

THE POWER OF WORD OF MOUTH IN THE SELECTION OF HOSPITAL DESTINATIONS

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Abstract

Malaysia is a neighboring country of Indonesia that promotes the medical tourism industry to Indonesia. One of the slogans carried in its tourism promotion in Malaysia is Truly Asia, but the Malaysian medical tourism industry has the tagline 'Quality Care for Your Peace of Mind'. Indonesia is one of the most visited countries in Malaysia, and it is suspected that the arrival of Indonesians visiting Malaysia is more influenced by information conveyed by others. This research aims to find out how the power of word of mouth in shaping Indonesian beliefs in the selection of hospital destinations in the Malaysian medical tourism industry. This study uses qualitative methods involving Indonesian people living in Sumatra. The results show that Indonesians have confidence in the selection of hospitals and tourist destinations in Malaysia which comes from the word of mouth that others convey to them, thus forming confidence in the choice of health services in the Malaysian medical tourism industry. The conclusion obtained that the experience of others conveyed through word of mouth greatly influenced the decision of the Indonesian people in the selection of hospitals that became the goal to seek healing.

Keywords: Word of mouth; the establishment of faith; hospital destinations; the medical tourism industry of Malaysia.

INTRODUCTION

Malaysia is a country that is very aggressive in promoting tourism to promote tourism places that it has. Previous research conducted by Yen and Othman (2011) showed The Malaysian tourism industry makes a significant contribution to national gross domestic product Even according to them Malaysia has seen steady growth in the tourism industry, with revenue from tourism showing a steady increase every year (Mohammed & Rashid, 2018). The slogan carried in every Visit Malaysia Year activity in Malaysia Truly Asia (MTA) which is quite risky considering Malaysia is a country that is in the middle of a country in the Asian continent, and Malaysia is not the only country or that can represent Asia. But Malaysia's courage to raise the slogan is believed to be coupled with a comprehensive tourism strategy. As a country bordering Singapore, Thailand, and Indonesia, of course, Malaysia must be able to show as a country representing Asia, in other words representing the three neighboring countries, both naturally, and culturally. Malaysia has not only promoted its tourism, since the late 90s, Malaysia has also vigorously promoted the medical tourism industry through institutions made official by the Government of the Kingdom of Malaysia, namely the Malaysia Healthcare Travel Council (MHTC). MHTC was launched as a formal entity within the Malaysian Ministry of Health in

2009 and with the approval of the Malaysian Cabinet, the MHTC brand was created with its logo and tagline, which later became the tagline of the Malaysian medical tourism industry namely 'Quality Care for Your Peace of Mind' (Malaysia Healthcare Travel Council, 2020).

In offering tourism, visit Malaysia Year events that are always conducted every year usually contain information about tourist attractions that can be visited in Malaysia. The tourist destinations offered are also diverse from historical tours, art tours, architecture, shopping tours to culinary tours, in the MTA brand. Similarly, medical tourism, where MHTC conducts various activities both promotion through its social media accounts, as well as exhibition events that present hospitals under the auspices of MHTC to several major cities in Indonesia. Until now the major cities frequented by MHTC are Medan, Pekanbaru, Jakarta, and Surabaya because it is suspected that from these major cities the greatest number of patients or tourists from Indonesia visit Malaysia for treatment. Previous research conducted by Yen and Othman (2011) showed The Malaysian tourism industry makes a significant contribution to the national gross domestic product even according to them Malaysia has seen steady growth in the tourism industry, with revenue from tourism showing a steady increase every year (Mohammed & Rashid, 2018)

Malaysia Truly Asia which Malaysia uses as a tourism brand turned out to give rise to a series of protests conducted by the People of Indonesia. Noted the media has seven times Malaysia claims Indonesian culture, from Reog Ponorogo, Rasa Sayange song, Pendet Dance, Tortor Dance, Gordang Sambilan musical instrument, and also angklung (Tempo, 2012). Another article even mentions there is eight Indonesian cultural heritage claimed by Malaysia, namely: wayang kulit, Lagu Rasa Sayange, Batik, Reog Ponorogo, rendang, angklung, pendet dance, and plate dance, and horse lumping (Lahitani, 2015). The protests conducted through the media want to state that the proximity of the country's location, does not mean it can claim the indigenous cultures of Indonesia as the culture of Malaysian heritage. The protest allegedly affected Indonesia's relations with Malaysia, especially in terms of the number of tourists visiting Malaysia.

