

Medical Tourism as Emerging Heaven for Economic Empowerment in India

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Abstract: Medical tourism refers to the practice of traveling to another country for medical treatment, usually at a lower cost or with a higher level of expertise than is available in one's home country. India has emerged as one of the leading destinations for medical tourism, offering a wide range of medical treatments and procedures at a fraction of the cost of similar treatments in developed countries. Medical tourism has emerged as a lucrative industry in India, providing an avenue for economic empowerment. This article explores the various factors that have contributed to the growth of medical tourism in India and its impact on the economy. It highlights India's competitive advantage in terms of cost-effectiveness, skilled healthcare professionals, and state-of-the-art infrastructure. The article also examines the challenges faced by the industry and the steps taken by the government and private sector to overcome these challenges. In addition, it discusses the potential for medical tourism to create employment opportunities and boost the local economy. Overall, this articles examines that how the medical tourism has the potential to become a significant contributor to India's economic growth and development.

Keywords: Medical tourism, economic empowerment, growth, employment opportunities.

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1. Introduction

The healthcare sector is undergoing rapid changes worldwide due to various factors such as advancements in technology, economic, social and cultural trends and a growing trend of medical consumerism. The aging population and an increase in the burden of diseases are also contributing to a surge in demand and cost for medical services. This has led to a convergence of industries and countries in healthcare, resulting in

a rise in the global medical tourism market (Deloitte global, 2021). Many countries are opening their health facilities for international patients. Developing nations are prioritizing their medical facilities to improve productivity, promote innovation and entrepreneurship, create employment opportunities, and drive GDP growth. While the developed world initially received much of the focus, the center of attention is now shifting towards emerging countries (Rahman, 2019). India has developed medical sector and has transformed its health system since the 1990s to address emerging health issues. The healthcare industry has become Central point of growth in India . However, the industry is facing challenges due to the rapidly changing regional and global landscape, resulting in increased competition and disruption. Service providers need to adapt their operating models to mitigate the effects of this shift, and the government and entrepreneurs need to recognize the need for change to maintain India's position (Bagga *et.al.*, 2020) .It has emerged as a significant sector contributing to the economic empowerment of India. With its growing reputation as a destination for high-quality and affordable healthcare services, India has become a haven for individuals seeking medical treatments from around the world. This abstract explores the reasons behind India's rise as a preferred medical tourism destination and its impact on the country's economic development. The accessibility of advanced medical technology, skilled healthcare professionals, and internationally accredited hospitals and clinics are key components that have propelled India to the forefront of medical tourism . India's competitive advantage lies in its cost-effective healthcare services, which are significantly lower than those in developed countries. This affordability, combined with high standards of medical care, has made it an attractive option for patients seeking quality treatments at reduced costs. Moreover, the presence of numerous specialized medical facilities and renowned healthcare professionals further reinforces India's reputation as a reliable place for medical tourism. The economic benefits of medical tourism are manifold. The influx of international patients contributes significantly to foreign exchange earnings, job creation, and increased revenue for healthcare providers, thereby boosting the overall economy. The demand for healthcare services stimulates investments in infrastructure development, including the expansion of hospitals, clinics, and allied services, further fueling economic growth. Additionally, medical tourism generates income opportunities in related industries such as hospitality, travel, transportation, and tourism, leading to a multiplier effect on employment and local businesses. To capitalize on the potential of medical tourism, the Indian government has implemented supportive policies and streamlined procedures to facilitate the entry of foreign patients. Visa facilitation, simplified travel arrangements, and the promotion of healthcare clusters have been instrumental in attracting medical tourists. Public-

private partnerships and collaborations between healthcare institutions and tourism agencies have also played vital role in developing the necessary infrastructure and promoting India as a medical tourism destination. However, challenges like maintaining quality standards, ensuring patient safety, and addressing ethical concerns associated with medical tourism must be adequately addressed. Continuous investments in research, training, and regulatory frameworks are essential to uphold the reputation and sustainability of India’s medical tourism sector. Overall, India’s emergence as a medical tourism hub has created significant economic empowerment opportunities. The combination of affordable yet high-quality healthcare services, advanced medical technology, and a skilled workforce has positioned India as an attractive destination for patients seeking medical treatments. The sector’s growth has contributed to foreign exchange earnings, employment generation, infrastructure development, and the overall advancement of the Indian economy. By leveraging its strengths and addressing challenges, India can continue to thrive as a sought-after destination for medical tourism, further bolstering its economic empowerment. most of the medical tourist arrives from bangladesh, maldives, iraq, sudan, kenya and other neighbour countries.

