



## Egypt as a Destination for Health Tourism: Opportunities and Obstacles

Youstina Rizk Soliman<sup>1</sup>    Abeer Mohamed Fathy<sup>2</sup>    Merhan Rizk Soliman<sup>3</sup>

High Institute for Tourism and Hotels 6 October city, Egypt<sup>1,2</sup>  
 Faculty of Tourism and Hotels Management, Helwan University, Egypt<sup>3</sup>

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### Abstract

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Health tourism has become a focus for many tourist destinations seeking to increase inbound tourism and diversify their tourism markets. In this context, this study aimed to evaluate the importance of health tourism, identify the key requirements for its development in Egypt, the obstacles facing its development, and the main opportunities available for the development of health tourism in Egypt. To achieve these objectives, a questionnaire was designed and distributed to a sample of officials in the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, the Egyptian Tourism Authority, and faculty members in tourism and hotel colleges and institutes. The study relied on the analysis of 312 questionnaires using SPSS v.28. The results of the study showed that focusing on health tourism contributes to attracting more visitors by providing high-quality health services and offering a unique tourist experience through enjoying health treatments and relaxation. The results also indicated that the main requirement for the development of health tourism in Egypt is to provide specialized and diverse healthcare services, while the lack of investment in health tourism projects is the main obstacle to its development in Egypt. Furthermore, the study highlighted statistically significant differences in the responses of the sample regarding the importance of health tourism, the requirements for its development, the obstacles facing its development, and the opportunities available for its development in Egypt, based on gender, workplace, and years of experience. Finally, the study recommended the need to promote health tourism in Egypt on a larger international scale through advertising campaigns, exhibitions, and international conferences specialized in health tourism.

## Introduction

Health tourism is a type of tourism that prioritizes the maintenance of good health and the promotion of physical and mental well-being for individuals. It involves traveling to various destinations such as health resorts, treatment centers, hospitals, and natural areas to obtain natural treatments like hydrotherapy, massages, yoga, and other health-related activities (Lee & Li, 2019). This approach to tourism focuses on holistic treatment that addresses the body, mind, and spirit. These trips provide a chance to reduce stress levels, relax, improve physical and mental fitness, and enhance overall quality of life. The range of treatments offered in health tourism is diverse, including both conventional and alternative therapies such as water therapy, medical baths, massages, herbal remedies, sports training, yoga, psychotherapy, meditation, prophetic medicine, cupping, color therapy, aromatherapy, sound therapy, and more (Smith & Puczkó, 2014).

Tourists who opt for health tourism can reap numerous benefits such as enhancing their physical and mental health and fitness, reducing stress levels, improving sleep quality, alleviating pain and fatigue, enhancing digestion and gut health, boosting cognitive function and focus, reducing symptoms of depression, anxiety, and tension, improving social relationships, and boosting self-confidence (Wong & Hazley, 2020). Health tourism is a crucial segment in the tourism industry, and it offers an opportunity to contribute to the economic development of the local community and generate new job opportunities. Moreover, it promotes sustainable tourism and raises awareness about health, well-being, and environmental sustainability (Lange, 2015).

Health tourism can encompass a diverse range of activities and experiences and can vary significantly from one country to another. Some of the popular destinations for health tourism include the Spa in France, the Baden-Baden resort in Germany, the Montreal resort in Canada, the Bali resorts in Indonesia, and the resorts in the Maldives. Health tourism also encompasses alternative therapies based on traditional medicine and ancient practices. These therapies may include herbal remedies, aromatherapy massages, soothing music, meditation, yoga, specialized sports exercises, healthy nutrition, as well as psychotherapy and psychological consultations (Gautam & Bhatta, 2020).

Health tourism can be beneficial for individuals suffering from chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, arthritis, respiratory problems, and various other ailments. Moreover, individuals who aim to maintain their health and well-being and improve their quality of life can also benefit from health tourism as a means to achieve their goals (Mathew & Sreejesh, 2017). Health tourism is an essential segment of the tourism industry, and it has gained immense popularity in recent times. Countries and tourist destinations can provide excellent infrastructure and services for health tourists to attract more visitors and bolster the local economy (Camilleri & Camilleri, 2018).

Environmental sustainability is a crucial aspect to consider in health tourism, which involves the responsible use of natural resources, preserving the environment, and safeguarding local culture and traditions (Han, 2021). It is also imperative to ensure the provision of quality health services and maintain necessary health conditions and cleanliness for patients and tourists. In conclusion, health tourism is a significant component of sustainable tourism development, as it promotes investment in health infrastructure, creates new job opportunities, bolsters the local economy, promotes health and well-being, and offers a unique and satisfying tourist experience (Pan et al., 2018). Egypt boasts several renowned destinations for health tourism, including the

Red Sea oases, Siwa Oasis, Saint Catherine, and many other places, where numerous resorts, hospitals, and health clinics are available throughout the country (Zaki, 2017).

Based on the above, the study aims to identify the most important strengths and weaknesses of Egypt as a destination for health tourism. The study also aims to evaluate the available opportunities for Egypt as a destination for health tourism, in addition to identifying the main challenges facing the development of health tourism.

## **Literature Review**

### **The Concept of Health Tourism**

Health tourism is a form of tourism that focuses on improving the physical and mental health and well-being of travelers. It encompasses a diverse range of health and therapeutic options such as physical therapy, massage, hydrotherapy, yoga, meditation, and other activities that aim to enhance health and well-being while reducing stress and tension. Physical therapy, psychotherapy, hydrotherapy, massage, and yoga are among the most commonly offered options in health tourism (Lee et al., 2020). Health tourism involves traveling to another country for medical and health care purposes. This can include undergoing major or minor surgeries, receiving medical treatment for chronic illnesses or special medical conditions, such as physical therapy, dental treatment, cosmetic surgery, herbal therapy, and mineral water therapy (Ratnasari et al., 2022).

People choose to travel for health-related reasons for various reasons, such as seeking high-quality healthcare, obtaining treatment at lower prices than those available in their home country, receiving treatment quickly and within close dates, as well as obtaining treatment in a luxurious and relaxing environment. Health tourism combines travel and medical treatment, providing an opportunity for patients to enjoy an enjoyable travel experience, discover new cultures and traditions, and receive the treatment they require (Du et al., 2021).