Interesting thing is that despite the wave of protests from the Indonesian people related to the cultural flow, data compiled by Global Economic Data, Indicators, Chart and Forecast (CEIC), in 2018 the 3rd quarter of tourists visiting Malaysia was recorded as many as 2,192,855 people and although in the fourth quarter decreased to 1,957,248 people, CEIC made an average from 1989 to 2018 a total of 1,264,855 tourists visited Malaysia. In March 2019 Malaysian tourist visits were reported as many as 2,334,613 people who showed an increase when compared to February 2019 data of 2,165,933 people (CEIC, n.d.). The data shows Malaysia's success in establishing Malaysia Truly Asia as a Malaysian brand destination as a representation of all brand destinations of kingdoms throughout Malaysia. MTA has managed to become a strong Malaysian tourism brand in Asia and encourages many tourists to visit Malaysia. Visit Malaysia Year is a Malaysian country destination brand event that successfully encouraged the number of tourists to Malaysia in 2007 also managed to inspire the Visit Indonesia Year 2008 event (Bungin, 2016).

Indonesia as the closest neighbor of Malaysia is also believed to be the most tourists who have visited Malaysia. Many interesting if observing Indonesians visiting Malaysia, some studies reveal that the word of mouth greatly affects the selection of tourist destinations, and this also applies to the medical tourism industry conducted by Indonesian people who decide to visit Malaysia as a tourist destination as well as treatment, even though if observed so many cultural similarities and natural beauty between Indonesia and Malaysia as well as hospital technology that is It is owned by Indonesia, especially in major cities, such as Medan, Jakarta, and

Surabaya. The process of forming beliefs in individuals is not easy, several things encourage the individual to have sympathy, like individual views and believes the advantages of a country in terms of its economics and politics, or the values contained in the country, such as the culture, region, and customs of the country (Damayanti et al., 2021). This led to a formulation of the problem: how the power of word of mouth in shaping the confidence of the Indonesian people in the selection of hospital destinations in the Malaysian Medical Tourism Industry.

This research is based on several concepts, the first of which is the concept of word of mouth. Word-of-mouth is believed to be the greatest force in marketing, even more, powerful than other marketing tools. Loudon and Bitta (1994) mention there are four main reasons why opinion leaders engage in word-of-mouth communication about products and services, (1) product involvement; (2) Self-involvement; (3) other involvement ; (4) Message engagement (Slusser et al., 2012). Referring to such understanding of the four reasons individuals choose a product and service, the reason is strongly influenced by word-of-mouth, the first reason is more looking at the products where consumer ethics use the product or service, the tension can originate, and as a way to reduce this tension, people tend to talk about pleasant or unpleasant things. Talk can serve to relieve the fun the speaker has gained and spread excitement regarding the use of the product. Both emphasize influencers seeking confirmation of their decisions and can satisfy certain emotional needs. Another involvement that is the main motivation is that opinion leaders want to help the listener. They want to give something to the listener. Fourth is the engagement of messages that can come from ads where advertising can stimulate word-of-mouth communication.

Although at this time communication has increased in the use of communication media technology, word of mouth communication is believed to still have irreplaceable power. Word of mouth is one of the oldest ways of conveying information (Dellarocas, 2003). Katz and Lasarsfeld (1966) describe the exchanging of marketing information between consumers in such a way that it plays a fundamental role in shaping their behavior and in changing attitudes towards products and services. Arndt (1967) said WOM is a person-to-person communication tool between a communicator and a receiver, who perceives the information received about a brand, product, or service as a non-commercial (Huete-Alcocer, 2017).

