

A

Report on

**Assessment of Medical Value Travel in India- Analysis of Treatment
Preferences and Key Factors Influencing International Patients**

At

Relieka Healthcare



Submitted By Dr Akanksha

Of

Post Graduation Diploma in Hospital and Health Management

PGDM 2021-23 Batch

PG/21/007

Under the guidance of Dr Ekta Saroha



International Institute of Health Management Research, New Delhi

ABSTRACT

Medical Value Travel (MVT) has gained prominence as a global phenomenon, with increasing numbers of patients seeking medical treatment abroad. India has emerged as a preferred destination for MVT due to its world-class healthcare facilities, skilled medical professionals, and cost-effectiveness. This report presents an assessment of Medical Value Travel in India, focusing on treatment preferences and key factors influencing international patients. Through interviews with a diverse group of patients, the study delves into their medical treatment preferences, reasons for choosing India, and the impact of cost-effectiveness on their decision-making process. The findings highlight India's appeal as a comprehensive healthcare destination, offering specialized medical treatments and alternative medicine systems. Additionally, the report explores the role of telemedicine and e-Health in bridging the gap in healthcare access for rural and remote areas. The analysis underscores the importance of continuous improvement and collaboration among stakeholders to further enhance India's position as a leading player in the global medical tourism industry. As a result, this report provides valuable insights for healthcare providers, policymakers, and stakeholders to align their services with the needs and preferences of international patients, fostering India's growth as a preferred medical value travel destination.

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from
INTELLIO HEALTHCARE PRIVATE LIMITED

The certificate is awarded to

Name: Dr.Akanksha

in recognition of having successfully completed her Internship in the Department of
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and has successfully completed her Project on


“Assessment of Medical Value Travel in India-Analysis of
Treatment Preferences and Key Factors Influencing International
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She comes across as a committed, sincere & diligent person who has a strong
drive & zeal for learning.

We wish her all the best in her future endeavors.



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This is to certify that Dr AKANKSHA student of PGDM (Hospital & Health Management) from International Institute of Health Management Research, New Delhi has undergone internship training at Relieka Healthcare from March 2023 to May 2023.

The Candidate has successfully carried out the study designated to her during internship/training and her approach to the study has been sincere, scientific and analytical.

The Internship is in fulfillment of the course requirements. I wish her all the success in her future endeavors.



Dr. Sumesh Kumar

Associate Dean, Academic and Student Affairs

IIHMR, New Delhi

Ekta Saroha
Mentor

IIHMR, Delhi

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

The following dissertation titled **Assessment of Medical Value Travel in India- Analysis of Treatment Preferences and Key Factors Influencing International Patients** at “Relieka Healthcare, New Delhi” is hereby approved as a certified study in management carried out and presented in a manner satisfactorily to warrant its acceptance as a prerequisite for the award of **PGDM (Hospital& Health Management)** for which it has been submitted. It is understood that by this approval the undersigned do not necessarily endorse or approve any statement made, opinion expressed or conclusion drawn therein but approve the dissertation only for the purpose it is submitted.

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This is to certify that **Dr Akanksha** , a graduate student of the **PGDM (Hospital &Health Management)** has worked under our guidance and supervision. She is submitting this dissertation titled “**Assessment of Medical Value Travel in India- Analysis of Treatment Preferences and Key Factors Influencing International Patients” at Relieka Healthcare, New Delhi**, in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the **PGDM (Hospital & Health Management)**.

This dissertation has the requisite standard and to the best of our knowledge no part of it has been reproduced from any other dissertation, monograph, report or book.



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Associate Professor

IIHMR, Delhi



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(Director)

Relieka Healthcare

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Signature

FEEDBACK FORM

Name of the Student: Dr.Akanksha

Name of the organization in which dissertation has been completed:

Intellio healthcare private limited

Area of Dissertation: Medical Value Travel

Attendance: 100%

Objectives achieved: Completed 4 months internship in the organization. She actively contributed as a valuable member of a team responsible in the field of Medical Value Travel. Throughout her tenure, she successfully fulfilled all assigned project tasks, demonstrating her commitment to completing essential responsibilities.

Deliverables:

- Contributed to the company's online presence by managing the official website
- Feasibility Study, Market Analysis & Proposal
- Website Content Creation
- Social Media Management
- Video Production
- Digital Marketing
- Consulting Meetups
- Recruitment Support

Strengths:

- Sincerity and commitment towards the responsibilities entrusted to her
- Hardworking and passionate to learn and explore new possibilities

Suggestions for Improvement: Needs to develop the skill of multi-tasking and grow in career by focusing on innovations and learning more dynamic fields in healthcare.

Suggestions for Institute (course curriculum, industry interaction, placement, alumni):

I would like to offer a suggestion to the esteemed organization of IIHMR Delhi regarding the orientation of students towards healthcare. While it is crucial to emphasize the importance of quality, operations and health IT, it is equally vital to broaden their understanding of healthcare as a holistic concept. I believe that by focusing on the following aspects, IIHMR Delhi can provide a more comprehensive and enriching educational experience for its students.