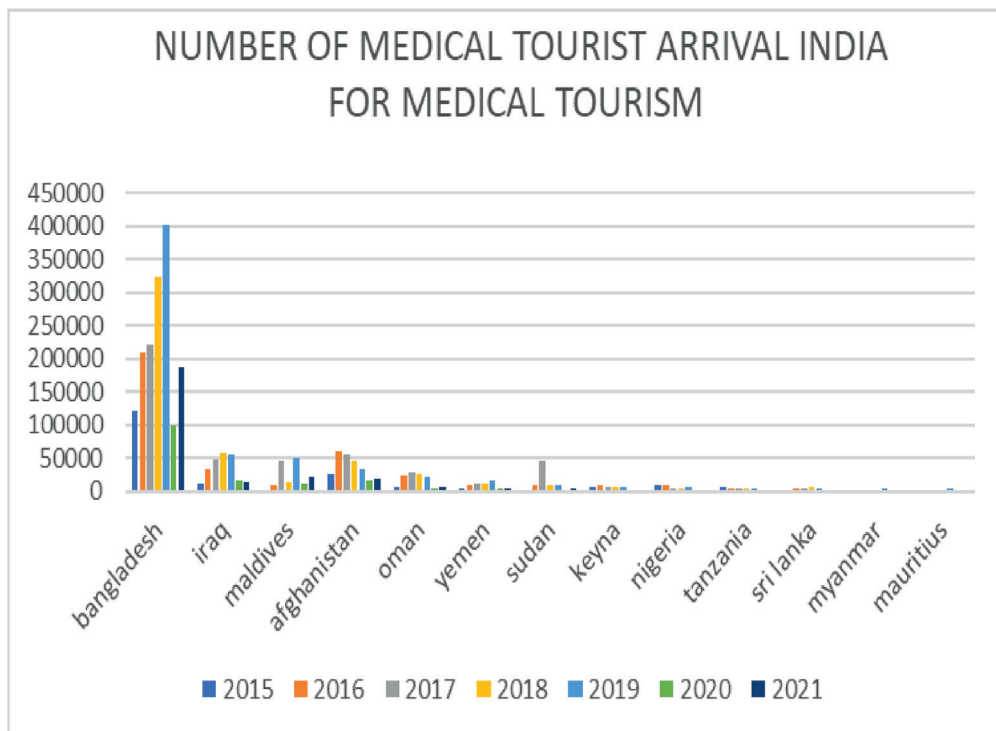


Figure 1: Number of medical tourist arrivals in India for medical purposes in different year

1.1. Overview of the benefits for the Indian economy

India is gradually becoming a reliable destination among the world for medical tourism, with patients seeking a range of medical procedures including cardiac surgery, orthopedics, and cancer treatments. The impact of medical tourism on Indian economy is very significant. Here are some of the key ways in which medical tourism has benefited the Indian economy:

- **Improved Infrastructure:** It has led to an improvement in the infrastructure of the Indian healthcare industry. Hospitals and medical facilities have upgraded their technology and services to meet the needs of medical tourists. This has also had a positive impact on the overall healthcare system in India, as local patients can benefit from the improved facilities and technology.
- **Reduced Healthcare Costs for Locals:** The growth of medical tourism has also led to a reduction in healthcare costs for locals. The increased revenue generated by medical tourism has led to a reduction in the cost of medical treatment for locals, making healthcare more accessible and affordable.
- **Increased foreign exchange earnings:** Medical tourism brings in foreign patients who spend money on medical treatments, accommodation, travel, and other related expenses. This helps to boost India's foreign exchange earnings, which can contribute to the country's economic growth.
- **Job creation :** Expansion of medical tourism has created many jobs in the healthcare sector, such as doctors, nurses, and other medical professionals. Additionally, it has also created jobs in the hospitality and tourism industries, as patients and their families require accommodation, transportation, and other services.
- **Technology transfer:** India has a highly skilled healthcare workforce, and the growth of medical tourism has led to the transfer of knowledge and technology from foreign countries to India. New technology will improve the medical facilities in India.
- **Increased investment:** Medical tourism has attracted foreign investment in the healthcare sector in India, which can lead to further growth and development of the industry. This has led to the establishment of new hospitals and medical facilities, creating job opportunities for locals and boosting the overall economy. This can create a positive feedback loop, where increased investment leads to further growth, leading to even more investment and growth.

Overall medical tourism has had a significant impact on the Indian economy, creating jobs, boosting tourism revenue, improving healthcare infrastructure, attracting foreign investment, and reducing healthcare costs for locals.

2. Research objectives

The purpose of this article is to show the increasing trend of medical tourism in India. The analysis focuses on the growth, potential, and difficulties faced by the healthcare industry related to medical tourism. The article presents a descriptive analysis of topics related to medical tourism, with three primary objectives:

- (1) To review the CAGR of India's health care sector
- (2) To understand the import and export in India's pharmaceutical industry and its relation with medical tourism
- (3) To explore the employment generation potential of health care sector

3. Literature Review

This literature review provides a detailed review on medical tourism in India, covering a range of topics and presenting a balanced view of the opportunities and challenges associated with this rapidly growing industry. The literature review provides insights into the future of medical tourism in India and offer recommendations for policymakers, healthcare providers, and other stakeholders to maximize the benefits and minimize the risks of this industry.

Sharmistha Ganguli and Shahla Ebrahim (2017) provide a more in-depth analysis of the benefits and risks associated with medical tourism. They note that medical tourism can provide cost savings for patients and their insurers, as well as access to treatments that may not be available in their home country. However, they also caution that medical tourism carries significant risks, including the potential for substandard or unsafe care, cultural and language barriers, and the lack of legal recourse in the event of malpractice. Carrera and Bridges (2006) analyzed articles and reports published between 2000 and 2005 to identify the key drivers and challenges of medical tourism. They noted that medical tourism could exacerbate inequalities in healthcare, as only those with the financial means to travel abroad for treatment were able to take advantage of this option. Smith and Puczko's (2009), suggest that the growth of medical tourism will depend on several factors including the high cost and long waiting times for medical treatment in some countries, the availability of specialized medical treatments and procedures in other countries, and the desire for a vacation-like experience while receiving medical care. They also highlight the potential risks of medical tourism, such as lack of regulation and oversight in some countries, language barriers, and the