### **The Importance of Health Tourism**

Health tourism is an effective strategy for promoting a tourist destination, as a destination that offers high-quality health services can use these services to attract more visitors and tourists (Zeng & Yi Man Li, 2021). The primary reasons that make health tourism important for promoting a tourist destination are as follows:

- Provision of high-quality health services: Providing top-notch health services to tourists creates an opportunity for the destination to attract more visitors and tourists, as tourists seek specialized healthcare, natural therapy, and treatment for chronic illnesses. This is a competitive advantage for the destination (Al-Azzam, 2016).
- Provision of a unique tourist experience: A destination that offers high-quality health services can provide tourists with a distinctive and memorable experience, where they can enjoy health treatments, relaxation, and entertainment in a comfortable and unique environment (Streimikiene et al., 2021).
- Boosting the local economy: Health tourism presents an opportunity to boost the local economy of the tourist destination by increasing demand for health and tourism services, generating new job opportunities and increasing tourist revenues. This, in turn, can lead to further investment in infrastructure and tourism services in the area (Lunt et al., 2013).

- Attracting a specific market: Health tourism also offers the chance to attract a specific market of tourists seeking specialized healthcare, natural therapy, and treatment for chronic illnesses. This helps to target a specific demographic and attract tourists who are specifically seeking these services (Mrčela et al., 2015).
- Improving the destination's reputation: Health tourism can contribute to enhancing the reputation of the tourist destination as a high-quality and distinguished tourist destination (Dryglas & Salamaga, 2018). A destination that offers excellent health services has a competitive advantage, making it an attractive choice for tourists and travelers from all over the world. Therefore, health tourism can create a positive image and increase appeal to visitors and tourists, making it a preferred destination for many (Wang, 2012).

Overall, health tourism is a powerful tool for promoting a tourist destination and boosting local revenues. It also encourages investment in infrastructure and tourism services, which can improve the region's economy and create jobs for local residents (Han, 2021).

Health tourism is important for individuals and society for several reasons, including:

- A. Enhancing healthcare: Seeking medical treatment in another country allows patients to access high-quality and specialized healthcare in certain fields. This is made possible by the availability of doctors, hospitals, and specialized clinics in countries that specialize in health tourism (Ghani et al., 2015).
- B. Cost-effectiveness: Medical treatment in the patient's home country may be more expensive than the same treatment in another country. Health tourism provides an opportunity for patients to receive treatment at lower prices, saving them the high costs associated with treatment in their home country (Sandberg, 2017).
- C. Time-efficiency: Receiving medical treatment in the patient's home country may take longer than desired, but traveling to another country for treatment can save time, as well as reduce waiting times for appointments with doctors and hospitals (Lunt et al., 2013).
- D. Enhancing mental well-being: Many patients experience stress and anxiety during medical treatment and hospital stays. Health tourism can improve patients' mental and emotional well-being by providing opportunities for rest, relaxation, and entertainment through tourist activities available in the destination country. This can have a positive impact on their overall mental and emotional health (Šušić & Dimitrijević, 2015).
- E. Encouraging health consciousness: Health tourism provides an opportunity for tourists to learn about the best health and medical practices from around the world and apply them to their daily lives. This promotes health consciousness and culture among tourists (Smith & Puczkó, 2014).
- F. Boosting the economy: Health tourism supports the economy of regions that offer high-quality health services. Tourists receive medical and health services, generating profits and creating new job opportunities in the health and tourism sectors. This also leads to the development of infrastructure and tourist services in the region, enhancing its appeal as a tourist destination and attracting more visitors and tourists (Aydin & Karamehmet, 2017).

Furthermore, health tourism offers an opportunity for cultural exchange and learning about other cultures and traditions (Mohamed, 2019). Tourists from different cultures and nationalities come together to learn about each other's cultures and traditions, which promotes cultural understanding and tolerance between different peoples and cultures. Therefore, health tourism is an important opportunity for cultural communication and mutual learning among individuals and communities (Albu, 2015).

## Requirements for Health Tourism

Health tourism necessitates certain requirements to be met by the tourist destination and relevant health and tourism facilities (Fetscherin & Stephano, 2016). The most crucial requirements include:

- Offering specialized health services: Tourists seeking health tourism require access to specialized and advanced health services that are available at the tourist destination. Health facilities need to provide these services and various medical specialties, including cosmetic surgery, treatment of chronic diseases, addiction treatment, physical therapy, rehabilitation, and others (Rahman, 2019).
- Providing specialized tourism facilities: The tourist destination must offer specialized and appropriate tourism facilities for tourists seeking healthcare, such as hotels, furnished apartments, health resorts, hospitals, and clinics dedicated to health tourism (DeMicco, 2017).
- Emphasizing service excellence: Prioritizing service and healthcare quality is crucial at the tourist destination. High-quality and exceptional services should be provided that meet the needs of tourists and ensure a comfortable and enjoyable tourism experience (Lee et al., 2020).
- Adhering to Health and Safety Regulations: Health and tourism facilities involved in health tourism must comply with the health and safety regulations established in the region to ensure the safety of tourists and prevent any health or security risks (Lunt et al., 2013).
- Offering Language Services and Translation: Language services and translation must be made available to tourists visiting the tourist destination, as they may speak a different language than the local official language. Tourism facilities should offer translation and communication in various languages to facilitate communication and effectively meet the needs of tourists (Bartłomiejczyk & Pöllabauer, 2022).
- Environmental and Sustainable Practices: The tourist destination, health, and tourism facilities involved in health tourism must prioritize environmental and sustainable practices. They should implement eco-friendly and sustainable measures, while preserving natural and cultural resources in the region (Irwansyah, 2020).
- Safety and Security Measures: The tourist destination, health, and tourism facilities involved in health tourism must prioritize safety and security. They should provide a safe and secure environment for tourists and patients, implement necessary security measures to ensure the safety of visitors, patients, and employees, and provide necessary medical services in emergencies and health crises (Lago, 2017).

In addition to the above requirements, other factors must be considered when developing health tourism in the tourist destination.

- Promotion and Marketing: The tourist destination should be promoted and marketed as a health tourism destination through various mediums such as social media, advertising, websites, and appropriate promotional campaigns (Morrison, 2018).
- Collaboration with Medical and Healthcare Institutions: The tourist destination must collaborate with local and international medical and healthcare institutions specialized in healthcare to enhance and improve healthcare services, as well as to streamline treatment and rehabilitation procedures for tourists visiting the destination (Arief et al., 2022).

- **Employee Training and Qualification:** Health and tourism facilities involved in health tourism should train and qualify their employees to provide necessary healthcare services and care for tourists. This will improve service quality and help meet the needs of tourists more effectively (Aydin & Karamehmet, 2017).
- **Infrastructure Investment:** Local authorities and investors in the tourist destination should invest in necessary infrastructure and development to provide suitable health and tourism facilities that meet the healthcare needs of tourists. This could include updating hospitals and clinics, providing medical equipment, and improving the healthcare system and public health (Medhekar et al., 2020).
- **Health Insurance:** The tourist destination must offer necessary health insurance for tourists visiting the destination to provide essential healthcare in case of accidents or sudden illnesses (Crush & Chikanda, 2015).
- **Guidance and Counseling:** Necessary guidance and counseling should be provided for tourists interested in obtaining health tourism. This includes providing information about healthcare services provided, available tourism facilities, necessary treatment procedures, and guidance for continuous healthcare needs after leaving the tourist destination (Snyder et al., 2011).
- **Patient Confidentiality:** Health and tourism facilities involved in health tourism must prioritize patient privacy and personal health information. This ensures the protection of tourist and patient privacy and maintains the confidentiality of health information (Khan & Alam, 2014).
- **Offering Additional Services:** Tourists seeking health tourism can benefit from additional services such as travel services, comfortable and appropriate accommodation and transportation services, as well as recreational and healthy activities and sports that help tourists relax and enjoy the health tourism experience fully (Ancy et al., 2020).