Date: 5th July, 2023

Place: Okhla, Delhi

Signature of the Officer-in-Charge/ Organization Mentor (Dissertation)



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my mentor Dr. Ekta Saroha, Associate Professor and Dean at IIHMR, Delhi for providing invaluable guidance throughout this research. Her dynamism, motivation, vision and encouragement has deeply inspired me.

I would like to thank my mentors at Relieka Healthcare Dr. Vineet Arora and Dr Ritika Jindal for their guidance during the tenure of my internship. Their active participation to all my questions and queries during my internship has made this journey a true success.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all the faculties of IIHMR, Delhi for the guidance throughout and constant support during the course.

I am extending my thanks to all the patients and hospitals who supported me while sharing their information and valuable time. Finally, my thanks to everyone who have supported me to complete the research work directly or indirectly.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

MVT- Medical Value Travel

MTI- Medical Tourism Index

MoUs -Memorandums of Understanding

PART A: OBSERVATIONAL LEARNING INTRODUCTION:

Relieka Healthcare overview

Relieka is healthcare service provider firm that specializes in providing top-notch healthcare services to patients from all over the world. With a team of highly skilled and experienced medical professionals, it aims to offer affordable and reliable medical solutions that meet the needs of our clients. With providing services like Telehealth care, Medical Value Travel and Global Projects consultancy, it aims to connect to patients and industries working in health sector across the globe.

Relieka Healthcare includes the following Services-

MEDICAL VALUE TRAVEL

India's popularity as a medical tourism destination can be attributed to several factors, including world-class hospitals, skilled medical professionals, high-quality healthcare, lower treatment costs compared to other countries, and credibility in alternative medicine systems. Additionally, the rising global demand for wellness services like Yoga and meditation further contributes to India's appeal as a sought-after healthcare destination.

TELE HEALTH SERVICES

Limited access to healthcare facilities in semi-urban, rural, and remote areas is primarily attributed to the scarcity of doctors. To tackle this issue, telemedicine and e-Health have emerged as promising solutions, leveraged India's extensive smartphone penetration and improving mobile connectivity. These technologies hold the potential to bridge the gap and provide healthcare services to a larger population in underserved regions

HEALTHCARE GLOBAL PROJECTS AND CONSULTANCY

In today's modern world, technological integrations have become imperative, and the healthcare industry is no different. Embracing technology is not merely a choice but a necessity, especially in an industry where even a minor error can have life-altering consequences. Technology adoption proves to be a boon, enhancing efficiency and reliability in healthcare practices. Several promising healthcare projects have already demonstrated their effectiveness in the field, prompting more healthcare providers to recognize the immense value of incorporating these innovations into their operations.

DEVELOPMENT OF ADVANCED MEDICAL AND SURGICAL PROGRAMMES GLOBALLY

Mortality due to treatable diseases is high in underdeveloped nations due to lack of good quality facilities and human resource inefficiency. With the help of capacity building by medical fraternity of India, good quality service can be assured leading to improvement in health status of the countries.

PART B: PROJECT REPORT

MY ROLE AT THE ORGANIZATION

In my role at Relieka Healthcare, I was assigned a pivotal task focused in the field of medical value travel. Specifically, I along with my team, collaborated with hospitals of Delhi/NCR through Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs). My primary responsibility involved managing patient queries received through our website, facilitating communication with different hospitals to obtain quotations, and maintaining a comprehensive customer relationship management (CRM) system.

During my tenure at Relieka Healthcare, the significance of seamless communication and effective partnerships between healthcare providers and patients seeking medical solutions abroad is evident. As part of my assigned duties, I, along with my team, engaged directly with hospitals to establish strategic alliances through MoUs, ensuring a diverse network of trusted medical institutions for our patients. Beyond administrative tasks, I actively contributed to marketing initiatives, promoting our company's services to expand our reach and enhance brand awareness.

A crucial aspect of my work revolved around handling patient queries received through our website. Acting as a bridge between patients and hospitals, I ensured prompt and accurate responses to each query. This involved liaising with multiple hospitals to gather detailed quotations and providing comprehensive information to patients, empowering them to make well-informed decisions regarding their healthcare journey.

INTRODUCTION

Medical tourism is a practice where individuals seek surgical, medical, or dental care abroad due to unavailability or high costs in their home countries. It involves traveling to international locations to access medical assistance. Hospitals and wellness facilities offer specialized services known as Medical Value Travel, encompassing both modern and conventional medical practices. [1]

The Indian Government has introduced a "Medical Visa" to facilitate international visitors seeking medical treatment for various conditions. E-medical visa facilities are provided to citizens of 156 countries, aiming to promote medical tourism in India. As a testament to its growing prominence in the field, India ranked 10th in the Medical Tourism Index for 2020-21, according to the Medical Tourism Association.[2]

One of India's key strengths as a medical value travel destination lies in conducting complex surgical procedures at globally recognized hospitals by esteemed medical specialists, all at a significantly lower cost compared to other countries. India's healthcare system is highly rated across various metrics, reflecting its world-class standards. [3]

In the Medical Tourism Index for the year 2020-2021, India has been ranked 10th out of 46 countries of the world by Medical Tourism Association. [4]

There are several strengths of India which makes it top notch medical value travel destination. It includes its top quality medical and diagnostic equipment from all over the

world which are available in many Indian hospitals. Apart from this, the medical practitioners and surgeons at Indian hospitals have undergone high quality and rigorous hands -on medical and surgical training which makes the patient gain trust and rely on their treatment.