possibility of complications arising from medical procedures. Jagyasi (2008) noted that medical tourism was becoming increasingly popular because of the high cost of healthcare in developed countries like the United States. Patients were traveling to countries like India, Thailand, and Singapore, where medical procedures were much more affordable. The article also highlighted the quality of healthcare in these countries, which was often on par with that of developed nations. However, She also pointed out some of the challenges associated with medical tourism. One of the main issues was the lack of regulation in some countries, which could result in patients receiving substandard or unsafe treatment. Dunets *et al.*, (2020), finds that some patients continue to travel for medical treatment, particularly for urgent or life-saving procedures. They highlight the importance of assessing the risks associated with medical tourism, including exposure to infectious diseases, lack of regulation and oversight in some destinations, and potential complications during and after treatment. Chambers and McIntosh (2008) conducted a study on the global trends in medical tourism. They found that medical tourism was a rapidly growing industry, with an estimated annual growth rate of 15-25%. The study identified a number of factors driving this growth, including rising healthcare costs in developed countries, long waiting times for medical procedures, and the increasing availability of affordable international travel. The study also highlighted the Importance of destination countries establishing a strong reputation for quality healthcare services, as well as building strong partnerships with healthcare providers in the source countries. They noted that many countries were competing to attract medical tourists, and that success in this industry would depend on a range of factors, including the availability of skilled medical professionals, the quality of facilities and equipment, and the overall attractiveness of the destination country as a travel destination. They note that medical tourism has become a rapidly growing industry in recent years, with an estimated market size of \$100 billion. Countries such as India, Thailand, and Malaysia are popular destinations for medical tourists seeking procedures such as cosmetic surgery, dental work, and orthopedic surgeries. Meanwhile, countries such as Mexico, Costa Rica, and Colombia are gaining popularity for medical procedures such as bariatric surgery and stem cell therapy. They note that the rise of medical tourism has also led to concerns regarding the safety and quality of medical care provided in certain destinations. To address these concerns, some countries have implemented accreditation systems for healthcare facilities that cater to medical tourists. Chhabra *et al.* (2021) conducted a systematic review of literature on the global trends in medical tourism from 2009 to 2020. The authors identified several key trends, including an increase in the number of medical tourists, a shift towards Asian destinations, and an increase in the number of medical treatments available for medical

tourists. The authors also noted a shift towards wellness tourism, with more medical tourists seeking treatments for wellness and prevention rather than solely for medical reasons. Taheri *et al.* (2021) conducted a study on the impact of COVID-19 on medical tourism in Iran. The authors found that medical tourism in Iran was severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, with a significant decrease in the number of medical tourists and revenue generated from medical tourism. The authors also noted that the pandemic led to a shift in the types of medical treatments being sought by medical tourists, with more focus on treatments related to COVID-19 prevention and treatment. Pafford (2009), on the other hand, provided an overview of medical tourism on a global level. The author discussed the various countries that have become popular destinations for medical tourists, as well as the different types of medical treatments that are commonly sought after. He also highlighted the risks and challenges associated with medical tourism, such as the potential for complications from medical procedures and the lack of standardized regulation and oversight in the industry. Ramirez de Arellano (2007) conducted a study on the global trends of medical tourism, which refers to the practice of traveling to another country for medical treatment. The study found that medical tourism is a growing industry, with an estimated 10-15 million patients traveling abroad for medical treatment each year. The study also identified several factors driving the growth of medical tourism, including the high cost of healthcare in developed countries, long waiting lists for certain procedures, and the availability of high-quality medical care in developing countries at a lower cost. In addition, the study noted that medical tourism can be seen as a form of globalization, as it involves the movement of patients and medical services across nation. Heung *et al.* (2010) conducted a study on global trends for medical tourism. The authors analyzed data from various sources, including academic literature, news articles, industry reports, and online resources, to provide a comprehensive overview of the industry. The study found that medical tourism is a rapidly growing industry, with an estimated annual growth rate of 15-25%. The study also identified several factors that are driving the growth of medical tourism, including rising healthcare costs in developed countries, long waiting times for medical procedures, and an increasing demand for cosmetic surgery and other elective procedures. However, the study also highlighted some challenges associated with medical tourism, including quality assurance issues, ethical concerns, and potential risks to patient safety (2010). Qadeer and Reddy (2013) explores the brief history of medical tourism, its evolution over time, and the factors contributing to its growth. They highlight the factors that have contributed to the growth of the Indian medical tourism industry, including the availability of high-quality medical facilities, skilled medical personnel, cost-effective treatments, and a

favorable exchange rate. R. R. Jha and G. (2013). Bhatnagar (2016) provide a comprehensive overview of the current state of medical tourism in India, including its history, growth, and the reasons why patients from around the world choose India for medical treatment. They highlight the opportunities and challenges associated with medical tourism in India. The authors discuss the advantages of India's healthcare system, including the availability of skilled medical professionals, state-of-the-art technology, and low-cost treatments. They also address the challenges faced by the industry, such as lack of standardization and regulation, safety concerns, and the need for quality assurance. A S. Karuppannan and S. M. Vishveshwara (2018), published an in-depth systematic review of the existing literature on medical tourism, focusing on the trends, motivations, and challenges of this phenomenon. They highlight the increasing trend of medical tourism, particularly in developing countries, where patients seek affordable healthcare services with high-quality outcomes. The authors also highlight the various motivations that drive patients to engage in medical tourism, including cost savings, the desire for better quality care, and accessibility to specialized treatments. They also explore the potential challenges associated with medical tourism, such as the lack of regulations, the risk of medical complications, and the ethical concerns surrounding the exploitation of healthcare workers in developing countries. R. Srivastava and A. Mahapatra (2019), highlight India's strengths in healthcare, such as its large pool of medical professionals, modern infrastructure, and cost-effectiveness. They also identify challenges facing the industry, such as the lack of standardization and regulation, ethical concerns, and quality assurance. They analyze the present status of medical tourism in India, including its growth trajectory, the types of treatments and procedures offered, and the types of patients who come to India for medical treatment. They also discuss the economic impact of medical tourism on India's healthcare system and the overall economy. S. Goel and A. Gupta (2020) , identify gaps in the literature and highlight some fields where further research is needed to better understand the impact of medical tourism on the healthcare system and the economy. They also explore the economic benefits and costs of medical tourism in India, including job creation, revenue generation, and the potential negative impacts on local communities and the environment. They analyze the role of various stakeholders, such as governments, healthcare providers, and patients, in shaping the development of the medical tourism industry in India.