Overall, health tourism requires a suitable, comfortable, and safe environment for tourists seeking healthcare (Seow et al., 2017). This includes providing specialized healthcare services, high-quality tourism facilities, and prioritizing safety, protection, privacy, environment, and sustainability. Additionally, marketing and promotion, collaboration with medical and health institutions, employee training and qualification, providing health insurance, guidance and counseling, and offering additional services are necessary. By providing these requirements and services, success and excellence in developing health tourism can be achieved, and the needs of tourists and patients can be met effectively (Sandberg, 2017).

### **Obstacles to the Development of Health Tourism**

There are several obstacles that can hinder the development of health tourism in a tourist destination, including:

- A. **Insufficient Funding:** The lack of funding and investment can be a significant obstacle to the development of health tourism. Developing and enhancing healthcare services and specialized tourism facilities can require substantial costs, and it may be difficult to secure adequate funding to implement these projects.
- B. **Low Health Awareness:** Low health awareness among tourists and the local community can also hinder the development of health tourism. If health awareness is low among the local community, it may be challenging to attract tourists interested in seeking healthcare. Thus, increasing health awareness and educating the community about the benefits of health tourism can be crucial to developing the sector (Jafari et al., 2016).

- C. **Inadequate Experience and Skills:** The lack of experience and skills among employees in healthcare and tourism facilities can be another challenge. Tourists seeking healthcare typically expect high-quality services, so employees in the healthcare and tourism fields must be highly trained and experienced to effectively meet the needs of tourists.
- D. **Inadequate Infrastructure:** The lack of appropriate healthcare and tourism infrastructure can hinder the development of health tourism. If healthcare and tourism facilities are not available or located far from the tourist destination, it may be challenging to attract tourists seeking healthcare (Duval & Smith, 2013).
- E. **Legal Restrictions:** Legal restrictions and health regulations can also impact the development of health tourism in the tourist destination. Strict health requirements for incoming tourists, such as medical examinations and quarantine, can increase travel costs and make the destination less appealing.
- F. **Security Concerns:** Security disturbances and unstable political situations can also affect the development of health tourism in the tourist destination. Tourists seeking healthcare require a safe and stable environment to travel to and receive treatment.
- G. **Technological Hurdles:** Technological challenges can also impede the development of health tourism in the tourist destination. The shift towards digital healthcare and modern technology requires investment in technological infrastructure and training of employees to use it effectively, and this can be a challenge for facilities and local authorities.
- H. **Cultural Differences:** Culture and local customs can pose an obstacle to the development of health tourism in the tourist destination. Healthcare and tourism facilities may struggle to navigate cultural differences and local customs of tourists, which can affect the provision of healthcare services effectively. This challenge can be addressed by expanding cultural awareness and developing training programs for employees to deal with cultural differences and local customs of tourists (Izadi et al., 2013).

Overcoming these obstacles requires continuous efforts from healthcare and tourism facilities, local and government authorities, and the local community. These efforts may include investing in development and training, improving infrastructure, promoting the tourist destination, and comprehensively developing healthcare and tourism services. Collaboration can also be enhanced between healthcare and tourism facilities, government agencies, local communities, and international organizations to achieve common goals and promote sustainable development of health tourism in the tourist destination (Kim et al., 2013).

### **Health tourism in Egypt**

Egypt has a rich history in traditional medicine and natural therapy, with many health and wellness resorts that attract tourists seeking relaxation and well-being (Smith & Puczkó, 2014). Tourists interested in health tourism can choose from various options in Egypt, including:

- **Health Tourism:** Egypt boasts numerous medical hospitals and specialized clinics that offer natural therapy, psychological therapy, and treatment of chronic diseases. These services are provided by qualified medical teams trained in the latest medical technologies. Examples of renowned places in Egypt for health tourism include the Nile Hospital in Giza, the International Peace Hospital in Cairo, and the International Peace Clinics in Alexandria (Saad, 2015).

- Health Tourism Involving Natural Water: Egypt is also famous for its natural springs that contain mineral-rich and naturally salted water. This water is used in natural therapy, water therapy, and medical baths. Some of the famous places for health tourism involving natural water in Egypt include the Firdous Health Village in the Western Desert and the International Peace Resort in Suez.
- Egypt is well-known for its serene and stunning natural areas, making it an excellent destination for ecotourism. Visitors can engage in activities such as nature trips, hiking, camping, walking, and sports training in these areas. Some of the famous ecotourism destinations in Egypt include Wadi El-Rayan Reserve, St. Catherine's Reserve, and Ras Mohamed Reserve (Zaki, 2017).

Moreover, Egypt is home to numerous world-renowned cultural and archaeological landmarks, making it an ideal destination for cultural tourism. Tourists can explore these landmarks and discover the ancient history and civilization of Egypt. These landmarks include the pyramids, Karnak and Luxor temples, various museums in cities such as Cairo, Alexandria, and Aswan, among others (Mohamed et al., 2020).

Egypt offers a wide range of high-end resorts and luxury hotels that feature exceptional healthcare and diverse medical services, provided by specialized health tourism teams. Additionally, Egypt provides promotional programs and exclusive deals for health tourists while continuously developing its healthcare infrastructure to enhance available services. This includes training and qualifying medical personnel, as well as implementing modern technologies for natural therapy, psychological therapy, water therapy, and other healthcare services. Environmental and cultural sustainability is also a priority in Egypt's health tourism industry, with the government and private sector collaborating to promote sustainable practices and transition towards more environmentally friendly and culturally sensitive approaches. Health tourism in Egypt is a vital sector in the tourism industry, contributing to the local economy, job creation, promoting cultural and ecotourism, as well as enhancing tourists' health and well-being (Ayoub, 2018).

Egypt possesses promising potential for developing medical tourism alongside its existing tourist offerings, benefiting from a robust infrastructure and a rich variety of ecological and cultural resources. Recent investments in tourism, exemplified by projects like Marassi and Porto Ghalib, underscore this potential. The country boasts a well-established healthcare system and skilled medical professionals, with growing private sector investment further bolstering its capabilities. While workforce training for handling international patients may require improvement, initiatives are underway to address this gap. Additionally, the presence of international airports and plans for infrastructure enhancement further enhance Egypt's attractiveness as a medical tourism destination (Ayoub, 2018).

