

DELIVING MEDICAL TOURISM IN INDIA: INSIGHTS AND CHALLENGES

Suneel Kumar* Vanessa GB Gowreesunkar Sanjeev Kumar*** Varinder Kumar****
Shaheed Bhagat Singh College, University of Delhi* National University Ahmedabad**
Career Point University Hamirpur, Himachal Pradesh*** University of Delhi******

Abstract

This article explores how successfully emerging economies, especially India, can compete in the Medical Tourism (MT) sector. Increasing globalization in this price-sensitive industry presents a new competitive potential for emerging nations like India. The paper discusses the possibilities of MT for emerging economies, particularly India, which are fast-rising industrial participants as a globally competitive industry. An attempt has been made to explore the medical tourism status in India. Further, the competitive advantages and challenges that the Medical Tourism sector would face are addressed, and necessary steps should be taken to address these issues are discussed. The main focus of this paper is to what degree issues can be tackled and the policy consequences, particularly the importance of government participation in developing MT services. For the present study, data has been collected from secondary sources, including reports from the Ministry of Tourism, the Government of India, Travel and Tourism council reports, Electronic Media, and relevant literature published in various indexed journals. The study findings concluded that the main competitors at MT have considerable backing from the Government, rely substantially upon international links and certification, and compete quite similarly. In the future, it is both likely and desirable to differentiate more. The current study provides a theoretical examination of the future competitiveness of India's constantly changing MT sector. This industry is closely related to emerging economies' comparative advantages and offers improvement and added value prospects.

Keywords: Medical tourism, Competitive strategy, Business development

Introduction, Background, and Literature Review

The Indian Government introduced the National Tourism Policy in 1982 to support tourism (Jenkins & Henry, 1982). Then the national policy on tourism, which focused on creating a solid infrastructure, was unveiled in 2002 (Khan & Kirmani, 2018). The promotion of domestic tourism enhances online tourist sites and low-cost carriers. India's niche tourist product range includes cruise services, adventure, medicine, wellness, sports, MICE, eco-tourism, cinema, rural tourism, and religions (Jaiswal, n.d.). In 2019, the country received 10.89 million international tourists (Roopak, n.d.). It is anticipated that by 2028 international visitor arrivals will exceed 30.5 million. By 2022, Prime Narendra Modi urged people to visit 15 national holiday destinations in India. India was rated third, according to WTTC, among the 185 nations, concerning the total contribution to GDP of travel and tourism in 2018 (Nandakumar, n.d.). Tourism FEEs grew 4.8% to Rs 211661 crore (\$30.06 billion) during 2019 (Reports of Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, 2020). During 2018-28, the industry is anticipated to increase its direct contribution to GDP by 7.1 percent per year in India (Sanjeev & Birdie, 2019). In India, 4.2 crore jobs were generated in 2019, 8.1 percent of the country's workforce. Travel and tourism in India are expected to increase their contribution to capital investment by 6.7% annually (Mir, 2014). Seventy-seven projects totalling Rs 6,035,70 (US\$ 863,60 million) were sanctioned under the Swadesh-Darshan program. The share of visitor exports to overall exports is estimated to be up 5.5% each year in 2018-2028. 2028 it is predicted that international tourists will reach 30.5 billion by 2028. The number of tourist visas issued in this nation has grown with the e-tourist authorizations, known as e-Tourist visas, established by the Government of India. As of December 2019, the facility had

been provided to residents from 169 nations. In 2019, 29,28,303 people came on the e-Visa, which saw a 23.6 percent rise.

The proportion of Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) grew to 10.93 million in India in 2019 from 10.56 million in 2018 (Ministry of Tourism, GOI, 2020). During 2019 the FTA growth rate was 3.5% in 2018 compared to 5.20% in 2018 compared 2017. India accounted for 1.23% of international arrivals in 2019. In 2019, India accounted for 4.97% of International Asia-Pacific tourist arrivals, with a seventh position (Ministry of Tourism, 2020). In 2019, India's top 10 source markets for FTAs were Bangladesh, the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, China, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Germany, and Russian Federation. In 2019 these top 10 nations shared about 63.9% of total FTAs in India.

Table: 1 Foreign Tourist Arrivals from the Top 10 countries

Sr No	Nations	Shares (in million and percentage share)
1	Bangladesh	2.58 (23.6%)
2	US	1.51 (13.8%)
3	UK	1.00 (9.2%)
4	Australia	0.37 (3.4%)
5	Canada	0.35 (3.2%)
6	China	0.34 (3.1%)
7	Malaysia	0.33 (3.1%)
8	Sri Lanka	0.33 (3.0%)
9	Germany	0.26 (2.4%)
10	Russian Fed	0.25 (2.3%)

Source: Reports of Ministry of Tourism, Government of India (2020)

As a foreign exchange generator of the country, tourism continues to play an essential role. In 2019, tourism's foreign exchange earnings (FEE) were at US\$ 30.06bn as opposed to US\$ 28.59bn in 2018, with a 5.1% increase.