4. Growth trend of India's health care sector

Over a last 1.5 decades, the health sector in India experienced a significant growth trend attributed to medical tourism especially in terms of the Compound Annual

Growth Rate (CAGR). This growth has propelled healthcare to become one of the most substantial sectors in the Indian economy, contributing significantly to both revenue generation and employment opportunities.

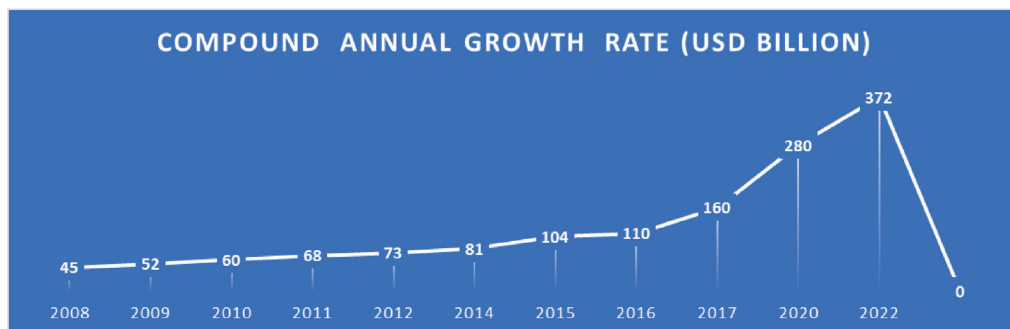


Figure 2: Compound annual growth rate in USD

During this period, India emerged as a popular destination for medical tourism due to several factors. Firstly, India offers a wide range of medical treatments and procedures at comparatively lower costs compared to Western countries. This cost advantage attracted a large number of international patients seeking affordable healthcare options. Secondly, India has a well-developed healthcare infrastructure with state-of-the-art hospitals and medical facilities. Renowned hospitals and healthcare providers in major cities like Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, and Bangalore have gained recognition for their advanced medical technology, skilled doctors, and high standards of care. Moreover, India boasts a large pool of highly qualified and experienced medical professionals, including doctors, surgeons, and nurses, who are proficient in English. This language advantage made it easier for international patients to communicate and understand the treatment procedures, creating a sense of comfort and trust. The Indian government also played a significant role in promoting medical tourism by simplifying visa procedures and introducing initiatives to streamline healthcare services for international patients. This included the creation of medical visa categories, collaborations with foreign governments, and the establishment of dedicated healthcare zones. As a result of these factors, the health sector in India experienced a substantial growth trend in medical tourism from 2014 to 2022. The influx of international patients contributed to increased revenue for hospitals, healthcare providers, and ancillary services such as transportation, accommodation, and tourism. This growth also led to the creation of employment opportunities and the overall development of the healthcare industry in India. However, it's important to note that the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and subsequent years had a significant impact on international travel and medical tourism

globally, including India. Restrictions on travel and concerns regarding health risks resulted in a temporary decline in medical tourism. The full recovery of the medical tourism sector is expected to take some time as travel restrictions are gradually lifted and confidence in international travel is restored.

4.1. Import and export of India's pharmaceutical sector and its relation with medical tourism

According to the report of Exim bank, pharmaceuticals exports are one of the top 20 export items from India . During the period of 2016-2020 ,pharmaceuticals exports grew at a CAGR of 5.98% and imports grew at a CAGR of 9.21%.india is one of the top 10 countries in the export of pharmaceuticals .During the period of 2015-2020, India's pharmaceutical sector experienced significant export and import activities. India is known as the "Pharmacy of the World" and is one of the largest producers and exporters of generic drugs globally.