Weaknesses in Egypt's medical tourism sector is evident in the absence of a coherent development strategy, hindering collaboration between government ministries and stakeholders. Bureaucracy poses a significant challenge, delaying project establishment. Additionally, a lack of specialized travel agencies limits the sector's ability to attract medical tourists, while facilities often lack accessibility for patients with disabilities and dietary accommodations. Marketing efforts are insufficient, relying heavily on conventional tourism branding. Hospital management practices are underdeveloped, with a need for trained professionals and quality assurance systems. Training programs for healthcare staff are lacking, impacting customer care quality. Improved accreditation systems and infrastructure investments are essential to enhance the sector's competitiveness and service quality (Ayoub, 2018).



## Methodology

### Instrument

As a data collection tool, the researcher designed a questionnaire divided into five sections revolving around the importance of health tourism, its development requirements in Egypt, obstacles to its development, and opportunities for its development in Egypt, in addition to demographic and occupational data for the study sample. The questionnaire items were designed by reviewing previous studies related to health tourism. The following is a presentation of the survey sections.

#### *Section 1: The Importance of Health Tourism*

This section aims to evaluate the importance of health tourism through nine statements such as "attracting more visitors by providing high-quality health services," "providing a unique tourism experience by enjoying health treatment," and "providing job opportunities".

#### *Section 2: Requirements for Developing Health Tourism in Egypt*

This section aims to identify the most important requirements for developing health tourism in Egypt through 12 statements such as "providing equipped healthcare facilities," "providing designated places for patients' accommodation," and "providing specialized and diverse health services".

#### *Section 3: Obstacles to Developing Health Tourism*

This section aims to highlight the obstacles to developing health tourism in Egypt through nine statements such as "low health awareness," "lack of investment in health tourism projects," and "lack of skills and experience in health tourism".

#### *Section 4: Opportunities for Developing Health Tourism in Egypt*

This section aims to identify the opportunities for developing health tourism in Egypt through eight statements such as "Egypt can become a unique destination for health tourism in the region," "Egypt can attract more patients and seekers of relaxation," and "Egypt has enormous capabilities in the field of health tourism".

The response to the four sections was designed using a five-point Likert scale, where (1) indicates strongly disagree, (2) indicates disagree, (3) indicates neutral, (4) indicates agree, and (5) indicates strongly agree.

#### *Section 5: Demographic and Occupational Data*

This section aims to identify the most important demographic and occupational data for the study sample through five aspects, namely gender (male, female), age (less than 30 years, 30-39 years, 40-49 years, 50 years and above), educational qualification (bachelor's degree, master's degree, PhD, diploma), place of work (Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, Egyptian Tourism Authority, tourism and hotel colleges and institutes), and years of experience (less than 5 years, 5-9 years, 10-14 years, 15 years and above).

## Validity and Reliability of the Study Tool

### *Face Validity:*

The questionnaire items were prepared in their final form, along with the study objectives and hypotheses, and presented to ten members of the faculty of tourism and hotels at Al-Sadat and Minya Universities to verify the face validity of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was presented to faculty members to evaluate the degree of correlation of each statement with its respective section, the clarity of its wording, and its suitability for achieving its goal. All faculty members' comments were taken into consideration, and the questionnaire was modified accordingly and distributed in its final form.

### *Reliability and Internal Consistency*

The researcher conducted a Cronbach's alpha test to evaluate the degree of reliability of the study tool. The questionnaire was distributed to a sample of 50 individuals from the officials of the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, the Tourism Activation Authority, and the faculty members of tourism and hotel colleges and institutes. 45 valid questionnaires were analyzed. Table (1) shows the Cronbach's alpha coefficient value and the internal consistency.

Table (1) Reliability and Internal Consistency

Variables	Reliability	Internal Consistency
importance of health tourism	0.814	0.902
requirements for developing health tourism in Egypt	0.792	0.890
obstacles to developing health tourism in Egypt	0.819	0.905
opportunities for developing health tourism in Egypt	0.833	0.913

Table (1) shows that all Cronbach's alpha coefficient values exceed the acceptable value of 0.70, indicating high reliability and internal consistency of the study tool. The Cronbach's alpha values were 0.814 for the importance of health tourism, 0.792 for the requirements for developing health tourism in Egypt, 0.819 for the obstacles to developing health tourism in Egypt, and 0.833 for the opportunities for developing health tourism in Egypt. These values indicate the high reliability of the study tool and its ability to achieve its objectives. The table also shows the high values of Internal Consistency, confirming the validity of the study tool and its ability to achieve its intended purpose.

### **Population and Sample**

The population of the study consists of officials from the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, the Egyptian Tourism Authority, and staff of tourism and hotel faculties and institutes. The questionnaire was prepared and distributed on paper to officials from the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities and the Egyptian Tourism Authority, while it was distributed electronically to faculty members from tourism and hotel faculties and institutes. For officials from the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities and the Egyptian Tourism Authority, 154 questionnaires were randomly distributed, and 122 were returned. For faculty members from tourism and hotel faculties and institutes, the questionnaire link was sent to 284 members, and only 234 responses were received. A total of 356 questionnaires were collected, and 42 incomplete questionnaires were excluded. 314 questionnaires were analyzed, with a response rate of 71.7%.

## Statistical Analysis Used

To test the hypotheses of the study, the researchers used statistical software program, SPSS V. 28. The following statistical methods were used:

- Test of reliability and internal consistency: This was used to measure the degree of reliability of the study tool.
- Frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations: These were used to describe the characteristics of the sample and determine the responses of the sample members towards all aspects of the study tool.
- Mann-Whitney U test: This was used to determine differences in the responses of the sample members for the study variables, and it is used in the case of determining differences between two independent samples.
- Kruskal-Wallis test: This was used to determine differences in the responses of the sample members for the study variables, and it is used in the case of determining differences between more than two independent samples.