Table: 2 Foreign Exchange Earnings from Tourism (PR)

In INR shares (1 crore = 10 million)	2,11,661 crores
Annual Growth Rate	8.6%
In US\$ shares (billion)	US\$ 30.06
Annual Growth rate	2.4%

Source: Reports of Ministry of Tourism, Government of India (2020)

Figure 1: Emerging Tourism Segments in India



Source: Authors Compilation

- Rural tourism seeks to create interest in tradition and culture and to encourage visits to the village to enjoy a peaceful and healthy living (Nagaraju & Chandrashekara, 2014).
- The adventure tourism category includes a wide range of adventure sports bundles. Trekking, bungee jumping, mountain biking, river rafting, and climbing are activities (Arunmozhi & Panneerselvam, 2013).
- Tourists visit India in different locations for their cultural heritage. The nation's rich history is widely represented in the many temples, beautiful forts, gardens, religious monuments, museums, art galleries, city, and countryside (Shankar, 2015).
- In 2018, India's luxury travel industry had a 12.8% growth rate, the most outstanding relative to any other BRIC country (Nandakumar, n.d.).
- A wide range of flora and wildlife is a significant cause for its rising popularity as a tourist attraction in many States. The first eco-tourism destination in India is Thenmala in Kerala (Arunmozhi & Panneerselvam, 2013).
- Pilgrimage tourism is one of the significant contributors to the tourist sector. India is a religious center for several religions, attracting many people every year (Shinde, 2020).
- Tourists seek specialized treatments, mostly Ayurveda, spa, and other therapy under medical tourism. The fundamental objective is to achieve, promote or preserve health and a sense of well-being (Medhekar, 2020).

1.1 Medical Tourism: A Global Competitive Market

The global size of the medical tourism industry in 2019 was projected to rise by 21.1 percent between 2020 to 2027 at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of approximately USD 44,8 billion (A. Dash, 2020). Some drivers in this market include the availability of extra advantages, such as improved healthcare, new technology, breakthrough medications, contemporary appliances, excellent hospitality, and customized care. In the projected future, the market is projected to develop quickly. Inadequate insurance benefits and no local insurance coverage drive market expansion. Most cosmetic operations are optionally deemed and hence not covered by medical insurance. Since the cosmetic procedure is not covered and paid out of pocket by most medical assistance programs, reduced costs boost the attractiveness for international patients in other countries. They reduce expenses when you go to places and take advantage of cheaper treatment while doing leisure activities in the land of destination. Access to more affordable treatment options and improved care quality is the primary driver of increased preference for offshore medical tourism. Patients may save 30% to 80% of total treatment costs. The primary cause of reduced treatment costs in medical tourism locations is low cost and easy access to the labour force (Ghasemi et al., 2021). The patients' emergency medical needs lead to searching for other possible medical tourism locations (Parekh et al., 2021). The progress of hospital administration has resulted in beneficial developments in the sector of medical tourism. Medical tourists are attracted to the provision of luxury accommodations and comfortable treatment by hospitals (Guiry & Morgan, 2021). Tourist facilities are available for patients after treatment.

Medical tourism includes tourism and medical services such as health tourism (Ferreira & Castro, 2020). It is the interchangeable distinction of conditions for health, wellness, and medical tourism (Olya & Nia, 2021a). 'Health tourism' covers 'medical and 'wellness tourism' (Yen, 2021). Health and Medical tourism are recognized as a fast-growing sector when individuals typically go large distances to foreign nations to get healthcare, dentistry, and operations while being vacationers concurrently (Subramanian & Vachharajani, 2021). Medical tourism covers different health procedures such as orthopedic and heart surgery, bariatric and aesthetic surgery, eye surgery, fertility, and transformation of gender (Olya & Nia, 2021b). Any additional health treatments and services are classified as 'wellness tourism' (Yen, 2021). Medical tourism is a complex phenomenon, the characteristics of which impact international medical travelers' decision-making processes in the host nation, facilities for medical experts, affordable costs, and quality of service in hospitality and tourism (Olya & Nia, 2021b). Low-cost treatments play a significant driver in foreign patients' travel (Olya & Nia, 2021b). However, medical and tourism services and facilities analyze location selection criteria (Büyüközkan et al., 2021). In this line, Weaver et al. (2021) claimed medical tourism is "conceptually rich in nuances, paradoxes, and contrasts. "Push-and-pull factors from tourism and economic literature to designing medical tourism constructions as part of the concept "the attractiveness of a country as a medical tourism destination in terms of its overall country environment; health and tourism costs and the quality of health facilities and services" (Kewina et al., 2021). They observed that those with different socio-demographical backgrounds assess the parameters mentioned above to pick a medical tourist destination (i.e., the four-dimensional MTI). While one other researcher believed that medical prices played a significant part in the formulation of the behaviour of medical tourists (Arfi et al., 2021), they discovered that medical tourism prices are not a consistent predictor of patient behaviour. One of other scholars also found that the cost plays both positive and negative functions to indicate customers' buying behaviour (G. Dash et al., 2021).

Medical tourism has become a popular choice for travelers worldwide. It mainly covers biomedical operations in combination with travel and tourism. Travel agents and mass media used medical tourism to characterize the rapidly rising travel practice across international borders to provide high-tech medicine. Different nations, such as Thailand, Malaysia, India, etc., vigorously push health tourism (Wong & Musa, 2012). India's primary benefits in medical tourism are low-cost, modern health treatment (cardiovascular, organ transplantation, eye surgery, etc.) and various tourist sites offered in this country (Bagga et al., 2020). Medical tourism has become a popular choice for travelers worldwide. The scope of MT is broad: it involves elective treatments, sophisticated specialist operations such as replacing a cardiac valve, and dental and aesthetic procedures. One crucial attraction to emerging markets might be the MT industry. It seems to play their strengths during the initial evaluation. Strong growth is projected shortly (Bagga et al., 2020); the industry has a significant cost-benefit and price-benefit in growing economies, and complementary businesses like medical and tourist services merge.