Another concept used in this research is the concept of a brand because the word of mouth used in this phenomenon is a word-of-mouth communication that aims to build a brand, especially the brand of a tourist destination. A brand can be interpreted as a tool used because of the competition that occurs due to the presence of more than one product, which makes a product must put itself in the minds of individuals. Companies or organizations that are connected to the public will usually look for ways to connect emotionally with the public, become irreplaceable, and create lifelong relationships. They will try to make a strong brand so that it stands out in a very crowded market. Companies strive to make people fall in love with their brand, trust them, and believe in the excellence they promise. How a brand is perceived affects its success, regardless of the strategy used to try to introduce a brand, whether it's an organization, a nonprofit organization, even a product (Wheeler, 2012). Anholt more succinctly refers to a brand as a product or a service or an organization, which is considered about its name, identity, and reputation (Anholt, 2007a).

The brand itself is formed not by itself, there is a process that ushers in it, which experts call branding. Branding itself is defined as the process of designing, planning, and communicating the identity of an object, both products, and institutions, built to gain a reputation (Anholt, 2007b). Chernatony and Mac Donald said

that the branding process itself is an individual process that will be tailored to the consumer experience of the product or brand (Dinnie, 2010). So, it can be said that the brand attached to the individual's mind is an investment of value contained in the brand, so the experience becomes one that determines how the brand will be attached individually. Temporal further says that building a brand is building an emotional relationship with its consumers called the emotional brand relationship process, which starts from awareness, information, respect, trust, loyalty, and finally togetherness/partnership (Temporal, 2010). The stage describes the importance of brand awareness because without the beginning of attention to a brand there will be no further process because if the individual has started aware to a brand, he will start to find out about the brand, and should be informed about the brand is available. If the information is felt to meet his expectations and feels useful for himself, the individual will feel respect, so that there will be trust in the product or institution represented by the brand. If the experience is in line with their expectations, individuals will build loyalty so that consumers will become loyal and do not want to replace the brand with another brand, even with similar products. From the depiction of the process can be seen the importance of differentiating and positioning a brand. Because every brand that is built will have a brand personality, attitude, and trust.

For tourism, the brand has a role in determining how tourists choose the right tour that will be used as a tourist destination. The image of a place is an important asset because the image itself is the starting point of tourist behavior. In tourism literature, it is recognized that the overall image of a tourist destination is greatly affected by cognitive and affective evaluation. Cognitive evaluation refers to belief and knowledge about an object whereas affective evaluation refers to feelings about that object (Qu et al., 2011). The process of image formation can be considered as the most comprehensive model towards the destination image. According to Gartner (1993), destination images are formed by three distinct but hierarchically interrelated components: cognitive, affective, and conative. The interrelationship between these components will determine the predisposition of the product. The cognitive image component is defined by Scott (1965) as an evaluation of understanding product attributes or understanding products in an intellectual way. While the affective component of an image is associated with individual motives in having a tourist destination. The conative image component is a behavioral analog because it is a component of action. Once all internal and external information is processed, a decision is reached. One goal of the decision set is chosen. The relationship of the conative component with the other component is direct. It depends on the image developed during the cognitive stage and evaluated during the affective stage (Gartner, 2008).

METHODOLOGY

The research methods used in this study are qualitative by using the theory of social construction over reality as a guide. Berger and Luckmann's social realities thinking is built on the phenomenological experience that lives in society, i.e. reality that is self-contained from objective reality, subjective reality, and intersubjective reality. In Berger and Luckmann's view, individuals are the product of social constructs of reality through institutional processes, legitimacy, and socialization (ILS). These three processes take place three simultaneous processes, namely externalization, objectivation, and internalization (Bungin, 2016). The study was conducted through observations and interviews on six Indonesians who are mostly Sumatrans, because according to data obtained that the area in Indonesia that has the most medical tourism to Malaysia is Sumatra Island (Newswire, 2015). They must also have the experience of traveling health tourism to Malaysia,

with different backgrounds.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Before entering the results of the study, it's good to look at the social construction view of Berger and Luckmann's reality on this phenomenon. According to Berger and Luckmann, the social construct of reality has the basis of the sociology of knowledge, where according to sociology the individual pays attention to himself with everything that is accepted as 'knowledge in society'. The sociology of knowledge is more about how individuals interpret 'knowledge' or what they 'know' as 'reality in everyday life'. In other words, 'knowledge' is the main focus which will then form a tangle of meanings without meaning that there is no living society (Maquet, 1968).

