



التَّوَسُّلُ إِلَى اللَّهِ الْأَوَّلِ لِلْحَفَاطِطِ الطَّبِيعِيَّةِ فِي الرِّيَاذَةِ الرَّجَائِيَّةِ

Capacities and strategies of developing health tourism in Mashhad Metropolis

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سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ



البونىبىر الاقلىبىر الاول للآآفاىب الطىبىة فى الرىبارة الاربىبىة

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Introduction :

المقدمة:

Health tourism and its sub-categories have extremely high status among other aspects of general tourism because it is most interrelated with pilgrimage and religious travels. It is also most demanding and developing with respect to other tourist activities in different locations of the world in recent years mainly because of on the one hand propagating and generalizing public health and welfare issues among various cultures and on the other hand improving medical facilities and activities to attract more local and international visitors.

The holy city of Mashhad has been famous worldwide firstly due to location of the Holy Shrine of Imam Reza and the Islamic belief of pilgrims and religious treatments which leads to its expansion and development during recent years.



البوابة الأولى للحرف الطبية في إيران العجيلة

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Mashhad as a universal metropolis in addition to its religious visiting places provides various medical and health services, offers different medical staff and experts, huge medical hospitals and clinics in different branches, advanced health instruments, laboratories, ICUs, Health and medical sub-structures, secondary health tourism facilities such as air, road, and railroad transfer terminals, airport, pure water supplies and sewerage systems, gas, electricity, telecommunication and web services, hotels, guest rooms, restaurants, caterings, national and international travel agencies, trading centers and malls, security services from one hand and beautiful relaxation, natural resorts and excellent sceneries around the city such as Torqabeh, Shandiz, Kalat , Hezar Masjed, Binalood, and Chenaran. In all, this huge holy city has been a great beautiful religious attraction site for health tourists in a local, international level especially from neighboring countries and the countries around Persian Gulf.



البؤنة الأولى للخبرات الطبية في زيارة الإيجلنة

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problem description :

Although health tourism and Implementing human and environmental services have long background but regarding its wide dimensions it is a new issue requiring modern developmental aspects. With this view, Mashhad as a universal metropolis has necessary health and medical sub-structures, facilities and locations. The main question is: what is the position of health tourism development strategies of this metropolis and what strategies can be used for health tourism development; and how we can improve health tourism in this holy city, regarding positive and negative outputs (internal structures) and opportunities and threats (environmental factors)?



البوتقة الأولى للحرف الطبية في مدينة الإجمالية

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Research Goal

The study aimed at exploring and presenting applicable strategies for developing health tourism in Mashhad as a religious metropolis.

Research Method:

The qualitative and comparative study used a descriptive-analytical method and focused on documents and empirical data. The study used integrated SWOT- QSPM model. Using Delphi method and interviewing some experts of health and tourism, 25 questionnaires were completed and analyzed.



التوجهات الأولى للحضارة الطبية في الحضارة الإسلامية

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Theoretical Basis:

A) Health Tourism:

According to World Tourism Organization health tourism is defined as “ using services that help improve or increase peoples’ health and human characteristics through spending time in mineral springs, various weathers or applying medication far from their permanent settlements more than 24 hours.

Health tourism is divided into three types:

1- **Curative Tourism**

2- **Medical Tourism**

3- **wellness Tourism**

b) Strategic planning

c) Health and health theories:



البوابة الأولى للحرف الطبية في زيارة الإمام الجليلية

Capacities and strategies of developing health tourism in Mashhad Metropolis

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Analyzing health tourism facilities in Mashhad:

The tomb of the eighth Islam Shiite Imam (Ali Ibn Moosa Reza) is located in Mashhad Metropolis with the population of 3001184 and more than 29297946 national and international visitors in 2016. The capital of khorasan Razavi is located in North East of Islamic Republic of Iran. Neighboring countries are CIS (Turkministan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Gherghizestan), and Afghanistan. In addition to the graveyard of Imam Reza, Mashhad provides various capacities for health tourism which according to UNWTO are classified as below.



