

THE IMPACT OF MEDICAL TOURISM ON INDIVIDUAL HEALTH AND MALE ITS ROLE IN STRENGTHENING INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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ABSTRACT

Emerging as a significant worldwide sector, medical tourism gives people access to reasonably priced, high-quality healthcare while strengthening political and commercial ties between countries. This paper examines the impact of medical tourism on personal health, costs, accessibility, and cross-cultural interaction. It also looks at how medical tourism advances policy changes, foreign investments, and healthcare partnerships, thus strengthening international ties. Using survey data from one hundred Indian visitors seeking medical treatment overseas, the study evaluates their healthcare experiences relative to those in India. Results show that although medical tourism offers quicker and more advanced treatments, problems such as high charges, delayed appointments, and limited access still exist. This paper highlights the need for better regulatory systems to guarantee moral medical practices and sustainable

healthcare interactions between countries worldwide (Connell, 2021; Lunt et al., 2011).

Keywords: Medical Tourism, Global Healthcare, International Relations, Health Benefits, Economic Growth.

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1. Introduction

Medical tourism is the travel across international boundaries for medical treatment, including elective procedures, wellness therapies, and specialist surgery. Medical tourism has emerged as a result of globalisation's growing impact on healthcare costs, the quality of services, and the availability of modern medical treatments (Turner, 2013). The advantages of medical tourism for personal health as well as its function in developing diplomatic ties between countries are investigated in this work. The study's goals are to look into the health benefits of medical tourism, as well as its diplomatic and financial benefits. It also wants to find any ethical or legal problems that may arise and use survey data to look into patient experiences and satisfaction (Hanefeld et al., 2014).

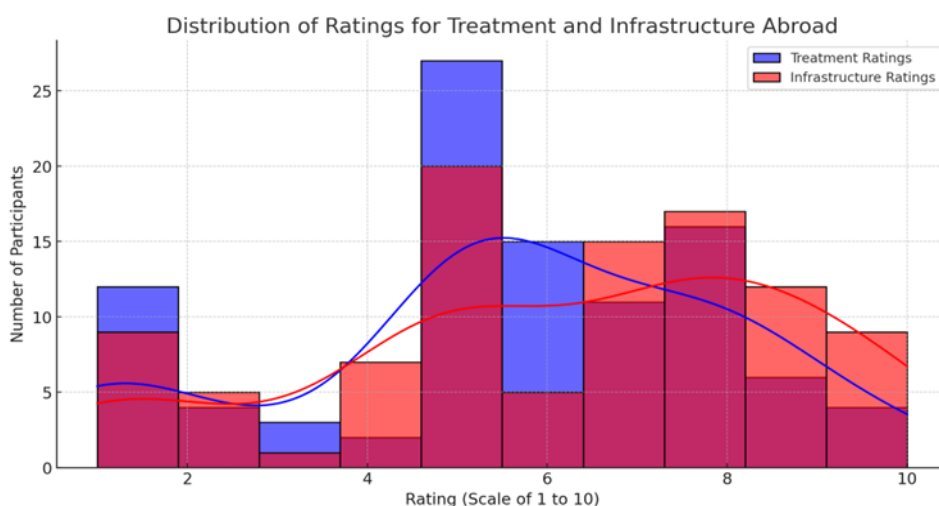
2. Health Benefits of Medical Tourism

Medical tourism means travelling beyond borders for medical care, including specialised surgeries, wellness treatments, and elective operations. Growing globalisation's effects on healthcare costs, the quality of services, and the availability of contemporary medical treatments have resulted in medical tourism (Turner, 2013). This paper explores the benefits of medical tourism for personal health as well as its purposes in fostering diplomatic relations between nations. Using survey data, this paper intends to assess the health benefits of medical tourism, analyse its diplomatic and financial contributions, highlight ethical and legal difficulties, and evaluate patient experience and satisfaction (Hanefeld et al., 2014).

3. Economic and Diplomatic Benefits of Medical Tourism

The flow of medical tourists mostly benefits host countries economies by raising healthcare revenue, the lodging industry, and local businesses (Bookman & Bookman, 2007). Medical tourism helps to enhance infrastructure and standards of quality in nations of involvement, therefore promoting foreign direct investment (FDI) in healthcare (Pocock & Phua, 2011). Signing bilateral agreements to streamline visa procedures and improve healthcare collaboration results in more international cooperation, hence fostering diplomatic relations (Ormond & Sothern, 2012). Medical tourism also promotes international knowledge and cross-cultural contact, therefore strengthening world ties (Connell, 2013).

4. Challenges and Ethical Considerations



Medical tourism still raises quality and control issues since differences in healthcare laws might result in patients getting inadequate or dangerous treatments elsewhere (Hopkins et al., 2010). Legal and ethical questions occur when patients encounter medical carelessness; some treatments are not covered by insurance coverage, therefore depriving patients of legal action (Turner, 2011). Highly qualified medical professionals migrating to countries with strong medical tourism demand can cause a lack of healthcare providers in underdeveloped countries, hence aggravating healthcare drain (Alsharif et al., 2010).