OBJECTIVE

A study to understand the profile of international patients in the context of Medical Value Travel in India.

METHODOLOGY

Study Design: Cross Sectional Study

Study Period: March to May 2023

Study population: Non-Indian patients visiting hospital for treatments

Study Variable:

- Country of Origin
- Gender Distribution
- Age group
- No. of Visits
- Specific Medical Treatment Preference
- Factors influencing choice of treatment
- Source of information
- Insurance holder

Study Setting: Hospitals of Delhi/NCR facilitating international patients seeking Medical Value Travel treatments.

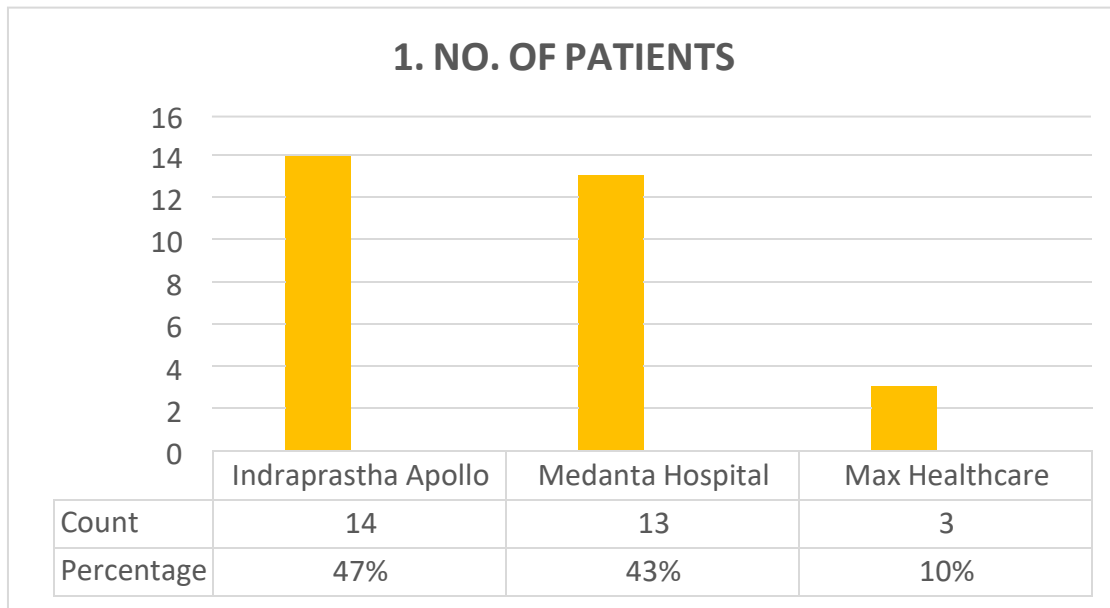
Study Tool: Structured Questionnaire

Data Collection:

Primary Data-

- The research involved collecting data from hospitals
 - Medanta Hospital, Gurugram, Indraprastha Apollo Hospital, Sarita Vihar and Max Healthcare.
 - Primary data was collected by visiting the hospitals' International Patient Care departments.
 - Google Forms were utilized to gather the data.
 - By leveraging the convenience and accessibility of Google Forms, a comprehensive dataset was obtained, providing valuable insights for the research study.
 - **Data Analysis-** The data was analyzed using Microsoft Excel in which the data was visualized, compared and analyzed. The comparable data is analyzed in the form of bar graph and pie chart.
-

RESULT

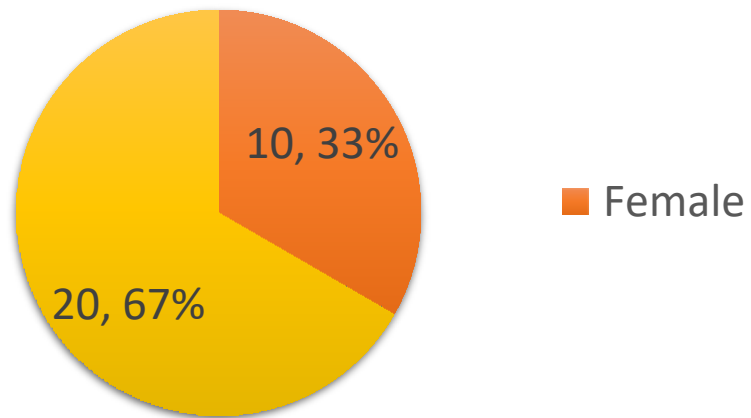


Hospital Names	No. of Patients	Percentage
Indraprastha Apollo	14	47%
Medanta Hospital	13	43%
Max Healthcare	3	10%
Grand Total	30	100%