Moreover, medical tourism is a sector that provides government participation and assistance, a feature of many thriving businesses in various subsequent emerging nations (Enderwick & Nagar, 2011). But MT also offers significant challenges to competition. There are questions of law about liability in cases of misadventure and the willingness of domestic doctors in postoperative care. Potential customers must be guaranteed in terms of quality and safety. It is becoming a competitive sector, with almost 50 nations claiming medical tourism as a national industry (Enderwick & Nagar, 2011).

1.2 Medical Tourism in India: Status and Scenario

The Board of Promotion of National Medical and Wellness was set up in 2015 (Shetty, 2021). Tourists are looking for specialist treatments, including Ayurveda, spa, and other therapies (Bashir et al., 2021). The fundamental goal is to achieve excellent health and well-being and

promote or preserve it. By 2020, India's medical tourism sector should reach 9 trillion dollars (KEERTHANA & BABU, n.d.). In addition to the nation's spiritual philosophy, the widespread practice of ayurvedic, yoga, Siddha, and naturopathy is the famed spa destination of India. According to 2019 reports, most medical tourist arrivals in India have originated in Southeast Asia, Mid-East, Africa, and the SAARC area, by the Federation of Indians Chambers of Commerce and Industry and Ernst & Young (honconsulangola.com, 2020). India attracts Australian, Canadian, Chinese, Russian, United Kingdom, and United States, medical tourists. The town of Chennai is currently renowned as India's medical hub (Aquino et al., 2021). In February 2019, the Government amended its e-tourism regime to include medical visas to stimulate the application and facilitate the journey for medical tourists (KEERTHANA & BABU, n.d.). This Visa has a maximum length of six months. Excluding organ transplantation without a medical visa, the visitor may be medically treated in India from 30 August 2019 onwards. The benefits of Indian healthcare include reduced costs, access to advanced health technologies, compliance with international standards of quality, trained doctors in western countries, including the US and the United Kingdom and English-speaking people. They have a lesser risk of foreigners facing language barriers in India.

India is the favourite destination for travelers worldwide with its rich heritage, numerous attractions, and gorgeous scenery (Dixit, 2021). Travel and tourism are significant factors in Make in India, one of the major drivers of service industry growth. It is anticipated that India's GDP will receive an astounding 512 billion dollars in 2029 (Gupta et al., 2021). India oozes trust when it comes to medical tourism. According to the most recent FICCI study (2020), by year-end, the country can receive 9 billion dollars in Medical Value Travel (MVT) (business-standard.com, 2020). India is viewed as a preferred medical destination and will stay in 2020 as it continues to follow present trends. Medical tourists like the health sector of the country, several of the reasons are listed. One is the processing expenses and travel expenditures compared to western nations such as the United States and Great Britain. Medical travelers can make modest savings – a feature that will play a significant role in 2020. The average daily cost to travel inside India of up to \$31 (about Rs 2,232) instead of \$123 (approx. Rs 16,056) in the United States might make up to at least 50 percent (Goretti et al., 2021). India has tremendous potential for adequate health and therapeutic expenses. In 2020, continuous developments and numerous other significant variables were projected to further popularize the country's medical tourism industry. One notable truth is that India has several areas of excellent medical treatment, such as spinal surgery and infertility therapy. The Top-priority of Chennai, Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Bangalore, Goa, Hyderabad, and Kolkata is seen among the medical tourists coming into the country (Choudhury & Dixit, 2021). Chennai reportedly draws around 15% of arriving foreign patients, while Kerala handles approximately 5 to 7%. India offers various medical tourists, many belonging to South-East Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and SAARC (Aquino et al., 2021).

Moreover, it is worth appreciating the quality of medical care. According to current figures, thirty-six hospitals have been recognized by the Joint Commission International (JCI). Also, The National Accreditation Board of Hospitals and Health Providers certified more than 500 hospitals (NABH). Surprisingly, India is visited for its heritage, fascinating beauty and pleasant diversity, and its high-end ecosystem of health care and world-class medical treatments. India has been, throughout the years, a first-class and attractive location for explorers from across the world to achieve, recharge and revitalize professional therapy. The definition of medical tourism (also called Medical Value Travel, Health Tourism and Wellness Tourism) is to speed up journeys across local and international countries to provide healthcare services. Medical tourism Health services and facilities are mainly divided into three primary categories in India:

Figure: 2 Major Health Services

Medical Treatment	Healing treatment for heart care, organ transplantation, orthopedics, neurology, cancer and bariatrics.
Wellness and Rejuvenation	Rejuvenation or aesthetic offers, such as esthetic operations, stress reduction, spa treatments etc.
Alternative Medicine	Health care Treatment to seek AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy) services

Source: Authors Compilation

2. Objectives of the Study

This article attempts to investigate the status of medical tourism in India. Further, the competitive advantages and challenges that the Medical Tourism sector would face are addressed, and necessary steps should be taken to address these issues are discussed. The paper titled "DELIVING MEDICAL TOURISM IN INDIA: INSIGHTS AND CHALLENGES" seeks to address the following objectives: to explore the medical tourism status in India, to explore the competitive strengths and challenges of Indian medical tourism sectors, and to explore the effects of MT in supports the growth of the Hotel and Travel sectors.

3. Research Methodology

It refers to identifying, collecting, summarizing, processing, and analysing data to address the research problems (Wang et al., 1995). For the accomplishment of study objectives, data has been collected from secondary sources, including reports from the Ministry of Tourism, the Government of India, Journals, articles, Tourism council reports, Electronic Media, and relevant literature, and a systematic review has been performed.