function

Attractions

**Cultural,
religious /
historical**

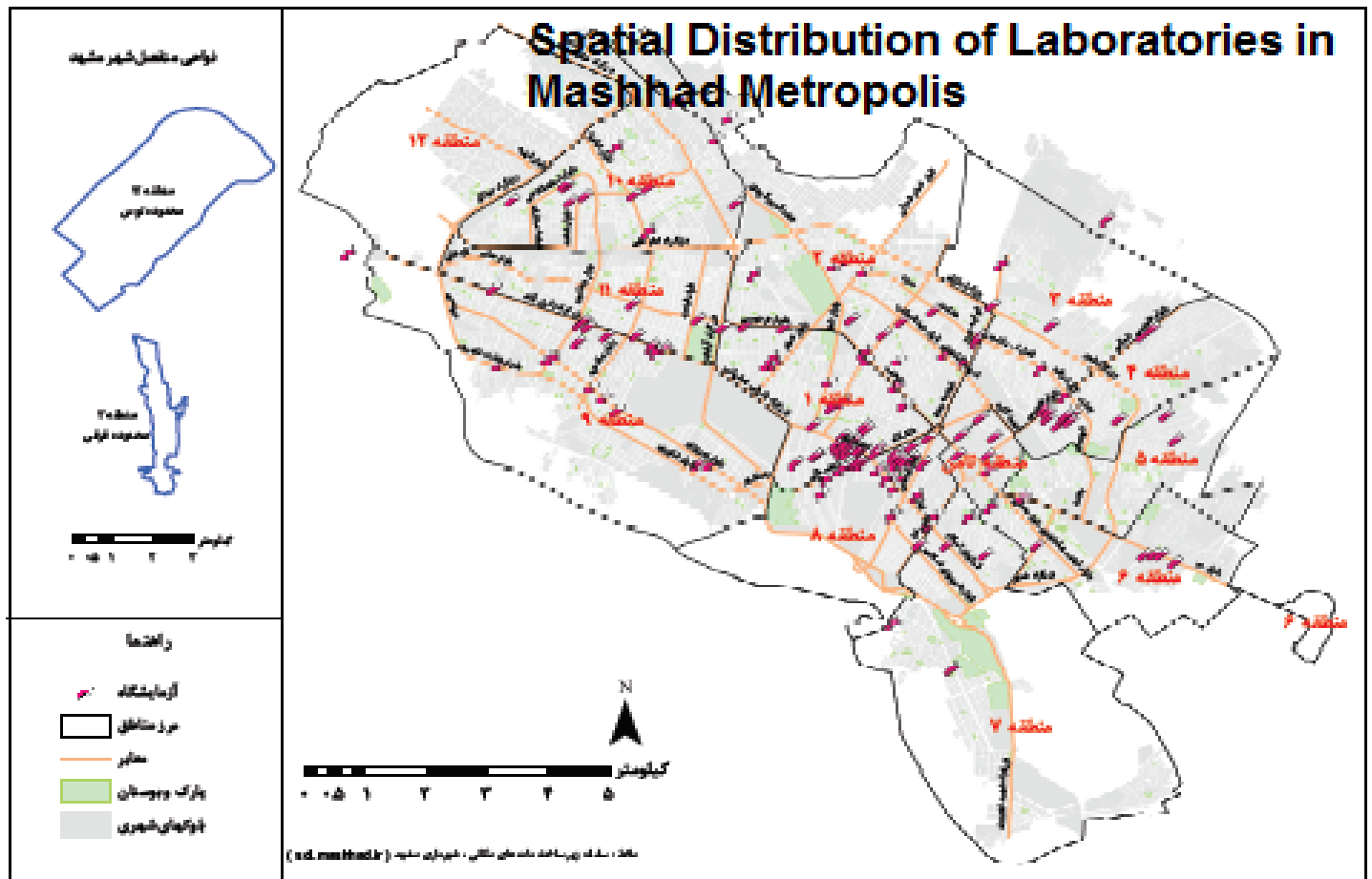
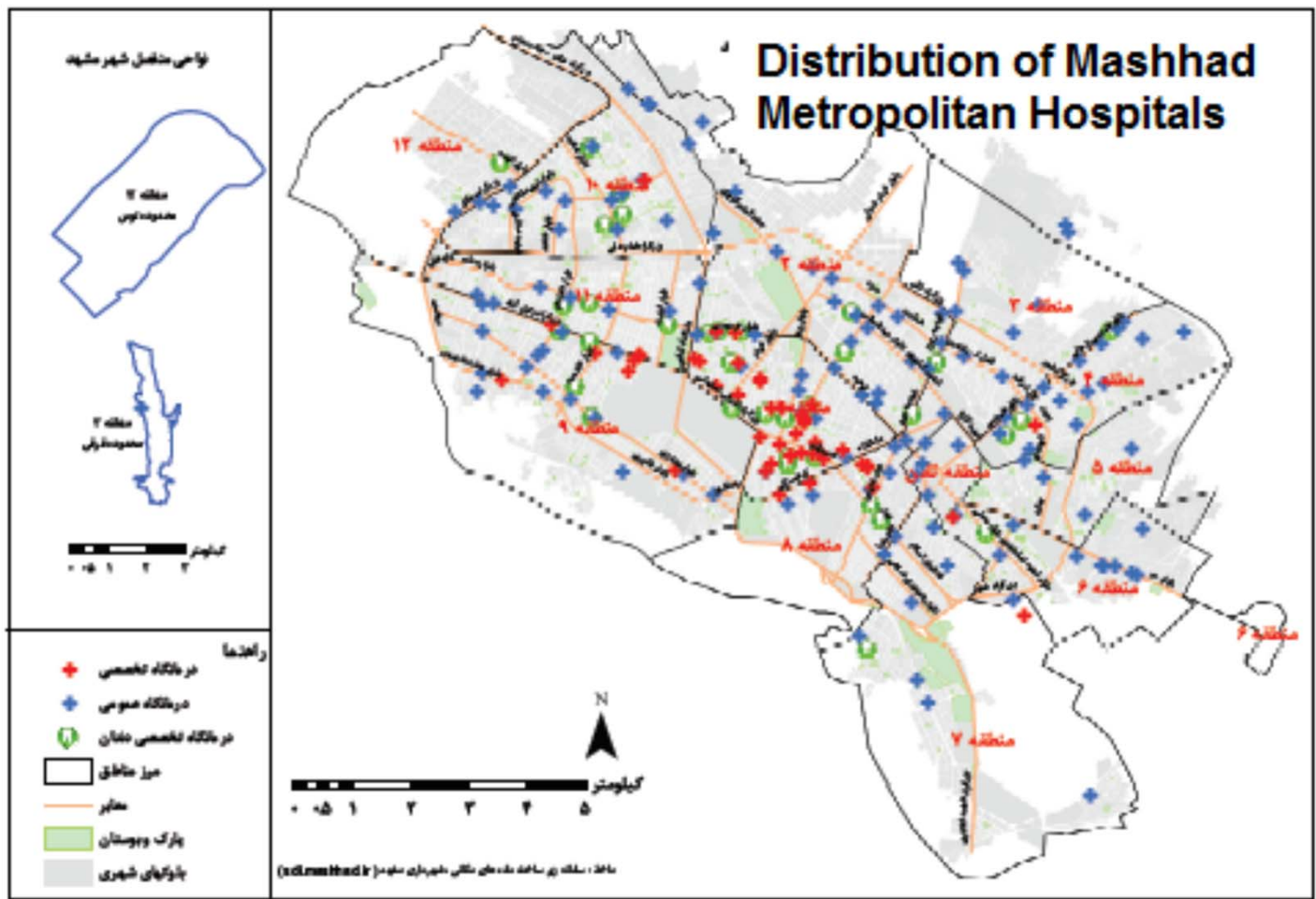
Shrine of Imam Reza (AS), Ferdowsi and Toos, Pir Plandoz, Tomb of Khajeh Rabi, Imamzadeh Yahya , Khajeh Morad, Abbasalt, Imamzadeh Yasser and Nasser, Bagh Naderi, Shah Mosque, Mashhla Mashhad, Mosslai Torq, Akhangan and ...

