

HEALTH TOURISM & ITS PROSPECTS IN INDIA THROUGH AYURVEDA & YOGA

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ABSTRACT

The Global growth in the flow of patients & health professionals as well as medical technology, capital funding & regulatory regimes across national borders has given rise to new patterns of consumption & production of health care services over recent decades. A significant new element of a growing trade in health care has involved the movement of patients across borders in pursuit of medical treatment & health, phenomena commonly termed as health tourism. It encompasses primarily & predominantly biomedical procedures combine with travel & tourism. It is the attempt to attract tourists by deliberately promoting its health care services & facilities in addition to its regular tourist amenities. The competitive advantage of India in health tourism stem from strong reputation of traditional system of medicine especially Ayurveda & Yoga worldwide & the diversity of tourist destinations available in the country. This paper focuses on the key issues & opportunities possessed by health tourism sector in India through Ayurveda & Yoga that enable it to overcome domestic & international barriers on promoting its medical services.

Keywords: *Health tourism, Ayurveda, Yoga.*

INTRODUCTION

With the advent globalization and culture of consumerism, people begin to travel to make use of wide variety of alternatives that bring satisfaction and healthy living. Now a day people are more aware of the importance of health. People visit tourism destination normally for leisure and recreation. The purpose of visiting a tourism destination may vary depending upon the nature & interest of tourist. Hence tourism destinations design variety of tourism products so as to cater the needs of tourists having different interests. Health tourism is a niche tourism developed by the competing tourism promoting

country trips in order to attract people travelling with the prime purpose of getting health care.¹ Another definition of health tourism is that it is the attempt to attract tourists by deliberately promoting its health care services and facilities, in addition to its regular tourists amenities.²

AIM AND OBJECTIVES:

This paper explore opportunities, discusses its key challenges and designing the suitable strategies for developing health tourism in India. It also emphasize

es over the competitive advantage of India over other country in promoting health tourism.

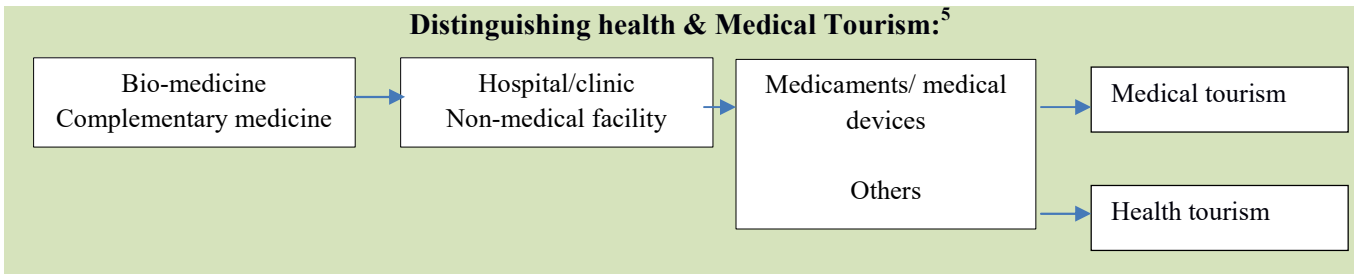
MATERIALS & METHODS:

The article have been written after going through all available literature related to health tourism in India & its possible marketing strategies with the help of Ayurveda & yoga.

DESCRIPTION:

Definition of medical tourism & health tourism –

Medical tourism can be defined as when consumers elect to travel across international borders with the intention of receiving some form of medical treatment. This treatment may span the full range of Medical services, but most commonly includes dental care, cosmetic surgery, elective surgery & fertility treatment.³ On the other hand health tourism is defined as “ the organized travel outside one’s local environment for the maintenance, enhancement of restoration of an individual well being in mind & body.”⁴



India as Health Tourism destination:

Health tourism comprises of two terms health care & tourism and it involves a combination of resources of health care & tourism¹. India being the richest source of bio-diversity and heritage sites is one of the most popular tourist destinations in world. If these tourist destinations made to highlights its health care resources, by giving a broad spectrum service of health and fitness and mixes leisure, fun and relaxation together with wellness and healthcare. This requires a comprehensive service package comprising physical fitness/beauty care/health nutrition & diet/relaxation and yoga and mental activity & education.

Ayurveda & Yoga – As Health Tourism products:

Ayurveda is a holistic system of healing which evolved in ancient India some 3000-5000 years ago. There are several aspects of this system of medicine which distinguish it from other approaches to health care⁶ –

1. It focuses on establishing and maintaining balance of the life energies within us, rather than focusing on individual symptoms.
2. It recognizes the unique constitutional differences of all individuals and therefore recommends different regimens for different types of people.
3. Ayurveda assists nature by promoting harmony between the individual and nature by living a life of balance according to her laws.
4. Ayurveda realized the need for preserving the alliance of the mind & body & offer mankind tools to Real the fragmentation and disorder of the mind-body complex and restore wholeness and harmony to all people.