## Results

### *Demographic and Occupational Data of the Study Sample*

Table (2) Distribution of the study sample according to demographic and occupational variables

Demographic and functional profile	Frequencies	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	175	55.7%
Female	139	44.3%
<b>Age</b>		
Less than 30 y	29	9.2%
30 : 39 y	84	26.8%
40 : 49 y	145	46.2%
50 y and above	56	17.8%
<b>Education</b>		
Bachelor	271	86.3%
Master	14	4.5%
PhD	8	2.5%
Diploma	21	6.7%
<b>Place of work</b>		
Ministry of tourism and antiquities	51	16.2
Egyptian Tourism Authority	50	15.9
Faculties and institutions of tourism and hotels	213	67.9%
Continued		
<b>Years of experience</b>		
Less than 5 y	7	2.2%
5 : 9y	101	32.2%
9 : 14 y	132	42
15 y and above	74	23.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table (2) depicts that more than half of the sample were males, accounting for 55.7%, while females constituted 44.3% of the sample. The table also shows that 46.2% of the respondents were aged between 40 and less than 50 years, 26.8% were aged between 30 and less than 40 years, 17.8% were aged 50 years or older, and 9.2% were younger than 30 years old. The results indicate that more than two-thirds of the sample hold a bachelor's degree (86.3%). Additionally, the majority of the study sample (67.9%) work in tourism and hotel faculties and institutes, while 16.2% of the respondents work in the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, and 15.9% work in the Egyptian Tourism Authority. Finally, the results show that 42% of the respondents have between 9 and 14 years of experience, 32.2% have between 5 and 9 years of experience, 23.6% have 15 years or more of experience, and 2.2% have less than 5 years of experience.

### *Descriptive Statistics*

To determine the importance of health tourism, the requirements for developing health tourism in Egypt, the obstacles to developing health tourism in Egypt, and the opportunities for developing health tourism in Egypt, means, standard deviations, and t-tests were used to test the significance and importance of the statements, as shown in the following tables.

### **Descriptive statistics of health tourism importance**

Table (3) Descriptive statistics of health tourism importance

No.	Items	Mean	SD	t	Sig.	Rank
1	Attracting more visitors by providing high-quality healthcare services	4.02	0.669	25.639	0.000	5
2	Providing a distinguished tourist experience through enjoying health treatments and relaxation	4.11	0.589	24.016	0.000	2
3	Creating job opportunities	3.98	0.715	29.847	0.000	8
4	Increasing income from foreign currency	4.15	0.711	21.536	0.000	1
5	Expanding into tourist markets	4.05	0.709	25.746	0.000	4
6	Increasing market share	4.08	0.772	22.397	0.000	3
7	Supporting the image of the tourist destination	4.00	0.658	26.484	0.000	7
8	Supporting the national economy	4.01	0.801	24.442	0.000	6
9	Increasing tourism revenues	3.95	0.777	27.211	0.000	9
Total mean and SD		4.04	0.603	25.631	0.000	

Table (3) reveals the study sample's responses to statements about the importance of health tourism. Overall, the results of the table indicate that the total mean of the sample members' responses to the importance of health tourism was 4.04 with a standard deviation of 0.603, indicating high importance. The mean values for this variable ranged from 3.95 to 4.15. Statement number 4 "Increasing income from foreign currency" had the highest mean value (mean= 4.15; standard deviation= 0.711), followed by statement number 2 "Providing a distinguished tourist experience through enjoying health treatments and relaxation" (mean= 4.11; standard deviation= 0.589), and statement number 6 "Increasing market share" (mean= 4.08; standard deviation= 0.772). Statement number 9 "Increasing tourism revenues" had the lowest mean value (mean= 3.95; standard deviation= 0.777).

The table also shows the low dispersion in the study sample's responses regarding the importance of health tourism, reflecting the convergence of the sample members' views on health tourism. Additionally, the table shows the convergence of the mean values, as indicated by the statistical significance values accompanying the calculated t-values, which indicate that there were no significant differences in the opinions of the study sample members regarding the statements of this variable, as the statistical significance for all levels was less than the level of significance (0.05).

### *Descriptive statistics of requirements for developing health tourism in Egypt*

Table (4) Descriptive statistics of developing health tourism requirements in Egypt

No.	Items	Mean	SD	t	Sig.	Rank
1	Providing equipped healthcare institutions	4.15	0.586	34.206	0.000	10
2	Providing dedicated places for patients' accommodation	4.23	0.541	31.864	0.000	3
3	Providing specialized and diverse healthcare services	4.30	0.596	35.264	0.000	1
4	Focusing on patients' needs	4.25	0.711	34.208	0.000	2
5	Emphasizing the quality of services and healthcare	4.19	0.692	37.445	0.000	6
6	Applying health and safety standards	4.22	0.571	35.951	0.000	4
7	Providing auxiliary services (such as translation, entertainment, and marketing)	4.10	0.732	31.253	0.000	11
8	Reducing negative environmental practices	4.18	0.703	36.552	0.000	7
9	Maintaining privacy	4.03	0.669	34.128	0.000	12
10	Adopting modern marketing strategies	4.16	0.608	33.289	0.000	9
11	Cooperating and integrating between healthcare and tourism facilities	4.20	0.564	30.814	0.000	5
12	Continuous training and qualification of workers in the field of health tourism	4.17	0.577	33.409	0.000	8

Table (4) indicates the study sample's responses to statements about the requirements for developing health tourism in Egypt. The results indicate that there are several requirements that must be focused on and developed in order to promote health tourism in Egypt. The most important requirements were "Providing specialized and diverse healthcare services" (mean= 4.30; standard deviation= 0.596), followed by "Focusing on patients' needs" (mean= 4.25; standard deviation= 0.711), then "Providing dedicated places for patients' accommodation" (mean= 4.23; standard deviation= 0.541), followed by "Applying health and safety standards" (mean= 4.22; standard deviation= 0.571), then "Cooperating and integrating between healthcare and tourism facilities" (mean= 4.20; standard deviation= 0.564), next "Emphasizing the quality of services and healthcare" (mean= 4.19; standard deviation= 0.692), then "Reducing negative environmental practices" (mean= 4.18; standard deviation= 0.703), then "Continuous training and qualification of workers in the field of health tourism" (mean= 4.17; standard deviation= 0.577), then "Adopting modern marketing strategies" (mean= 4.16; standard deviation= 0.608), then "Providing equipped healthcare institutions" (mean= 4.15; standard deviation= 0.586), then "Providing auxiliary services (such as translation, entertainment, and marketing)" (mean= 4.10; standard deviation= 0.732), and lastly, "Maintaining privacy" (mean= 4.03; standard deviation= 0.669).

The table also shows the low dispersion in the study sample's responses regarding the requirements for developing health tourism in Egypt, reflecting the convergence of the sample members' views on the requirements for developing health tourism in Egypt. Additionally, the table shows the convergence of the mean values, as indicated by the statistical significance values accompanying the calculated t-values, which indicate that there were no significant differences in the opinions of the study sample members regarding the statements of this variable, as the statistical significance for all levels was less than the level of significance (0.05).