natural

Vakilabad, Kohsangi, Shandiz, Tarqaba, Abardeh, Zoshk, Khader, Archang, Nagandar, Kong, Azghod, Al, Kalate , Golestan , Hessar, Mayan Ardama, Moghan, Bulgar , Haft Hoz.

**human
made**

Mellat Park, Kardeh Dam, Chali Dareh Dam, Torgh Dam, Water Waves, Iranian Water Park .





البؤنة الأولى للحفات الطيرة في الرارة الإعلنة

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Capacities and Secondary Elements of Mashhad Metropolitan Health Tourism:

Facilities and Service	unit	description	Facilities and Service	unit	description
hospital	60	eye , heart and ...	sewage	558,677	domestic, commercial, and ...
Lab	224	-	Public transportation	17.673	Bus, minibus and taxi
Doctor specializing	2.800	Eye ,skin, teeth,	number of foreign flights	5.580	-
drinking water	225,612,651	-	railway passengers	10.676.320	domestic and foreign
Electricity	6.475.610.195	kilo watt	electric train	33.830.355.794.459	-
gas	6.265.279.000	-	residential units	1466	Hotel and
Agency	263	Travel	Internet Service	18	-



التطوير الاستراتيجي للسياحة الطبية في مدينة المقدسة

Discussion :

Mashhad Metropolitan Health Tourism Development Strategy:

A) Internal factors:

According to the studies, the main strengths and weaknesses of Mashhad metropolitan health tourism are as follows.

Strengths	option	Weaknesses	option
Availability of modern special services	S1	Decentralization & dispersing services in city	W1
Easy access to high quality medical care in some clinics especially for international patients	S2	Lack of proportion of number of medical centers to number of patients	W2
Performing new methods of operations	S3	Lack of supervision over technical activities	W3
providing talented medical experts & physicians & subspecialist	S4	Lack of sufficient security & medical high quality in some hospitals	W4
low cost expenses	S5	incapability of medical staff to communicate well with foreign patients	W5
low cost travel expenses	S6	Lack of complete insurance coverage	W6
True belief in Imam Reza's pilgrims	S7	Multi managements in some hospitals & institutions	W7
providing a variety of natural relaxation resorts	S8	Insufficient natural resorts available	W8
Availability to transfer services (road, railway, air)	S9	Lack of supervision over private informal residential	W9
providing various economic levels of residential options for different people	S10	Lack of supervision on health tourism services and facilities	W10
Easy access to health sub-structures such as pure water, gas, electricity, communication, sewerage, etc.	S11	Lack of providing necessary data banks for health tourism	W11
providing local security and relaxation	S12	Partial lack of pure water supply in some parts of city	W12
Establishing rules & regulations in travels	S13	Insufficient air travel services	W13
special supporting rules for travel facilities	S14	Problems with respect to getting visa	W14



البؤنة الأولى للخبرات الطبية في السياحة الإيرانية العجيلة

B: External factors:

These factors are outside the health tourism system of the city but affect the activities of this system.

Opportunities	option	Threats	option
providing international, cultural, and tourist relations with neighboring countries	01	Availability to relaxation resorts in neighboring countries	T1
providing framework to attract more visitors(IRI as a member of WTO)	02	Availability to relaxation resorts in other cities in Iran	T2
Government support of international patients	03	Putting sanctions on Iran to provide needed requirements	T3
Applying NGOs requests in health tourism	04	Lack or insufficient rules to support international visitors in Iran	T4
Considering high status of Mashhad as a main religious capital city of Islam and Iran	05	Rush of lobbies in health tourism in Iran	T5
Lack of security for visitors in other countries	06	Political treats & terrorist activities in Iran	T6
Insufficient or lack of technical services in neighboring countries	07	Competition in airlines in neighboring countries	T7
Receiving various requests to invest in health tourism in Iran	08	Investments in purchasing hotels & trading centers around holy shrine of Imam Reza by non-natives	T8
Cultural bounds among other Islamic neighboring countries	09	International negative propaganda against Iran	T9

