A Study on Service Expectation of Medical Tourism Customers in Kerala

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ARTICLE DETAILS

ABSTRACT

Kerala or God's very own country as its corporate trademark goes has spearheaded wellbeing and restorative the travel industry in India. They have tried to advance Medical Tourism bigly, which has brought about considerable increment guest landings into the state. In any case, however Kerala has emphatically centered on Medical the travel industry and its wide exhibit of medications and meds, great offices are likewise accessible in the other conventional types of drug just as in restorative treatment. The inclination towards Medical Tourism in Kerala is strong to the point that Kerala Medical the travel industry focuses have been built up at numerous areas in different metro urban communities, consequently featuring the upsides of Medical the travel industry in wellbeing the executives. An administration is a capacity which is bolstered by a subset of endpoints in a locale or division. Medical and the travel industry Service can be characterized as a monetary movement that does not result anything in the proprietorship, and this is the thing that separates it from giving substantial merchandise. The Medical Tourism center has seen Kerala take an interest in different public exhibitions and expos where in the upsides of this customary type of prescription is displayed. Medicinal voyagers' worries given the way that the medical and the travel industry are developing, its difficulties ought not to be overlooked. Since these difficulties are worldwide issues, changing over them to circumstances, encourages the way toward pulling in patients.

1. Introduction

Kerala has developed as the most acclaimed vacationer goal of the nation in the ongoing past. World Travel and Tourism Council has chosen Kerala as a Partner State. National Geographic Travel following 2 years of research has picked Kerala, as one of the 50 must see goals of a lifetime. Kerala has-been expressed as one of the 10 heavens of the world. It needs to draw in wellbeing visitors to make utilization of these assets proficiently and successfully. To draw in increasingly more wellbeing vacationers, a great Medical Tourism goal picture ought to be made by giving standard and fulfilling administration to the clients of Medical Tourism. Wellbeing sightseers' fulfillment relies on their desires and view of administrations given by Medical Tourism suppliers. Restorative Tourism suppliers generally offer administration bundles including tourism services and health care services.

The extent of the movement and Medical the travel industry is wide going. It is an industry involved various sub-businesses. Transportation, accommodation, food and beverage, entertainment, amusement and administrations all shape the foundation of what is all things considered alluded to as the Travel and Medical Tourism industry. Consumer loyalty mirrors the desires and encounters that the client has with an item or administration. Buyer desires reflect both past and current administration desires and client encounters. The travel industry's job in the economy is regularly seen as being constrained to the accommodation business, and outbound and inbound travel offices and transporters. Be that as it may, the financial effect of the travel industry is a lot more prominent, since numerous sources of info are required so as to deliver the travel industry and recreation administrations, spreading over the entire scope of homestead, agri-nourishment and mechanical generation, including the creation of capital products just as development and open works. Moreover, the travel industry exercises likewise have more extensive effect on the economy regarding making occupations and pay for the family units through vacationers' spending in the neighborhood economy.

Kerala and Medical travel industry are synonymous to one another, as it is the primary place on nation where Medical the travel industry is drilled with total validness and devotion. This old Indian plan of arrangement has wound up being the remedy for disorder just as the 100 percent normal approach to regent wellbeing. The procedures for Medical the travel industry are uncommon and across the board. As opposed to treating manifestations of a sickness, it treats the individual and minding the entire body. Medicinal the travel industry pharmaceuticals are essentially customary and totally free of symptoms. Medical travel industry drugs can be gathered into two sorts; Rejuvenative and Therapeutic.