***Descriptive statistics of obstacles to the development of health tourism in Egypt***

Table (5) Descriptive statistics of obstacles to the development of health tourism in Egypt

No.	Items	Mean	SD	t	Sig.	Rank
1	Low health awareness	3.45	0.967	21.414	0.000	8
2	Lack of investment in health tourism projects	4.18	0.681	27.632	0.000	1
3	Shortage of skills and expertise in the field of health tourism	3.69	0.985	24.582	0.000	7
4	Lack of suitable infrastructure	3.95	0.864	25.551	0.000	6
5	Legal and legislative restrictions	4.09	0.699	23.841	0.000	3
6	Social and cultural constraints	4.15	0.701	26.632	0.000	2
7	Insecurity instability	1.99	1.01	24.019	0.000	9
8	Weak technological infrastructure	4.00	0.881	25.552	0.000	4
9	Health culture and habits	3.98	0.702	29.452	0.000	5

Table (5) shows the study sample's responses to statements about the obstacles to developing health tourism in Egypt. The results indicate the most important obstacles that may face the development of health tourism in Egypt, and which require serious attention. The most significant obstacles were "Lack of investment in health tourism projects" (mean= 4.18; standard deviation= 0.681), followed by "Social and cultural constraints" (mean= 4.15; standard deviation= 0.701), then "Legal and legislative restrictions" (mean= 4.09; standard deviation= 0.699), then "Weak technological infrastructure" (mean= 4.00; standard deviation= 0.881), then "Health culture and habits" (mean= 3.98; standard deviation= 0.702), then "Lack of suitable infrastructure" (mean= 3.95; standard deviation= 0.864), followed by "Shortage of skills and expertise in the field of health tourism" (mean= 3.69; standard deviation= 0.985), then "Low health awareness" (mean= 3.45; standard deviation= 0.967), and finally, "Insecurity instability" (mean= 1.99; standard deviation= 1.01).

The table also shows the low dispersion in the study sample's responses regarding the obstacles to developing health tourism in Egypt, reflecting the convergence of the sample members' views on the obstacles to developing health tourism in Egypt. Additionally, the table shows the convergence of the mean values, as indicated by the statistical significance values accompanying the calculated t-values, which indicate that there were no significant differences in the opinions of the study sample members regarding the statements of this variable, as the statistical significance for all levels was less than the level of significance (0.05).

*Descriptive statistics of opportunities for developing health tourism in Egypt*

Table (6) Descriptive statistics of opportunities for developing health tourism in Egypt

No.	Items	Mean	SD	t	Sig.	Rank
1	Egypt can become a distinctive destination for health tourism in the region	3.99	0.901	19.862	0.000	7
2	Egypt can attract more patients and seekers of relaxation and rest	4.25	0.758	14.528	0.000	1
3	Egypt has enormous potential in the field of health tourism	4.20	0.741	18.630	0.000	2
4	Egypt has human capabilities in the field of health tourism	4.00	0.737	19.610	0.000	6
5	There are distinctive healthcare and tourism facilities available in Egypt	4.15	0.633	15.478	0.000	4
6	There is a strategic plan to make Egypt a destination for health tourism	3.55	0.805	18.036	0.000	8
7	Egypt is working to provide all necessary healthcare services and care	4.19	0.564	17.112	0.000	3
8	Egypt is working to coordinate and cooperate between healthcare and tourism facilities	4.11	0.607	20.236	0.000	5

Table (6) highlights the study sample's responses to statements about the opportunities for developing health tourism in Egypt. The results indicate the most significant opportunities that Egypt can offer for developing health tourism. The strongest opportunities were "Egypt can attract more patients and seekers of relaxation and rest" (mean= 4.25; standard deviation= 0.758), followed by "Egypt has enormous potential in the field of health tourism" (mean= 4.20; standard deviation= 0.741), then "Egypt is working to provide all necessary healthcare services and care" (mean= 4.19; standard deviation= 0.564), then "There are distinctive healthcare and tourism facilities available in Egypt" (mean= 4.15; standard deviation= 0.633), followed by "Egypt is working to coordinate and cooperate between healthcare and tourism facilities" (mean= 4.11; standard deviation= 0.607), then "Egypt has human capabilities in the field of health tourism" (mean= 4.00; standard deviation= 0.737), then "Egypt can become a distinctive destination for health tourism in the region" (mean= 3.99; standard deviation= 0.901), and finally, "There is a strategic plan to make Egypt a destination for health tourism" (mean= 3.55; standard deviation= 0.805).

The table also shows the low dispersion in the study sample's responses regarding the opportunities for developing health tourism in Egypt, reflecting the convergence of the sample members' views on the opportunities for developing health tourism in Egypt. Additionally, the table shows the convergence of the mean values, as indicated by the statistical significance values accompanying the calculated t-values, which indicate that there were no significant differences in the opinions of the study sample members regarding the statements of this variable, as the statistical significance for all levels was less than the level of significance (0.05).

**Mann-Whitney test**

Table (7) Mann-Whitney results

	Gender	N	Mean rank	U	Z	Sig.
Importance of health tourism	Male	175	122.73	5303	-2.080	0.037
	female	139	107.28			
Requirements for developing health tourism in Egypt	Male	175	126.37	4971.5	-2.669	0.008
	female	139	104.83			
Obstacles to the development of health tourism	Male	175	122.58	5316	-1.968	0.049
	female	139	107.38			
Opportunities for developing health tourism in Egypt	Male	175	122.98	5279.5	-2.052	0.040
	female	139	107.11			

Table (7) clarifies the results of the Mann-Whitney test for differences between two independent samples to test the effect of gender on the study sample's responses to the importance, requirements, obstacles, and opportunities for developing health tourism in Egypt. The results indicate statistically significant differences in the sample members' responses to the importance, requirements, obstacles, and opportunities for developing health tourism in Egypt based on gender. The results, as shown by the mean rank, indicate that all differences favored males.

**Kruskal-Wallis test***A- Results of Kruskal-Wallis test according to age*

Table (8) Results of Kruskal-Wallis test according to age

	Age	N	Mean rank	Chi-Square	Sig.
Importance of health tourism	Less than 30 y	29	105.81	3.842	0.279
	30 : 39 y	84	110.95		
	40 : 49 y	145	115.48		
	50 y and above	56	140.96		
Requirements for developing health tourism in Egypt	Less than 30 y	29	81.13	8.575	0.036
	30 : 39 y	84	117.91		
	40 : 49 y	145	114.63		
	50 y and above	56	128.96		
Obstacles to the development of health tourism	Less than 30 y	29	95.17	2.813	0.421
	30 : 39 y	84	117.23		
	40 : 49 y	145	115.53		
	50 y and above	56	101.29		
Opportunities for developing health tourism in Egypt	Less than 30 y	29	85.00	3.594	0.309
	30 : 39 y	84	112.78		
	40 : 49 y	145	117.34		
	50 y and above	56	119.21		



Table (8) shows the results of the Kruskal-Wallis test for differences between more than two independent samples to test the effect of age on the study sample's responses to the importance, requirements, obstacles, and opportunities for developing health tourism in Egypt. The results indicate statistically significant differences in the sample members' responses to the requirements for developing health tourism in Egypt based on age only. This result suggests notable differences in how respondents within the sample group addressed the requirements for promoting health tourism in Egypt, and these distinctions hold statistical significance. It indicates that age is a pivotal factor influencing individuals' viewpoints on the necessary steps for advancing health tourism in Egypt. Essentially, it implies that varying age groups may possess diverse opinions, preferences, or anticipations concerning the progression of health tourism within the nation. The results, as shown by the mean rank, indicate that the differences favored those aged 50 years and above (mean rank= 128.96), followed by those aged 30-39 years (mean rank= 117.91), then those aged 40-49 years (mean rank= 114.63), and finally those aged below 30 years (mean rank= 81.13). The results also indicate no statistically significant differences in the sample members' responses to the importance, obstacles, and opportunities for developing health tourism in Egypt based on age.