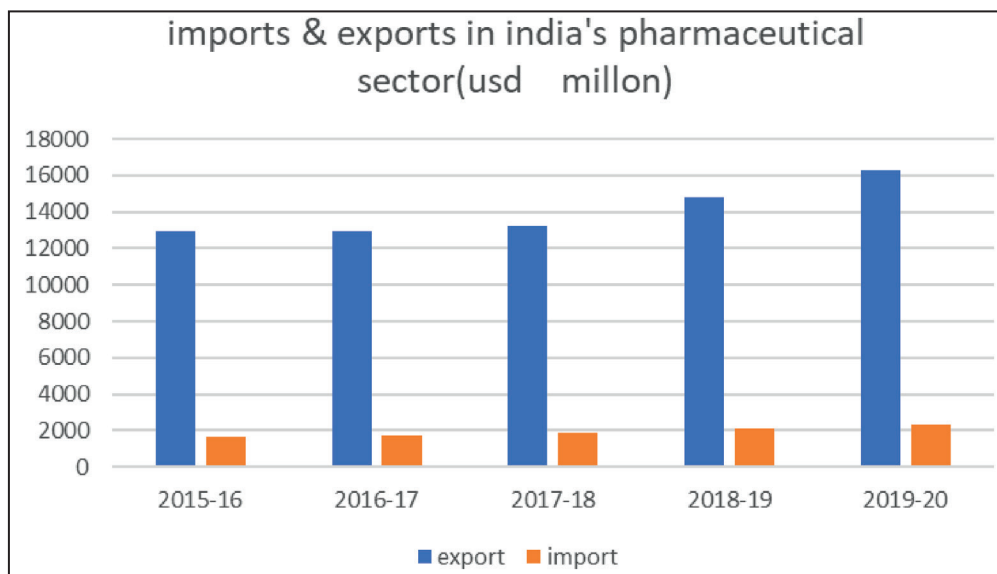


Figure 3: Import and export of India's pharmaceutical sector in USD

India's pharmaceutical exports witnessed a steady growth trajectory from 2015 to 2020. In 2015-16, pharmaceutical exports from India were valued at approximately \$ 13 billion. By 2019-20, the exports reached around \$16.4 billion, demonstrating a consistent upward trend. Key export destinations included the United States, European Union countries, Africa, and various Asian countries. Indian pharmaceutical companies primarily exported generic drugs, active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs),

and formulations. India's pharmaceutical sector heavily relies on the import of raw materials, bulk drugs, and intermediates for drug manufacturing . During 2015-2020, there was a significant increase in imports due to the dependence on foreign sources for certain critical APIs and intermediates. The major countries from which India imported pharmaceutical products were China, the United States, Germany, Switzerland, and Italy. India imported both raw materials and finished formulations to meet domestic demand and supplement its manufacturing capabilities. Overall, India's pharmaceutical sector demonstrated a positive trade balance, with higher exports compared to imports, contributing to the country's position as a key player in the global pharmaceutical market.

The relationship between India's pharmaceutical industry and medical tourism is twofold. First, India's reputation as a hub for high-quality and affordable medical treatment has led to the growth of medical tourism in the country. Foreign patients travel to India to avail themselves of medical services, including surgeries, treatments, and access to affordable medications. The availability of a wide range of pharmaceutical products at competitive prices further enhances India's attractiveness as a medical tourism destination. Second, medical tourists often require medications during their treatment and recovery. India's robust pharmaceutical industry ensures a ready supply of pharmaceutical products for both domestic and international patients. This availability of medicines, often at lower costs compared to other countries, contributes to the overall appeal of India's medical tourism sector. In summary, India's pharmaceutical industry is closely linked to import and export activities, with the country being a major exporter of pharmaceutical products. The industry's role in providing affordable medications contributes to the growth of medical tourism in India, as it attracts foreign patients seeking cost-effective healthcare solutions.

4.2. Medical value travel and medical tourists arrival in India

India's medical tourism industry is growing rapidly and was valued at approximately USD 5-6 billion in mid-2020. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, experts predicted that it would reach around USD 9 billion by 2020. Furthermore, the industry is expected to continue expanding and reach a value of USD 13 billion by 2022. India is ranked 7th globally and 3rd in the Asia-Pacific region for wellness tourism in 2017. The country's popularity as a medical tourism destination can be attributed to factors such as the presence of excellent hospitals and highly skilled medical professionals who provide high-quality healthcare. In addition, the cost of treatments in India is comparatively lower than in other countries. India is also renowned for its expertise in alternative systems of medicine and experiences a growing global demand for wellness

services like Yoga and meditation. Furthermore, India has 37 hospitals accredited by the Joint Commission International (JCI) and 513 hospitals accredited by the National Accreditation Board for Hospitals & Healthcare Providers (NABH). The clinical outcomes achieved in leading Indian hospitals are comparable to those of internationally recognized medical facilities.

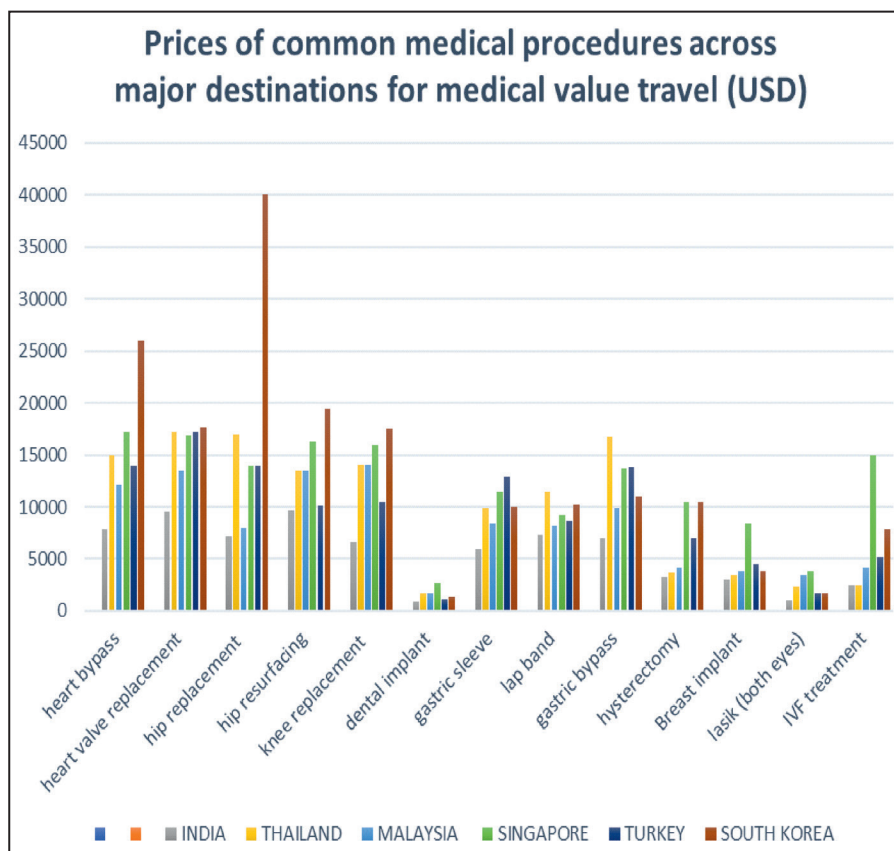


Figure 4: Prices of common medical procedures in across major destination in the world

