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Strategic management of medical tourism in Iran based on SWOT model

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ABSTRACT

Medicine and related services worldwide, branches of tourism as medical tourism, have created. Every year, thousands of tourists have access to modern medical services, and of course reasonably priced way to Iran, the more they attract and develop medical tourism, a comprehensive review is necessary. This study, based on an analytical method - a description, and utilization of available resources in the field of tourism management, tourism, and its role in the development of medical tourism in the country, as well as a comprehensive analysis SWOT, and enjoying open questionnaire was used to determine the basic strategies for the management and development of medical tourism in the country. The results of the analysis of the potential and limitations, it suggests that the benefit of proper infrastructure and the fields of health and medicine, and medical and hospital environments, and human capital of the country, benefiting from a weighted score of 0/64, in the first place strengths inappropriate accommodation and welfare facilities, with a weighted score of 0/48 in the first position of weakness, the incentive to travel to Iran for treatment among tourists, with a weighted score of 0/56, the highest rating have weight, and at the first available opportunity, and the continued Weakness adequate facilities to attract medical tourists, with a weighted score of 0/52, in the first place is under threat. The most important strategies that can be employed in this field, namely, infrastructure services, recreational facilities, health care centers and tourist sites, optimum use of the

potential therapeutic, medical and human resources of the country, and efforts to strengthen absorption for the treatment of Iran stated.

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1. Introduction

Tourism industry, the oil and cars, is the world's third- largest industry. Circulating in the financial industry, has a special place, and in the future, certainly, one of the first industries in the world. Years ago, the general form of tourism centers. With the passage of time and advancement of the industry, a little below the frequency of branches in urban tourism, rural tourism, cultural tourism, electronic and virtual tourism, food, space tourism, adventure tourism path, coastal tourism, mountain tourism, ecological tourism, nostalgic and Medical tourism, were added (Armaghan, 2007). Today, medical tourism, the fastest growing segments of the global tourism industry, is, therefore, interested countries and organizations involved in tourism development, according to the department of tourism, attracting people for its programming. Based on the definition of tourism, one of the goals that can stimulate tourists to resolve travel, trips to the doctor. Medical tourism, which is a kind of tourism to the preservation, improvement and restoration of physical and mental health of individuals, more than 24 hours, and is done in less than one year (the site of Medical Tourism, 2008). In other words, medical tourism is to introduce and provide some medical care centers, in the form of "packages ". The package of detailed description and activities foreseen, to determine the treatment atmosphere over the course of their treatment (treatment process), it is composed, VIP services and special advantages for the patient (Pershiamed, 2008). Factors such as changes in consumer values , changes in construction, older population, and the requirements of the health care system can be considered as the main cause of the rise of medical tourism. Medical tourism, the World Tourism Organization classification, with different subsets. Medical tourism (Health tourism), a wide range of prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation for persons encompasses (Bahar, 2007). Village doctor, and paste features skating, track cycling, riding clubs, swimming hall, children's park, road, health, community nursing and home, toys along with training in the areas of beautification, recycling, environment, family planning, supporting it is, promote public awareness, and reduce the social and cultural problems of the city, and the citizens are among the main objectives (Aalam, 2008). But the latest study by Japanese researchers, a medical tourism with mental health approaches have been proposed, both for residents of major cities, and is useful for a tourist company. Medical Tourism mental, or emotional health tourism, in particular, mental health, and strengthen its kind among the inhabitants of large cities, which for various reasons, from stress, depression and mental suffering, or those due to long for PC, psychological pressures are numerous, it is used in (Asadnia, 2009).The potential of medical tourism, high capacity, many modern hospitals and old country, Gaps and can remove some of the problems hospitals, and the entry of foreign patients, changing economic conditions and to strengthen these centers (Edak, 2006) another positive conditions for the development of medical tourism, medical cheap in comparison to other countries in the region. Groups so that the costs of medical services, drug and at the same time, the difference in pay compared to similar charges of civil cases, and the difference between these costs with the costs of other countries can be considered. Even if these costs should be considered in the private sector. The price of the government subsidies, should be considered. Again towards the costs of public services - health, in other countries, such as India, Singapore, Egypt is cheaper (Arman, 2005). Other capabilities in the field of tourism and pilgrimage are characteristic, which is considered by Muslims. Companionship, shared religious tendencies, the neighborhood borders, the country is to attract medical tourists (Baghani, 2007). The costs of transport and transfer, to travel to Iran, according to the geographical proximity of other important and is helpful in this regard. Secretariat of International Medical Services, which in the year 2006 in the medical monitoring center accreditation Deputy Minister of Health was formed, rules and charts to explain something, formed several groups to determine standards for services, and identify centers of tourist activity in the payment plan (Samaii, 2008). According to the definition of medical tourism, traveling to treat a range of illnesses, or performing surgery in hospitals and health centers, hospitals, hotels in the hospital, to play, to encourage patients to treatment, and attract more tourists to treatment. Hashemi Nejad Hospital Tehran could play this role properly, so that a complete record, exhaustion and