SWOT Analysis

<p>Internal factors</p> <p>External factors</p>	<p>Strengths</p> <p>S1 Availability of modern special services S2 Easy access to high quality medical care in some clinics especially for international patients S3 Performing new methods of operations S4 providing talented medical experts & physicians & subspecialist S5 low cost expenses S6 low cost travel expenses S7 True belief in Imam Reza's pilgrims S8 providing a variety of natural relaxation resorts S9 Availability to transfer services (road, railway, air) S10 providing various economic levels of residential options for different people S 11 Easy access to health sub-structures such as pure water, gas, electricity, communication, sewerage, etc. S12 providing local security and relaxation S13 Establishing rules & regulations in travels S14 special supporting rules for travel facilities</p>	<p>Weaknesses</p> <p>W1 Decentralization & dispersing services in city W2 Lack of proportion of number of medical centers to number of patients W3 Lack of supervision over technical activities W4 Lack of sufficient security & medical high quality in some hospitals W5 incapability of medical staff to communicate well with foreign patients W6 Lack of complete insurance coverage W7 Multi managements in some hospitals & institutions W8 Insufficient natural resorts available W9 Lack of supervision over private informal residential W10 Lack of supervision on health tourism services and facilities W11 Lack of providing necessary data banks for health tourism W12 Partial lack of pure water supply in some parts of city W13 Insufficient air travel services W14 Problems with respect to getting visa</p>
<p>Opportunities</p> <p>O1. providing international, cultural, and tourist relations with neighboring countries O2. providing framework to attract more visitors(IRI as a member of WTO) O3. Government support of international patients O4. Applying NGOs requests in health tourism O5. Considering high status of Mashhad as a main religious capital city of Islam and Iran O6. Lack of security for visitors in other countries O7. Insufficient or lack of technical services in neighboring countries O8. Receiving various requests to invest in health tourism in Iran O9. Cultural bounds among other Islamic neighboring countries</p>	<p>SO</p> <p>1. Preparing a comprehensive plan document in different horizons for branding Mashhad as a national and regional health city. 2. Increasing development of information and advertising technology in the field of health tourism. 3. Development of domestic and foreign investments in constructing, upgrading of tourism infrastructure and physical spaces (development of hotel-hospital spaces) suitable for health tourism. 4. Developing medical tourism spaces 5. Developing various health tourism health services</p>	<p>WO</p> <p>O8-W8 Developing investments in health tourism sub-structures O1-W3 Training new human experts in uniformed management O7-W9 Standardizing & improving health in residential resorts O3-W14 Government support to remove visa for patients O7-W10 Establishing equipped medical spaces according to economic, social, cultural structures O8-W8 Relations between government & private sector in investing on natural resorts O9-W10 Vast ads in various parts with help of organizations O1-W13 Getting help from other countries in health tourism transfer systems</p>
<p>Threats</p> <p>T1 Availability to relaxation resorts in neighboring countries T2 Availability to relaxation resorts in other cities in Iran T3 Putting sanctions on Iran to provide needed requirements T4 Lack or insufficient rules to support international visitors in Iran T5 Rush of lobbies in health tourism in Iran T6 Political treats & terrorist activities in Iran T7 Competition in airlines in neighboring countries T8 Investments in purchasing hotels & trading centers around holy shrine of Imam Reza by non- natives T9 International negative propaganda against Iran</p>	<p>ST</p> <p>T1-S8 Providing various resorts in health tourism S1-T3 Supporting local productions & providing necessary bank loans & discounts T4- S14 Supporting low cost travels for international patients T5-S13 Limiting brokers activities by providing health tours organized by government T6-S4 Applying high skilled experts in medical tourism T10-S8 Providi9ng appropriate ads to ensure travel security T9-S12 Developing sub-structures in health tourism T8-S9 Inviting private sectors to compete with airlines T2-S10 Establishing new medical-residential places Establishing new medical-residential places especially hospitals & hotels Establishing various local ads to propagate natural resorts in Mashhad</p>	<p>WT</p> <p>T5-W7 Supporting tourist insurance T1,2 - W9 Providing facilities for patients during recovery periods T7-W4 Providing public security & establishing tourist police T3-W2 Standardizing tourist resorts & medical places T10-W9 Providing ads in medical tourism in national/regional levels T3-W2 Providing medical devices & instruments T9-W13 Standardizing sub-structures & improving investments T7-W15 Establishing rules to remove visa T8-W14 Standardizing airlines and making brands T10-W11 Improving sanitation & medical care T6-W3 Enriching human experts in health tourism</p>

