

ENTREPRENEURIAL TOOLS AND NEW APPROACHES IN MEDICAL TOURISM

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Abstract: The healthcare tourism, which concerns medical tourism along with health tourism, is a growing industry in the context of current business globalization. Many of the areas of wellness and health are widespread, though a handful of individuals are practically inaccessible due to social economics and politics. The patients can sometimes be considered tourists as well, especially when they have foreign individuals who are in the same area for health purposes. Thus, this paper described the profiling and pricing strategies of entrepreneurs as participants, helping the marketing model reach the ambitious objectives of product innovation and competitive advantage in creating new products for health tourists. Since the marketing strategy is based on reaction, the proposed objectives comprise a pivotal focus on a co-creation platform. The academic specifications exert great rigor on scholarly contributions concerning the tools and enactments that apply to entrepreneurship. Furthermore, scholars support these by comparing entrepreneurial models and hype leadership in the medical tourism sector, from November 2024 through March 2025. Average selling plans consider responsive web design with features such as AI chat assistance, federal telemedicine content with assets helps, and real-time online confirmation.

Keywords: medical tourism, marketing strategies, health tourism, medical tourism providers, medical entrepreneurial tools

JEL Classification: I11, I12, I18, L83

Introduction

For all around world, happiness is a value key for daily living with health challenges, economics levels, security assets, and travel accessibility (Ionescu-Feleaga, L. *et al.*, 2022). Firstly, happiness is viewed as an interchangeable term for well-being, however, is frequently significantly conditioned by culture of nation, family social values, region religion, political factors, and the approaching digital future. The behavior of digital users serves to understand how is built organizational behavior in real life. Meanwhile, the conduct of digital organizations shows us fresh ideas about how the physical world operates. Digitalization changes human interactions, medical services, schools, and the understanding of truth and falsehood; it frequently changes us. The Digital Happiness Report involve the authenticity in social media, and how are working the influencers, the content trusting, the effect of persuasion or motivated information “How do we work with fake influencers with fake followers and fake engagement in a more authentic way?” (Van Doorn, M., *et al.*, 2023). Shared healthcare and travel experiences are often viewed as pieces of puzzle of personal branding, subject to evaluation by others on online platforms. Personal healthcare experiences are viewed as narratives frequently shared on social media where they undergo public reviews. Daniel Kahneman mentioned that social media has transformed travel experiences into collective memory collections (Layard, 2024). Providers measure every day the number of new daily followers and viewers, as a marketing variable in digital marketing, leveraging ASMR (Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response) through images and sounds. Their audience is captivated by sense of sounds as a peace and relaxation for visitors (Portas Ruiz, 2022). This technology innovation also involves entrepreneurs with the digital skills that create a virtual world with genuine values that capture their natural attention. The most exciting attention

values in healthcare tourists are personalized services immediately, making clients feel they are fully trustworthy and influential decision-makers upon the time-sharing. Entrepreneurs invest their time and value budget for create an authentic online environment to captivate potential clients and keep them to co-create this e-system to interact with each other. Co-creation, entrepreneurs-online visitors, help providers to create personalized services during interactions.

Literature review

Traveling for health creates new opportunities for entrepreneurs to develop innovative strategies for daily activities, such as domestic medical tourism, as an important economic regional economic field (Hudson, S. and Li, X., 2012), viewed as a direct source of foreign income to contribute to the development of the local economy. The concept of travelling for health, for low-cost products, or for high-quality products and services, for qualified professionals in healthcare creates Medical Tourism (Kaushik, D. & Rustagi, A., 2020).

Exploration of medical tourism encompasses medical tourism networking (Azmi, K.M. & Awang, K.W., 2012), medical tourism destinations, and medical tourism approaches to patients viewed as tourists, as well as the medical tourism branding process, which is considered an important criterion in political organization.

Hospitality is a fundamental characteristic of healthcare and tourism; the process of delivering services to clients, the image of entrepreneur in each interaction with customer and their families, provide hospitality in healthcare services and tourism services, and it is vital for perceived value, client satisfaction, and loyalty (Sadeh, E., & Garkaz, M., 2019).

The literature discusses the transformation of tourism destinations, the perceived creation of smart medical cities, the co-creation of medical tourism destinations (Khan, M.J., Chelliah, S., Haron, M.S., 2016) to attract patients and investors, driven by destination accessibility and available tourism products to every need.

Travel motivations and the vital importance of traveling to tourism destinations emphasize real opportunities for providers to create individualized model activities (Zarei, A., Feiz. D., Minbashrazgah, M.M., Maleki, F., 2021).

