

TOURISM AND HOSPITAL INDUSTRY WITH REFERENCE TO DAKSHINA KANNADA DISTRICT

Dr. Florin Shelomith Soans

Assistant Professor ,Department of Economics ,St.Aloysius College (Autonomous) , Mangalore

Introduction:

In the recent developing world tourism is gaining very important place in the process of change. It is the tourist who contributes for the economy in both the form of economical and social change. In this context hospital industry is playing significant role. Hospital industry in Dakshina Kannada area is attracting many customers (patients) from different parts of the world. With this as an idea, research work to be undertaken will be about the contribution of hospital industry to the tourism sector. Certain objectives are given to analyze the full paper.

Objectives:

- To review the literature on tourism industry and hospital management.
- To analyze the steps taken by hospital industry to attract the consumers.
- To examine the challenges faced by hospital industry to develop the tourism sector.

Methodology:

To archive at the above said objectives both primary and secondary data will be taken into consideration for study. As a part of primary data 50 sample size will be interviewed with the help of well structured questionnaires and sample will be tested using simple statistical tools. Secondary data will be collected from the government reports, books, e-journal, various index, NSSO information etc.

Keywords:

Hospital industry, tourism, management, development, change.

Introduction

In the recent developing world tourism is gaining very important place in the process of change. It is the tourist who contributes for the economy in both the form of economical and social change. In this context hospital industry is playing significant role. Hospital industry in Dakshina Kannada area is attracting many customers (patients) from different parts of the world. With this as an idea, research work to be undertaken will be about the contribution of hospital industry to the tourism sector.

Tourism and hospital industry (Medical tourism) is a new concept where two important service industries are joining to attract people who seek healthcare services located beyond the geographical territory of their country. It provides state of the art private medical care in collaboration with tourism industry to patients from other countries. Price offered is highly competitive when compared to those prevalent in the western countries.

Nowadays, a lot of factors draw people towards tourism. The important motivators for travel and tourism may be cultural, social, interpersonal, physical, religious, and now the healthcare. Tourism has much scope for development and it can develop certain localities, states and even countries. A planned and integrated development of tourism can act as a catalyst of the economic development of any country, more so, the developing country, like India.

Karnataka is one of the fastest growing states in India. And Dakshina kannada is one of the fastest grow district in Karnataka. It is the home to some of the most high tech industries. As Karnataka is endowed with a combination of high-tech super – specialty hospitals on the one hand, on the other, it has a number of natural beauty spots. The coastal district of South Canada, Udupi can provide something unique to the tourist.

Review of literature

SaptarshiDuttaet.el (2010), “Scope and management of medical tourism in India” authors have expressed that given the potential India holds as a healthcare destination, the healthcare tourism sector can be a major source of foreign exchange earning for the country. Moreover, authors also have mentioned that this sector is witnessing a ‘reverse brain drain’ trend, with interesting number of specialists, who have been practicing abroad, showing keen interest to comeback and practice in India.

Manjula Chaudhary, (2011), "A study on problems and challenges faced by Medical tourists visiting India" In a research conducted by Indian Institute of Tourism and Travel Management it maps the Indian medical tourism value chain, to identify the important concerns of medical tourists visiting India vis-a-vis various service providers in value chain. It also identifies the bottleneck in medical tourism industry and recommends to address the concerns of medical tourists.

Anupama Sharma (2013), "Medical Tourism: Emerging Challenges and future prospects" highlights the potential of medical tourism industry in India. It also helps introspection the Hospital Accreditation system for medical tourism, examining the role of government in promoting infrastructure and analysing the latest trends to increase the flow of medical tourism. Study also examines the role of all stakeholders in building the image of India as high quality medical tourism destination.

M.Saravanan (2013), "Medical tourism-The New Face of Tourism" highlights several factors which are enhancing medical tourism in India viz. Cost competitiveness, service spectrum and consumer profile. He concluded that the healthcare industry has successfully managed to maintain the interest and attention of not only Indian Government but also the common man. The Indian consumer has ready access to new innovations in the field of health and medicine and the companies are constantly acquiring latest technology either through partnerships or developing them indigenously.

K.S.Vijayanambi (2014), "Progress and Challenges of Medical Tourism in India" Noted that the world class infrastructure is one of the main reasons for concentrating on promotion of this kind of tourism in India. Moreover, the growing economy has led to privatization and corporatization in the field of healthcare, thereby leading to the setting up of the world class hospitals that provide high advanced treatment facilities through high end technology and world class doctors.

Website

The website is the most important way you can attract potential patients to your hospital. An excellent website is one that is able to attract increasing number of visitors from your target market and is able to transform them into effective leads. Your website should allow visitors to navigate easily, so the layout and design of the website is important. But before that, you need to make your website easily visible on the internet because that is how you will be able to start a flow of organic visits to your website.