QSPM Matrix of Mashhad Health Tourism Strategic Planning

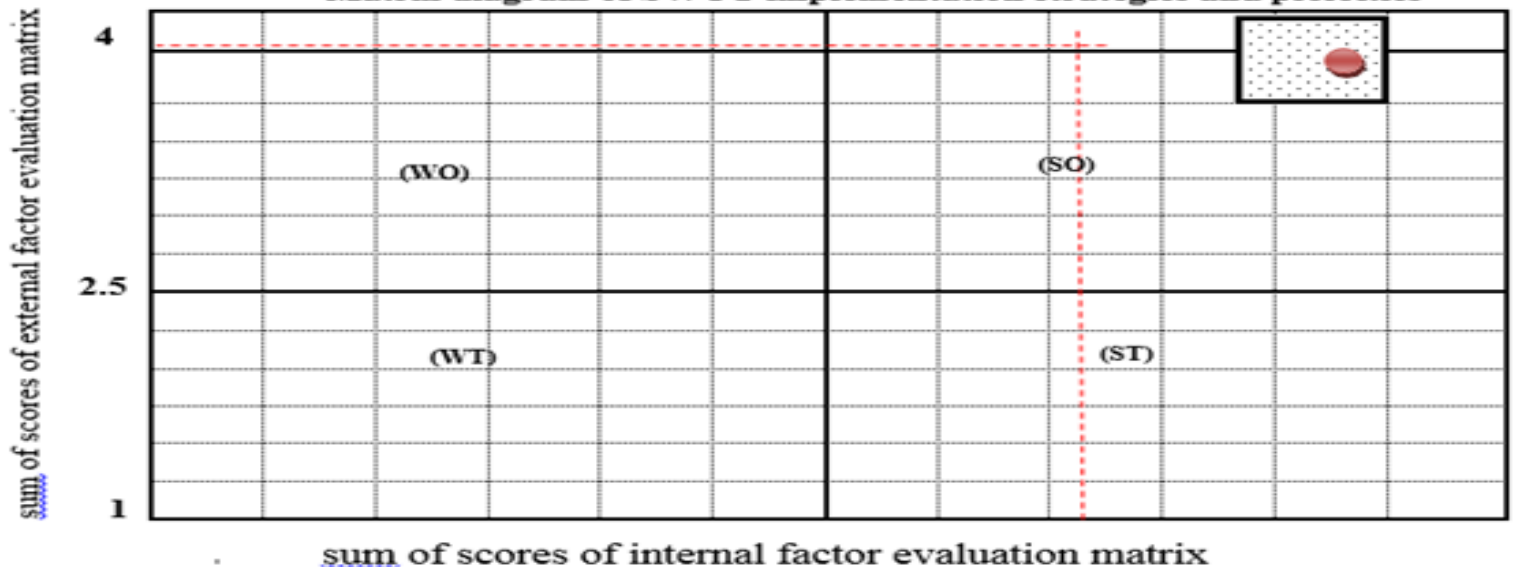
Index	. Preparing a comprehensive plan document in different horizons for branding Mashhad as a national and regional health city.			Increasing development of information and advertising technology in the field of health tourism		Development of domestic and foreign investments in constructing, upgrading of tourism infrastructure and physical spaces (development of hotel-hospital spaces) suitable for health tourism.		Developing medical tourism spaces		Developing various health tourism health services	
	strategies										
factor	coefficient	ratio	score	ratio	score	ratio	score	ratio	score	ratio	score
Strengths											
S1 Availability of modern special services	0.059	4	0.236	1	0.059	1	0.059	4	0.236	3	0.177
S2 Easy access to high quality medical care in some clinics especially for international patients	0.055	4	0.22	1	0.055	4	0.22	3.5	0.192	3	0.165
S3 Performing new methods of operations	0.053	4	0.212	1	0.053	3	0.159	1	0.053	3	0.159
S4 providing talented medical experts & physicians & subspecialist	0.059	4	0.236	2	0.188	2	0.188	3	0.177	3.5	0.206
S5 low cost expenses	0.055	1	0.055	1	0.055	1	0.055	2	0.11	2.5	0.137
S6 low cost travel expenses	0.053	1.5	0.079	2	0.106	1.75	0.092	1.5	0.079	1.5	0.079
S7 True belief in Imam Reza's pilgrims	0.056	3	0.168	2	0.112	2	0.112	2	0.112	2	0.112
S8 providing a variety of natural relaxation resorts	0.049	2.5	0.122	3	0.147	3	0.147	3	0.147	2.5	0.122
S9 Availability to transfer services (road, railway, air)	0.059	2.5	0.147	1	0.059	3	0.177	2	0.118	4	0.236
S10 providing various economic levels of residential options for different people	0.055	2	0.11	3	0.165	3	0.165	3	0.165	2	0.11
S 11 Easy access to health sub-structures such as pure water, gas, electricity, communication, sewerage, etc.	0.056	2	0.112	3	0.168	1	0.056	1	0.056	1	0.056
S12 providing local security and relaxation	0.057	3	0.171	1.5	0.085	3	0.171	3	0.171	4	0.228
S13 Establishing rules & regulations in travels	0.063	3.5	0.220	1	0.063	3.5	0.220	3	0.189	4	0.252
S14 special supporting rules for travel facilities	0.056	3	0.168	2	0.112	4	0.224	3	0.168	1	0.056
Weaknesses											
W1 Decentralization & dispersing services in city	0.068	2	0.136	1	0.068	1	0.068	2	0.136	1	0.068
W2 Lack of proportion of number of medical centers to number of patients	0.072	4	0.288	1	0.072	3	0.216	3	0.216	3	0.216
W3 Lack of supervision over technical activities	0.066	4	0.264	1	0.066	2	0.132	1	0.066	1.5	0.099
W4 Lack of sufficient security & medical high quality in some hospitals	0.063	2.5	0.157	1	0.063	1	0.063	2.5	0.157	3	0.189
W5 incapability of medical staff to communicate well with foreign patients	0.065	2.75	0.178	2.5	0.162	4	0.26	2.75	0.178	2.5	0.162
W6 Lack of complete insurance coverage	0.080	2	0.16	2.5	0.2	2	0.16	1.5	0.12	3	0.24
W7 Multi managements in some hospitals & institutions	0.076	3	0.228	1.5	0.114	2	0.152			3	0.228