destruction in 2002, the hospital has been converted into a hotel, which is of similar construction and decoration of this section with respect to medical devices, there is less (Sherafati, 2006). However, each year thousands of tourists for access to modern medicine, and of course reasonably priced way to Iran. Very low cost to travel to Iran, and of course received excellent medical services, the main factor for the tourists, in Iran, but Iran is not historic and religious attractions, ignore the most important factor in attracting them to Iran, and for medical tourism boom, and take advantage of the economic, social and cultural, in the country, it is required to review all aspects, this research also has taken steps towards this goal.

2. Materials and methods

This study, based on an analytical method - a description, and utilization of available resources in the field of tourism management, and their role in the development of medical tourism in the country, as well as a comprehensive analysis SWOT, and opened for names is used to determine the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of action, and then, according to experts interviewed each option to determine the weight, and finally the integration of the most important points, key strategies for manage the development of medical tourism in the country was determined.

2.1. Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, the SWOT model

Analysis SWOT, identification and evaluation of internal factors (strengths and weaknesses) and external factors affecting the area (opportunities and threats), the development of science in the country, used to be (Wheelen, 1995). In fact, this method as a tool to identify strategic issues and to provide appropriate guidelines and strategies used is (Karimi and Mahboobfar, 2012). In the first area, measure the indoor and outdoor environment, a list of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, was the swim, and then the polls and talking to people, officials and experts identified these factors, and to eliminating or minimizing weaknesses and threats, strengthen and improve existing strengths and opportunities associated with medical tourism, suggestions and strategies were presented.

2.2. Internal factors affecting the medical tourism tourists

Using internal evaluation matrix, to identify and evaluate the relationships between different topics, and to provide solutions to address them (David, 2004). In this section, three existing categories strategies, practices and resources, attention, and have been reviewed, and the strengths and weaknesses of the division are as follows:

Strengths	No
Benefit from the infrastructure, and health fields, and areas prone to medical and human capital	1
There is adequate space tourism, natural and cultural history, ranging from medical centers	2
There are well-equipped hospitals, elsewhere in Iran	3
Being prone, most hospitals for medical tourism investments	4
Authorities believe the jobs by expanding medical tourism	5
There are job opportunities, due to the presence of tourists, and many health centers in the country	6
Increased motivation for treatment, for tourists to Iran	7
Lower health care costs, and presence in Iran for tourists	8
Increased attention to medical centers for tourists, as major advertisers to attract medical tourists	9
Weaknesses	No
Inappropriate residential facilities, and welfare centers	1
Poor facilities and travel visa	2
Unfavorable environmental and physical infrastructure (roads, sewage, etc)	3
Weakness leisure spaces and green areas around hospitals	4
The Weakness diversity in the development of tourism facilities and services, and their poor performance	5
Weakness proper advertising than health centers and surrounding	6
Weakness transportation and transportation facilities, medical centers and tourist areas around them	7
Not run programs designed for medical tourism due to Weakness coordination between relevant agencies	8
Light of those in charge, holding programs in the field of medical tourism	9
Weakness adequate training of those involved in dealing with tourists	10

The Weakness adequate knowledge of the range of treatment sites, and even medical tourism revenue authorities	11
The absence of symptoms and signs guide travelers	12
Limitation of medical tourists, the few centers in Iran	13

2.3. External factors affecting the medical tourism

The purpose of this phase, explored the effects of the external environment on medical tourism, to identify opportunities and threats is. In this regard, it should be noted opportunities, set of features and capabilities that are outside the area of the environment, the health functionality of the site, directly or indirectly, are effective, as well as threats, factors outside the are considered, the inefficacy of these areas have direct and indirect effects. Based on studies and analysis on the state of the country, opportunities and threats of, and influence on the development of medical tourism in the country, which are mapped as follows:

opportunity	No
Incentive travel, for the people	1
Develop and equip the health center, recreation facilities	2
Improve the quality of tourism services, the creation of educational centers Tour Operators and services, to develop medical tourism	3
Investment in infrastructure and superstructure, in order to service better service	4
Increased attention from the government and the private sector, the medical tourism sector	5
Optimum use of all attractions within the area of health sites	6
Increased attention from the government and authorities to invest in medical tourism	7
Enhancing the role of health centers, especially hospitals equipped, as the most important factor in the development of medical tourism for tourists	8
Identification of natural and cultural attractions around the treatment site	9
Provision for adverse employment at hospitals	10
There is opportunity for experts and experienced a boom Comments	11
Holding more conferences, meetings and seminars in the field of medical tourism	12