The daily transformation in the distribution and sale of travel products, and the inevitability of partnerships between digital and travel providers, emerge in the e-tourism ontology with a trustworthy, and high ethical standards in online activity (Frikha, M., Mhiri, M., Zarai, M., Gargouri, F., 2016).

The business's profitability develops from the perspective competing with the creativity of the providers to tailor an individual model with the combination of the personal business assets and the professionals' qualification, the product or service benefits, the consumer's leisure-time taste, the business's image, and the national health policy framework (Medhekar, A., Wong, H.Y., Hall, J., 2015).

Health tourism's share in the EU28 is about 5% of total tourism and a maximum of 0.3% of the economy. The domestic share is considerably higher than the international share. Increasing the health share would improve the sustainability and labor qualifications, reduce travel seasonality, and reduce health costs by promoting prevention and reducing dependence on pharmaceuticals (Mainil, T., *et al.*, 2017). In the EU28, health tourism brings in EUR €46.9 billion in income, accounting for 4.6% of total tourism receipts and 0.33% of GDP. The distribution of total EU health tourism income among the member states is shown in *Figure 1* below. Only five countries—Germany, France, Poland, Italy, and Sweden—are responsible for over 75% of the EU's health tourism revenues.

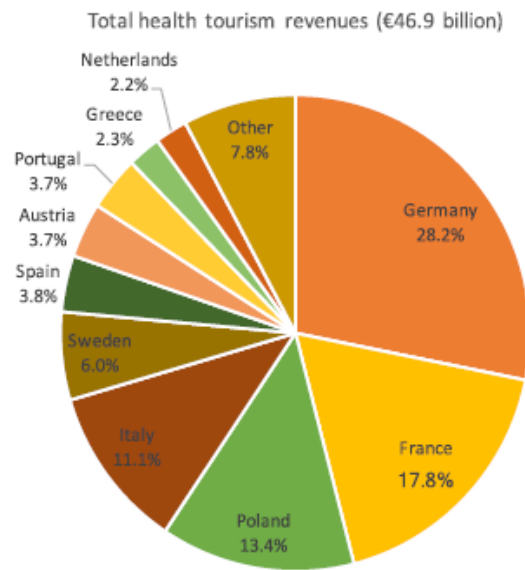


Figure 1. Total EU28 health tourism revenue.

Source: (GlobalHealthcareAccreditation, 2023)

Compared to the previous decade, the number of health tourists has increased and the faster pace in the wellness tourism segment. For example, the Medical Tourism Association determines that annually 14 million people travel for medical reasons around the world, the industry value was around USD 58.6 billion in 2020 and is anticipated to rise to USD 142.2 billion by 2025, with an annual growth rate hiking to 12 percent (CAGR) (GlobalHealthcareAccreditation, 2023).

The health and tourism sectors are now challenged providing their business continuity in turbulent conditions of inventing new brands seeking ways to build resilience and increase the competitiveness of the tourism destination (Kavoura, A., *et al.*, 2023, p. 44). Travelling for well-being creates experiences that meet modern new expectations and provides opportunities to develop new tourist attraction areas (Nechita, F., *et al.*, 2019), based on tourists' beliefs and travel experiences, and the characteristics of tourism destinations, services, offers, and infrastructure (Gartner, 1994). Modern image formation is based on their promotion with the help of modern communication and marketing strategies', such as electronic word of mouth, the provision of information on the Internet, and the transfer of information by travelers. Their ultimate goal is achieved if there are happy tourists who wish to return to your destination (Jebbouri, A. *et al.*, 2022). The attractiveness of tourist destinations is shown by social, economic, and environmental opportunities and wellbeing content promoted by local actors who directly or indirectly establish leadership in local communities, leading to significant improvements in healthcare (Firza, N., *et al.*, 2024). Do to communication technology, attractions, and local cultural authenticity, the influence on tourist satisfaction has improved within an expanding framework, is a multidimensional providers experience evidenced by the value of tourism destinations' identity (Lemmi, E., Deri, M.G., 2020). Stakeholders can utilize innovative technology as virtual reality, augmented reality and video content marketing assets to craft narratives that connect the local community with visitors, renewed the discovering way of world, mentioning reconfiguration of tourism systems to align with the principles of sustainable tourism and resilience (Haller A. P., Tacu-Harsan, G.D., 2021).