Inference-

- Total No. of patients interviewed – 30
- The graph shows the no. of patients viz-a-viz hospitals

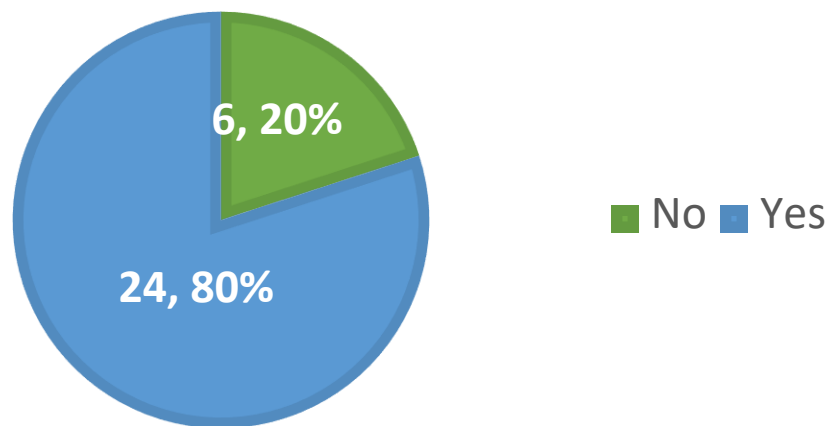
2.GENDER DISTRIBUTION



Inference-

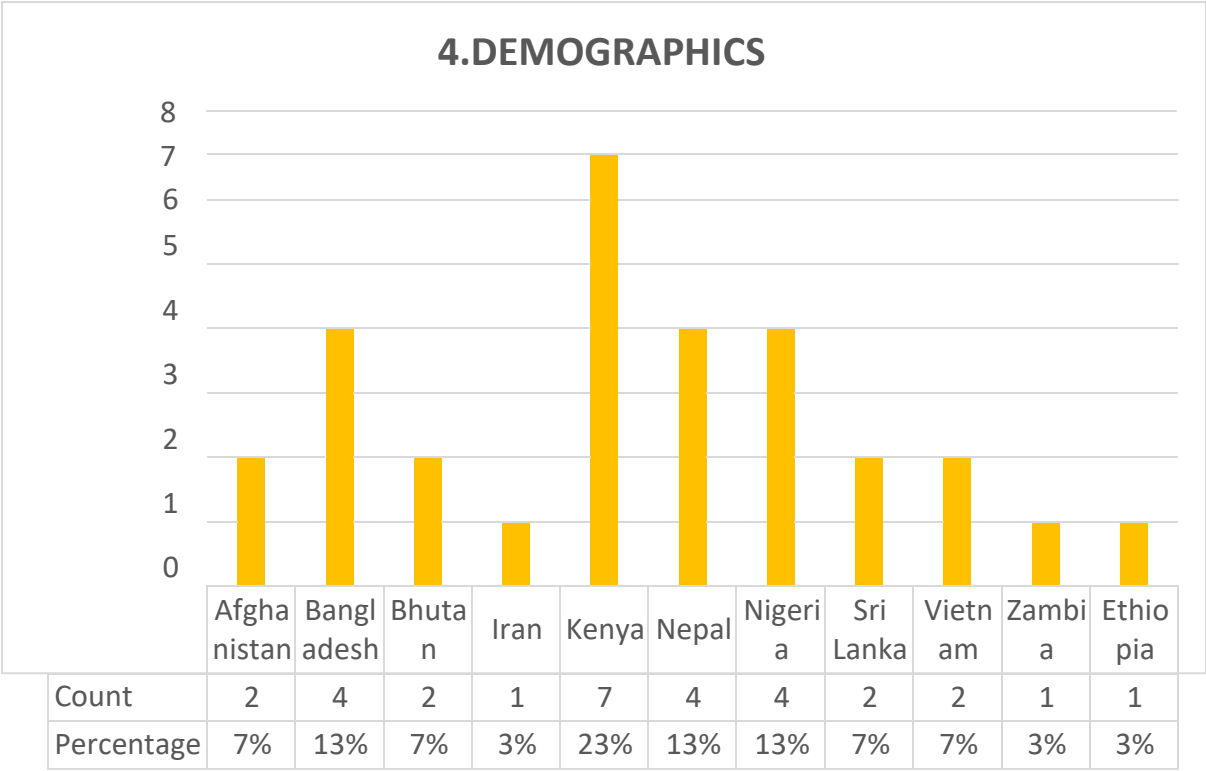
The gender information data shows that the number of male patients are more than the number of females.

3.INSURANCE HOLDER



Inference-

Above data represents that 80% patients are insurance holders.

