

## Peer Review

# Review of: "Medical Tourism in the Thessaly Region, Greece: Hotel Managers' Attitudes, Opinions, and Perspectives"

Evangelos Rasvanis<sup>1</sup>

1. Department of Economics, University of Macedonia, Greece

This paper explores hotel managers' perspectives on medical tourism in Greece's Thessaly Region, a topic of increasing relevance amid the global rise of medical tourism, using primary questionnaire data to assess attitudes, investment willingness, and policy needs, offering a valuable localised perspective to the broader literature, though opportunities remain to enhance its clarity, depth, and analytical rigor, as outlined in my comments below.

Although the abstract is concise and outlines the aim, method, results, and conclusions effectively, it could better highlight the study's unique contribution to the field (e.g., how it differs from existing studies on medical tourism).

The literature review covers a broad range of global and Greek studies on medical tourism; it feels somewhat descriptive and lacks a clear synthesis that ties it directly to the Thessaly context. However, you can organize the literature review thematically (e.g., supply-side factors, demand-side motivations, policy frameworks) and conclude with a paragraph linking these themes to Thessaly's unique characteristics (e.g., natural environment, EU tourist base). This would strengthen the rationale for the study's focus and hypotheses.

As for the methodology, you can provide a rationale for focusing only on 4- and 5-star hotels (e.g., their greater capacity for medical tourism infrastructure) in Section 4.1. In addition, clarify how the questionnaire was adapted from prior studies – cite specific examples from Table 1 to show how variables were selected or modified. This would enhance transparency.

The results section is data-rich, with tables and figures effectively summarizing findings. However, the narrative can feel like a list of statistics without sufficient interpretation, and some findings (e.g.,

mistrust toward public agencies) are introduced late without earlier foreshadowing.

There is also an issue with the sample. I wonder how representative the sample is, since about 75% of the responses come from only one of the four prefectures of Thessaly (i.e., the prefecture of Magnesia). Moreover, Figures 1 and 2 are useful but lack detail in their captions and could be visually improved. For example, Figure 1 does not specify what “other forms” of tourism include beyond the percentages given.

The theoretical contribution section aligns findings with prior studies, which is a strength. But it does not articulate a distinct theoretical advancement (e.g., a new framework or model). The practical contribution section is actionable but could be more specific to Thessaly.

In Section 5, propose a simple conceptual model based on findings (e.g., a diagram showing how hotel capacity, accreditation, and policy support influence medical tourism investment willingness).

The conclusions summarize key findings well but repeat points from the results without offering a forward-looking perspective or broader implications. You can add a final paragraph in Section 8 that reflects on the study’s implications beyond Thessaly – e.g., “These findings suggest that regions with strong tourism infrastructure but low medical tourism engagement could benefit from targeted public-private partnerships, a model applicable to other Mediterranean destinations.” This would elevate the paper’s global relevance.

Finally, conduct a thorough proofreading to refine phrasing (e.g., replace “as hotels’ capacity arises” with “as hotel capacity increases”) and vary transitional phrases (e.g., use “additionally,” “furthermore,” or “in addition” instead of over-relying on “also”).

Overall, the paper is a solid contribution to the medical tourism literature, particularly for its regional focus and empirical approach. Its strengths lie in the clear presentation of findings and alignment with existing studies. However, it could benefit from deeper analysis, stronger narrative coherence, and more specific contributions to theory and practice. Implementing these recommendations could elevate the paper’s scholarly influence and make it more approachable to a wider readership.

## **Declarations**

**Potential competing interests:** No potential competing interests to declare.