In 2019, there was a noticeable uptick in the count of international tourists arriving in India for medical reasons, reaching around 697,000, which stands in contrast to the figure of 495,056 recorded in 2017. Throughout history, India has consistently drawn medical visitors from various nations, including but not limited to Afghanistan, Pakistan, Oman, Bangladesh, Maldives, Nigeria, Kenya, and Iraq. The medical specialties that hold magnetic appeal for medical travelers encompass cardiac care, orthopedics, organ transplantation, neurosciences, oncology, and bariatrics. India's allure as a medical tourism destination is amplified by its active promotion

of alternative medicine, rejuvenating therapies, wellness initiatives, and preventive healthcare. This distinct draw beckons patients from across the globe who are seeking treatment within India.

An integral sector within the medical tourism industry is wellness tourism, which is observing substantial expansion within India, tapping into the nation's proficiency in Ayurveda and Yoga. Prominent entities such as Apollo and the Manipal Group are establishing wellness hubs with a pronounced focus on conventional healthcare treatments, and the establishment of Ayurveda centers is witnessing proliferation, particularly in the southern states of India. Eminent tour operators have also recognized the significance of Ayurveda in attracting medical tourists and have seamlessly incorporated it into their offerings.

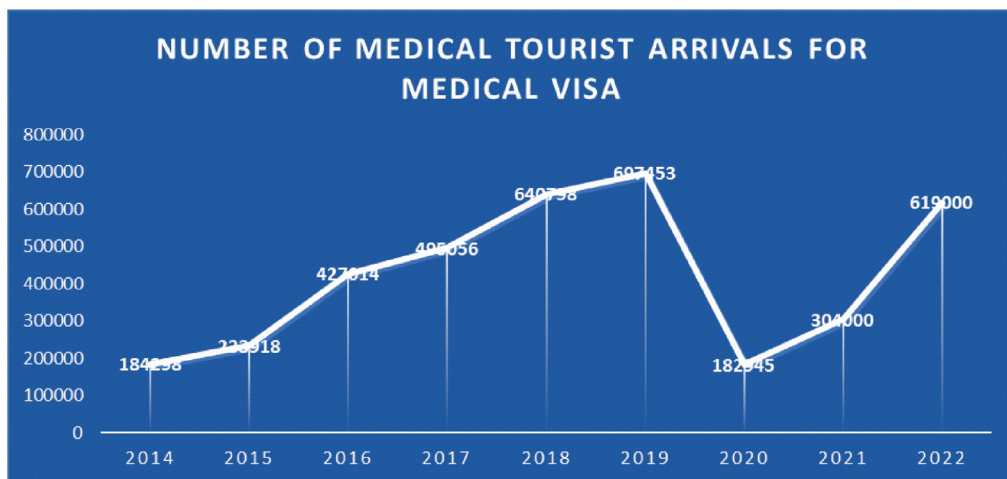


Figure 5: Number of medical tourist arrivals in India on medical visa

The rising influx of medical tourists to India has yielded substantial economic advantages, fostering the expansion of the healthcare sector, encompassing hospitals, clinics, and specialized medical facilities. This growth trajectory has translated into job generation and the broadening of healthcare-related services, consequently bolstering prospects for employment. Furthermore, medical tourism has exerted a stimulating influence on various other segments of the economy. It has provided a boost to the hospitality industry, given that patients and their companions necessitate lodging during their treatment and recovery phases. Correspondingly, the transportation sector has profited from escalated air travel and ground transportation requisites. In addition, medical tourism has acted as a conduit for foreign exchange inflow to India. The expenditures made by international patients on medical treatments, accommodation,

transportation, and supplementary services directly contribute to the augmentation of the nation's foreign currency reserves. In a comprehensive context, the significance of medical tourism and the mounting count of medical tourists in India over the past 15 years have orchestrated a substantial affirmative impact on the economy. This phenomenon has propelled the expansion of the healthcare sector, propagated avenues for employment, invigorated interconnected industries, and substantiated foreign exchange earnings.

4.3. Employment generation potential of health sector

The healthcare sector in India has experienced rapid expansion in recent times, resulting in significant job opportunities. According to a collaborative report by KPMG and FICCI, it ascended to the position of the fifth-largest employer in 2015, directly engaging 4.7 million individuals. The NSDC's forecast anticipates that the healthcare domain will engage around 7.5 million professionals directly, leading to the creation of nearly 2.7 million fresh positions from 2017 to 2022, averaging over half a million job openings annually. Beyond the immediate effects on employment and economic progression, the healthcare industry's career avenues offer supplementary positive impacts, notably the potential to enhance female workforce involvement. The WHO's High-Level Commission on Health Employment and Economic Growth, in its 2016 report, emphasized the potential for women's employment in the healthcare realm. Furthermore, the healthcare sector's influence extends indirectly, fostering complementary employment possibilities and inducing economic growth beyond its own realm. The World Health Organization's assessment reveals that investing in the health sector yields a USD 0.77 return in economic expansion through indirect and induced consequences. These ramifications involve constructing infrastructure, procuring equipment, and nurturing skills via education and training. This, in turn, fuels increased manufacturing and service outputs, thus generating additional job prospects.