### ***B- Results of Kruskal-Wallis test according to education***

Table (9) Results of Kruskal-Wallis test according to education

	Education	N	Mean rank	Chi-Square	Sig.
Importance of health tourism	Bachelor	271	111.10	0.695	0.874
	Master	14	115.60		
	PhD	8	109.94		
	Diploma	21	129.50		
Requirements for developing health tourism in Egypt	Bachelor	271	112.04	0.034	0.998
	Master	14	117.17		
	PhD	8	113.90		
	Diploma	21	113.29		
Obstacles to the development of health tourism	Bachelor	271	128.00	2.042	0.564
	Master	14	99.48		
	PhD	8	116.33		
	Diploma	21	113.73		
Opportunities for developing health tourism in Egypt	Bachelor	271	114.27	3.742	0.291
	Master	14	117.11		
	PhD	8	127.83		
	Diploma	21	94.24		

Table (8) shows the results of the Kruskal-Wallis test for differences between more than two independent samples to test the effect of education on the study sample's responses to the importance, requirements, obstacles, and opportunities for developing health tourism in Egypt. The results indicate no statistically significant differences in the sample members' responses to the importance, requirements, obstacles, and opportunities for developing health tourism in Egypt based on education.

**C- Results of Kruskal-Wallis test according to place of work**

Table (10) Results of Kruskal-Wallis test according to place of work

	Place of work	N	Mean rank	Chi-Square	Sig.
Importance of health tourism	Ministry of tourism and antiquities	51	64.10	10.252	0.004
	Egyptian Tourism Authority	50	54.83		
	Faculties and institutions of tourism and hotels	213	60.03		
Requirements for developing health tourism in Egypt	Ministry of tourism and antiquities	51	69.73	9.813	0.033
	Egyptian Tourism Authority	50	68.71		
	Faculties and institutions of tourism and hotels	213	56.56		
Obstacles to the development of health tourism	Ministry of tourism and antiquities	51	58.53	11.784	0.019
	Egyptian Tourism Authority	50	52.17		
	Faculties and institutions of tourism and hotels	213	74.79		
Opportunities for developing health tourism in Egypt	Ministry of tourism and antiquities	51	85.00	8.632	0.045
	Egyptian Tourism Authority	50	61.07		
	Faculties and institutions of tourism and hotels	213	58.13		

Table (10) shows the results of the Kruskal-Wallis test for differences between more than two independent samples to test the effect of workplace on the study sample's responses to the importance, requirements, obstacles, and opportunities for developing health tourism in Egypt. The results indicate statistically significant differences in the sample members' responses to the importance, requirements, obstacles, and opportunities for developing health tourism in Egypt based on workplace. This finding indicates notable variations in how individuals within the sample group view the significance, prerequisites, challenges, and prospects for advancing health tourism in Egypt, depending on their workplace. Essentially, it suggests that individuals' perspectives on different aspects of health tourism development in Egypt are influenced by their place of work.

These discrepancies are statistically significant, indicating that they are not random occurrences but rather genuine differences in viewpoints among individuals based on their work environments. The mean rank values show that:

- Regarding the importance of health tourism, the differences favored the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (mean rank= 64.10), followed by tourism and hotel faculties and institutes (mean rank= 60.03), then the Egyptian Tourism Authority (mean rank= 54.83).
- Regarding the requirements for developing health tourism, the differences favored the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (mean rank= 69.73), followed by the Egyptian Tourism Authority (mean rank= 68.71), then tourism and hotel faculties and institutes (mean rank= 56.56).
- Regarding the obstacles to developing health tourism, the differences favored tourism and hotel faculties and institutes (mean rank= 74.79), followed by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (mean rank= 58.53), then the Egyptian Tourism Authority (mean rank= 52.17).
- Regarding the opportunities for developing health tourism, the differences favored the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (mean rank= 85.00), followed by the Egyptian Tourism Authority (mean rank= 61.07), then tourism and hotel faculties and institutes (mean rank= 58.13).

***D- Results of Kruskal-Wallis test according to years of experience***

Table (11) Results of Kruskal-Wallis test according to years of experience

	<b>Years of experience</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean rank</b>	<b>Chi-Square</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Importance of health tourism	Less than 5 y	7	109.69	9.887	0.009
	5 : 9y	101	112.95		
	9 : 14 y	132	112.45		
	15 y and above	74	131.67		
Requirements for developing health tourism in Egypt	Less than 5 y	7	102.88	8.357	0.029
	5 : 9y	101	110.45		
	9 : 14 y	132	128.26		
	15 y and above	74	122.00		
Obstacles to the development of health tourism	Less than 5 y	7	100.60	7.821	0.045
	5 : 9y	101	107.66		
	9 : 14 y	132	111.82		
	15 y and above	74	117.20		
Opportunities for developing health tourism in Egypt	Less than 5 y	7	91.63	8.506	0.019
	5 : 9y	101	118.01		
	9 : 14 y	132	114.29		
	15 y and above	74	114.30		

Table (11) shows the results of the Kruskal-Wallis test for differences between more than two independent samples to test the effect of years of experience on the study sample's responses to the importance, requirements, obstacles, and opportunities for developing health tourism in Egypt. The results indicate statistically significant differences in the sample members' responses to the importance, requirements, obstacles, and opportunities for developing health tourism in Egypt based on years of experience. This result indicates significant variations in how individuals in the sample group view the importance, requirements, obstacles, and opportunities for developing health tourism in Egypt, depending on their years of experience. It suggests that the duration of individuals' work experience in their fields shapes their perspectives on different aspects of health tourism development in Egypt. These disparities are statistically significant, suggesting that they are not random and reflect genuine differences in viewpoints among individuals based on their professional experience. The mean rank values show that:

-Regarding the importance of health tourism, the differences favored those with 15 years or more of experience (mean rank= 131.67), followed by those with 5-9 years of experience (mean rank= 112.95), then those with 9-14 years of experience (mean rank= 112.45), and finally those with less than 5 years of experience (mean rank= 109.69).

