

# Health of two different segments. one segment

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Health tourism or travel for health consists of two different segments. One segment consists of people who travel to other countries for rejuvenation purposes, and the other segment consists of people who travel for curative care that is not available in their countries. While the former is a luxury segment, the latter is economy. Majority of the market that travels for curative care is extremely price sensitive and hence it plays an important role in deciding their destination for medical assistance (Natarajan, 2015). With both, rising of disposable income and healthcare awareness, health tourism is becoming a more and more popular across the world. The global wellness tourism industry, with a growth rate of 9 per cent per year, is said to be growing at a 50 per cent faster rate than other tourism sectors (Natarajan, 2015).

Figure X shows the range of health products and facilities which have emerged in the past years. Figure X: Health Continuum Source: Global Wellness Institute Health tourism has been widely studied and therefore has many interpretations. There is no commonly used definition to express this term, however, the IUOTO in 1973 emphasized that health tourism is "... the provision of health facilities utilizing the natural resources of the country, in particular mineral water and climate" (p. 7). Mueller and Kaufmann (2001) further defined health tourism as "the sum of all the relationships and phenomena resulting from a change in location and residence by people in order to promote, stabilize and, as appropriate, restore physical, mental and social well-being while using health services and for whom the place where they are staying is neither their principal nor permanent place of residence or work". Which means that people travel to a

destination in order to either get a medical treatment or to maintain and improve their health. Therefore, health tourism can be generally seen as an umbrella term for wellness tourism and medical tourism as shown in figure X. Medical paradigm is represented on the poor health continuum, which focuses on treating and curing illness and it is reactive.

Connell (2006, p. 1094) defines medical tourism as "tourism" deliberately linked to direct medical intervention, and outcomes are expected to be substantial and long term". Natarajan (2015) adds up that those travelling can include complex surgeries, specialized treatments for chronic diseases, and other methods of focused care. In contrast, wellness paradigm is best understood on a continuum ranging from poor health to the state of optimal well-being, focusing on maintaining and improving health and is proactive. According to Begum (2013) wellness tourism is a field of healthcare focused on improving everyday health and state of wellbeing, rather than treating a disease or curing illness. Global Wellness Institute (2017, p. 11) provides more expansive definition of wellness tourism, namely, "travel associated with the pursuit of maintaining or enhancing one's personal wellbeing".

It includes two types of wellness travelers, those who travel entirely for wellness purposes (primary wellness tourists), and those who may engage in wellness activities during their trip (secondary wellness tourists). In 2015 wellness sectors, which encompasses 10 diverse sectors, shown in Figure X below represented \$3.7 trillion of economy including both international wellness tourism receipts and domestic wellness tourism expenditures (Global Wellness Institute, 2017). Figure X: Global

WellnessEconomy: \$3. 7 trillion in 2015 Source: Global

WellnessInstitute According to the latest data from Global Wellness Institute (2017) the wellness economy currently represents 5% of global economic output and covers almost half of the global health expenditures, which was \$7. 6 trillion in 2014. Wellness economy is growing enormously, especially southeast Asian countries are the fastest-growing wellness travel destinations, with a projected 22 percent annual growth rate (Gregoire, 2013).

Health Tourism in India Medical tourism can be measured in different ways, however in this paper we will focus only on Medical Tourism Index (MTI). MTI “ measures the attractiveness of a country as a medical tourism destination in terms of overall country image and environment; healthcare and tourism attractiveness and infrastructure; and availability and quality of medical facilities and services” (“ MTI Construct - Medical Tourism Index”, 2017). It is based on opinion survey and it consists of three main dimension or groups with 34 underlying indicators among 41 countries worldwide. The first one is “ Destination Environment” and relates to overall country environment (economy, safety, image and culture). The second one is “ Medical Tourism Industry” which consists of two parts, the attractiveness of country as a tourism destination and costs associated with medical tourism. And the third is “ Facility and Services” that includes factors related to the quality and availability of the medical facilities and services. According to Medical Tourism Index (MTI) 2016, India is placed on the fifth place, after Canada, UK, Israel and Singapore on overall ranking, showing the Figure X below. Looking over three dimensions, in 2016 India has become the leading country in “

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Medical Tourism Industry”, the third one in “ Quality of Facilities & Services” and twelfth on “ Destination Environment” dimension.

Figure X: Top five destinations according to Medical Tourism Index 2016

Source: Medical Tourism Index As stated in The Economic Times article India among fastest growing medical tourism destinations: Official (2017), India is one of the “ fastest growing medical tourism destinations in Asia” and it is estimated that medical tourism in the country can become \$9 billion industry by 2020, from about \$3 billion currently, according to a white paper by CII and consulting firm Grant Thornton India (Reddy, 2016). Ayurveda, yoga and wellness industry are the strongest competitive advantages of India and set country apart from the other medical tourism destinations in the world. In wellness tourism rankings India is not placed that high as in the medical tourism rankings. However, it’s position is still among the top twenty countries worldwide, according to Global Wellness Economy Monitor made by Global Wellness Institute in January 2017. As shown in the Figure X below, India is positioned on the 12th place on the ranking of “ top twenty wellness tourism markets, 2015”.

India’s wellness tourism expenditures in 2015 were US\$11.8 billions, they received 38.6 million wellness tourism trips, which contributed to 5.32 million direct employments. Figure X: Top Twenty Wellness Tourism Markets, 2015 Source: Global Wellness Institute What is even more surprising, according to Global Wellness Institute (2017), India is facing a robust growth in wellness tourism, which can be seen in the Figure X below. It is positioned

on the 4th place after China, US and Germany, with the 6 million wellness trips added and 8.8% average annual growth rate from 2013-2015.

This drastic constant growth could be a consequence of the “Incredible India” tourism ad campaign launched in 2002, suggests Gregoire (2013). Figure X: Leading Growth Markets for Wellness Tourism Trips, 2013-2015 Source: Global Wellness Institute India wellness supply is quite broad and they have a lot to offer. Susie Ellis, Chairman and CEO of the Global Spa & Wellness Summit, emphasizes that “India’s wellness offerings are very understandable — they have yoga, meditation and ayurveda, ... Right now, those are things that are really resonating with people... the kind of things that people want and need are the things that India is offering.” (Gregoire, 2013).