Medicinal the travel industry is one of the segments of Medical Tourism and it is the primary supporter of Kerala's Medical Tourism. Therapeutic the travel industry Satisfaction and pleasure are both unequivocally affected by client desires. Desires are influenced unequivocally by understanding. It is the exchange characteristic of Kerala's Medical Tourism. It is an all-encompassing treatment that has no symptoms and consequently it is exceptionally well known among medicinal services explorers. The treatment under Medical the travel industry restores body and brain. One can take occasion and restore his body and brain experiencing Medical and the travel

industry treatment. Health voyagers as well as sightseers accompanying some other explicit designs are likewise keen on Medical the travel industry. Since patient mindfulness is expanding, the patient's musings and feelings ought to be the need of wellbeing focuses. Follow-up framework, capability and aptitudes of specialists, individual wellbeing, hospital diseases, legitimate insurance, and the expense of restorative administrations were the principle worries of medical sightseers before making a trip to their goals.

2. Specialties of medical tourism in Kerala

Due to extreme worldwide challenge among associations giving health services, there are cozy connections between the qualities of medicinal the travel industry services and the fulfillment of medical vacationers. Along these lines, these associations are searching for approaches to evaluate benefit quality and to enhance it. The survey which estimates the gap between patients' desires and desires is a standout amongst the most broadly utilized devices in this field.

- With the best framework, the most ideal medicinal services offices went with the most focused costs that one can complete the treatment in Kerala at the least rates.
- Even the standard health checkups costs low in Kerala when contrasted with the other European nations.
- The tropical atmosphere of Kerala is most appropriate for any restorative treatment and revival treatment.
- The experienced doctors, highly qualified surgeons and paramedical staff.
- Worldwide accredited medical facilities
- No waiting lists
- Price of health care treatments is 60 -80% low
- Fluent English Speaking employees
- 24 hours round the clock service

3. Medical tourism service expectation of customers

In current focused conditions, one of the essential issues that medical facilities manage is the dimension of patients' fulfillment. Hospitals utilize this data to evaluate their quality methodology and approach for survival. Fulfillment is a psychological and enthusiastic response that patients proclaim while addressing their necessities. A fulfilled restorative vacationer is bound to allude to the previous hospital. The assessed investigations expressed a few factors in medical tourist expectation fulfillment. These elements included advanced equipment, skilled hospital staff, reliable and professional doctors, and service quality, patient demand perception, confidentiality of medical records, structuring

standard administration process by doctor's facilities, simple section into the goal nation, security, correspondence, and proper framework.

Service quality is a judgment between patient desire and the recognition from the provided services. Desire is the patients' needs from specialist service providers. Providing a service lower than desire dependably prompts disappointed patients. Variables influencing the inclusion of the medical visitor's desire included: excellent administrations, great friendliness, high ability treatment consideration benefit, minimal effort care, universal accreditation for doctor's facilities, tolerating health care coverage patients, straightforwardness of costs, getting every one of the service in a single stage, giving right data to patients, enhancing data administrations, giving administrations at a worldwide standard, treatment approach dependent on patient-focused, clinical review, ceaseless quality enhancement, a few instructive process, contending with worldwide contenders, putting resources into new innovation, staff and association advancement, medicinal records, doctors acquainted with English dialect, and patient wellbeing.

4. Methodology

The study is descriptive in nature. The perceptions of the local and foreign tourist regarding various factors of medical tourism were determined and analysed using statistical techniques.

a) Sample Size

The universe of the study was the medical tourism customers in Kerala.

b) Tools for Data Collection

The tool employed for data collection was a questionnaire.

(1) Primary Data

The primary data were collected through questionnaire from 384 respondents. Questionnaires and interview schedules were used for this.

(2) Secondary Data

The study also made use of various types of secondary data including studies, reports and data collected by government and non-governmental organizations.

c) Data Analysis - Tools

Statistical tools such as percentage and factor analysis were used for analysing the data.

