


Chapter 9

Artificial Intelligence– Enhanced Global Healthcare: The Future of Medical Tourism

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ABSTRACT

Health and tourism are benefiting from AI technology. This study examines medical tourism's positive outlook and emphasizes AI's role in improving the complete experience for foreign patients. Qualitative desk research and thorough review of contemporary research literature, including content analysis, identified AI and smart healthcare system (SHS) dimensions in medical tourism. The study found that AI is helping medical agencies connect physicians with prospective medical tourists via telehealth and virtual assistance. Results demonstrate that medical tourists utilize AI to research hospitals, treatments, check-ups, and consultations. AI secures medical data exchange and blockchain-based cashless transactions. Medical travelers find AI-enabled smart health devices useful for tracking health data. AI problems in medical tourism are highlighted in the study. The study concludes with insights on AI's transformative impact on medical tourism. The chapter helps comprehend the changing dynamics of AI, healthcare, AI's role in improving medical tourism and addresses its issues.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The landscape of healthcare is in the midst of a profound transformation, with Artificial Intelligence (AI) emerging as a pivotal force reshaping the medical tourism industry. AI's capacity to enhance diagnostic accuracy, streamline patient care, and enable surgical innovation has created new opportunities for the global healthcare sector. According to Wong and Sa'aid Hazley (2020), technology has played a substantial role in shaping the healthcare business, and the growth of the medical tourism industry has been accelerated by the introduction of the latest technologies in the healthcare sector. Artificial Intelligence (AI), in particular, has been a transformative force in medical tourism, propelling the sector to new heights and advancements. AI applications in medical tourism have not only facilitated the delivery of quality treatments but have also streamlined the overall patient experience, marking a significant shift in the dynamics of the industry. The integration of Smart Healthcare Systems (SHS) leveraging Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies plays a pivotal role in the healthcare ecosystem, especially in the context of monitoring medical tourists. This utilization of AI contributes to reducing treatment costs and streamlining information workflows. By incorporating advanced technologies, SHS enhances the overall efficiency, effectiveness, and cost-effectiveness of healthcare services, benefiting both providers and medical tourists.

With increased demand and expansion in medical tourism throughout the world, digital technologies under smart healthcare systems (SHS) are now offering a stronger boost to the sector. Healthcare providers, medical tourists, medical tourist facilitators (MTFs), the local community, and the government are the primary players in medical tourism and SHS leads to their network integration to benefit medical tourism (Dar & Kashyap, 2022). According to Akpojaro and Bello (2019), applications of Smart Healthcare Systems (SHS) including AI, play a crucial role in enhancing the quality of healthcare and medical tourism. These applications extend from fitness tracking to the remote monitoring of medical tourists within hospital settings. The integration of SHS technologies allows for continuous monitoring and tracking, contributing to improved healthcare outcomes and a more seamless and efficient experience for medical tourists. AI-enabled devices utilized in medical services and healthcare demonstrate the capability to surpass human physicians in making precise measurements for disease detection (Gärtner et al. (2020). This heightened accuracy is seen as a crucial factor in improving the overall customer experience. Further this accuracy and precision offered by AI technology contribute to a positive user experience by instilling confidence and fostering a better understanding of the medical information provided (Ameen et al. (2021). In addition to accessing information, the internet and mobile devices have practically and effortlessly connected medical tourists, healthcare providers, and other stakeholders, regardless of geography

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