

Chapter 3

Indian Medical Tourism Industry Basics and Its Competitive Positioning: Case Study

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ABSTRACT

Medical tourism (MT) may be described as a journey outside the country of residence to receive medical assistance. It must be taken into account that specialized healthcare involves the participation of specialists in the field of medicine such as surgeons, who differentiate medical tourism from wellness and spa tourism. There can be two main forms of medical tourism: surgical and therapeutic. The chapter mainly aims to understand the fundamentals of medical tourism in perspective to focused on its definition, categories, growing trends, drivers, challenges, and quality standards. The specific case of the Indian medical tourism industry and its competitive position is also being discussed in this chapter.

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-7998-3427-4.ch003

1. INTRODUCTION

The idea of health tourism has traditionally originated from countries that have spa, coastal and indigenous care practices. Medical tourism represents the broader concept of health tourism. The overall trend of health and medical tourism is viewed with different emphasis. It includes healthcare, healthcare suppliers, distributors, consultants, web-based health services, conferences, and media members. These various actors are playing a vital role in developing the health tourism market globally.

Medical tourism attempts to understand its fundamentals, different types, driving factors, quality standards, challenges, and global trends. The act of medical tourism in foreign countries is known to include treatment and care, ranging from highly invasive (hip, chest, plastic surgery, resurfacing) to less invasive (dental) and wellness (Reddy, York, & Brannon, 2010). Despite the fact that, medical tourism trend was wrongly perceived to be driven by cosmetic procedures seeking travelers, it is evident that more critical health procedures (such as cardiac operations or knee transplantation) are provided and considered as key drivers in destinations such as India, Thailand, Singapore, Taiwan, and Malaysia (Singh, 2013).

In India, which has become the world's universal healthcare destination in general, growth is not limited to particular hospitals but also got benefits that are derived from the advancement in number of different healthcare services providers, such as naturopathic, ayurvedic, homeopathic and yoga institutions. According to Mochi (2013) analyzed that India's position in the medical industry is growing daily. According to previous research, the international health industry increases by approximately \$3 billion, owing to its services and facilities, and by providing India's as healthcare brand equity. The medical expertise of India in the globe is the highest compared to other countries worldwide, and doctors in India support by providing better services everywhere. The main reason for India's success as an important medical destination is due to its prestige as the world-class Indian healthcare center. Mohanty and Madhav (2006), found that Indian health companies began to emerge as the main tourism destination compared to other countries of the world simply because Indian Industry improves its expertise, ability, fasters and deeper understanding of many advanced medical practices and humanizes its reputation with regard to pricing and excellence. Because of its natural and ayurvedic practitioners only India is one of the most well-known and popular destinations in international patients compared to western and also more respected medical treatment worldwide.

There are many qualities of a destination that tourists who visit a specific type of tourism can draw. This means that the characteristics that lead tourists to choose between destinations must be identified. Ayurvedic treatments are an ancient practice considered to be the best natural healing method in the Indian subcontinent that was formed some 5,000 years ago. As we all know, ayurvedic medicines are a natural

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