Health tourism is a vital source of jobs within the healthcare industry and a significant indicator of revenue generation (Shaygani, F., *et al.*, 2023). Developing guidelines for

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multilingual online content that includes information, on facilities offering online services, appointments, external activities, prices, international standard certificates, and qualified teams would strengthen the provision of such information in a more user-friendly, interactive manner (Moghavvemi, S., Ormond, M, *et al.*, 2017). Social, economic, and environmental challenges sometimes are viewed as opportunities, and they are transformed in process to upgrade urban spaces into smart tourism destinations, it is valuable part of the transition from traditional to modern by innovative strategies (Ji, X., Chen J. & Zhang, H., 2024).

First, in terms of health modernization, from patient’s perspective, health tourism is likely to offer more choices, increase the availability of top-quality medical resources, and enhance the industry’s international competitiveness. In addition, using a segmentation approach, the firm should concentrate on the elements in which it has a comparative advantage. *Figure 2* shows the Milwaukee asbestos savings. The savings, unfortunately, dependent on the tourism destination and the requested healthcare services. In other words, in this aspect, comparisons between the selected instances and the US vary drastically: Malaysia has a range of 65-80%, while India’s ranges from 65-90%. From this study, it may also conclude that the primary goal is to increase the number of insurance companies or insurance offerings.

Procedure	US	UK	India	Singapore
Angioplasty	57000	21000-27000	11000	18500
Angiography	2500 – 3000	3000	600	1000
Hip replacement	43000	43000-46000	9000	12000
Knee replacement	40000	36000-38000	6000-9000	12000
Open Heart(CABG)	100000	43000	7500	9600
IVF	10000-15000	7000-10000	3000-6000	7000
Face lift	20000	21000	3100	6250
Heart valve Replacement	160000	150000	9000	12500
Breast Reduction	10000	11000	2200	8000
Bone Marrow Transplant	250000	215000	60000	80000-100000
Liver Transplant	250000	215000	60000	80000-100000
Kidney Transplant	250000	215000	60000	80000-100000
Dental Implants	250000	215000	60000	80000-100000

Figure 2. Treatment costs in different tourism destinations (USD).

Source: (HealthTourismStatistics, 2018)

As shown in Figure 3, research has emphasized the primary challenges in managing tourism destinations, including healthcare crises (viral diseases, epidemics, or pandemics), economic and financial crises, disasters, global conditions, and euthanasia, along with positive factors such as innovation, public health policies, tourism economics, and tourist behavior (Vong, C., *et al.*, 2021).

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Source: (MercureHealthcareInternational, 2023).

Results and analysis

As the respondents indicated, the performance of medical tourism relies on effective leadership, a diverse array of professionals, and an innovative approach to understanding tourists' preferences, needs, and behaviors. *Table 1* outlines the challenges and opportunities for creating profitable health tourism products from entrepreneurial perspectives in this industry.

Table 1. Respondents' opinions on the challenges and opportunities in creating health tourism products.

Healthcare is about:	Medical treatments and surgical procedures abroad; the health benefits of natural resources; wellness and spa resorts offering individualized programs run by qualified professionals; health recovery in nature; health improvement through forest walking; beauty and aesthetic procedures administered by experts; aromatherapy and alternative medicine at seaside accommodation; yoga, slow tourism, and meditation; religious activities with detox plans managed by nutritionist programs.
Challenges in the business market	<p>The health and tourism industries are differentiated by the preferences of segmented tourist groups in areas with unique tourism characteristics, limited freshwater resources, agricultural land, and heavily polluted urban environments. <i>Sludge is no longer just an appealing option for retirees. The changes in products containing sludge are also drawing interest from young people.</i></p> <p>The COVID-19 pandemic has altered healthcare trends and tourist demographics. <i>Depression, anxiety, and lifestyle have emerged as strategic targets in the tourism product policy.</i></p> <p>These regulations should address location and density, isolate visitors who have contracted communicable diseases, and address other hygiene concerns. They should also ensure that the tourism and healthcare sectors do not harm the environment. <i>The lack of health education leads to more trips from areas with limited access to urban centers that offer a range of healthcare services.</i></p> <p>Specialized training is necessary for gainful employment, leadership, and collaborative innovation in regions with high unemployment and insufficient workforce training. <i>Traditional authentication can help create services that enhance wellbeing and foster new lifestyles for Romanians and others.</i></p> <p>Small enterprises are the backbone of visitors' experiences at every destination, even when major players and international investors provide popular destination packages. Small enterprises are vital for the local economy in achieving sustainability goals. <i>Resilience is an asset that enables tourism intermediaries to enhance the design of specific tourist packages, thereby creating tourism opportunities for destinations.</i></p> <p>Tourism needs to be planned appropriately to benefit the industry, the environment, health, and well-being. <i>Health services require facilitators or advisors to create personalized packages without wasting time and resources on unnecessary tourist services, thereby attracting new customers.</i></p> <p>Tourists seek new or unique experiences, so resources such as water quality, bathing water quality, and the appropriate use of natural resources and resort development can be integrated into new projects from the outset of tour planning. <i>We must establish value for national products, natural resources, and a team of professionals across various specialties rather than relying on a high price to demonstrate product quality.</i></p> <p>Safety concerns regarding travel often arise from the international financial crisis or events related to soft-target terrorism.</p>