Within India, the burgeoning insurance sector and the assimilation of digital technologies within healthcare will also trigger employment. For example, the implementation of the National Digital Health Mission (NDHM) will necessitate personnel skilled in digitizing medical records at various tiers. Proficiency in Health Information Technology (HIT), Health Informatics, and Medical Informatics will prove indispensable for supporting such endeavors. Furthermore, the introduction of Ayushman Bharat in 2018 has further expanded the job landscape. The initiative's aim to establish 150,000 Health and Wellness Centres (HWCs) across the nation, each managed by a team comprising a Mid-Level Health Provider (MLP) and other

healthcare personnel, will necessitate approximately 150,000 certified MLPs to oversee HWC management.

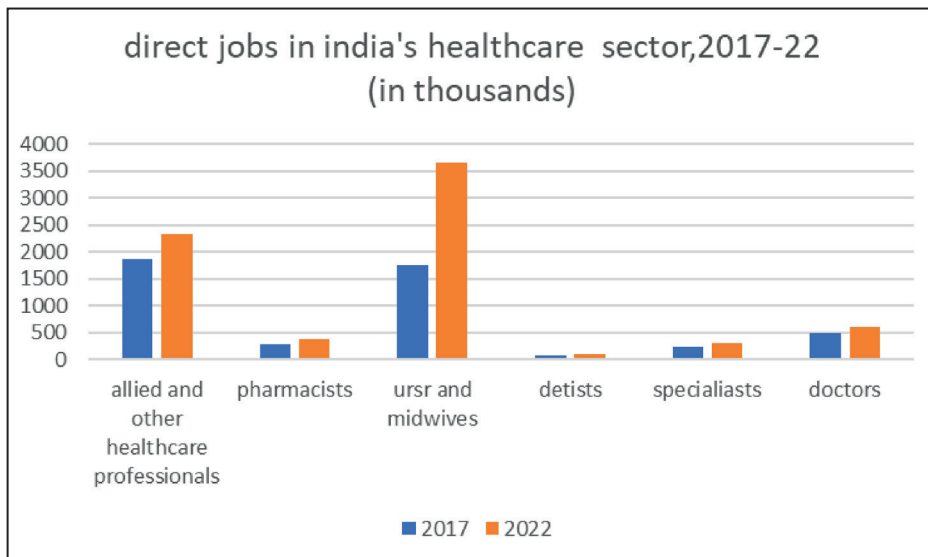


Figure 6: Direct jobs in India's health care sector

Recent data indicates a consistent rise in medical tourism within India. In 2021, India's medical tourism sector held a value of approximately \$9 billion, with projections indicating growth to \$16 billion by 2024. The escalating influx of medical tourists has triggered an amplified requirement for healthcare professionals and auxiliary staff. The ongoing shift toward demand-side financing and strategic procurement is set to create diverse job prospects. As the PM-JAY initiative expands and endeavors to enhance health insurance coverage gain momentum, novel positions will emerge. These roles will center on augmenting the competencies of health insurance entities and healthcare providers through training and skill development. Additionally, Indian healthcare establishments have invested in cutting-edge infrastructure and advanced medical technologies to cater to medical tourists' needs. This move has brought forth employment opportunities for technicians, biomedical engineers, and IT specialists specializing in healthcare systems. Furthermore, Indian healthcare institutions have fostered partnerships with renowned international hospitals and research centers. These collaborations have fostered the exchange of knowledge, training initiatives, and research avenues, thereby broadening career horizons for Indian healthcare professionals. On the whole, the impact of medical tourism on India has translated into positive implications for medical employment prospects, fostering jobs across

diverse healthcare sectors and contributing to the healthcare industry's expansion. As insurance programs undergo expansion, job opportunities will surface for professionals like actuaries, coders, and data analysts. These individuals will play a pivotal role in executing strategic procurement contracts and identifying fraudulent activities. The Ayushman Bharat initiatives will also promote the training of nurses and allied health professionals, enabling them to provide adept auxiliary services in secondary and tertiary care. Moreover, the rapid growth of India's home healthcare sector is poised to generate substantial employment possibilities. This labor-intensive realm has the potential to create around 200,000 blue-collar jobs annually, spanning 50 cities in India. Skilled patient attendants and caregivers, including those hailing from rural areas, can find employment in this sector. Additionally, this sector is poised to offer roughly 50,000 employment openings annually for women, spanning roles such as nursing and caregiving.

5. Discussion

In recent years, medical tourism, which involves traveling to another country for medical treatment, has become a notable catalyst for India's economic advancement. India's appeal to medical tourists is underscored by various factors, including top-tier healthcare facilities, proficient medical practitioners, cost-effective therapies, and an extensive array of procedures. The driving force behind the success of medical tourism in India is its financial advantage. In contrast to developed nations, medical procedures in India come at notably lower costs. This affordability magnetizes a substantial number of patients who seek superior healthcare at a fraction of the price they would pay in their home countries. This economic appeal, coupled with access to advanced medical technologies, solidifies India's attractiveness to patients worldwide. India's healthcare infrastructure is robust, featuring numerous hospitals and clinics equipped to provide exceptional medical care. Many of these institutions boast international accreditations, assuring patients of treatment that aligns with global benchmarks. Moreover, India is home to a substantial pool of adept doctors, surgeons, and medical professionals renowned for their expertise across various medical specialties. The reputation of these professionals and their international recognition fuel the growth of medical tourism in the country. Acknowledging the economic potential of medical tourism, the Indian government has actively encouraged its expansion. Measures such as simplifying visa procedures, establishing dedicated medical tourism departments, and establishing specialized healthcare zones have been adopted to entice more international patients. These initiatives have translated into heightened patient inflows, generating revenue for healthcare providers and ancillary services, including travel, hospitality, and tourism.