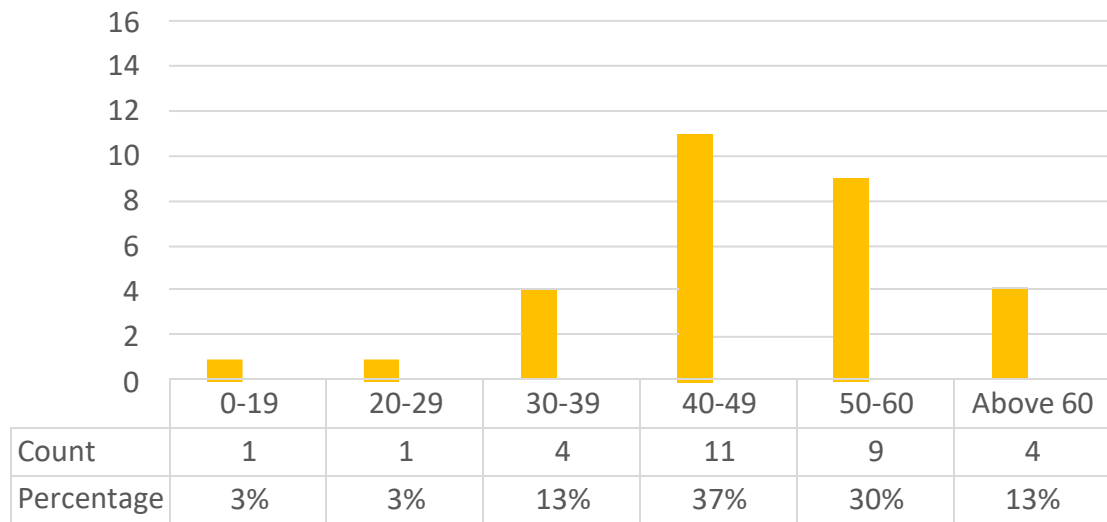


Country Name	No. of Patients	Percentage
Kenya	7	23%
Bangladesh	4	13%
Nepal	4	13%
Nigeria	4	13%
Afghanistan	2	7%
Bhutan	2	7%
Sri Lanka	2	7%
Vietnam	2	7%
Iran	1	3%
Zambia	1	3%
Ethiopia	1	3%
Grand Total	30	100%

Inference-

- The graph represents that the maximum number of patients are from Kenya

5.AGE RANGE

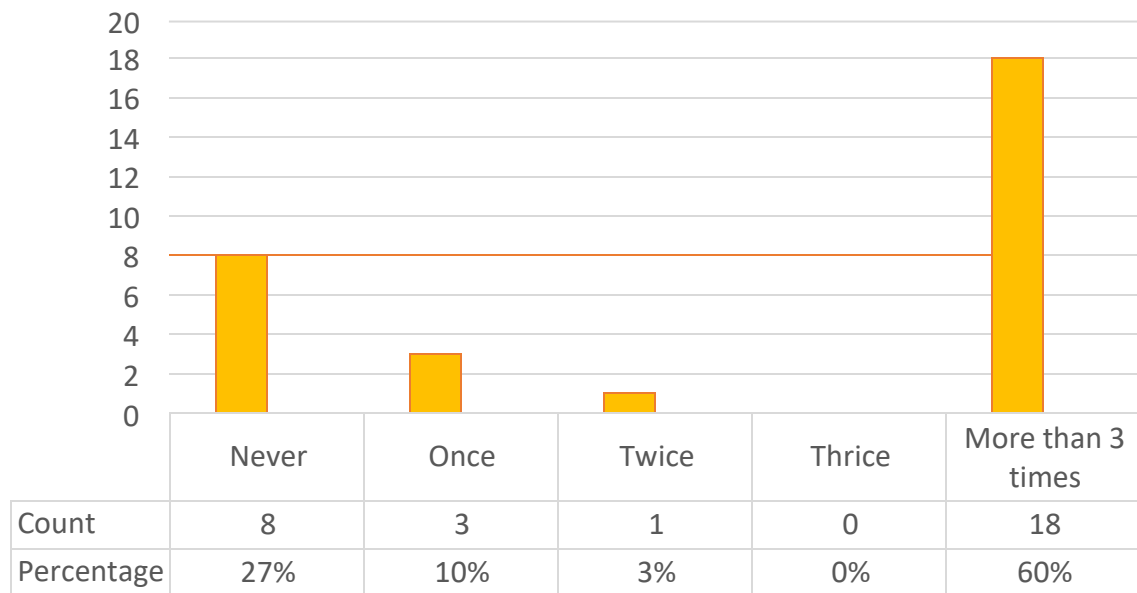


Age Range	No. of Patients	Percentage
0-19	1	3%
20-29	1	3%
30-39	4	13%
40-49	11	37%
50-60	9	30%
Above 60	4	13%
Grand Total	30	100%

Inference-

- The graph shows the maximum number of patients are from the age group of 40-49 years