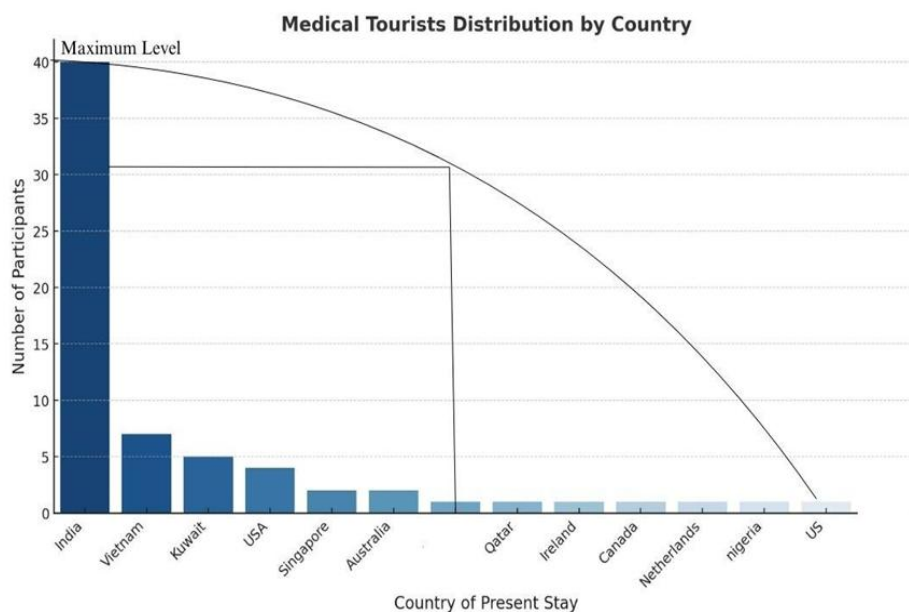
5. Survey Analysis: Experiences of Indian Medical Tourists

Emphasising healthcare accessibility, cost, infrastructure, and general satisfaction, a structured questionnaire was sent to 100 people who travelled overseas for medical treatment

(Runnels & Carrera, 2012). The results show that India, the USA, the UK, Australia, and Thailand are top medical tourism destinations. Seeking treatment overseas was mostly driven by access to modern medical techniques (40%), affordable therapy (35%), and speedier treatment (25%). While 70% found India speedier, 45% of respondents said they waited over a week abroad. Comparatively, 65% of respondents said healthcare was more reasonably priced in India than abroad. Treatment abroad averaged 7.5/10; infrastructure abroad averaged 7.8/10; treatment in India averaged 6.2/10; and infrastructure in India averaged 5.8/10. Patients reported mostly high expenditures (60%), delayed appointments (30%), and language problems (10%). Better appointment scheduling, cost control, and enhanced insurance coverage—among other areas—were recommended for development (Glinos et al., 2010).

6. Discussion

The results show that cost and accessibility remain important issues even if medical tourism provides access to top-notch treatments. While most participants agreed that India's healthcare system provides reasonably priced services, it suffers in infrastructure and appointment efficiency. Countries like Thailand and Singapore with well-defined medical tourism policies offer a mix of cost and quality. To keep the benefits of medical tourism, governments should concentrate on enhancing medical visa rules, expanding healthcare cooperation, and guaranteeing moral medical practices (Whittaker, 2008).



7. Conclusion

Medical tourism greatly affects personal health by providing access to superior therapies and therefore supporting diplomatic relations and economic development. Still, problems including high costs, legal concerns, and healthcare accessibility have to be addressed. By implementing ethical medical tourism policies and strengthening bilateral healthcare agreements, one can maximise the advantages of this expanding industry (Carrera & Bridges, 2006).

7.1 Limitations and Future Research

This study acknowledges the limitations of the sample size. A higher sample size may be considered.

7.2 Declarations of conflicts of interest

The authors declare that they have no potential conflicts of interest regarding the study design, research analysis, or publication of this article.

7.3 Funding

The work was supported by the UNS Research Council & UNS Digital Technologies Pvt Ltd.

7.4 Ethical Approval

The study was approved by the Review and Ethics Committee of the UNS Research Council, India. All participants provided written informed consent about the trial.

7.5 Author Contributions

Rajakarthikeyan Sengottaiyan designed the study; **Dr Hemachandran Ravikumar** provided ideas on the final design and selection of assessment tools. Both authors were involved in data collection, summarising, statistical analysis, and finalising the report. Dr. Hemachandran Ravikumar provided the initial draft of the manuscript, and they both considered it before making the final version available.

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