5. Analysis and inference

TABLE 1
Demographic Distribution of Respondents

Demographic distribution		Number of Respondents	Percentage
Gender	Male	210	54.69%
	Female	174	45.31%
	Total	384	100.00%
Age	Upto 20 years	18	4.69%

	21 to 30 years	45	11.72%
	31 to 40 years	15	3.91%
	41 to 50 years	140	36.46%
	Above 50 years	166	43.23%
	Total	384	100.00%
Duration of Visit	Upto One Month	75	19.53%
	One to Two Months	181	47.14%
	Three to Four Months	63	16.41%
	Five to Six Months	47	12.24%
	More than 6 Months	18	4.69%
	Total	384	100.00%
Occupational Status	Private Sector	123	32.03%
	Business	119	30.99%
	Unemployed	47	12.24%
	Professional	35	9.11%
	Govt. sector	31	8.07%
	Others	17	4.43%
	Student	12	3.13%
	Total	384	100.00%
Monthly Income Status	Upto $ 1,000	34	8.85%
	$ 1,001 to $ 2,000	18	4.69%
	$ 2,001 to $ 3,000	53	13.80%
	$ 3,001 to $ 4,000	115	29.95%
	Above $ 4,000	164	42.71%
	Total	384	100.00%
Educational qualification	College	179	46.61%
	Professional	80	20.83%
	Others	72	18.75%
	Higher Secondary	45	11.72%
	Upto 10th Standard	8	2.08%
	Total	384	100.00%

Inference

From the above table it can be seen that 54.70 percent of the medical tourism customers are female and about 45.30 percent of the medical tourism customers are male, 43.23 percent of the medical tourism customers are above 50 years followed by 36.46 percent of the medical tourism customers between 41 and 50 years of age. 46.61 percent of the medical tourism customers are having college education followed by 20.83 percent of the medical tourism customers being professionals. 42.71 percent of the medical tourism customers have a monthly income of above $ 4,000 followed by 29.95 percent of the medical tourism customers having a monthly income between $ 3,001 and $ 4,000. 47.14 percent of the medical tourism customers have spent one to two months for treatment followed by 19.53 percent of the medical tourism customers having spent upto one month.

TABLE 2
Native of Medical Tourism Customers in Kerala

Sl.No.	Native	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
1	SAARC	121	31.51	31.51
2	Gulf	85	22.14	53.65
3	Africa	61	15.89	64.54
4	Europe	54	14.06	83.60
5	Others	32	8.33	91.93
6	USA	31	8.07	100.00
	Total	**384**	**100.00**	

Inference

From the above table it can be evident that 31.51 percent of the medical tourism customers are from SAARC followed by 22.14 percent of the medical tourism customers from Gulf countries. Also about 15.89 percent of the medical tourism customers are from Africa. The analysis infers that majority of the medical tourism customers come from SAARC (neighboring countries) for treatment in Kerala.

TABLE 3
Important Factors of Service Expectation of Medical Tourism Customers in Kerala

Factors (Eigen Values)	Variables	Factor Loading	Reliability Coefficient	Percent of Variation
Travel (7.184)	Visa Process	0.788	0.788	17.107
	Currency Conversion	0.761		
	Transportation	0.739		
	Airport Pick and Drop	0.695		
	Local Tour	0.556		
	Shopping Support	0.543		
	Appointment Scheduling	0.425		
Infrastructure (5.385)	Food and Accommodation	0.832	0.784	15.346
	Post Treatment facility	0.786		
	Entertainment options	0.771		
	Appealing interiors	0.767		
	Clean and Healthy	0.756		
Technical (3.735)	Competent Staff	0.684	0.711	10.418
	Quality Medicine	0.618		
	Sophisticated equipment	0.600		
	High-end medical care	0.556		
	Patient Safety and Care	0.534		
Interpersonal (1.814)	Friendly Employees	0.730	0.617	7.828
	Courtesy and Empathy	0.703		
	Cooperative	0.502		
Financial (1.557)	Cost Estimate	0.705	0.662	7.521
	Treatment Info	0.564		
	Insurance	0.470		
Technology (1.452)	Modern Communication facility	0.717	0.639	7.064
	Patient Information Database	0.491		
	Clinical Diary	0.433		
Support (1.125)	Translator	0.687	0.628	4.042
	Locker facility	0.556		
	Personalized care	0.372		
Others (1.013)	Cultural programmes	0.525	0.535	3.375
	Preventive/Personalized health care support	0.446		
	Prayer Rooms	0.260		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.				0.786
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity		Approx. Chi-Square		9517.151
		Df		378
		Sig.		0.00

Inference

The narrated eight factors explain the service expectation of medical tourism customers to the extent of 72.70 percent. The most important factor is 'travel' which consists of seven variables with a reliability coefficient of 0.788, Eigen value of 7.184 and explains 17.107 percent of variation. The second important factor is 'infrastructure' which consists of five variables with a reliability coefficient of 0.784, Eigen value of 5.385 and explains 15.346 percent of variation.