W8 Insufficient natural resorts available	0.065	2	0.13	1.25	0.081	3	0.195			2.5	0.162
W9 Lack of supervision over private informal residential	0.060	3	0.18	3	0.18	2.5	0.15	3	0.228	3	0.18
W10 Lack of supervision on health tourism services and facilities	0.07	3	0.21	3	0.21	2	0.14	2.5	0.162	1.5	0.105
W11 Lack of providing necessary data banks for health tourism	0.070	2	0.14	2	0.14	2	0.14	2.5	0.15	2.5	0.175
W12 Partial lack of pure water supply in some parts of city	0.070	2.25	0.157	3.5	0.245	2.75	0.192	2.5	0.175	2.5	0.175
W13 Insufficient air travel services	0.033	1.75	0.057	1	0.033	1.5	0.049	2.5	0.175	1.25	0.041
W14 Problems with respect to getting visa	0.072	3	0.216	2	0.144	1.5	0.108	2.75	0.192	2	0.144
Opportunities											
O1. providing international, cultural, and tourist relations with neighbouring countries	0.108	3.5	0.378	2	0.216	3	0.324	2.5	0.027	2	0.216
O2. providing framework to attract more visitors(IRI as a member of WTO)	0.112	2.75	0.305	1.5	0.168	3	0.336	2.75	0.305	1.5	0.168
O3. Government support of international patients	0.16	3	0.48	2.25	0.36	3.25	0.52	2.75	0.44	2.75	0.44
O4. Applying NGOs requests in health tourism	0.108	2.75	0.297	2	0.216	3.25	0.351	2.75	0.297	2.75	0.297
O5. Considering high status of Mashhad as a main religious capital city of Islam and Iran	0.128	2.5	0.32	4	0.512	3.5	0.448	2	0.256	3.75	0.48
O6. Lack of security for visitors in other countries	0.112	2.5	0.28	3	0.336	3	0.336	1.5	0.168	2.75	0.305
O7. Insufficient or lack of technical services in neighbouring countries	0.108	1	0.108	1.5	0.162	3	0.324	2.5	0.27	2.5	0.27
O8. Receiving various requests to invest in health tourism in Iran	0.1	2.75	0.27	1.5	0.15	4	0.4	3	0.3	2.5	0.25
O9. Cultural bounds among other Islamic neighbouring countries	0.114	1.5	0.171	1.25	0.142	3	0.342	2	0.228	2.5	0.285
O9. Cultural bounds among other Islamic neighbouring countries	0.108	3.5	0.378	2	0.216	3	0.324	2.5	0.027	2	0.216
Threats											
T1 Availability to relaxation resorts in neighbouring countries	101/0	2.75	0.277	2.5	0.252	2.5	0.252	2.5	0.252	3	0.303
T2 Availability to relaxation resorts in other cities in Iran	107/0	3	0.321	3.5	0.374	3.5	0.374	2.5	0.267	2	0.214
T3 Putting sanctions on Iran to provide needed requirements	107/0	1	107/0	3	0.321	3.25	0.347	3	0.321	2.75	0.294
T4 Lack or insufficient rules to support international visitors in Iran	109/0	3	0.327	1	109/0	3.25	0.354	3	0.327	3	0.327
T5 Rush of lobbies in health tourism in Iran	111/0	1	111/0	1	111/0	1.5	0.166	2.5	0.277	2.5	0.277
T6 Political treats & terrorist activities in Iran	113/0	1	113/0	1	113/0	1.5	0.169	1.5	0.169	2.75	0.310
T7 Competition in airlines in neighboring countries	089/0	1	089/0	3.5	0.311	1.5	0.133	3.25	0.289	3	0.267
T8 Investments in purchasing hotels & trading centers around holy shrine of Imam Reza by non- natives	091/0	1	091/0	4	0.364	1	091/0	2.25	0.204	2.25	0.204
T9 International negative propaganda against Iran	085/0	4	085/0	1.25	0.106	1.5	0.127	1	085/0	3	0.261
Total score			8.538	4	7.704	9.98	9.121	9.875			