Threats	No
Continuing Weakness adequate facilities to attract medical tourists	1
Reduce the incentive to travel to Iran for treatment among people	2
Advertising and the growing Weakness proper information	3
Increased investment costs for facilities and equipment, and they are not affordable	4
Divestment responsible for implementing and developing medical tourism	5
To unfamiliar places of natural, historic and cultural area hospitals	6
Intense propaganda against Iran, particularly in the fields of medical treatment and against the country's enemies.	7
And attitudes of medical attention solely to the issue of incoming tourism	8
Excessive concentration of tourists and patients, the limited number of medical centers	9
Effects of tourism on the environment.	10
Cultural problem accepting tourists and people	11

2.4. The final analysis of the factors influencing the development of medical tourism

For the final analysis, in tabular form, according to internal factors (weaknesses and threats), and external factors (opportunities and threats), with four columns contain factors, weight rating, and the rating is weighted. Column A (external and internal), the most important strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing the system, we like the name. In column two (weights), each of these factors, according to their possible impact on existing strategic location (Based on the findings of understanding and analyzing the status quo), the weight of a (major), to zero (the most unimportant) process. The more weight, the current situation and its future impact on the system, the greater the (sum of columns 2, regardless of the number of 1's). In column three (the rating), the

importance of each factor based on the current status of the system, the specific factor score of 5 (very good) to 1 (poor), (Based on the findings, the identification and analysis of the status quo) will. His grading shows that how the system will respond to any external factors. Column four (weighted score), the weighted degree of each factor (column 2 multiplied by column 3) we multiply, to obtain the weighted scores obtained. Thus, for each factor, a weighted score of 1 to 5, is obtained from the average (mean) of these scores is the number 3. Finally, the weighted scores for all internal and external factors in column 4 to Tvrjdaganh shake together, and we calculate the weighted score. The total weighted scores, indicating that the system how to present and potential factors and forces in its external environment responds. Always weighted average of scores in a system context, is the number 3 (Hangr and Violin, 2005). If it is higher, it is more important to you than it is of less importance and influence.

2.5. The results of the analysis of internal factors affecting the medical tourism news (IFAS)

Organizing internal factors, strengths and weaknesses facing the issue in the system, using the calibration factors, and considering the importance of each of their strengths and weaknesses, and the influence of each of them, (Ebrahimzadeh, and Aghasi, 2009), the development of medical tourism in Iran, for passengers, calculated as described in Table 1 were determined:

Table 1
Results of analysis of internal factors (strengths)

Weighted Score	Calibration	Weight	strengths
0.64	4	16.0	Benefit from the infrastructure, and health fields, and areas prone to medical and human capital
0.54	4	0.14	There is adequate space tourism, natural and cultural history, ranging from medical centers
0.52	4	0.13	There are well-equipped hospitals, elsewhere in Iran
0.36	3	0.12	Being prone, most hospitals for medical tourism investments
0.33	3	0.11	Authorities believe the jobs by expanding medical tourism
0.3	3	0.1	There are job opportunities, due to the presence of tourists, and many health centers in the country
0.18	2	0.09	Increased motivation for treatment, for tourists to Iran
0.16	2	0.08	Lower health care costs, and presence in Iran for tourists
0.07	1	0.07	Increased attention to medical centers for tourists, as major advertisers to attract medical tourists
3.1		1	Sum

From the perspective of those who were asked about the most important strengths in the field of medical tourism, it has, are to benefit from the infrastructure and treatment areas, and medical areas and is prone to human capital, which benefiting from a weighted score of 0/64, in the first place is the fact that Iran, a country is up to date medical equipment, which can be a good place to be for therapy. There is adequate space tourism, natural and cultural history, ranging from medical centers with a weighted score of 0.54, in the second place, there are strengths in terms of the tourists and travelers can, during treatment, or after, the interest captures pristine natural and cultural attractions, interesting places to see. There are well-equipped hospitals, elsewhere in Iran, with a weighted score of 0.52, strengths are in third place, in every corner of the country, we have witness a hospital equipped with medical charm, such as the spa, Sports are healthy and which can be used to attract them. Table 2 presents the results of the analysis of internal factors (Weakness) it offers.