So if based on Berger and Luckmann, the Indonesian people's belief in *medical tourism* carried out by Malaysia is formed through the externalization stage, a value, philosophy, and information that exists in health tourism are externalized by MHTC into Indonesian society through promotion, word of mouth (experience of previous people), or news that Malaysian health tourism is seen, heard, understood by the Indonesian people through promotion, *word of mouth* (experience of previous people), or news that Malaysian health tourism is seen, heard, understood by the Indonesian people as the target of this tourism target. This process is believed to take a long time and a large cost, evident from the reality that the Malaysian health tourism industry has been doing since 1997. The success of the externalization process also depends on the legitimacy-objectivization process. This process becomes an endorsement in a logical explanation of the institutionalized process. Legitimacy is the process of finding reasons for acknowledging and rationalizing against institutionalized. So, legitimacy in the social process of objectivation gives a rational reason to the promotion of the Malaysian health tourism industry that has been conveyed to the Indonesian people in the *institutionalized* process. The follow-up process is institutional legitimacy maintained by being socialized to new members in social groups. This process is called internalization. Internalization will strengthen the social system in accepting the social construction of reality.

Some of the things that appear in this study are the beliefs obtained from the results of the interaction of sources with the surrounding environment about the medical tourism industry developed by Malaysia. Some of the things that come up are about the experience of treatment in their own country (Indonesia), the experience of treatment in Malaysia, and information obtained through the media, both mass media and social media, even events conducted both by the Malaysia Healthcare Travel Council (MHTC) as an official institution under the Ministry of Health Malaysia, which has responsibility for the development of this industry, Also done by Malaysian hospitals that deliberately promote their health services in Indonesia.

The power of word of mouth in influencing confidence in the experience of treatment in the country This is the first question asked in this study.

The experience of treatment in the country itself (Indonesia) is obtained from the personal experiences and experiences of others who become significant others. It is said significant others because not all other people's experiences are referenced by the individual, only others are considered close, and can be trusted who can influence the individual's beliefs. The experiences that come up with others usually include unpleasant experiences, such as the difficulty of finding a specialist. Sources who are mostly Sumatran people revealed that in the hospital closest to where he lives, which is also a government-owned hospital, it is usually very

difficult to find a specialist doctor, even if there are specialists this has a long enough patient queue so it requires more patience to find specialist services. This is indeed by a report that reveals a lack of equal distribution of specialist doctors in Indonesia. Research conducted by Meliala, and Trisnantoro revealed that the number of specialist doctors in Indonesia is very limited, they found that specialists tend to gather in government hospitals and private hospitals located in DKI, West Java, Central Java, East Java, and North Sumatra. And although the government's policy of providing letters of duty to specialists to serve in the area, the number of specialist doctors does not increase or even tends to decrease. The study found that many local governments invite doctors to work in an area, but do not provide proper facilities, even hospitals, which are accredited, do not provide adequate equipment and competent teams to support the work. The results of the study were found in the reality that occurred, especially in the Sumatra area, what was conveyed by others who felt close to him was confirmed by his experience that did experience the same so that the objectivation that arises from the experience is the difficulty of specialist doctors. Although this does not happen to sources from North Sumatra, they acknowledge that the existence of specialist doctors in North Sumatra is more practicing in private hospitals, especially international ones.

Another thing that is found from the experience of treatment in this country is the convoluted administrative services. The source acknowledged that the convoluted experience of this administration was not only experienced by him but also by others who had done or taken care of health insurance such as BPJS. Some people even admit what has been experienced by others makes there is a reluctance of some sources to do health insurance management. The experience of others conveyed is also confirmed by their personal experience obtained not only in managing insurance but also inpatient registration and the search for health services such as in polyclinics.