البحث العلمي الأول للخبرات الطبية في السياحة العلاجية

Findings of the study, using SWOT technique and evaluating WT/ST/WO/SO for developing health tourism in Mashhad, indicated that the score for strengths (2.828) such as expert human resources in healthcare sector, modern health facilities and services, low medical costs, etc. is higher than the score of weaknesses (1.105). In total, the final score for internal factors (SW) was 3.933. Moreover, the score for opportunities (2.735) such as central government's support for attracting health tourists, political interactions with neighbor countries was higher than the score for threats (1.239) in this metropolis. In total, the final score for external factors (OT) was 3.974. Therefore, the development strategies of health tourism in Mashhad Metropolis **urges existing strengths and opportunities with an offensive Strategy.** selection of offensive position (SO) based on analysis of the SWOT model is given below

Matrix diagram of SWOT implementation strategies and priorities





البوابة الأولى للحفلات الطبية في زيارة الإيجلينة

Research Results:

According to the SWOT and QSPM analysis and selection of aggressive strategies, following suggestions are offered for the development of Mashhad metropolitan health tourism:

1. Preparing a comprehensive plan document in different horizons for branding Mashhad as a national and regional health city.
2. Increasing development of information and advertising technology in the field of health tourism.
3. Development of domestic and foreign investments in constructing, upgrading of tourism infrastructure and physical spaces (development of hotel-hospital spaces) suitable for health tourism.
4. Developing medical tourism spaces
5. Developing various health tourism health services



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