

ABSTRACT

Medical tourism has a great potential to become a yielding segment in tourism industry in specific economies, including Sri Lanka as an expanding phenomenon of special interest tourism. Particularly, the medical tourism has a particular position since it can be traced back to early days of humanity. Medical tourism has emerged as an industry because of the low cost for medical treatments and reliable leisure activities of the potentials. This kind of potentials will enhance the opportunities to attract diversity the visitor portfolio of the destination with an additional profit. The current study was extended to identify challenges and potentials to promote this treasured segment in Sri Lanka during the ongoing circumstances. Revealing the precise barricades and to find possible ways and means to squash the sap, the study was adopted subjective ontology employing in-depth structured interviews for 14 identified individuals associated with the medical tourism industry in Sri Lanka. Respondent in the study were purposively selected to acquire a pertinent outcome and collected data were analysis suing content analysis. The findings of the study revealed that Sri Lanka has all the necessary elements such as attraction, cost benefit, available packages, amenities, activities, and ancillary services to promote medical tourism industry. Further brain drains, lack of government support, communication problem, infrastructure facilities, competitive countries were identified as key challenges to promote medical tourism industry in Sri Lanka. This study concludes with some recommendation for medical tourism such as establish multi-language translation/interpreter services, build strong government support, and introduce medical tourism concept in public hospital sector.

Keywords: Challenges, Medical tourism, potentials, Sri Lanka