Another experience that has happened to significant others is an unpleasant experience related to the results of a doctor's diagnosis that is considered less happy such as a diagnosis that states the patient suffers from a chronic disease. The results revealed that basically, every individual will go through the process when it comes to discovering that the individual has certain diseases, from denial to acceptance. Acceptance of disease means accepting and being reconciled with the presence of the illness, which allows adaptation to the new situation, that is life with the disease (Piotrkowska et al., 2021). In this case, the individual who goes through the denial process up to the acceptance of not only the patient but also the patient's family. At this stage of denial usually, individuals cannot accept the results given by the doctor, and they tend to state that the diagnosis is wrong, and they will seek a second opinion to confirm the results they believe are wrong, and that's why they travel to a neighboring country and when the results are obtained differently to the diagnosis of doctors in Indonesia, they tend to blame the misdiagnosis on Indonesian doctors. The experience is conveyed to another person, and the person who has closeness to the person will transfer the information as a truth that they will process as additional knowledge related to the doctor's misdiagnosis, even if they do not experience it themselves.

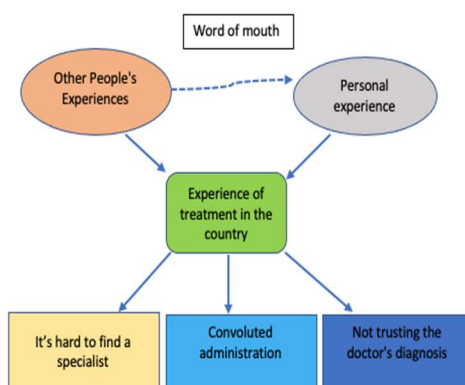


Figure 1. WOM process in influencing the confidence of treatment in the country
(Research Results, 2020)

The interesting thing in this process found that to convince the influence of treatment in the country, the individual tends to confirm with his own experience. The function of the message through word of mouth delivered by others is to validate the previously held belief in the experience he had experienced himself in health services in Indonesia.

The power of word of mouth in influencing treatment beliefs in Malaysia is the next question in this study.

For residents living on the island of Sumatra, especially residents of Riau and Medan, visiting Malaysia even though not for treatment, is common. They admit that visiting neighboring countries is just a 'walk' often they do, even more often when compared to visiting Jakarta. For them, Malaysia is the nearest neighbor that is very easy to visit, even at a cheap price, when compared to if they are going to Java Island. In terms of the treatment, they consider it normal to seek treatment in the country, even the results of interviews with MHTC revealed that this industry is growing because of the large number of Indonesians who seek treatment in Malaysia. Penang is one of the areas that became the beginning of the development of the medical tourism industry in Malaysia. Malaysia began promoting medical tourism after the monetary crisis that hit almost all countries in Southeast Asia in 1997. The Malaysian government began promoting medical tourism in 1998, venturing into the health and tourism sector (Ormond et al., 2015). Most studies state that Malaysia has low medical costs and modern infrastructure facilities compared to other countries (Chandran & Azmi, 2018).

In terms of medical experience to Malaysia, it turns out that the proximity of the location becomes the most important determinant of the population of Riau and Medan visiting Malaysia, although the Malaysian Government claims their medical costs are relatively low. The process that occurs in determining the purpose of the hospital to be addressed is the experience of significant others to the hospital. Individuals tend to make other people's experiences the main information in choosing a hospital destination. In terms of seeking treatment the individual does not choose trial and error, but information obtained from various people with whom he has close relationships and is believed to be the main source.

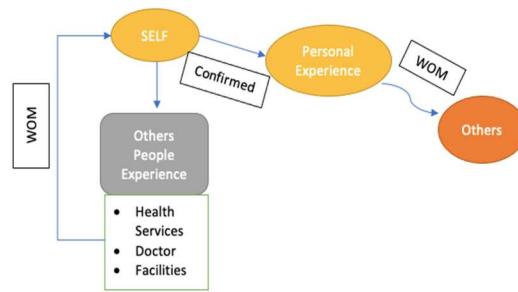


Figure 2. WOM process in influencing treatment confidence in Malaysia
(Research Results, 2020)