The blogosphere is another platform that you can use to succeed in your online marketing

efforts. As I mentioned already, your blogs need to be captivating or at least interesting enough so that people will link to them. Again, you need to keyword-optimize your blogs, including titles and URL's, using keywords that your potential patients are searching.

Questionnaire analysis from data collection

Out of 50 sample size the data collected has certain information

- Reason for choosing medical treatment in Dakshina Kannada district
 - a. To spend more time in home country/town.
 - b. High quality of health care.
 - c. Combining with relaxing holiday
 - d. Cost competitive advantage
 - e. The lure of new and different
- What are the sources consulted by you for selecting Dakshina Kannada for medical treatment.
 - a. Medical tourism guide
 - b. Medical tourism operator
 - c. Friends and relatives
 - d. Doctors in home town/country
 - e. Hospital websites
 - f. Advertisements

Ans: Advertisements

- Have you evaluated the information collected about the hospital?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

Ans: Yes



- If yes, how many hospitals have you evaluated?
 - a. 2
 - b. 3
 - c. More than 3

Ans: More than 3

- What are the sources consulted for evaluating the hospital
 - a. Medical Tourism guide
 - b. Medical Tourism operator
 - c. Hospital websites
 - d. Friends and Relatives
 - e. Advertisements

Ans: Hospital website

- What would be the criteria used you in evaluating the hospital.
 - a. Cost
 - b. Facilities
 - c. Quality
 - d. Culture
 - e. Safety

Ans: Facilities

- Would you take decisions for selecting the hospital individually
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

Ans:No

- Through whom did you organize your medical accommodation and travel your medical and travel
 - a. Directly with provider
 - b. Through Medical tourism operator
 - c. Friends and Relatives

Ans: b) Through medical tourism operator

Challenges/Drawbacks

Follow-Up problems

The follow up care is very difficult in case of medical tourism. If the patient gets any complications after surgery and is back to his own country, the follow up is not only difficult but expensive also. Though Information Technology (IT) has helped a lot in this but sometimes personal meeting with the doctor becomes inevitable. This is a challenge that countries are still struggling against in medical tourism because this reduces the demand.

Language barriers

Language barriers pose major challenge in medical tourism. The country may offer expert doctors and highly sophisticated medical systems but if the doctors, nurses and other medical staff do not understand the language of the patient, the whole process becomes extremely difficult for the patient as well as the staff. So the cultural and language barriers also influence demand.

Brain drain

In the countries with a pool of talented doctors and nurses like India, it is a major challenge to retain these professionals. There is shortage of such skilled professionals in most countries across the globe and thus they are offered the best salaries abroad. Brain drain takes place due to lack of opportunities in the home country.

Lack of infrastructure

Many developing countries including India face problems due to poor infrastructural support in medical services. There are problems related to proper water and power supply, poor hygiene in hospitals including unhygienic surroundings, untidy staff and low quality food and lodging, along with poor air connectivity to support patients' inflow in the country.

Lack of professionalism

The medical staff in most developing countries lacks professionalism and behavioral aspects. The soft skills of medical workforce like warmth, concern, and friendliness, and professional skills like interpersonal skills, loyalty and appearance are still underdeveloped and it negatively influences the customers' service experience.

Difficulties in promotion

The countries like India also suffer from problems of promotion in medical tourism. There is a lack of quality accreditation and regulation in the hospitals and other medical service providers. Apart from this there is no uniform pricing and standardization of services acting as barrier in building customers' trust on the services offered.

Legal problems

One of the serious concerns in medical tourism relate to differences in laws in different countries. There are no uniform laws and moreover, in most countries there are weak laws for malpractice in medical services which leave patients with fewer options to fight for their rights in case they are cheated or if something goes wrong during the whole medical process.

Conclusion

The medical tourism is going through exciting phase where alongside of international activities, more intra-regional travels are taking places in this sector of the health market. The responses received clearly revealed that there is an overwhelming perception among the industry leaders that there is so much more that can be achieved within this sector. However, there are challenges, which require immediate attention of industry stakeholders.

References

- Buhalis, D., A.M. Tjoa and J. Jafari 1998, Information and Communication Technologies in tourism, ENTER'98 Conference Proceedings, Istanbul, Springer-Verlag, Wien-New York.
- Gary Inkpen 1998, Information Technology for Travel and Tourism, Longman, ISBN 0-582-31002-4
- Sheldon, P.J. Wöber, K., Fesenmaier D.R. (Eds) 2001, Information and Communication Technologies in Tourism 2001: Proceedings of the International Conference in Montreal, Canada, 2001: Springer-Verlag Vienna ISBN 3-211-83649-7