

eISSN: 2981-1554

Original Article (Quantified)

## Presenting a marketing model for health tourism with an emphasis on medical equipment

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### Receive:

02 September 2025

### Revise:

24 October 2025

### Accept:

20 November 2025

### Abstract

The aim of this research is to present a marketing model for health tourism with an emphasis on medical equipment. The present research is applicable-fundamental in terms of its purpose and exploratory-survey in terms of its nature and method. The statistical population of the present study includes 15,000 employees and faculty members of Mazandaran University of Medical Sciences. The Cochran formula was used to determine the sample size, and 375 people were selected as a sample using simple random sampling. The collection tool in the present study includes a questionnaire. SPSS and PLS software were used to analyze the findings. The findings showed that economic and policy factors indirectly affect marketing development through infrastructure and service quality. Infrastructure conditions have a positive and significant effect on service quality, patient experience, and marketing development, but its direct effect on destination image was not significant. Service quality indirectly affects marketing development through patient experience, and destination marketing and image directly enhance the development of health tourism. After confirmatory factor analysis, the GoF criterion method was used to fit the overall model, and the value obtained was 0.617. Therefore, the model has a good fit.

### Keywords:

Marketing,  
health tourism,  
medical equipment,  
service quality,  
marketing  
development

Please cite this article as (APA): Farzinmehr, R., Bahmani, P., Kahrizi, O. and Baghfalaki, A. (2025). Presenting a marketing model for health tourism with an emphasis on medical equipment. *Journal of New Approaches in Management and Marketing*, 4(3), 94-115.



<https://doi.org/10.22034/jnamm.2025.563729.1218>



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## **Extended Abstract**

### **Introduction**

In the present era, the increasing spread of technology and the accelerated effort for industrialization and rapid urbanization and machine life in most countries of the world, especially in third world and developing countries, bring with them problems. A person tired of today's society who has taken a marginal role next to industry must work like a machine to make a living and live more comfortably and not show his fatigue. Although he looks very satisfied and happy on the outside, he suffers from boredom and depression more than any other time in history. It is obvious that a society benefits from dynamism and vitality when its citizens enjoy optimal physical and mental health. But the present century, which is rooted in technology and industry and has been called the century of anxiety, stress, and nervous disorders among different centuries and eras, has always had an adverse effect on human health and has brought about new social, health, and medical issues (Omid et al., 2022). Since the second half of the twentieth century, numerous factors such as globalization, development and progress, modern means of transportation, and communications have taken steps towards the development and progress of the tourism industry, so that this industry is known as the third economic industry (Saeedbakhsh et al., 2021). Tourism is one of the expanding industries in the world, and its added value and income play a major role in the gross national product and the provision of citizens with a sustainable livelihood (Godovykh et al., 2020). The significant importance of tourism, especially in the nature tourism sector, has become apparent to everyone globally and from various aspects, especially health tourism. In addition, with the optimal planning that has been carried out in some countries, treatment costs have been reduced to a high extent and the field for the recovery and rehabilitation of patients has been provided (Soliman et al., 2023).

Today, although various factors affect tourism attraction and return visits, the nature of health tourism destinations has not been seriously considered by researchers (Zakavoti et al., 2023). This issue is of great importance, especially in health tourism destinations. Every health tourism destination, including health camps, has an image that can distinguish it from other tourism destinations. (Kovalchuk et al., 2021). In order to develop the competitive position of health tourism destinations, it is necessary to present a favorable image centered on designing appropriate and up-to-date marketing strategies, because it has a positive effect on the motivations for visiting and tourist satisfaction (Pashaeifar et al., 2021). Today, health tourism has not only found diverse formats and diverse goals, but in many marketing strategies in this field, the construction and operation of complexes such as health camps has gained considerable importance: (Zarei et al., 2019).

Research on designing a marketing model for health tourism with a focus on medical equipment is of great importance. Because in the field of health, tourism-related businesses focus on items such as medical services, medical equipment, and health services, which play a very important role in attracting tourists. Considering the above issues, the main question of the present study is: what is the marketing model for health tourism with an emphasis on medical equipment?