Yoga:⁷

Yoga increases the efficiency of the heart and slows the respiratory rate, improves fitness, lowers blood pressure, promotes relaxation, reduces stress and allays anxiety. It also serves to improve coordination, posture, and flexibility, range of motion, concentration, sleep and digestion. It can also be used as supplementary therapy for conditions as diverse as cancer, diabetes, arthritis, asthma, migraine etc. &

help to combat addictions such as smoking. It is not, in itself, a cure for any medical ailment.

Benefits of Health Tourism in India:

Health tourism brings numerous benefits to the parties engaged in it. The advantage of health tourism can be broadly classified under two headings –

Benefits enjoyed by health tourists –

1. Health tourists get personalized attention.
2. Potential savings as the cost of treatment in health tourism destination is much less than that of home country.
3. Shorter waiting time. The patients need not wait in a queue for getting treatment and they will receive treatment immediately after their arrival.
4. Chance to experience a new culture.
5. Rejuvenation of mind, body and soul using alternative therapies.
6. Chance to enjoy natural beauty and relaxation during the recovery period.
7. Opportunities to participate in stress relieving programmes.
8. Availability of holistic treatments like Ayurveda, yoga etc.

Benefits enjoyed by health tourism destinations:

1. Increase in employment opportunities with simultaneous expansion of hotel, tourism and aviation industry.
2. Avenue of foreign exchange generator.
3. Increases employment opportunities in health care sector.
4. Increased demand for alternative medicines.
5. Health tourism improves political friendship.
6. Growth in insurance industry.

Health tourism potential of India

India is emerging as a leader in medical tourism industry because of its ability to provide high quality treatments at low cost.¹ Indian health care system offers a unique basket of services by providing a blend of both modern and traditional system of medicine.

Developing strategies on Indian health Tourism:

The following marketing strategies may be used by Indian health service providers to expand its health tourism aspect-

1. Product:

Ayurveda and yoga can be used as key factor in developing health tourism sector in India. Panchakarma therapy mixed with Yoga can be used to develop health care modalities in popular tourists' spots. India has numerous number of tourist destination which can be used to promote the alternatives medicinal system of Ayurveda.

2. Price:

India has a competitive advantage among their competitor country due to its high standard of health treatment & service offered at a very and reasonable price.

3. Promotion:

The developing health tourism sector should emphasize on promotion of its services by participating in travel marts, travel fair, trade fair, exhibition seminars, conference and advertise in travel magazines in countries with the supporting from government. These will help to create awareness of the available alternative medical treatment as well as to build up a positive image of the high quality and international standard of health care in India.

4. Role of Govt.

The Govt. of India must act as a regulator to institute health care set ups tying with tourist destinations. It should also act to facilitates to encourage private investment in health care infrastructure and policy making for improving health tourism.

5. Holistic medical and diagnostic centers within the corporate hospitals:

Big tertiary Hospitals should have facility of yoga and meditation programmes along with Ayurveda, naturopathy etc. within the premises. This will complement the both systems and also will promote Indian traditional system of medicines.

Obstacles seen⁸

The country like India is facing following issues/challenges to become a tourist destination with

a competent medical tourism industry. Which are as follows-?

1. Lack of infrastructural facilities like connectivity, coordinating systems, water and power supply.
2. Most Indian hospitals are facing trust issue from foreign patients because of poor hygiene awareness, lack of proper hospitality services and no industry standards.
3. Lack of government accreditation
4. Inadequate insurance coverage etc.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

India is gaining worldwide attention due to its developing tourist amenities and healthcare sector facilities. So it is easy for us to highlight its traditional system of medicine like Ayurveda and Yoga to do more international marketing. No doubt India is in limelight for health tourist for their needs now, but still, to provide a continuous world-class service to clients of different countries, all aspects related to the field i.e. Government, hospital facilities & traditional system of Indian medicines has to work integrate & have to offer prompt services.

CONCLUSION

India is in an advantageous position to tap the global opportunities in the health tourism sector and should use these advantages. The government's role is crucial to the development of health tourism. The tourism, health, information and communication departments need to work in tandem for efficient patient care. India can excel in health tourism sector by highlighting its holistic treatments along with building and promoting the image of India as provider of high standard of quality treatments at a reasonable price and make them available to the potential customer.

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