Table 2

The results of the analysis of internal factors (Weakness).

Weighted Score	Calibration	Weight	Weakness
0.48	4	0.12	Inappropriate residential facilities, and welfare centers
0.4	4	0.1	Poor facilities and travel visa
0.36	4	0.09	Unfavorable environmental and physical infrastructure (roads, sewage, etc)
0.32	4	0.08	Weakness leisure spaces and green areas around hospitals
0.32	4	0.08	The Weakness diversity in the development of tourism facilities and services, and their poor performance
0.28	4	0.07	Weakness proper advertising than health centers and surrounding
0.18	3	0.06	Weakness transportation and transportation facilities, medical centers and tourist areas around them
0.18	3	0.06	Not run programs designed for medical tourism due to Weakness coordination between relevant agencies
0.18	3	0.06	Light of those in charge, holding programs in the field of medical tourism
0.18	3	0.06	Weakness adequate training of those involved in dealing with tourists
0.15	3	0.05	The Weakness adequate knowledge of the range of treatment sites, and even medical tourism revenue authorities
0.11	2	0.055	The absence of symptoms and signs guide travelers
0.09	2	0.045	Limitation of medical tourists, the few centers in Iran
3.05		1	Sum

Table 3

Results of analysis of external factors (opportunities).

Weighted Score	Calibration	Weight	opportunities
0.56	4	0.14	Incentive travel, for the people
0.48	4	0.12	Develop and equip the health center, recreation facilities
0.44	4	0.11	Improve the quality of tourism services, the creation of educational centers Tour Operators and services, to develop medical tourism
0.3	3	0.1	Investment in infrastructure and superstructure, in order to service better service
0.27	3	0.09	Increased attention from the government and the private sector, the medical tourism sector
0.27	3	0.09	Optimum use of all attractions within the area of health sites
0.24	3	0.08	Increased attention from the government and authorities to invest in medical tourism
0.14	2	0.07	Enhancing the role of health centers, especially hospitals equipped, as the most important factor in the development of medical tourism for tourists
0.12	2	0.06	Identification of natural and cultural attractions around the treatment site
0.1	2	0.05	Provision for adverse employment at hospitals
0.05	1	0.05	There is opportunity for experts and experienced a boom Comments
0.04	1	0.04	Holding more conferences, meetings and seminars in the field of medical tourism
3.01		1	Sum

Table 2 is based on the inappropriateness of accommodation and welfare facilities, medical centers, with a weighted score of 0.48 in the first position of weakness lies in tourism, one of the most important topics, services

and infrastructure, as a prelude to attend and bring tourists to the area is Tourists, in this context, be sure to boost medical tourism services and facilities, should be taken. Poor visa and travel facilities, with a rating of 0.4, are in second place, that this is the most important infrastructure services, which should be considered in the context of critical measures. Unfavorable environmental and physical infrastructure (roads, sewers, etc.), with a weighted score of 0.36, there are weaknesses in the third place, it is also, like the previous cases, one of the most important factors encouraging the introduction of tourism, treatment area, which is good, and the forms of roads, as well as other facilities, are included.

2.6. The results of the analysis of the external factors influencing the development of medical tourism (EFAS)

To organize external factors, opportunities and threats facing issues within the system, using the calibration factors, and considering the importance of each of the threats and opportunities, and the impact of each of them, the level of tourism development Medicine in Iran, was measured and calculated as described in the following table:

As can be seen, the incentive travel option for treatment among people with a weight rating of 0.56, has the highest weight rating, and the first available opportunity, in the field of medical tourism, has been, in fact, when wanting to treat people will rise, which will lead, develop medical tourism. The next highest score belonged to develop and equip the health center, recreation facilities, which amount to 0.48, indicating a role in creating the attractive areas in the surrounding area medical centers, and medical tourism sites, a variety of comfortable space for alongside treatment, and also attract more tourists, the centers will be.

Improve the quality of tourism services, the creation of educational centers Tour Operators and services, to develop medical tourism, with a weighted score of 0.44, other opportunities are in third place, the role Tour Operate behavior, and those providing health care services to tourists, the Return an important field, and attract more tourists, and have training in this area, more work is needed. Table 4 presents the results and analysis of the threat, the weight and the weight rating of the show.