The image above shows that in the process of influencing the belief to do treatment in Malaysia, a person is actively seeking information from others. In contrast to the process of influencing confidence in treatment in one's own country, which confirms more personal experience, in the process of 50 years of a conviction for treatment in Malaysia, one will ask other people who are considered to have previous experience and have a high level of trust from the person. The main focus on the information he wants to obtain is about the health services provided such as administrative services, services, or hospital staff admissions, and the ease of accessing information about the hospital becomes the main question. The next question is the doctor who handles, both how they handle patients, where they come from, which graduates, also becomes the next question. Another important question is the hospital's facilities, such as medical devices used to examine patients, even small facilities such as wheelchairs and even rooms provided for patients. Those three questions are usually underlying to ask others, although it does not cover many other questions that later develop. What is interesting is the impression left in the minds of people who have done treatment in Malaysia is about things that are physical, such as hospital buildings, locations, equipment used during treatment, while non-physical things that are remembered in the minds of Indonesians who have done treatment in Malaysia are more about services that feel very appreciative and humane. The experience of treatment in Indonesia raises uncomfortable feelings when it comes to taking care of convoluted administration, not found in medicine to Malaysia. They feel the rapid management of administration, even some sources find experience in doing administrative management at home.

The record of the findings in this study is the activeness of individuals in obtaining information to be a driver of the internalization of knowledge, this internalization takes place faster because of the encouragement of one's need for the information, but the process of objectification takes place with many influences from significant other. And externalization occurs by re-spreading the knowledge left behind that has become an individual impression on Malaysia's medical tourism industry.

The power of information through word of mouth in uncertain tourist destinations in the next finding in the results of this study.

Tourist destinations or tourism destinations become an integral part of the medical tourism industry because in a sense medical tourism is combining tourism with treatment. The Medical Tourism Association (2017) defines medical tourism as the process of traveling outside the country where they live intending to get medical treatment. According to Lubowiecki-Vikuk (2011), medical tourism is defined as 'conscious activity,

in which a medical tourist intends to obtain health services, either in his home country or abroad to obtain a better health condition, and/or the appearance of an estate of his own body, combined with relaxation, regeneration of physical and mental strength, sightseeing and entertainment' (Azmi & Chandran, 2018). From this definition, it can be seen that medical tourism involves tourism as a place of relaxation, sightseeing, and entertainment because this is why MHTC provides information about tourism destinations located in Malaysia, especially those that have locations adjacent to the location of hospitals that are tourist destinations. MHTC provides tourist destination information through their social media accounts, as well as through leaflets of visiting events that they make every year. Even hospitals that are often visited by Indonesians also provide information on these tourist destinations, in addition to travel agents scattered throughout Indonesia. When the MHTC interview revealed that they plan to work with the travel agent application to inform about the hospitals that can be visited along with tourist sites and nearby hotels.

In this study, it was found that information about tourist destinations is obtained by many individuals from many people, not just significant others. Many people who have traveled to Malaysia share their experiences in the neighboring country, both requested and unsolicited. This abundant information is not all processed and used as knowledge by individuals because some sources say that even though they receive information, and trust it, they still seek their information through widely circulated media, both through social media, and other conventional and internet-based media. What they find will be confirmed with information obtained through word of mouth, although the source is reliable is word of mouth.

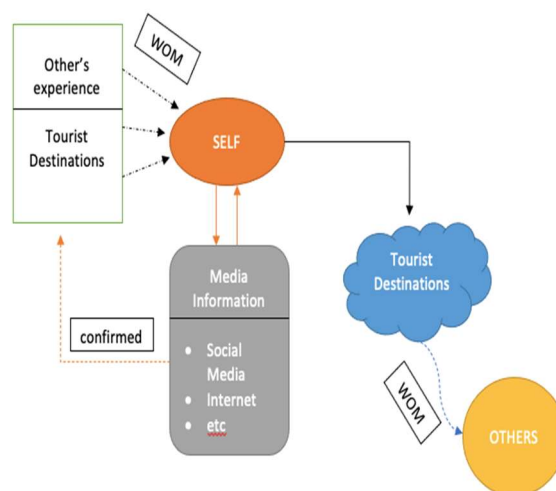


Figure 3. WOM process in influencing the decision of tourist destinations
(Research Results, 2020)