The third factor is 'technical' which consists of five variables having a reliability coefficient of 0.711, Eigen value of 3.735 and explains 10.418 percent of variation. The fourth factor is 'interpersonal' which consists of three variables having a reliability coefficient of 0.617, Eigen value of 1.814 and explains 7.828 percent of variation.

The fifth factor is 'financial' which consists of three variables having a reliability coefficient of 0.662, Eigen value of 1.557 and explains 7.521 percent of variation. The sixth factor is 'technology' which consists of three variables having a reliability coefficient of 0.639, Eigen value of 1.452 and explains 7.064 percent of variation.

The seventh factor is 'support' which consists of three variables having a reliability coefficient of 0.628, Eigen value of 1.125 and explains 4.042 percent of variation. The eight factors is 'support' which consists of three variables having a reliability coefficient of 0.535, Eigen value of 1.013 and

explains 3.375 percent of variation. The KMO Measure of sampling adequacy was 0.786 and the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity is significant.

6. Findings

- During the study it has been noted that majority of the medical tourism customers are females compared to male customers. Regarding the age group of customers most of them are in the age group of above 50 years followed by the age group between 41 to 50 years.

- As per the analysis the educational qualification of customers, many of the medical tourism customers are graduates followed by professionals. Many of the medical tourism customers are employed in private sector followed by people engaged in business.

- As per the data analysis the native of medical tourism customers are 31.51 percent from SAARC countries followed by Gulf countries with 22.14 percent.

- According to the factor analysis the most important factor which are considered by the customers are 'Travel' and 'Infrastructure' with 17.107 and 15.346 percent variation respectively.

7. Suggestions

There is a trend at the worldwide dimension to devour however much as could reasonably be expected. In this way, travel offers the best chance to extend the scale and extent of utilization principally because of which the travel industry trades have turned into an imperative part as a developing wellspring of outside trade earnings. The outputs of factor analysis elucidate the factors influencing the tourist's perception.

- The tourists agree with the destination image of Kerala – as an ideal health care destination and the

importance of medical tourism in Kerala. Hence, it is also revealed from this study that Kerala can continue to be marketed as a better destination for medical tourism.

- This analysis proves that customer preference and satisfaction are the direct antecedent of customer retention so medical tourism providers should concentrate on the customers service expectation point of view. So constant interaction with health tourists, their progress, and impact should be strictly monitored and attended effectively.

8. Conclusion

Medical Tourism client desire is their psychological conviction of the execution quality. In the event that the desire is more than desire, it tends to be said that the doctor's facility has given qualified administrations. Giving satisfactory data about patients' desire for service quality can help treatment facilities to distinguish measurements and the upper hand benefit quality. In these investigations, most patients' desire for provided service quality incorporate; alluring affirmation administrations, low holding up records, nourishment services, moderate rooms, high relational abilities of staff, great conduct of staff, straightforwardness of cost, new medicinal gear, an assortment of provided treatment services, giving auspicious consideration, quick administration conveyance, compelling drug, and accentuating the clinical diagnosis. Observing the assortment of measurements of administrations quality in restorative the travel industry to draw in more patients to the nation, is a prerequisite for the strategy of a nation's social insurance framework. Subsequently, it is proposed to direct further investigations in the field of medicinal the travel industry benefit quality in various nations so as to recognize the elements of this field and to guarantee the nature of provided services at universal guidelines.

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