HOW COGNITIVE APPRAISALS AND MALADAPTIVE COPING EXPLAIN THE BEHAVIOURAL INTENTION OF HEALTH TOURISTS?

Seow Ai Na¹, Choong Chee Keong² & Choong Yuen Onn³

^{1,2,3}Faculty of Business and Finance, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman,
(seowan@utar.edu.my, choongck@utar.edu.my, choongyo@utar.edu.my)

ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this paper is to understand the behavioural intention of health tourists through cognitive appraisals and maladaptive coping. A research model is proposed. A field study was conducted in Malaysia's various international airports. 718 international tourists were approached to partake in the paper survey. The data collected was analysed using SmartPLS software version 3 with partial least square structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM). This study's findings show that only response severity is not significant related to maladaptive coping, which is defined as a compulsive behaviour individuals use to soothe themselves when feeling anxious. Perceived vulnerability and response cost are positively related to maladaptive coping, whereas response efficacy and self-efficacy are negatively significant to maladaptive coping. This study's abstract consists of seven main elements: purpose and background, methodology, findings, conclusion, contribution/practical implications, references, and keywords.

KEYWORDS: Health Tourism, Protection Motivation Theory, International Tourists, Maladaptive Coping, Appraisals Coping

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

Past studies on health tourism have mainly focused on clientele's perspective, the current research attempted to fill the research gap by predicting international tourists' behavioural intention for healthcare services abroad using a theoretical based model adopted from Protection Motivation Theory (PMT). The hypothesis was proposed to incorporate cognitive appraisal and the maladaptive coping roles.

METHODOLOGY

A self-administered questionnaire was designed and used for data collection. Field study was conducted in Malaysia at five major international airports. The data was gathered from 718 respondents via structured survey questionnaires. The structural model was assessed using PLS-SEM in an effort to further affirm the robustness of the findings.

FINDINGS

The results indicated that perceived vulnerability and response costs are positively related to maladaptive coping, however response efficacy and self-efficacy are negatively significant to maladaptive coping. Further, perceived vulnerability, perceived severity, and self-efficacy are positively related to behavioural intention for health tourism. Whereas response cost and maladaptive coping are negatively significant to behavioural intention for health tourism.

CONCLUSION

This study's finding establishes a proposed research framework and argue based on PMT accentuation and belief that policy makers and healthcare providers should be encouraged to continuously strengthen the media messages and provide more health campaigns which focus on motivating international tourists to consider health tourism as an option when travelling. Several research insights have been derived from the findings which could benefit various stakeholders such as academicians, healthcare centers, relevant governmental agencies and the local authorities.

CONTRIBUTION/PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

The study implied that the government administration in the health tourism industry is highly dependent on the significant perception of potential health tourists. Thus, the development of healthcare infrastructure to create an enabling environment and at the same time to foster the growth of health tourist arrivals is interrelated.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research has been awarded by the Ministry of Higher Education of Malaysia under Fundamental Research Grant Scheme project no. FRGS/1/2019/SS01/UTAR/02/2.

REFERENCES

- Floyd, D. L., Prentice-Dunn, S., & Rogers, R. W. (2000). A meta-analysis of research on protection motivation theory. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 30(2), 407-429.
- Prentice-Dun, S., Jones, J. L., & Floyd, D. L. (1997). Persuasive appeals and the reduction of skin cancer risk: The roles of appearance concern, perceived benefits of a tan, and efficacy information. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 27(12), 1041-1047.
- Rippetoe, P. A., & Rogers, R. W. (1987). Effects of components of protection-motivation theory on adaptive and maladaptive coping with a health threat. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 52(3), 596-604.