4. Famous Medical Tourism Destination in India

India has a vast number of medical destinations, and the major destinations are as follows:

- **Chennai:** In the Indian subcontinent, Chennai is one of the most advanced metropolitan hubs. Various polls suggest that over 40% of individuals prefer Chennai for low-cost, high-quality treatment. Chennai gets around 200 patients a day from abroad (Shanmugam, 2013). Other cardiovascular procedures and therapies are performed in addition to cardiac surgery. The capital of health in India is also known as Chennai. Chennai's top hospitals frequently provide the most necessary treatments, such as alternative medicine, bone marrow, heart bypass, eye surgery, and hip replacement.
- **Mumbai:** Mumbai is India's fastest-growing medical tourism destination (Muthyam, 2017). There are many specialty Hospitals, Diagnostic & Research centers for weight loss surgery, cosmetic surgery, and Orthopaedics Surgery. Mumbai is also famous for cosmetic surgery and Ayurveda treatment.

- **Goa:** Goa was rated India's premier holiday destination (Bhandare, 2013). Also, in India, Goa is a rising health destination. More specialized hospitals attract international patients. Goa is famous for heart bypass, hip substitution and spinal fusion surgery. Goa's Government also encourages the State's other health and well-being tourism.
- **New Delhi:** Delhi, the capital of India, features several prize-winning hospitals such as Fortis Hospital, the Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals, and Dr. Ram Manohar Hospital. The facilities specialize in neurosurgery, heart surgery, eyesight, joint replacement, general surgery, and therapy (Purandare, 2014).
- **Bangalore:** Bangalore is recognized for its industrial boom in trade. Some of Bangalore's finest hospitals have state-of-the-art medical technology that meets the best in the world (Rath & Das, 2012). Their hospital is Well-known for stomach surgery. Complex surgery by the finest doctors is less dangerous.
- **Kerala:** Kerala has stood up to date and preserved its ancient traditions alive and continuously in 2018. The treatments and massages of Ayurveda Kerala are now famous globally (Menon, 2018). People from around the world come to Kerala to explore and try Ayurveda. It's a flourishing business unit, starting from a tradition earlier. This attracts substantial state revenues. At least one massage takes tourists from around the world that visit Kerala to leave the place for the better. Kerala became the hub for Ayurveda treatment (Kannan & Frenz, 2019).
- **Rishikesh:** Yoga and Ayurveda go together; the study of yoga is also an exploration of Ayurveda. In Rishikesh retreats, nature and the components of nature that may help heal our thoughts and bodies are highly essential (Hoyez, 2017). People around the globe travel to Rishikesh to learn Ayurveda and yoga and to teach in the Western world (Hoyez, 2007). The strength of Ayurveda is tremendous and thus spread all across the world. Yoga or therapy here is a happy journey since it is situated in the lap of the Himalayas right close to the river Ganges. The interesting fact about these treatments is that they consider the Himalayan temperature, so you get a distinct approach compared to Kerala. The Kerala massage consists of a lot of oil; however, the oil is used here less, and the massages are slow and timed.
- **Ahmadabad:** Ahmadabad is renowned for being the fastest-growing medical center in the Indian Region (Černauskas et al., 2018). Ahmadabad is preferred by many NRI individuals since several world-class hospitals are available. Famous hospitals are found in the cities of Ahmadabad, including the Civil Hospital (Asia's biggest civil hospital), Sterling Hospital, and the Apollo Hospital.
- **Coimbatore:** Coimbatore is Tamandua's second biggest city and is renowned for its small businesses and textile factories. It is appropriately referred to as South Indian Manchester. Coimbatore is ideal for heart surgery and ENT. VGM, KMCH, and PSG hospitals are recognized for their excellence at a reasonable treatment price (Geethapriya, 2019).
- **Hyderabad:** Hyderabad has various tourist attractions which are charming for medical tourism. For the health tourism of many people, Hyderabad gives the best treatment at affordable prices at their hospitals (Reddy & Qadeer, 2010). Treatments such as plastic and reconstructive operations are carried out at the lowest cost. Heritage Hospital, Aditya Hospital, and Livlife Hospital are the most well-known medical care clinics.

5. Competitive Advantages of the Medical Tourism in India

Foreign tourists come in Indian from Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Oman, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Nigeria, Malaysia, Kenya, and Iraq are most likely to come across these categories (<https://tourism.gov.in>, 2020). India's primary medical tourism destinations are Tier 1 and Tier 2 hospitals and diagnostic centres, such as Delhi NCR, Mumbai, Bangalore, Chennai, Chandigarh, and Jaipur. Of course, India is a popular location for medical tourism for numerous underlying competing causes. The following are:

- **Trained Staff:** India is not just the centre of world-class facilities but also the home of some of the most renowned and respected doctors in the world who are pioneers in their

respective areas. Around 1.2 million allopathic doctors, 0.17 million dental specialists, 2 million Nurses, and 0.8 billion ayurvedic doctors are the country's leading pool of physicians and paramedics (www.imecplanet.com,2020). Many physicians around the country have the training and work at some of the most famous medical facilities in the United States, the United Kingdom, and other developed countries, making them highly skilled and caring for patients from the farthest corners of the world.

