

HEALTH TOURISM SPAS: A STUDY OF DELHI NCR

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Abstract

With the expansion of the concept of healthcare services to include services such as alternate healing systems, naturopathy, yoga etc. there has been a proliferation of services and facilities like spas where leisure and health are delivered as a wholesome package. When clients from across borders travel to avail of these, it has been termed 'health tourism' alternatively called. "Health and Wellness tourism". This conceptual definition shows the importance placed on the wellness aspect of healthcare and the growth in popularity of this special segment. The various stakeholders in the concept use the terms wellness tourism and health tourism interchangeably. The paper also depicts the profile of the clients of the modern spas as well as the profile of the health and wellness tourist. A survey was conducted on Spagoers using a structured questionnaire schedule, to investigate the motives, the regularity, and the situational factors of the spa visit in addition to their other habits with respect to healthcare, in Delhi NCR (National Capital Region). The information collected through the survey, was used to create a spa goers profile in Delhi NCR, subsequently in this consumer group clusters were determined using a classification technique. This study demonstrates that the popularity and proliferation of the spas and their consumer base is a reflection of the new beliefs and ideology about health care and health management. This research illustrates that the concept of wellness includes not only a physical and psychological aspects but also social dimension such as spending quality time with family and friends. Therefore it may be concluded that the wellness concept though identified closely with modern spas, is multidimensional that covers a wide array of practices in which leisure time is the central theme. This paper focuses on the growing importance of the spas in the modern society evident in the growth of demand and supply; as also to develop a better comprehension of spa users profile in Delhi NCR on the basis of the survey.

Keywords: Health Tourism, Healthcare Services, Naturopathy, Wellness Tourism, Health Management.

Introduction

Patients from around the world especially, the middle eastern countries, India's neighboring countries, the USA and some African countries visit India for medical treatment, attracted by the combination of quality treatment at a fraction of the cost of similar treatment in their own country along with the world class services. The private players in the healthcare sector in India are pushing "high tech healing" as a tourist attraction. This has been termed as Medical Tourism. The government of India through its Ministry of Tourism is spurring the Medical Tourism operators to pitch the idea of availing world class but low cost treatment by travelling to India. There is massive expansion going on in the Indian healthcare industry, while the country is already seen as a leading medical tourism destination. According to a report of CII-Grant Thornton, the Indian medical tourism industry would grow from USD 3 billion in 2015 to USD 8 billion by 2020. The concept of Spa has been embedded deeply as a post-

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