6.NO. OF PRIOR VISITS

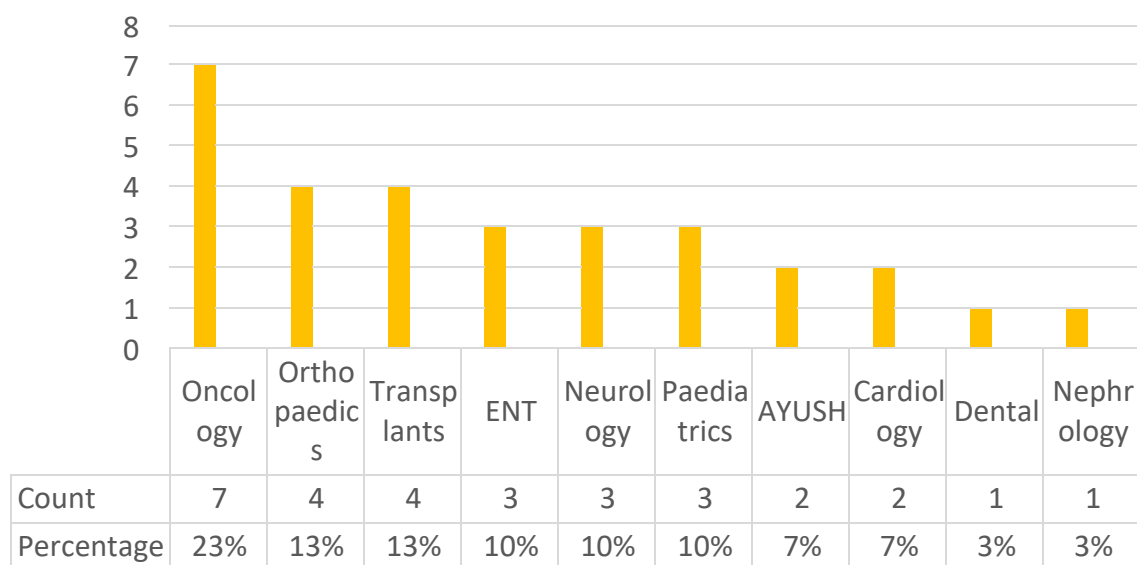


No. of prior visits	Count	Percentage
Never	8	27%
Once	3	10%
Twice	1	3%
Thrice	0	0%
More than 3 times	18	60%
Grand Total	30	100%

Inference-

- 27% patients have never visited India to avail services under Medical Value Travel
- 60% have visited more than thrice

7.TREATMENT PREFERENCE

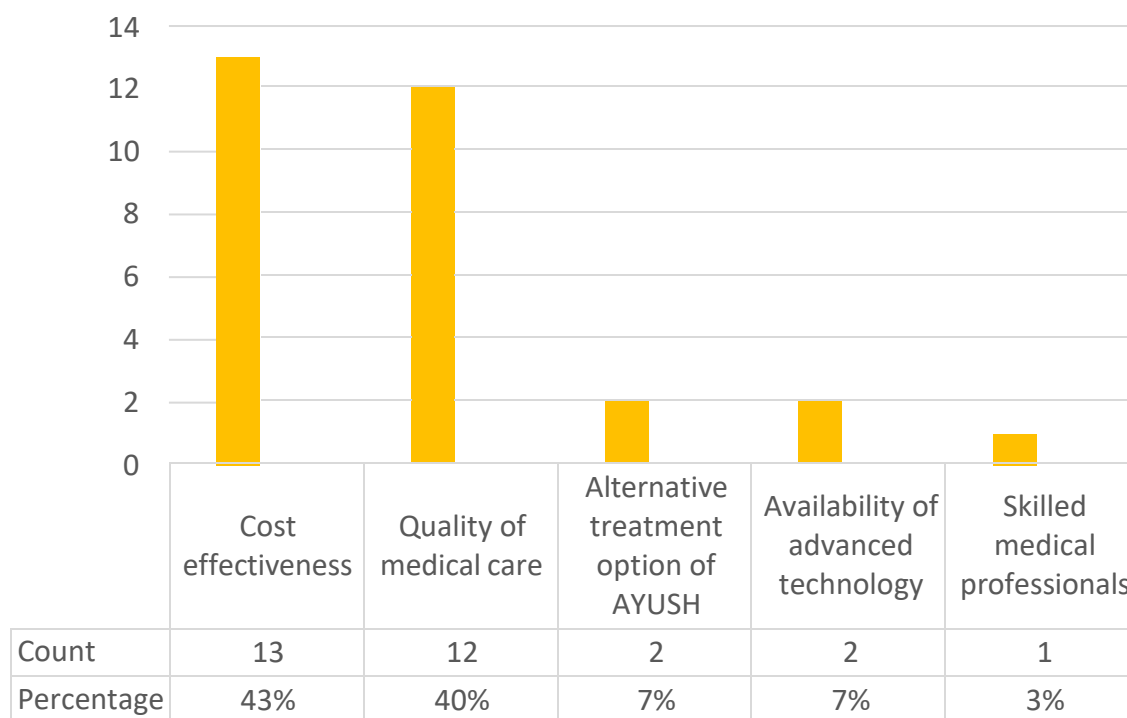


Treatment Name	Count	Percentage
Oncology	7	23%
Orthopaedics	4	13%
Transplants	4	13%
ENT	3	10%
Neurology	3	10%
Paediatrics	3	10%
AYUSH	2	7%
Cardiology	2	7%
Dental	1	3%
Nephrology	1	3%
Grand Total	30	100%

Inference-

- 23% patients have preferred to visit India for their treatment related to Oncology followed by other treatments.