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	<p>The intensive exploitation of tourism resources necessitates visiting taxes for multiple travel destinations to protect local revenues and the authenticity of the destination.</p> <p><i>The tourist market is oversaturated, with numerous services that cause consumers to waste time selecting and evaluating their options. Additionally, destinations are looking to limit tourist numbers by imposing access fees. The local population is weary of accommodation and food, expressing a desire for these services to be complemented by relaxation facilities, a pleasant atmosphere, fresh air, qualified staff, nutrition programs, digital technology, and the removal of language barriers.</i></p> <p>Ongoing concerns include environmental disruption, excessive and unconventional construction, seasonality of tourism, decreased tourism flows, poorly planned advertising programs that disregard ethical standards for patients, messages promoting inexpensive healthcare treatments, and changes in the local atmosphere due to the arrival of travelers and businesses that do not respect the area's culture and charm.</p> <p>The concept of tourism has evolved, introducing new forms of travel that cater to travelers' needs while reducing tour costs.</p> <p><i>The tourist seeks happiness, a sense of well-being, new knowledge, satisfaction, and a connection between expenses and experiences, from planning to returning home safely. The demand for educational information, which is essential to understand before the trip, and its distribution online serves as an attraction for the product rather than for the entrepreneur. The tourist desires support and guidance; he seeks empathy in addressing his concerns and shaping his lifestyle to stay fashionable and healthier emotionally and physically.</i></p> <p>Each tourism entity functions as an organization that directly or indirectly promotes culture and health and wellness travel. They can and should influence national and regional tourism policy-making without directly impacting public healthcare for locals.</p> <p>The challenges of collaboration, building trust, and exchanging information, best practices, and experiences.</p> <p>Tourism and entrepreneurship are both interrelated economic factors shaped by legislative requirements.</p> <p>Technological tools such as AI (artificial intelligence), the metaverse, VR (virtual reality), and ChatGPT pose significant challenges with extensive business implications.</p> <p>Humanoid robots represent the latest innovation in medical tourism, particularly in emotional and stress therapies.</p> <p><i>We observe a change in the diagnostic anamnesis that necessitates ongoing research into the patient's behaviors, adjustments to the treatment process, the methods of preparation and treatment, the resources utilized by the entrepreneur, and investments in applications and digital assistance programs.</i></p> <p>One of the key challenges for the future of tourism is the 'local renaissance,' focusing on resilience and creating sustainable authenticity.</p>
<p>Opportunities to develop a profitable tourism product</p>	<p>One-way health and wellness tourism benefits the community by introducing new services, stimulating competition, adapting to diversified and flexible structures, and creating new jobs during downsizing.</p> <p>The community benefits from health and wellness tourism in one-way opportunity of novel services, triggered competition, diversified and flexible structures, and new employment generation during downsizing. Active promotion of the community thru providing itinerary advice, local history stories, cultural insights, authentic traditions, and picturesque landscapes by wellness participants. The co-creation is manifested by a distinct job at SME destination management, tour operators' network, and support of online and offline travel agencies input mixing for an extreme traveling outcomes.</p> <p><i>An entrepreneur cannot manage services, advertising, research, maintaining good customer relationships, and attracting new clients; these tasks require specialists. There is only so much money a single entrepreneur can afford to risk, as they are</i></p>