The decision to choose a particular tourist destination was not affected by the hospital that was used as a treatment destination because tourist destinations were more influenced by the desire to visit a place that felt not in their own country. Sources acknowledge that the knowledge they gain from others, as well as what they seek in the media, is more likely to be in places they don't think are found in Indonesia. It is interesting when the power of information obtained through word of mouth is felt stronger than media information because they think the media tends to be manipulated by media owners or those who have interests, while information through word of mouth is believed to be more objective because it is the result of the experience in question. Objectivation in tourist destinations is also much influenced by the experience of others. People are skeptical.

They do not believe anymore in what they see or hear. Research shows that most customers share a similar sense of skepticism, and they attribute this to either misleading or disappointing situations they have experienced. According to a survey by the firm Porter Novelli, only thirty-seven percent of the public considers information from a software or computer company somewhat believable. When the information comes from a pharmaceutical company, this percentage decreases to twenty-eight percent while insurance companies rate only sixteen percent (Rosen, 2000) (Slusser et al., 2012).

The results of the study prove that word of mouth has credibility and power beyond the ability of sales marketing. If you look at the findings of closeness with others who become significant others are very decisive. Trust in them has been formed before the information is delivered. Rosen (2000) mention friend and relatives are the number one source of information about places to visit or about flights, hotels, or rental cars, according to the Travel Industry Association. Of the people they surveyed, forty-three percent cited friends and family as a source for information (Slusser et al., 2012).

Another thing that determines is the communication used in conveying information. Communication woven through proximity tends to be more genuine, not made up, not inserted promotion, and certainly tends to be more comfortable communication actors. The experience conveyed through the point of view of the informer is believed to be considered objective as well as genuine. If there is visualization through photos is also a real photo in actual time. That's what Daugherty and Hoffman (2014) say, word of mouth is widely regarded as one of the most influential factors affecting behavior, especially tourism behavior, because this influence is especially important with intangible products that are difficult to evaluate before consumption, such as tourism or hospitality (Huete-Alcocer, 2017). Silverman (2001) says what gives the word of mouth most of its power is the fact that it is an experience delivery mechanism (and that) the faster you deliver that experience, the faster people will feel comfortable enough to go to full adoption of their experience (Slusser et al., 2012).

CONCLUSION

Individual experience is key in information delivered through word of mouth. Something experienced directly is a major source of information that is strongly believed by others, especially those who need information about the hospital that will be used as the destination for one's departure to Malaysia. The decision to leave someone to a neighboring country is entirely influenced by the personal experiences and experiences of others who are confirmed to be the same in health services that have been experienced while in Indonesia. Disappointment and dissatisfaction with health services is a driver to decide to choose a second opinion abroad (Malaysia), which is felt by the people of Sumatra as something natural to look at the proximity of distance and location of the country. Word of Mouth (WOM) in influencing the confidence of the Indonesian people to determine the destination hospital to seek treatment to Malaysia and tourist destinations proved to have a tremendous contribution. The experience of others who have done treatment to Malaysia becomes a source of information that is used as a reference in determining which hospital to choose and serves as a departure destination. Indonesians who choose Malaysia as a goal in treatment try to reduce the risk of trial and error so that they need the experience of others who can help in making decisions. Things conveyed by significant others are memorable things such as health services that they get, things that are physical such as the shape of buildings and tools used. Tourist destinations are also influenced by information conveyed by others, especially

about their experience visiting these places, because although in the medical tourism industry, tourist destinations are inseparable from the reality found, Indonesians tend to choose tourism as a separate part with treatment.

LIMITATION AND STUDY FORWARD

This research was conducted during the global pandemic period so that some things that are natural settings are not too formed data retrieval. For further research, if you will use qualitative studies should consider the location of data retrieval. In addition, it would be better to use quantitative research as complementary data to further uncover how word of mouth affects the behavior of Indonesians in choosing destination hospitals.

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