- **Low-cost benefits:** The cost of expensive medical treatments in India constitutes a fraction of the expenditures in advanced economies. The combined medical bills and tourism prices are significantly lower than medical costs overseas, and significant numbers of visitors visit India to profit from the difference in expenses. It is expected that 18 percent of the entire market will be grabbed. The biggest reason is lower prices in Western Europe, South-East Asia, etc. Private businesses, such as Max Healthcare, handle 50,000 overseas patients at their facilities. Heart surgeries, hip resurfacing, and other complicated treatments are well-known in India. Bangladesh and Afghanistan are the major countries wherefrom the most extensive patients come from India. Roughly 30% of people are from South Asia, 30%–32% from Africa, and 10% from Sovereign Nations, Oceania, and Western Asia. Most individuals view the skills of doctors rather than prices. Most Indian doctors and surgeons are trained or working in several top medical institutions in India.
- **Infrastructure and digital facility:** The Indian healthcare ecosystem offers excellent worldwide treatment and care, from eye, heart, and renal problems to organ transplants, orthopedics, and cancer, at lower rates (almost 20 percent less for primary surgical treatments than those developed and equipped with internationally recognized facilities). In India, there are presently about 36 Joint Commissions International (JCI) renowned hospitals and 513 National Accreditation Board for Hospitals and Healthcare Providers (NABH) approved hospitals offering healthcare following worldwide guidelines and standards and above. The NABH-approved hospitals offer healthcare services. Some of India's best-known specialty hospitals and services provide patients with the most advanced and specialized treatments for more efficiency and credibility, employing the most modern technologies, such as artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and robots.
- **Naturopathy and therapeutic treatments:** India has positioned itself to be the focus of the most ancient sciences and arts, curated and renovated AYUSH, naturopathy, Vedanta, and meditation techniques. India provides many recreations, recharges, and rejuvenation venues ranging from yoga ashrams to spas and health centres that offer holistic therapy. The strong government branding of AYUSH attracts clients from all over the world to India. Several businesses, such as Apollo and the Manipal Group, set up health facilities using traditional healthcare solutions.
- **National Medical and Wellness Tourism Board:** The National Medical and Wellness Tourism Board was established as a dedicated and complete institutional structure, incorporating the Indian system of AYUSH medicine, and is chairpersons by the Minister of Tourism. The Board is the leading medical tourism body with representations from the Minister of AYUSH, the QCI (Quality Council of India), and the National Hospital Accreditation and Health Providers Accreditation Board (NABH).
- **Quality of care:** India has emerged as the antecedent to delivering inclusive, personal, and compassionate care that lives by Athithi Devo Bhava and being the most cost-effective and accessible destination for medical attention and health care (Guest is akin to God). Medical staff in India tries to maintain the highest standards via empathy, compassionate awareness, and prioritization of patients' needs and interests.
- **Language:** While the Indian language variety, English remains an official language and is widely spoken by the majority and medical professionals virtually uniformly. In Noida, several hospitals have recruited language translators to make it more convenient for Balkans and African nations while facilitating their treatment. Many medical tourism firms facilitate foreigners, notable patients from Arabic, Russian, English, and Bangladesh.

6. Medical Tourism in India and its Challenges

Since different nations are in the grasp of growing their position in the medical tourism sector, India has to build a distinct niche by using its current capabilities and delivering a unique value proposition. Three categories of medical tourists are usually present.

Figure: 3 Type of Medical Tourist

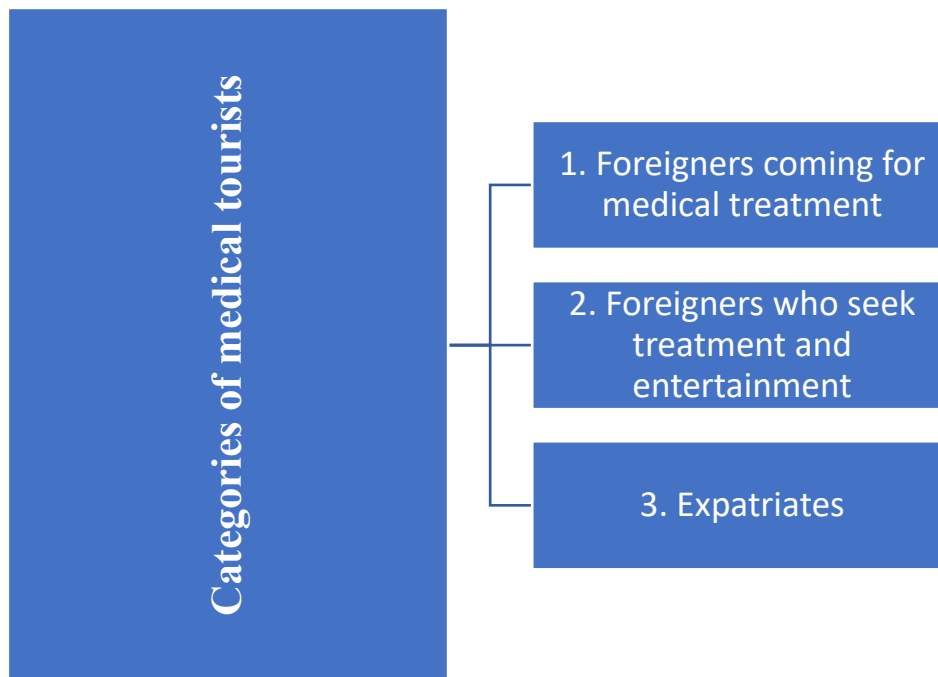


Figure: Author's own

A country like India has the following problems/challenges to becoming a competent tourist destination for medical tourism and some of them are as under:

- **Insurance problem:** When visiting India as a medical tourist, the legal concerns are how much tourist insurance can cover itself. In malpractice cases, it might be difficult to claim damages merely because insurance regulation fluctuates country by country. Although medical insurance is available at hospitals and clinics, fake diagnostic has been requested in the settlement; carelessness may not be the sum you anticipate simply because your country's insurance policies and legislation have been comprehended.
- **Lack of Infrastructure:** The second problem for Indian medical tourism is the absence of amenities, such as a lack of connection, coordination, inadequate electricity, and poor water supply.
- **Lack of Trust:** Most Indian hospitals likewise face international patients' lack of confidence. The hospitals noted inadequate hygiene awareness among medical professionals, unsanitary food handling, and the lack of suitable hospitality services.

7. Medical Tourism and Hospitality Sector: A Significant Relationship

The hotel industry has greatly benefited from the flow of medical tourists to India. Several hotels and resorts also provide rejuvenation therapies with the most prominent hospitals for post-treatment accommodation. Some operations require a check-up after a week, which means that the patient has to stay and that his patients choose to stay in the resorts and visit some tourist sites for leisure. The hotels and resorts took up the matter and pulled the business. Some rooms

are designated for certain hospitals that are attached to them, guaranteeing their patients confirmed accommodations. Visitors and relationships accompanying these patients need to be housed and stay in nearby hotels. In particular, in New Delhi, Bangalore, Hyderabad, and Chennai, Star Hotels have recorded higher room reservations by tourists. In the three-star and four-star sectors, the medical tourism industry benefits more. Other resorts regularly report businesses from medical tourists through links to hospitals.

Medical visitor influx also dramatically benefits the travel sector. The cascading impact of visitor money spent in the host economy starts with tourist centres, such as hotels, restaurants, and taxis. This expenditure then penetrates the economy (Mathieson & Wall, 1982), producing repercussions on three levels: direct, indirect, and induced. This is the impact of the multiplier. It started with hospitals and moved to hotels for medical tourists. Travel businesses provide packages, including air return tickets, post-treatment accommodation, and sightseeing packages. There are web portals, such as www.healthtourism.com, which provide patients with a wide range of possibilities to view and stay in a hotel. The rise in medicinal tourism in India has created many job possibilities for international tourists who need specialist services in hospitals, hotels, and travel. This has established a specialized industry and a need for professionals to grow to care for medical tourists. Customer requirements for travel, housing, food, and tourism have produced new occupations in the sectors. Tourists feel easy if all your demands are met at a fair price compared to your nation. The hotel sector also has an enormous potential to tap into the rising flow of medical tourists by offering specialized services for the hostel's visitors and patients.

8. Recommendations to boost medical tourism in India

- In India, comfort, accommodation, and other amenities should be created for international tourists seeking treatment. It might be good to make this widespread in areas where medical tourism thrives. Thus, they are treated in minutes of the hospital, and visitors may be guaranteed comfort, security, and essential necessities. The State can also go ahead to heal the surroundings of life based on the medical care the guest needs.
- The second point is that these living conditions must be reasonable. Medical tourist stresses that the travel, hospital bill, and lodging costs in their nations are still more inexpensive than their health care. If Indians and their states are to enhance their medical tourism, this tradition of guaranteeing affordable care to everyone that needs them should continue.
- A pleasant experience for medical tourists to look at the broader picture would encourage them to visit Uttarakhand, Himachal, Kerala, and Maharashtra, particularly the hills and peaceful places. This may lead to a possible holiday location for the patient's family.
- The medical tourist's typical expenditures are from USD5000 to USD6000 and other USD3000-USD5000 for shopping, transport, and other expenses. It can create huge jobs for local people and small enterprises in the state area. The beneficiaries will include Cab services, foreign exchangers, hospitals, doctors, and hotels and enhance local market economies. Medical tourism is one of India's 26 champion industries and has a strong potential for development and economic growth.

9. Conclusion of the study

India is in a position to seize the world's medical tourism prospects. For the growth of medical tourism, the Government's participation is important. The Government should take measures to facilitate private investment in healthcare and act as a regulator. In India, medical tourism has shown tremendous development and expertise in providing patients with better service and results. As a result of the high hospitals and services of Indian hospitals and their growth, the flow of many international tourists from other nations has been strengthened by globalization. In 2019 has seen foreign health tourists grew by 8.9 million (Reports of Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, 2020). Tourism continues to play a crucial role as the country's foreign

money generator. The foreign exchange earnings (FEE) were 30.06 billion dollars in 2019, up from 28.09 billion in 2018, which increased by 5.1%. India has the lowest medical cost advantage and ranks 2nd among nations across the globe, second to Thailand, mainly because of the top physician's accessible, trained staff, English speaking, and quality of hospital treatment and facilities and no time waiting available. The hospitals provide an extra benefit for the hotel and tour packages. Medical tourism also complements the hotel and travel industry by continuously providing businesses in this area and creating new jobs. Many hotels and resorts already know the possibilities of business with particular hospitals. The Indian medical sector also has problems to confront, such as no post-therapy treatment, confidentiality, insurance coverage concerns, disparities in Government and private institutions, absence of industry standards, brain drain, and higher costs for local citizens. Indian Medical & health tourism can achieve numbers of international medical tourists arriving and foreign exchange revenues by 2025 if good service standards are maintained. Medical tourism may indeed also contribute to the economic growth of the country.