8.FACTORS INFLUENCING VISITS

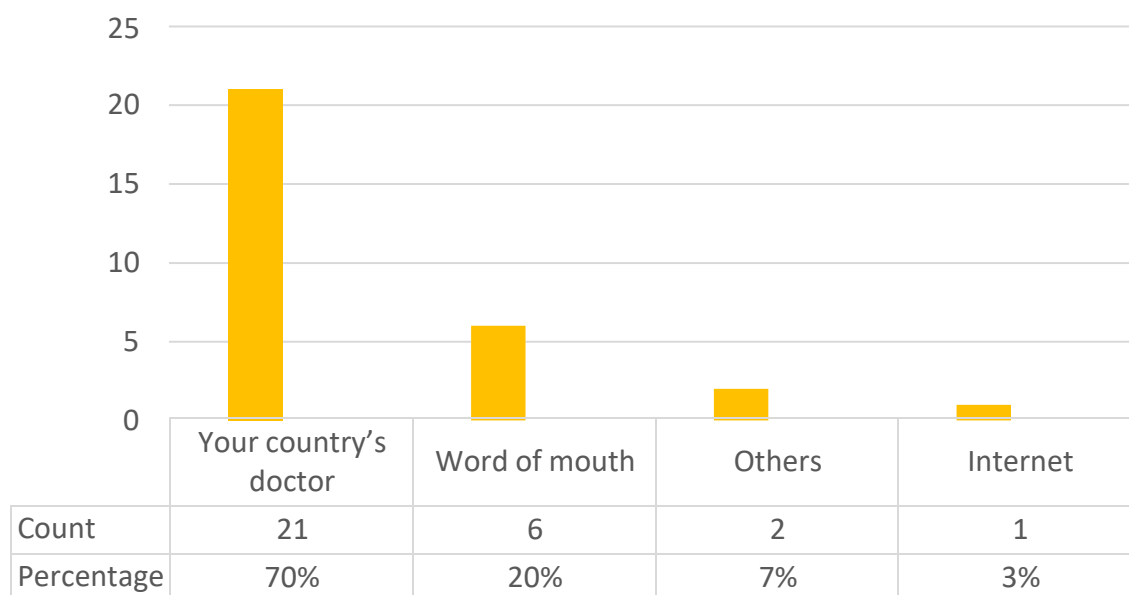


Factors influencing visits	Count	Percentage
Cost effectiveness	13	43%
Quality of medical care	12	40%
Alternative treatment option of AYUSH	2	7%
Availability of advanced technology	2	7%
Skilled medical professionals	1	3%
Grand Total	30	100%

Inference-

- 43% patients find medical treatments in India as cost effective.

9.SOURCE OF INFORMATION



Source of information	Count	Percentage
Your country's doctor	21	70%
Word of mouth	6	20%
Others	2	7%
Internet	1	3%
Grand Total	30	100%

- Inference-
- 70% patients are referred for Medical Value travel to India through their respective country's doctor

DISCUSSION

The present report delves into the assessment of Medical Value Travel (MVT) in India, with a specific focus on treatment preferences among international patients and the key factors influencing their decision to seek medical services in the country. Through comprehensive analysis and examination of data, this study offers valuable insights into the trends and dynamics of medical tourism in India.

The findings of this study shed light on the treatment preferences of international patients seeking medical services in India. Understanding these preferences is crucial for healthcare providers and policymakers to align their services with the demands of this patient segment. The data may reveal which medical specialties are more attractive to international patients and guide efforts to promote India's expertise in these areas. Additionally, recognizing the treatment preferences of patients from different regions can facilitate targeted marketing strategies to attract diverse patient populations.

Identifying the key factors influencing international patients' decisions to choose India as their medical travel destination is paramount for healthcare providers and stakeholders in the medical tourism industry. Among these factors, cost-effectiveness emerges as a prominent driver, emphasizing India's competitive advantage in providing affordable yet high-quality medical treatments. Highlighting the cost-effectiveness of treatments in marketing efforts can further bolster India's appeal to international patients.

Moreover, this study uncovers other essential factors, such as the quality of medical services, availability of cutting-edge technology, well-trained medical professionals, and patient-centered care. Understanding these factors allows healthcare providers to prioritize areas for improvement and optimize their services to cater to the needs of international patients effectively.

The insights garnered from this assessment hold significant implications for the medical tourism industry in India. Understanding treatment preferences and influential factors can assist healthcare providers in strategic planning and resource allocation. By focusing on key areas that matter most to international patients, providers can enhance the overall patient experience and build a strong reputation as a reliable destination for medical services.

Furthermore, addressing challenges and capitalizing on opportunities can result in a more competitive and sustainable medical tourism sector. Collaborative efforts between healthcare providers, government agencies, and tourism bodies can create a conducive environment for the growth of medical tourism in India.

