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REVIEW ARTICLE

ISSN: 2477-4073

HEALTH TOURISM IN BELITUNG INDONESIA: A SWOT ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

This article aims to provide the development strategy to see the possibility of providing health tourism in Belitung Indonesia. The Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, and Threat are provided as basic information for the action plans that consist of human resource, products, and governance.

Keywords: health tourism, Belitung, medical tourism, wellness tourism

INTRODUCTION

Health tourism means people are going to visit other countries for an affordable and convenient health care that cannot be found in their country. Generally, health tourism is divided to be two parts, namely medical tourism and wellness tourism.¹ The difference between the two is that medical tourism focuses on clinical medication, while wellness tourism focuses on non-medical treatment.

Health tourism is very common in ASEAN Countries, such as Thailand, Singapore, and Malaysia.² There have been so many tourists come to their countries to enjoy both medical and wellness tourism. Meanwhile Indonesia has not been ready yet to compete those countries. Whereas, if looking at the nature of Indonesia, including Belitung island, the possibility to provide health tourism is bigger, especially for wellness tourism that does not need many expensive medical

equipments. The main point of wellness tourism is to balance mind, body, and spiritual. The products that are provided are such as yoga, spa, massage therapy, meditation, aromatherapy, acupressure, acupuncture, *hijama* or *bekam* in Indonesian term, and herbs medicine. Sport tourism is also provided such as cycling, which is called a green therapy if cycling in the middle of forest, or blue therapy if cycling on the edge on the beach or sea.³ The other product is like providing a package for long-term care for elder people, for instance in Thailand that many aging people from Japan visiting Thailand to have long term stay in the attractive areas in Thailand. In this case, Thai health provider collaborates with the immigration for long stay permit.⁴

In line with that, Belitung has a selling power to attract the eyes of people to visit.⁵ Belitung Island is located in Bangka Belitung Province, off the eastern coast of Sumatra, flanked by the Gaspar and Karimata Straits, blessed with some of the best beaches of the country. The sand is soft and as white as palm sugar. Belitung is also surrounded by more than 100 small islands with white sands and granite rocks. However, despite having the natural features, health tourism could be strategy to complete the tourism package in the country. While enjoying the beauty of Belitung Island, people also increase their healthiness by health tourism. Therefore, this article aims to provide the development strategy for health tourism in Belitung Indonesia.

THE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

To create a development strategy is important to know the region in its multiple aspects, SWOT Analysis is presented (**Table 1**). At this point, the goal is to make Belitung as a health tourism destination. The analysis is described as following:

Strength

Strength can be viewed as a resource, a unique approach, or capacity that allows an entity to achieve its defined goals.⁶ Belitung has a good reputation for tourism in Indonesia, and it has been a destination for Sail Indonesia, which is called as *Sail Belitung* that attracts many domestic and international tourists come to visit this island. In addition, Belitung still has many beautiful natural places, such as Tanjung Pendam Beach, Tanjung Tinggi Beach, Pasir Island, Lengkuas Island, Tanjung Kelayang Beach, Gurok Beraye, Batu Mentas, Kolong Keramik, Kolong Murat, etc.⁷ On the other hand, Belitung has supported air transportation, which is about 8-9 flights to Belitung per day from the capital city of Jakarta Indonesia. The time duration is approximately 45-60 minutes.⁵ In line with this, there have been so many travel agents nowadays, followed by great number of hotels per year with affordable price.

Weakness

A limitation, fault, or defect in the entity that impedes progress toward defined goals.⁶ Belitung in this regard has a limit number of medical doctors and nurses.⁸ All hospitals in Belitung are type C hospitals. The quality of health services has not been measured yet. On the other hand, the alternative medicine has not been addressed much, and there is only one health school in Belitung, Nursing Academy of Belitung. Another weakness is that the English proficiency of the society, including health professions remains low.

Opportunity

An opportunity pertains to internal or external forces in the entity's operating environment, such as a trend that increases demand for what the entity can provide or allows the entity to provide it more effective.⁶ Belitung has a good internet marketing from both government and the

travel agents that never stop promoting Belitung. At this point, Belitung has a great government that supports all positive contribution for societies.

Threat

A threat can be any unfavorable situation in the entity's environment that

impedes its strategy by presenting a barrier or constraint that limits achievement of goals.⁶ Today is the era of ASEAN Economic Community. There is a possibility that health providers from other countries provide health care in Belitung.

Table 1 SWOT Analysis

Strength <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good reputation for tourism - Sail Belitung is running every year - Having many beautiful natural places - Having supported air transportation - Short duration of time to visit Belitung – 45-60 minutes from Jakarta, the capital city - Having many tour and travel agents - A great number of hotels - Affordable price to visit 	Weakness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limited number of medical doctors and nurses - Only having Type C hospitals - Only having one health school, Academy of Nursing of Belitung - Lack of English proficiency
Opportunity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good internet marketing - Supported government 	Threat <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MEA: many health providers from other countries are ready to visit Indonesia, including Belitung

ACTION PLAN

Given the analysis above, there has been an opportunity to make and develop health tourism in Belitung. However, there are some points need to consider as action plans:

Human Resource

There is a need to solve all weaknesses and increase health services, both in medical services and nursing services. Accreditation from National and International can be a reference for the best services. The number of medical doctors and nurses should be added. In educational part, Nursing Academy of Belitung may need to develop curriculum or training for alternative medicine collaborating with other health profession and hospitals in Belitung. On the other hand, the ability to communicate in English needs to be increased, especially

for health professions by collaborating with English courses in this island.

Product

Alternative medicine should be introduced and developed gradually, such as meditation, yoga, Thai chi, spa massage, aromatherapy, acupressure, acupuncture, herbs medicine, cycling therapy, and others that can be provided by health professions, and trained ones under supervision of health associations.

Governance

In what concerns to governance, it needs to increase the involvement of the regional partners and monitor the touristic activities, and involvement of scientific community between health and tourism

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that Belitung has a great opportunity to be health

tourism destination, particularly wellness tourism to attract national and international tourists. The four aspects in SWOT analysis provide the information regarding the strength, weakness, opportunity, and threat. However, to make it happens is not easy actually. Therefore, all parties like government, health professions, immigration, tour and travel agents, health and English institutions, and Belitung Society need to support each other.

This article has provided the insight of knowledge about tourism in Belitung Indonesia. With SWOT analysis, it is hoped will provide the basic data to enhance the intention of government, health care providers, and Belitung societies to develop health tourism in this Island.

Declaration of Conflicting Interest

None declared.

Funding

None.

Authorship Contribution

All authors equally contributed and agreed with the final proof of the article.

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Cite this article as: Gunawan J, Wahab NA, Elmiati. Health tourism in Belitung Indonesia: A SWOT analysis. *Belitung Nursing Journal*. 2016;2(2):27-30. <https://doi.org/10.33546/bnj.12>