Declaration of Conflicting Interest

The author(s) declare no conflict of interest in the publication of this paper.

References:

- Aquino, P. G., Justin, M. S. M., & Jalagat, R. C. (2021). Clean India Mission and Its Impact on Cities of Tourist Importance in India. In *Strategies in Sustainable Tourism, Economic Growth and Clean Energy* (pp. 89–107). Springer.
- Arfi, W. B., Nasr, I. B., Khvatova, T., & Zaied, Y. B. (2021). Understanding acceptance of eHealthcare by IoT natives and IoT immigrants: An integrated model of UTAUT, perceived risk, and financial cost. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, *163*, 120437.
- Arunmozhi, T., & Panneerselvam, A. (2013). Types of tourism in India. *International Journal of Current Research and Academic Review*, *1*(1), 84–88.
- Bagga, T., Vishnoi, S. K., Jain, S., & Sharma, R. (2020). Medical tourism: Treatment, therapy & tourism. *International Journal of Scientific & Technology Research*, *9*(3), 4447–4453.
- Bashir, N. A., Balaraman, P., & Mukherjee, A. (2021). Indian Medical Tourism Industry Basics and Its Competitive Positioning: Case Study. In *Growth of the Medical Tourism Industry and Its Impact on Society: Emerging Research and Opportunities* (pp. 43–73). IGI Global.
- Bhandare, S. G. (2013). *Tourism and its Impact on Rural Entrepreneurship in Goa: An Empirical Study for Promoting Village Tourism in Goa*. [PhD Thesis]. Goa University.
- Büyükožkan, G., Mukul, E., & Kongar, E. (2021). Health tourism strategy selection via SWOT analysis and integrated hesitant fuzzy linguistic AHP-MABAC approach. *Socio-Economic Planning Sciences*, *74*, 100929.
- Černauskas, V., Angeli, F., Jaiswal, A. K., & Pavlova, M. (2018). Underlying determinants of health provider choice in urban slums: Results from a discrete choice experiment in Ahmedabad, India. *BMC Health Services Research*, *18*(1), 1–11.
- Choudhury, R., & Dixit, S. K. (2021). Rural Tourism in India: Exploring the Travel Blogger's Perspective. *Rurality, Ruralism and Rural Tourism*.
- Dash, A. (2020). Exploring visit intention to India for medical tourism using an extended theory of planned behaviour. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Insights*.
- Dash, G., Kiefer, K., & Paul, J. (2021). Marketing-to-Millennials: Marketing 4.0, customer satisfaction and purchase intention. *Journal of Business Research*, *122*, 608–620.

- Dixit, S. K. (2021). *Tourism in India: Marketing Perspectives*. Routledge.
- Enderwick, P., & Nagar, S. (2011). The competitive challenge of emerging markets: The case of medical tourism. *International Journal of Emerging Markets*.
- Ferreira, F. A., & Castro, C. (2020). Medical tourism in Portugal—a potential niche market. In *Advances in Tourism, Technology and Smart Systems* (pp. 615–625). Springer.
- Geethapriya, M. J. (2019). THE ROLE OF MEDICAL TOURISM FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN TAMILNADU. *Editorial Board*, 8(10), 171.
- Ghasemi, P., Mehdiabadi, A., Spulbar, C., & Birau, R. (2021). Ranking of Sustainable Medical Tourism Destinations in Iran: An Integrated Approach Using Fuzzy SWARA-PROMETHEE. *Sustainability*, 13(2), 683.
- Goretti, M. M., Leigh, M. L. Y., Babii, A., Cevik, M. S., Kaendera, S., Muir, M. D. V., Nadeem, S., & Salinas, M. G. (2021). *Tourism in the Post-Pandemic World: Economic Challenges and Opportunities for Asia-Pacific and the Western Hemisphere*. International Monetary Fund.
- Guiry, M., & Morgan, A. (2021). Mexico's medical tourism healthcare service quality: A content analysis of international patients' online testimonials. *International Journal of Leisure and Tourism Marketing*, 7(2), 105–135.
- Gupta, V., Cahyanto, I., Sajnani, M., & Shah, C. (2021). Changing dynamics and travel evading: A case of Indian tourists amidst the COVID 19 pandemic. *Journal of Tourism Futures*.
- Hoyez, A.-C. (2007). The 'world of yoga': The production and reproduction of therapeutic landscapes. *Social Science & Medicine*, 65(1), 112–124.
- Hoyez, A.-C. (2017). From Rishikesh to Yogaville: The globalization of therapeutic landscapes. In *Therapeutic landscapes* (pp. 49–64). Routledge.
- Jaiswal, N. (n.d.). Impact of Tourism and Hospitality Industry in growth of Indian economy. *Journal Homepage URL*, 4(1), 101–105.
- Jenkins, C. L., & Henry, B. M. (1982). Government involvement in tourism in developing countries. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 9(4), 499–521.
- Kannan, S., & Frenz, M. (2019). Seeking health under palm trees: Ayurveda in Kerala. *Global Public Health*, 14(3), 351–361.
- KEERTHANA, Y., & BABU, M. K. (n.d.). A STUDY ON FACTORS AFFECTING THE CHOICE OF INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL FACILITY FOR GROWTH OF INDIAN MEDICAL TOURISM. *Turkish Journal of Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation*, 32, 2.
- Kewina, I., Abdel Aziz, G., & Adam, S. (2021). Medical tourism: A conceptual framework to exploit the drivers of push and pull towards Egypt as a hub and destination for medical tourism in Africa to achieve Egypt's vision 2030. 220–193, (11)7, *مجلة الدراسات التجارية المعاصرة*.
- Khan, O. F., & Kirmani, M. S. (2018). Seven Key Factors of 2002 National Tourism Policy-An Empirical Study of Kashmir. *International Journal of Economics, Commerce and Research*, 8(3), 1–8.
- Medhekar, A. (2020). Emerging Trends of Wellness and Medical Tourism in India. In *Global Developments in Healthcare and Medical Tourism* (pp. 1–22). IGI Global.
- Menon, I. (2018). *Hereditary Physicians of Kerala: Traditional Medicine and Ayurveda in Modern India*. Taylor & Francis.