### **Theoretical Framework**

#### **Marketing**

Marketing is defined as a social management process in which individuals and groups satisfy their needs and desires through the production and exchange of goods. This basic definition has gained new color and spirit today, and researchers' research has made it richer and broader than before (Zekavoti et al., 2023).

### **Tourism Industry**

The tourism industry is one of the industries that play a significant role in the economic development of countries and the creation of job opportunities. Marketing is very important in this industry, and implementing effective marketing strategies can help the growth and development of this industry.

### **Health Tourism**

Health tourism is a growing trend in the tourism industry that focuses on improving and maintaining the physical and mental health of individuals. This type of tourism includes trips that people take to improve and promote their health and usually includes staying in places with beautiful nature, recreational facilities, and various health and medical centers. One of the characteristics of health tourism is attention to spirituality and spirituality along with maintaining physical health (Osman et al., 2021).

Chowdhary & Majumdar (2025), using a mixed qualitative and quantitative approach, showed that health tourism acts as a driver of economic growth in developing countries and contributes to economic development through foreign exchange, job creation, and strengthening healthcare infrastructure; while effective policymaking, public-private partnerships, and targeted marketing play a key role in exploiting this potential.

Afradi (2025) in a review study aimed at examining the importance of health tourism marketing in Iran, it was shown that principled marketing and successful strategies in this area improve the quality of services, attract health tourists, develop infrastructure, and ultimately national economic growth.

### **Research Methodology**

The present study is applicable-fundamental in terms of purpose and exploratory-survey in terms of nature and method. The statistical population of the present study includes 15,000 employees and faculty members of Mazandaran University of Medical Sciences. The Cochran formula was used to determine the sample size, and 375 people were selected as a sample using simple random sampling. The collection tool in the present study includes a questionnaire.

### **Research findings**

SPSS and PLS software were used to analyze the findings. The findings showed that economic and policy factors indirectly affect marketing development through infrastructure and service quality. Infrastructure conditions have a positive and significant effect on service quality, patient experience, and marketing development, but its direct effect on destination image was not significant. Service quality indirectly affects marketing development through patient experience, and marketing and destination image directly strengthen the development of health tourism. After confirmatory factor analysis, the GoF criterion method was used to fit the overall model, and the value obtained was equal to 0.617. Therefore, the model has a good fit.

### **Conclusion**

The present study aimed to present a marketing model for health tourism with an emphasis on medical equipment. These results are in line with the studies of Chowdhary & Majumdar (2025), Afradi (2025), Sayadi et al. (2025), Monroy-Rodriguez, & Caro-Carretero (2025), Shabankareh et al. (2025), Shahabadi et al. (2025), Khodayi et al. (2024), Mesgari & Mehrabi Bahar (2024), Kabak & Sevim (2024), Cha et al. (2024), Connell (2021), Fernando & Long (2023), Alsharif et al. (2023), which emphasize the importance of advanced infrastructure,

service quality, and branding in attracting international patients. For the sustainable development of health tourism, Iran should focus on technology-driven branding, experience-driven marketing, and integrating infrastructure and policies with digital campaigns to establish its position as a top global destination. Shabankareh et al. (2025) showed that government support has the greatest impact on improving the quality and reducing the cost of healthcare services, using advanced medical technologies, and on economic, infrastructural, and cultural factors related to health tourism. Based on the above results, the following suggestions are made: integrating health policy, economics, and marketing, national health branding with a technological core, designing treatment packages with advanced technologies, creating a narrative ecosystem to record and disseminate patient experiences with an emphasis on medical technologies, using medical equipment in health diplomacy to enhance the destination image, converting modern equipment (MRI, smart operating room) into marketing content, creating a cooperation network with the Persian Gulf, Central Asia, and Caucasus countries, developing multilingual applications to provide information on equipment, treatment stages, and follow-up.