

UNLEASHING MEDICAL TOURISM IN BANDUNG: OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES, AND STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS FOR GROWTH

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ABSTRAK

Permintaan global untuk turisme medis terus meningkat, dan Indonesia siap untuk memasuki pasar ini dengan memanfaatkan kemampuan pariwisatanya. Bandung, ibu kota Jawa Barat, diidentifikasi sebagai kota dengan potensi signifikan untuk mengembangkan sektor ini. Studi ini bertujuan untuk menjelajahi, memahami, dan menguraikan kemungkinan serta implementasi turisme medis di Bandung, sekaligus mengidentifikasi tantangan yang dihadapi selama implementasinya. Metodologi penelitian kualitatif deskriptif digunakan untuk mencapai tujuan ini. Penulis menemukan bahwa Kota Bandung memiliki potensi tinggi dalam pengembangan turisme medis yang dapat meningkatkan sektor pariwisata serta mendukung peningkatan layanan kesehatan. Pengembangan turisme medis dapat meningkatkan pertumbuhan GRDP dengan menerapkan kolaborasi antara pemangku kepentingan berdasarkan model penta helix. Potensi sektor pariwisata di Kota Bandung tersebar, seperti turisme belanja, kuliner, dan pendidikan, yang dapat sejalan dengan pertumbuhan fasilitas kesehatan di kota ini. Untuk menjaga stabilitas pertumbuhan ini, diperlukan kolaborasi antara pemangku kepentingan. Kendala dalam implementasi turisme medis di Kota Bandung meliputi ketimpangan fasilitas kesehatan dan sumber daya manusia, kurangnya penggunaan bahasa internasional, serta kurangnya publisitas dan promosi. Saran untuk potensi dan implementasi turisme medis di Kota Bandung adalah pengembangan infrastruktur pariwisata dan fasilitas seperti aksesibilitas dan fasilitas pendukung di tempat wisata serta fasilitas kesehatan yang mendukung program turisme medis perlu ditingkatkan.

ABSTRACT

The global demand for medical tourism is on the rise, and Indonesia is poised to enter this market by leveraging its tourism capabilities. Bandung, the capital of West Java, is identified as a city with significant potential for cultivating this sector. This study seeks to explore, comprehend, and detail the possibilities for, and the actualization of, medical tourism in Bandung, alongside identifying the challenges faced during its implementation. A qualitative, descriptive research methodology has been employed to achieve these objectives. The author found that Bandung City is a city category that has high potential in the development of medical tourism and has the potential to increase the tourism sector that can support the improvement of health services. The development of medical tourism can increase GRDP growth by implementing collaboration between stakeholders based on the penta helix model. The potential of the tourism sector in Bandung City is scattered, such as shopping, culinary and education-based tourism. This can be in line with the growth of health facilities in Bandung City. To maintain the stability of this growth, there needs to be collaboration between stakeholders. Obstacles in the implementation of medical tourism in Bandung City are uneven health facilities and human resources, lack of international language usage and

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lack of publicity and promotion. Suggestions for the potential and application of medical tourism in Bandung City are the development of tourism infrastructure and facilities in the form of accessibility and amenity of tourist attractions and health facilities that support medical tourism programs need to be improved.

INTRODUCTION

The global demand for medical tourism is increasing, and Indonesia is well-positioned to capitalize on this trend due to its robust tourism industry. Bandung, the capital of West Java, is a prime candidate for developing medical tourism due to its established tourism infrastructure and potential for growth in health services. This study aims to explore and detail the possibilities, challenges, and strategic interventions needed to actualize medical tourism in Bandung.

Research Background

Tourism has been a significant socio-economic driver worldwide, with the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) highlighting its role in job creation, infrastructure development, and economic growth through exports. In 2018, over half of all international tourist arrivals were for leisure, with a significant portion also traveling for health or medical treatment. This growing trend presents an opportunity for Bandung to develop as a medical tourism hub.

Medical Tourism Potential in Bandung

Bandung has high potential in developing medical tourism, supported by its diverse tourism sector, including shopping, culinary, and educational tourism. The city also boasts numerous health facilities that can cater to medical tourists. However, the success of this sector depends on effective collaboration between stakeholders, including the government, private sector, and the local community, based on the penta helix model .

Economic Impact

The development of medical tourism in Bandung is expected to positively impact the local economy. It will not only increase tourist numbers but also boost hotel occupancy rates, tourist attractions, and the local creative economy. Moreover, the use of health facilities and services will rise, contributing to the Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP) growth. For instance, Bandung's GRDP, which was IDR 176 million in 2021, is projected to grow by 2.15% - 2.55% in the coming years .

Strategic Interventions for Growth

1) Infrastructure Development

Enhancing tourism infrastructure, such as accessibility and amenities, is crucial. This includes improving health facilities and ensuring they meet international standards.

2) Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement

Implementing the penta helix model, which involves collaboration between the government, academia, business, community, and media, is essential for the sustainable growth of medical tourism in Bandung.