- Mir, L. A. (2014). An economic evaluation of Indian tourism industry. *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*, 4(12), 1–7.
- Muthyam, P. (2017). Medical tourism in India: An Analysis. *International Journal of Information Research and Review*, 4(12), 4801–4803.
- Nagaraju, L. G., & Chandrashekar, B. (2014). Rural tourism and rural development in India. *International Journal of Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary Studies*, 1(6), 42–48.
- Nandakumar, R. (n.d.). *ECONOMIC IMPACT OF FLOOD DISASTER ON TOURISM SECTOR*.
- Olya, H., & Nia, T. H. (2021a). The medical tourism index and behavioral responses of medical travelers: A mixed-method study. *Journal of Travel Research*, 60(4), 779–798.
- Olya, H., & Nia, T. H. (2021b). The medical tourism index and behavioral responses of medical travelers: A mixed-method study. *Journal of Travel Research*, 60(4), 779–798.
- Parekh, J., Jaffer, A., Bhanushali, U., & Shukla, S. (2021). Disintermediation in medical tourism through blockchain technology: An analysis using value-focused thinking approach. *Information Technology & Tourism*, 23, 69–96.
- Purandare, N. (2014). Health tourism-Global positioning of India. *Sai Om Journal of Commerce & Management*, 1(6), 7–17.
- Rath, S. P., & Das, B. (2012). Medical Tourism-The New Technical Mono-Tourism Market of India. *Kushagra International Management Review*, 2(1), 121.
- Reddy, S., & Qadeer, I. (2010). Medical tourism in India: Progress or predicament? *Economic and Political Weekly*, 69–75.
- Roopak, S. (n.d.). *Impact and Importance of Tourism in India*.
- Sanjeev, G. M., & Birdie, A. K. (2019). The tourism and hospitality industry in India: Emerging issues for the next decade. *Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes*.
- Shankar, S. (2015). Impact of Heritage Tourism in India: A Case Study. *International Journal of Innovative Research in Information Security*, 6(2), 59–61.
- Shanmugam, K. (2013). Medical tourism in India: Progress, opportunities and challenges. *Madras School of Economics, Chennai*.
- Shetty, P. (2021). *the impact of covid-19 in the Indian tourism and hospitality industry: Brief report*.
- Shinde, K. (2020). The spatial practice of religious tourism in India: A destinations perspective. *Tourism Geographies*, 1–21.
- Subramanian, J., & Vachharajani, H. (2021). Medical Tourism: Trade and Business Opportunities Between Oceania and India. *Emerging Business and Trade Opportunities Between Oceania and Asia*, 179–197.
- Wang, R. Y., Storey, V. C., & Firth, C. P. (1995). A framework for analysis of data quality research. *IEEE Transactions on Knowledge and Data Engineering*, 7(4), 623–640.
- Weaver, D., Moyle, B. D., & McLennan, C. (2021). A core/periphery perspective on mega-event sustainability: Dystopic and utopic scenarios. *Tourism Management*, 86, 104340.
- Wong, K. M., & Musa, G. (2012). Medical tourism in Asia: Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, and India. *Medical Tourism: The Ethics, Regulation, and Marketing of Health Mobility*. London and New York: Routledge, 167–186.

Yen, T.-F. T. (2021). How Do New Media Promote Health and Wellness Tourism in Southwest China. *Asian Journal of Education and Social Studies*, 39–50.

Web-Links:

1. https://www.business-standard.com/content/b2b-pharma/medical-value-travel-industry-in-india-to-reach-9-bn-by-2020-study-116100600787_1.html, Time 15/06/2021, Time 4.15 PM
2. <https://www.honconsulangola.org/healthcare-education.php>, Time 14/06/2021, Time 2.15 PM
3. Indian Tourism Statistic, 2020. Retrieved from <https://tourism.gov.in/>
4. Medical Tourism in India, 2019. Retrieved from <https://www.imecplanet.com/services/medical-tourism-india/> 15/06/2021/2:00PM

Contributors: Dr Suneel Kumar: Associate Professor, Department of Commerce, Shaheed Bhagat Singh College, University of Delhi, Delhi, India: drsuneel.sbsc@gmail.com; Dr_Vanessa GB Gowreesunkar: Associate Professor in Tourism, Anant National University Ahmedabad, India, gvanessaa@gmail.com; Sanjeev Kumar: Research Scholar, Department of Commerce and Management, Career Point University Hamirpur, Himachal Pradesh, India sanjeev_ims84@yahoo.co.in; and Varinder Kumar: Research Scholar, Faculty of Management Studies, University of Delhi, India varinder.phd20@fms.edu

Corresponding Author: Mr. Varinder Kumar: Research Scholar, Faculty of Management Studies, University of Delhi (India) varinder.phd20@fms.edu