-Regarding the requirements for developing health tourism, the differences favored those with 9-14 years of experience (mean rank= 128.26), followed by those with 15 years or more of experience (mean rank= 122.00), then those with 5-9 years of experience (mean rank= 110.45), and finally those with less than 5 years of experience (mean rank= 102.88).

-Regarding the obstacles to developing health tourism, the differences favored those with 15 years or more of experience (mean rank= 117.20), followed by those with 9-14 years of experience (mean rank= 111.82), then those with 5-9 years of experience (mean rank= 107.66), and finally those with less than 5 years of experience (mean rank= 100.60).

-Regarding the opportunities for developing health tourism, the differences favored those with 5-9 years of experience (mean rank= 118.01), followed by those with 15 years or more of experience (mean rank= 114.30), then those with 9-14 years of experience (mean rank= 114.29), and finally those with less than 5 years of experience (mean rank= 91.63).

## Results and Recommendations

### Results

- Health tourism has many benefits in tourist destinations, as it contributes to attracting more visitors by providing high-quality health services, creating job opportunities, offering a unique tourist experience through enjoying health treatments and relaxation, increasing foreign currency income, tourism revenues, and supporting the national economy, in addition to increasing market share by expanding into tourism markets.
- There are a number of requirements that must be provided to develop health tourism in Egypt, such as providing specialized and diverse health services, equipping healthcare institutions, identifying patients' needs, focusing on the quality of healthcare, adopting global health and safety standards, integrating tourist and healthcare facilities, and adopting modern marketing strategies.
- There are several obstacles that may hinder the development of health tourism in Egypt, such as low investment in health tourism projects, legal and legislative constraints, health culture and habits, low health awareness, social and cultural constraints, and a shortage of experience and skills in health tourism.
- There are opportunities available in Egypt to develop health tourism, as Egypt can become a destination for health tourism with its huge potential and capabilities, in addition to its distinguished human resources, tourist and healthcare facilities, and its ability to attract patients and seekers of comfort and relaxation.
- There are statistically significant differences in the sample members' responses to the importance, requirements, obstacles, and opportunities for developing health tourism in Egypt based on gender, workplace, and years of experience.
- There are statistically significant differences in the sample members' responses to the requirements for developing health tourism based only on age, while there are no statistically significant differences in the responses to the importance, obstacles, and opportunities for developing health tourism based on age.
- There are no statistically significant differences in the sample members' responses to the importance, requirements, obstacles, and opportunities for developing health tourism based on education level.

### Recommendations

Health tourism is an emerging industry in Egypt, but there is still significant potential for its growth. To develop health tourism in Egypt, the following recommendations can be implemented:

- Upgrading and improve healthcare facilities, including hospitals, health resorts, and medical clinics to meet the needs of health tourists.
- Promoting health tourism on an international scale through advertising campaigns, international exhibitions, and specialized conferences.
- Developing logistic services for health tourists, such as transportation, accommodation, and health insurance to provide a comfortable and enjoyable experience.
- Encouraging investment in health tourism by providing financial, tax, and administrative incentives for investors.

- Developing integrated tourism programs that offer medical treatment, entertainment, and tourism to provide a diverse and comprehensive experience for health tourists.
- Developing religious health tourism by utilizing Egypt's historical and religious wealth to establish health centers and resorts at different religious sites.
- Providing training and qualification for healthcare professionals and tourism workers to improve the quality of services and provide a distinguished experience for health tourists.
- Ensuring safety and security in all health tourism areas through appropriate measures to protect health tourists.
- Utilizing technology by creating applications and websites for booking and promoting health resorts and communicating with health tourists.
- Encouraging domestic tourism by creating integrated health tourism programs for Egyptians to raise awareness of the importance of health tourism and encourage them to explore health resorts and clinics in Egypt.

### Future Studies

- A. Evaluating the impact of health tourism on the competitive capabilities of the Egyptian tourism destination.
- B. Measuring the impact of expanding health tourism activities on inbound tourism to Egypt.
- C. SWOT analysis of health tourism in the Egyptian tourism destination: comparative study.
- D. The relationship between marketing strategies and policies, and the development of health tourism in Egypt.

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**مصر كمقصد للسياحة الصحية: الفرص والمعوقات**

يوستينا رزق سليمان<sup>١</sup> عيبر محمد فتحي<sup>٢</sup> ميرهان رزق سليمان<sup>٣</sup>

<sup>١</sup>المعهد العالي للسياحة والفنادق بمدينة ٦ أكتوبر - الجيزة - جمهورية مصر العربية

<sup>٢</sup>كلية السياحة والفنادق - جامعة حلوان - جمهورية مصر العربية

**الملخص:**

أصبحت السياحة الصحية محور اهتمام الكثير من المقاصد السياحية لزيادة حركة السياحة الوافدة إليها، وتنوع الأسواق السياحية. في هذا السياق؛ هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى تقييم أهمية السياحة الصحية، وتحديد أهم متطلبات تنميتها في مصر، والمعوقات التي تواجه التنمية، وأهم الفرص المتاحة لتنمية السياحة الصحية في مصر. لتحقيق أهداف الدراسة؛ تم تصميم استمارة استقصاء وتوزيعها علي عينة من المسؤولين في وزارة السياحة والآثار، وهيئة التنشيط السياحي، وأعضاء هيئة التدريس بكليات ومعاهد السياحة والفنادق. اعتمدت الدراسة علي تحليل ٣١٢ استمارة باستخدام SPSS v.28. أبرزت نتائج الدراسة أن الاهتمام بالسياحة الصحية يساهم في جذب المزيد الزوار نتيجة تقديم خدمات صحية عالية الجودة، وتوفير تجربة سياحية متميزة من خلال الاستمتاع بالعلاج الصحي والاسترخاء. كما أوضحت نتائج الدراسة أن أهم متطلبات تنمية السياحة الصحية في مصر كان توفير خدمات صحية متخصصة ومتنوعة، بينما كان نقص الاستثمارات في مشروعات السياحة الصحية أبرز معوقات تنمية السياحة الصحية في مصر. كذلك أبرزت نتائج الدراسة وجود فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية في استجابات أفراد العينة لأهمية السياحة الصحية، متطلبات تنمية السياحة الصحية، معوقات تنمية السياحة الصحية، وفرص تنمية السياحة الصحية في مصر تعززي للنوع، ومكان العمل، وسنوات الخبرة. في النهاية أوصت الدراسة بضرورة الترويج للسياحة الصحية في مصر بشكل أكبر على المستوى الدولي، وذلك من خلال حملات إعلانية ومعارض ومؤتمرات دولية خاصة للسياحة الصحية.

**الكلمات الدالة:** السياحة الصحية، الرعاية الصحية، الخدمات الصحية، مصر.