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	<p><i>often unprepared and unqualified to handle losses. In this context, we view things as a multifaceted challenge, where a large, specialized team respects its roles to achieve satisfactory outcomes for visitors and consumers. Do you know what distinguishes a consumer from a satisfied consumer? It is their happiness that arises from the relationship between: consumption and intention, consumption and satisfaction, intention and motivation.</i></p> <p>The growth of health and wellness tourism appears new to local businesses, communities, and government organizations.</p> <p>There is a growing aspiration among educated and highly qualified professionals to develop services or products with a fresh perspective.</p> <p>Increasing environmental and societal concerns have led to the demand for green travel, healthy nutrition, and high air quality for effective monotherapy.</p> <p>There is a push to rebrand traditional tourism with new services and innovative techniques.</p> <p>The desire for health tourism destinations to compete globally has introduced international standards regarding patient safety, travel insurance, data protection, and secure online payments.</p> <p><i>Accommodation services are not defined solely by the classification certificate. Do you know what truly matters? It is the place, the location, whether you have the equipment to monitor the tourists' activity, and the ability to provide feedback to help improve their health by choosing your accommodation services.</i></p> <p><i>The food served is not just meant to fill a gap; customers care about how it is served, where it is served, what plates we use, which pots it was cooked in, the nutritional values it has, the benefits of certain dishes, who served these dishes before, how many likes they have received on social media, and only afterward, how much they pay for the dish itself. This is what happiness consists of.</i></p> <p><i>Is there a chance that some of the services will be reimbursed? It does not matter whether they come from public or private sources. Are there loyalty programs available? There are benefits if they are part of a specific alliance, belong to an association or organization, use an app, or recommend its use. These present challenges that the service provider often lacks the time and resources to consider in order to achieve profitability. An entrepreneur must be guided, supported, and assisted by other specialists so that the satisfaction of an additional customer can lead to profit.</i></p> <p>Develop partnerships to benefit travelers using Mastercard or virtual debit cards.</p> <p>Develop and implement an online application form for check-in and appointments, and receive confirmation via email with details about the schedule, medical team, physical status, and treatments;</p> <p>Utilize a redefined algorithm for market research on consumer behavior;</p> <p>Create strategies based on team values, emotional intelligence in teamwork, and entrepreneurial management;</p> <p>Develop internal marketing strategies and tailor individual services and products for each client, similar to those created for personal use;</p> <p>Involve stakeholders to enhance multidisciplinary perspectives in a unique value proposition;</p> <p>Enhance industry experience by emphasizing prevention, boosting immunity, and preventing burnout syndrome among employees;</p> <p>Evaluate clients' emotional variables, the responsibilities of work teams regarding the consumption of healthcare services, and the satisfaction levels of local communities, balancing price requirements with expected experiences.</p>
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Source: Elaborated by authors based on in-depth interviews (2024-2025).

Conclusions, limitations, and future research directions

This research highlights the importance of entrepreneurs adapting to societal changes (not just within their specific sector) (Setyaningsih, S. *et al.*, 2024). Therefore, the practice of behavioral modeling is a never-ending process and not a strategy bound to have an impact only based on the outdated model. Finally, consumers receive the opportunity to become happy

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because of the costs of consumption which allow consumers to start cultivating a lifestyle while it prevents various diseases. Leadership makes all travelers cut down on using their devices when going on a trip by educating the clients on how to use the tools accordingly and responsibly. The increased interests in healthcare and education make the products or services of high-end health and wellness destinations the latest hottest trend. The various research papers on the topic of tourism in healthcare industries, the role of business on the exchange of patients on clients, and the role of managers and doctors on assessing new value offerings exploring clients' feedback and perceptions on a scale for new, enhanced services of healthcare are valuable to underline (Illario M, *et al.*, 2019). The growth of medical tourism has introduced unpredictability regarding the health of digital tourists and remains a subject that requires further study. Customized procedures, direct marketing, virtual content, and individually tailored services demonstrate how an innovative strategic marketing approach can effectively establish a healthcare tourism service in travelers' minds (Ayobami Raji, M. *et al.*, 2024). Considering entrepreneurship, the reins of leadership will be transferred to the daily updated marketing strategies, not predetermined by ordinary and evergreen business plans but by dreams of wanderlust. In the prospective visions, community development may be combined with the economic development provisions and promote the integration of touristic and healthcare efforts to professionalism that have been working side by side sideways all this time. Along with other business landscape architectural changes, removing the in-silos concept of single companies, that is merely cooperating getting a license, will provide a profitable strategy for touristic destinations, which may give birth to sustainable leadership policy that attracts the development investments for business renovation (Stewart, 2015, p. 326). Driven by factors such as cost reductions, the availability of specialized treatments, and a growing focus on wellness and preventative healthcare, medical tourism represents a significant segment of global tourism revenues (GWI, 2025). With the rising appeal of health tourism, collaboration among governments, healthcare providers, and travel agencies is essential to ensure optimal healthcare for tourists while promoting ethical and sustainable business practices (GlobalHealthcareAccreditation, 2023).

The above conclusions on the feasibility of market niches in general and specific spa and wellness tourism in contrast and integration with medical tourism reveal their limits. They are consumer satisfaction by general criteria and specific factors related to different generations, destinations, and experiential value. Thus, the direction of new approaches of medical tourism today due to creativity and entrepreneurship is the process, human resources, and the diversity of the tourist experience.

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