

Chapter 8

Travel 5.0: Mapping the Mind in the Age of Smart Healing

Swati Sharma

 <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-2949-2363>

Amity University, Noida, India

Akshita K. Tiwari

 <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-5167-6794>

Amity University, Noida, India

Bruno Barbosa Sousa

 <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-8588-2422>

Polytechnic University of Cavado and Ave, Portugal

ABSTRACT

The rapid evolution of medical tourism and wellness travel has intensified scholarly interest in how digital technologies, globalization, and mental health priorities are transforming health-related mobilities. This chapter explores Travel 5.0, a paradigm of technologically integrated healing tourism, through a mixed-method research design combining systematic review, comparative case studies, qualitative interviews, and foresight analysis. A review of literature (2010–2024) linking healthcare delivery, tourism behaviour, and technology adoption. Twenty-five stakeholder interviews—spanning medical tourism facilitators, wellness experts, AI/VR entrepreneurs, and psychologists—revealed themes of personalized care, neuro-tourism, and data ethics. Delphi-based foresight rounds projected future trajectories for Travel 5.0, emphasizing mental wellness, technological innovation,

DOI: 10.4018/979-8-3373-6881-8.ch008

and sustainability. Findings indicate that the mind is increasingly positioned as a travel destination through neuro-wellness technologies; hybrid digital-physical experiences are redefining mobility.

1.INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the landscape of global tourism has undergone a profound transformation driven by digital innovation, globalization, and the growing emphasis on mental and physical well-being (Connell, 2016; Hall, 2020). Among the most dynamic sectors emerging from this evolution is medical and wellness tourism, where individuals travel across borders in search of therapeutic, preventive, or restorative health experiences (Hanefeld et al., 2015; Smith & Puczkó, 2017). This convergence of healthcare, technology, and mobility has given rise to a new paradigm—Travel 5.0—which integrates advanced digital technologies with personalized, holistic approaches to healing and well-being (Gretzel, 2021).

The concept of Travel 5.0 extends beyond traditional notions of medical tourism. It reflects the influence of Industry 5.0 and Society 5.0, paradigms emphasizing the synergy between human-centered innovation and smart technology (Carayannis & Morawska-Jancelewicz, 2022). Within this framework, Travel 5.0 envisions a future where artificial intelligence (AI), big data, virtual and augmented reality (VR/AR), the Internet of Things (IoT), and blockchain are seamlessly integrated into the design, delivery, and evaluation of health-related travel experiences (Buhalis & Amaranggana, 2015; Xiang et al., 2022). These technologies are not merely enhancing operational efficiency; they are fundamentally reshaping how travelers seek, experience, and evaluate wellness and medical care abroad (Neuhofer et al., 2020).

Simultaneously, the globalization of healthcare services has facilitated a complex network of cross-border flows—of patients, practitioners, technologies, and knowledge systems (Connell, 2013; Carrera & Bridges, 2006). Countries are increasingly positioning themselves as health and wellness hubs, competing to attract international visitors seeking affordable treatments, cutting-edge procedures, or immersive wellness retreats (Heung et al., 2011; Dryglas & Salamaga, 2018). The mental health imperative has further expanded this landscape, as travelers increasingly pursue emotional restoration, mindfulness, and digital detox experiences alongside medical interventions (Voigt et al., 2011; Smith & Diekmann, 2017). This intersection of mental wellness, digital technology, and global mobility forms the intellectual foundation of the present research.

Despite its growing importance, the field of technologically integrated health tourism remains underexplored, particularly regarding how digitalization mediates traveler experiences and how it redefines the boundaries between medical, well-

24 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: www.igi-global.com/chapter/travel-50/404132

Related Content

Revisiting the Issue of Trust in E-Health

Elizabeth Sillence, Pam Briggs and Peter R. Harris (2018). *Web-Based Behavioral Therapies for Mental Disorders* (pp. 241-259).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/revisiting-the-issue-of-trust-in-e-health/187306

A Developmental Critical View of Emotional Intelligence Theories and Programs in the Greek Educational Settings

Dimitra V. Katsarou, Georgios A. Kougioumtzis, Maria Sofologi, Evangelos Mantsos, Efthymia Efthymiou and Dimitrios Sarris (2024). *Building Mental Resilience in Children: Positive Psychology, Emotional Intelligence, and Play* (pp. 145-170).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/a-developmental-critical-view-of-emotional-intelligence-theories-and-programs-in-the-greek-educational-settings/353728

Personal Reflection: A Postscript

(2019). *The Mental Health Effects of Informal Caregiving: Emerging Research and Opportunities* (pp. 85-94).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/personal-reflection/216535

Smartphone Addiction in Youngsters and Their Mental Health

Suvidha Rastogi and Sangeeta Yadav (2025). *Smartphone Addiction, Phone Snubbing, and Effects on Interpersonal Relationships and Mental Health* (pp. 93-122).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/smartphone-addiction-in-youngsters-and-their-mental-health/374882

A Critical Overview of "the Good," "the Bad," and "the Ugly" in CSR Contemporary Business Landscapes

Hosam Alden Riyadh, Askar Garad and Maher A. Al-Shmam (2024). *Impact of Corporate Social Responsibility on Employee Wellbeing* (pp. 1-30).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/a-critical-overview-of-the-good-the-bad-and-the-ugly-in-csr-contemporary-business-landscapes/355641