Table 4
Results of analysis of external factors (threats).

Weighted Score	Calibration	Weight	threats
0.52	4	0.13	Continuing Weakness adequate facilities to attract medical tourists
0.48	4	0.12	Reduce the incentive to travel to Iran for treatment among people
0.44	4	0.11	Advertising and the growing Weakness proper information
0.4	4	0.1	Increased investment costs for facilities and equipment, and they are not affordable
0.27	3	0.09	Divestment responsible for implementing and developing medical tourism
0.27	3	0.09	To unfamiliar places of natural, historic and cultural area hospitals
0.27	3	0.09	Intense propaganda against Iran, particularly in the fields of medical treatment and against the country's enemies.
0.24	3	0.08	And attitudes of medical attention solely to the issue of incoming tourism
0.21	3	0.07	Excessive concentration of tourists and patients, the limited number of medical centers
0.12	2	0.06	Effects of tourism on the environment.
0.06	1	0.06	Cultural problem accepting tourists and people
3.28		1	Sum

According to Table 4, it is observed that the continued Weakness appropriate facilities for medical tourism, with a weighted score of 0.52, in the first place are under threat, in this case, a detailed explanation was provided in part weaknesses. Reduce incentives to Iran, travel to treatment among people with a score of 0.48, is in second place, when in fact several reasons, the desire to travel to Iran for treatment, decreases, admittedly on growth and development of medical tourism in Iran, will have a negative impact.

Advertising and the growing Weakness proper information, with a weighted score of 0.44, at other times, is under threat, in fact, Iran is the care and treatment centers, as well as the surrounding attractions, the wide publicity given technology and modern equipment, the relevant institutions take place, so that people are aware of their existence, because many people are unaware of this appeal.

Now, each of the factors interfering with each other, the different strategies of competitive / aggressive (so), diversity (st), revision (WO) FINALLY defensive strategies (wt) deal, which follows:

3. Strategies

3.1. Competitive strategies / aggressive (so)

In this strategy, the focus on internal strengths and external opportunities is based on the following:

- The basic plan of the enormous capacity and potential health and medical treatment in order to increase the willingness to travel;
- Provide an agenda based on a variety of natural attractions, and historic areas within medical centers, medical tourism development;
- Despite enjoying enormous health center sites in the country and the vast expanse of the country, among them the development of medical tourism;

3.2. Variety of strategies (st)

The diversification of the internal strengths and external threats, focused, and include the following:

- Create a basic program to strengthen and bring medical tourists to the country;
- Increased tourism facilities and services in the medical and treatment centers and sites for tourists are respected;

3.3. Strategies Weekly (wo)

Emphasized the intrinsic weaknesses, we try to take advantage of external opportunities, to promote medical tourism in the country and includes the following:

- Provide Tour operate classes and training for tourism development authorities, medical and risk involved in all service commands, utilities, behavior, etc. ;
- Equipping health centers within the space, to recreation, to suit all tastes and people travel to Iran to strengthen medical tourism;

3.4. Defensive strategies (wt)

These strategies have focused on eliminating the vulnerability of medical tourism include:

- Provide consistent and ongoing programs, and taking advantage of new tools and experts in the field of advertising appropriate to introduce potential therapeutic, medical clinics, and charm about them ;
- equipping all sites medical tourism services, facilities, and infrastructure facilities such as sanitation and communication routes, etc;

4. Conclusions

One of the high potential of our country in the field of tourism, indeed great potential in the field of health and medical centers, medical tourism is to thrive, the country in terms of quantity, has great strength is that it require planning and basic solutions, which have all the elements involved are analyzed together, so as to return it to the medical tourism boom, and also to boost medical tourism, from all over the world, and before that, too, could boost the local economy. Therefore, this study will also have access to reinforcement strategies, and results of the analysis of the potential and limitations, it suggests that the benefit of proper infrastructure and the health

and medical fields, and the presence of multiple centers and sites many health and human capital of the country, benefiting from a weighted score of 0.64, in the first place strengths inappropriate accommodation and welfare facilities, with a weighted score of 0.48 in the first position of weakness, increased incentive travel health among people with a weight rating of 0.56, has the highest weight rating, and the first available opportunity, and the continued Weakness adequate facilities to attract medical tourists, with a weighted score of 0.52, in the first place under threat there. The most important strategies in this regard, can be used include infrastructure services, recreational facilities, health care centers, and tourist sites, optimum use of the potential therapeutic, medical and human resources of the country, and efforts to strengthen charm, for the treatment of Iran stated.

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