Additionally, the impact of medical tourism extends positively to the Indian economy. As patients seek medical care in India, their expenditures on accommodation, transportation, food, and other services contribute to the local economy. This, in turn, fosters growth in related industries and creates job opportunities for local communities. Nevertheless, it's important to address the challenges posed by the growth of medical tourism, including infrastructure development, quality maintenance, patient safety, and patient volume management. Collaborative efforts between healthcare providers and the government are essential to navigate these challenges and uphold India's status as a preferred medical tourism destination. On the whole, medical tourism has emerged as a driving force for India's economic progress, leveraging the country's healthcare prowess and financial appeal. The recent patterns indicate a rising influx of international patients seeking both quality and cost-effective medical treatments. With strategic planning, investments, and collaborations, medical tourism holds the potential to sustain and further propel India's economic growth and empowerment.

6. Conclusion and Findings

Medical tourism has become a vital driver of economic advancement in India, benefitting from the potential for employment within the health sector, the surge in medical value travel, and the rising influx of medical tourists. This growth trajectory reinforces India's reputation as a preferred medical tourism hub. Notably, the health sector has proven to be a robust source of job opportunities. The domain of medical tourism has catalyzed diverse employment avenues, encompassing healthcare professionals, support staff, hospitality personnel, transportation workers, and ancillary services providers. This demand for skilled workers in various domains has spurred job creation, contributing to economic empowerment for individuals and communities alike. India's medical value travel, denoting the inflow of foreign patients seeking medical treatment, has exhibited consistent growth. The country offers an extensive array of medical services, including intricate procedures, at a fraction of the cost compared to developed nations. This cost advantage, combined with top-notch medical infrastructure and skilled healthcare practitioners, has magnetized a substantial influx of medical tourists. Over time, the number of medical tourists arriving in India has shown substantial growth. Patients from around the world, including the United States, Europe, Africa, and the Middle East, have opted to travel to India for both cost-effective and high-quality medical treatments. This surge in medical tourists has not only contributed to foreign exchange earnings but also heightened tourism revenue and fostered enhanced trade and investment prospects. India's healthcare sector has achieved remarkable expansion, both in terms of infrastructural development and technological innovation. The

nation has witnessed the establishment of cutting-edge hospitals, clinics, and medical research centers equipped with state-of-the-art medical technologies and equipment. This growth has not only enhanced healthcare provisions for local citizens but also magnetized international patients seeking advanced medical interventions.

Overall, the burgeoning medical tourism sector in India stands as a pivotal contributor to economic upliftment. The potential for job creation within the health sector, the increasing prominence of medical value travel, and the upward trajectory of India's healthcare domain collectively consolidate its reputation as a sought-after medical tourism destination. As this sector continues to flourish, it is anticipated to further stimulate economic progress, foster employment avenues, and position India as a global beacon in the realm of healthcare.

7. Future of Medical Tourism in India

The outlook for medical tourism in India presents a promising trajectory. India has made substantial investments in advanced healthcare infrastructure, encompassing modern hospitals, clinics, and specialized medical centers. Equipped with cutting-edge medical technologies and staffed by highly skilled healthcare professionals, these facilities stand out. India is renowned for providing cost-effective medical treatments, rendering it an attractive choice for international patients seeking quality care while saving costs. The country has positioned itself as a sought-after hub for various medical specialties, spanning cardiac surgeries, orthopedics, organ transplants, fertility treatments, and cosmetic procedures. The diverse array of specialized medical professionals caters to a global patient base. India boasts a wellspring of adept doctors, surgeons, nurses, and medical staff, many of whom have received training from esteemed domestic and international institutions. The proficiency and expertise of these healthcare practitioners bolster the care provided to medical tourists. Recognizing the potential of medical tourism, the Indian government has instituted policies to foster its growth. This encompasses streamlined visa processes, medical tourism facilitation centers, and incentives for hospitals to attract international patients. India's rich cultural heritage and tourist attractions enhance the medical tourism experience, allowing patients and their families to delve into historical sites, cultural immersion, and scenic beauty. Embracing healthcare technology, India is incorporating telemedicine and e-health platforms to extend medical services' accessibility. This enables medical tourists to connect remotely with doctors, seeking consultations and follow-up care from their home countries. While a promising future for medical tourism in India is on the horizon, challenges such as upholding quality standards, enhancing infrastructure in remote regions, and ensuring patient satisfaction require attention. Collaborative

efforts from the government, healthcare providers, and stakeholders are essential to address these hurdles and strengthen India's status as a prime medical tourism destination. The growth of medical tourism can serve as a gauge of India's healthcare sector progress, attracting global recognition. This trend can stimulate investments in healthcare infrastructure, research, and development, heightening healthcare service quality. However, the outlook depends on factors including government policies, regulatory frameworks, infrastructure progress, and global economic conditions. Upholding and enhancing healthcare services' quality, combined with effective marketing approaches, will be pivotal in sustaining and augmenting medical tourism growth in India.

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