3) Promotion and Publicity

Increasing the visibility of Bandung as a medical tourism destination through targeted marketing and promotion is necessary. This can involve using mass media, social media, and other digital platforms to attract domestic and international tourists.

4) Training and Development

Addressing the uneven distribution of health facilities and improving the skills of medical personnel through training and development programs will ensure high-quality services for medical tourists.

Challenges

Despite its potential, Bandung faces several challenges in implementing medical tourism :

1) Health Facilities and Human Resources

The distribution of health facilities and trained medical personnel is uneven, which can affect service quality.

2) Language Barriers

The lack of international language proficiency among healthcare providers can hinder communication with foreign patients.

3) Publicity and Promotion

There is a need for more effective publicity and promotion strategies to highlight Bandung's medical tourism offerings.

RESEARCH METHODS

Research Object

Substantively, the main problem in this research is inspired by the ineffective implementation of medical tourism *in* the city of Bandung . Therefore, the object of this research is projected on the Potential and Analysis of the Application of Medical Tourism *in* the City of Bandung.

The research method used by researchers is descriptive analysis with the type of research being qualitative. According to Moleong (2018:3) that "qualitative research is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observable behavior". The qualitative method was chosen with the consideration that this method is expected to obtain real data and be able to examine the research problem in depth so that the expected results can be obtained. The use of qualitative research methods is felt to be very appropriate in the study of public administration, especially research that tries to study and understand a society further said that " qualitative research is a type of research that produces findings that cannot be achieved using statistical procedures or other methods of quantification. Qualitative research can be used to examine people's lives, history, behavior, organizational functionalization, social movements, or kinship relationships. Qualitative research requires guidance in the preparation of substantive theories based on data.

The type of qualitative approach used is an institutional model case study strategy. Researchers carefully investigate a program, event, activity, process or group of individuals. Cases are limited by time and activities, researchers collect complete information, using various data collection procedures based on predetermined times. Next, the institutional model case study research steps according to Hancock et. al (2016:32) is as follows:

1. Research Preparation. This stage is the stage where the researcher prepares various things that need to be known as preparation for case study research. In this case, the researcher studied the case study research methodology to ensure that the choice of case study research method was appropriate for researching the potential and analysis of the application of medical tourism *in* the city of Bandung .
2. Determine what is already known. The author carried out this stage through a review of theory and literature on policy, policy implementation models, and laws and regulations related to the research problem. The aim is to establish basic research concepts and research questions. Theories contained in the literature serve as a reference for researchers to develop knowledge related to research questions.
3. Determine the research design. At this stage the researcher determines the research design in accordance with the aims and objectives of the research, namely to conduct a critical study of the potential and analysis of the application of medical tourism *in* the city of Bandung and the factors that influence it.
4. Collect information and data through interviews. The author carried out data collection through interviews using individual interviews and through *Focus Group Discussions (FGD)*.
5. Collect data through observation. At this stage the researcher made observations on various objects, such as: potential and analysis of the application of medical tourism *in* the city of Bandung.
6. Formulate and interpret data. At this stage the researcher carries out data description, data reduction and data selection to be able to draw temporary conclusions to the final conclusion.

7. Prepare research reports. At this stage the researcher writes the research report in a logical order, chapter by chapter so that it is easy for readers to digest and understand.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Case Studies of Medical Tourism in Asia

Several Asian countries, including India, Malaysia, Thailand, South Korea, the Philippines, Taiwan, and Singapore, dominate the medical tourism market. These countries have successfully attracted medical tourists by offering world-class health facilities and services. For example, medical tourism in Malaysia has accelerated economic growth, contributing significantly to the GDP. Similarly, Thailand's medical tourism sector has generated substantial economic benefits, although it has also led to increased healthcare costs and challenges in maintaining equitable access to medical services for locals .

Bandung's Initiatives

Bandung is following in the footsteps of these successful models by developing its own medical tourism sector. The city government, in collaboration with business circles, is preparing class A and B hospitals for medical tourism. Hospitals like Bandung Kiwari and Santosa Hospital are already providing specialized services to foreign patients. The plan is to increase the number of hospitals offering medical tourism services, aiming for 16 hospitals in the future. This initiative is expected to create significant investment opportunities and enhance Bandung's appeal as a medical tourism destination.

CONCLUSION

Bandung has the potential to become a leading medical tourism destination, leveraging its existing tourism infrastructure and health facilities. However, realizing this potential requires strategic interventions, including infrastructure development, stakeholder collaboration, effective promotion, and addressing challenges such as uneven health facility distribution and language barriers. With these measures, Bandung can attract more medical tourists, boosting its economy and enhancing the quality of healthcare services in the region.

By focusing on these strategic areas, Bandung can successfully integrate medical tourism into its broader tourism strategy, providing comprehensive healthcare packages and a unique travel experience for medical tourists and their companions. This integration will not only benefit the local economy but also improve the overall quality of healthcare services, making Bandung a preferred destination for medical tourists from around the world.

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