LIMITATIONS

- The existing literature review may benefit from more research paper and reports on this topic to ensure the inclusion of the most recent studies and findings in the field.
- The selection of study sites was based on convenience, which may limit the generalizability of the results to a broader population.
- The sample size and sampling methods were chosen for practical reasons, considering factors such as time and resource constraints. This could impact the sample representation and limit the validity of the study.
- The data collection tool used in the study was not standardized, which might introduce variability and potential biases into the data.
- The measures employed in the study might have inherent limitations or biases that could influence the obtained results.
- Due to certain constraints or limitations, the study was unable to generate a specific test hypothesis. This might affect the precision and focus of the research findings.

CONCLUSION

The study reaffirms India's position as a preferred destination for medical tourists from around the world. The country's healthcare infrastructure, renowned medical expertise, and cost-effectiveness play a pivotal role in attracting a diverse range of patients seeking various medical treatments. India's continued commitment to maintaining high-quality healthcare services and competitive pricing reinforces its appeal as a global healthcare hub.

It indicates that cost-effectiveness is a primary factor influencing international patients to choose India for medical treatments. This highlights the significance of India's reputation for providing top-notch medical services at a fraction of the cost in comparison to other developed countries. Healthcare providers should capitalize on this competitive advantage to attract more patients seeking affordable yet quality medical care.

The study reveals that patients often choose India for specialized medical treatments such as oncology and other complex procedures. This emphasizes the importance of promoting India's expertise in these specific areas and further developing specialized centres of excellence. By focusing on promoting India's strengths in specialized medical fields, the country can carve a niche for itself in the international medical tourism market.

The assessment highlights certain challenges faced by international patients during their medical travel journey, such as bureaucratic hurdles and cultural differences. Healthcare providers and policymakers should work collaboratively to streamline administrative processes, facilitate smoother communication, and improve cultural sensitivity to enhance the overall patient experience. A patient-centric approach is crucial to fostering patient satisfaction and encouraging positive word-of-mouth referrals.

To maintain and strengthen India's position as a leading medical tourism destination, collaboration among healthcare providers, government agencies, tourism bodies, and other stakeholders is essential. By fostering strategic partnerships and working together, India can capitalize on the vast potential in the medical tourism market and continually improve the overall offerings for international patients.

This assessment of MVT in India has certain limitations. To build a comprehensive understanding of patient preferences and the evolving medical tourism landscape, further research with larger sample sizes and long-term follow-up studies is recommended. Additionally, continually analysing patient feedback and evolving trends can help healthcare providers adapt their services to meet the changing demands of international patients.

ANNEXURE

Dear Participant, I invite you to participate in a research project titled "Assessment of Medical Value Travel in India - Analysis of Treatment Preferences and Key Factors Influencing International Patients," which is being conducted by Dr Akanksha as part of her college research project at IIHMR Delhi.

If you agree to participate, you will be requested to provide information related to your experience as an international patient seeking medical treatment in India. This may include details about the specific treatments you received, factors influencing your decision to choose India as a medical value travel destination and your overall satisfaction with the medical value travel services received.

All information collected during this study will be treated with strict confidentiality. Your responses will be anonymized, and any personally identifiable information will be kept

confidential. The data collected will be used for research purposes only and will be reported in an aggregated and anonymous manner. No individual participant will be identifiable in any reports or publications resulting from this study.

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary, and you have the right to withdraw at any time without penalty or consequence. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the research project or your participation, please feel free to contact Dr. Akanksha at

akankshadixit.mgs@gmail.com

By signing this consent, you indicate that you have read and understood the information provided above and voluntarily participating in the research project. The interview will take 5 minutes.

Tick the checkbox if you agree to participate in the survey otherwise tick the checkbox of refused.

Agree []

Refused []

1. Name _____

2. Age_____

3. Are you Indian or non- Indian_____

4. Which country are you from_____

5. Have you visited India before to seek medical treatment?

• Yes []

• No []

6. How many times have you visited India before to seek medical treatment?

• 1

• 2

- 3
- More than 3

7. Would you recommend India as a medical value travel destination seeking treatment?

- Definitely
- Probably
- Not sure
- Not likely

8. What treatment you are seeking for?

- Cardiology []
- Oncology []
- Urology []
- Transplants []
- Neurology []
- Dental []
- ENT []
- Dermatology []
- Orthopaedics []
- Gastroenterology []
- Nephrology []
- Psychiatry []
- Minimal Invasive Surgery []
- AYUSH []
- Physiotherapy []
- Others []

9. What are the factors that influenced you to seek medical treatment in India?

- Cost effectiveness

- Quality of medical care
- Availability of advanced technology
- Skilled medical professionals
- Alternative treatment option of AYUSH
- Other _____

10. How did you get to know about this treatment?

- Your country's doctor []
- Internet []
- Advertisements []
- Word of mouth []
- Others []

11. Do you have health insurance coverage that supports your medical value travel?

- Yes []
- No []

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