing mix strategies and adopt modified and efficient measures in order to promote medical tourism amongst customers.

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