



*Medical tourism industry with a focus on electronic promotion:
Experiences of some Arab countries as a model.*

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Abstract

The medical tourism industry as a successful investment policy, which contributes to developing economies, generating revenue and improving the quality of health services; requires focusing on how to market and promote it using specific policies, chief among them is e-promotion, which has become an imperative in light of an environment characterized by extreme competition and change Continuous. Within the Arab world, some Arab countries have taken great interest in this industry to diversify their sources of income and optimize their wealth to achieve the greatest economic return, by providing the elements of electronic medical tourism based mainly on electronic promotion.

we aim through this paper to identify the role of e-promotion in the medical tourism industry, while highlighting the experiences of some Arab countries.

Key words: tourism industry, medical tourism, e-promotion, medical tourism in Arab countries

1. INTRODUCTION

The tourism industry has witnessed significant development, especially in the past two decades, one of the major reasons for this growth is the advancement of transportation, communication, and the world transforming into a global village, Additionally, countries have begun to pay more attention to the tourism sector, realizing its substantial importance in stimulating various sector of the national economy, directly or indirectly impacting these sectors and providing significant benefits, such as job creation and substantial revenues for the countries.

Medical tourism is one of the largest revenue generators for countries worldwide. Therefore, the medical tourism industry should be considered one of the primary economic pillars. Its impact should not be limited to the healthcare sector alone but should extend to all other economic activities as a source of income, employment, economic and social development in general.

Utilizing technology in tourism services has become a distinguishing factor in attracting tourists and developing the tourism industry, this is in light of the contemporary changes in information and communication technology, with electronic promotion services being an essential necessity that no local or international activity can do without.

The strategy of electronic is an application of information technology in the field of tourism, its aim to reshape the electronic marketing mix to increase consumer benefits, enhance the efficiency of marketing mix planning, and innovate exchanges that contribute to fulfilling both consumer needs and organizational objectives, the electronic mix comprises several marketing elements, including electronic product, distribution, pricing, and promotion. The internet serves as a medium for interacting with consumers to achieve both global and local organizational goals, serving consumers with minimal costs, effort, and time.

In this context, it can be said that many Arab possess the necessary factors for successful medical tourism industry, enabling them to present it as a thriving sector. To achieve this, a focus on modern marketing and promotion technique using advanced technologies is required, opening direct communication channels with medical tourists, in this regard, the research question can be formulated as follow as: **what extent does electronic promotion contribute to the development of medical tourism in Arab countries ?**

In order to address this issue, the study has been divided into two axes:

1- Medical tourism industry and electronic promotion

2- Presentation of the experiences of some Arab countries.

-Study Objectives

Some of the objectives of this study include

* Highlighting the Role and Effectiveness of Electronic Promotion in Supporting and Growing the Medical Tourism Sector in the Arab World.

* The Importance of Implementing Digital Technologies, Systems, and Applications in Tourism Organizations in the Arab World.

* The Necessity of Relying on Electronic Promotion in the Medical Tourism Sector in the Arab World

- Study Significance

This study derives its significance from the importance of medical tourism as a sector that has become an economic alternative contributing to national income growth. This is particularly evident considering the unique tourism assets of Arab countries. The emergence of electronic promotion concepts has had a positive impact on boosting tourism and enhancing medical tourism services

- - Study Methodology

To address our topic, we rely on the methodologies used in economic studies, utilizing the inductive approach through descriptive methods to build a theoretical foundation for the research.

1. Medical tourism industry and electronic promotion

Medical Tourism industry and electronic promotion tourism has evolved from a phenomenon into industry, with its own foundations, component, and diverse mechanism, specialized institution were established, and countries began to focus on the element of tourist attraction, providing tourist facilities and securing the appropriate infrastructure to attract a larger number of tourists, the world and tourism council (WTTC) declared that tourism is the largest global industry, surpassing automotive, steel, electronics, agriculture industries (macintosh , 2002, p. 22).

The economic importance of the tourism industry attributed to the capital it brings in for investment, amounting approximately 250 billion dollars annually, additionally, the tourism industry is considered a key factor in the fundamental framework of the economy due to its significant in marketing, sales, management, planning, and strengthening economic ties between nations (Al-Harbi, 2012, p. 21).

Medical tourism has generated significant economic returns for countries, with approximately 11 million tourists traveling across borders to receive medical treatment and spending around 439 billion dollars in one year, Thailand welcomed up 1.2 million medical tourists, while Indian embassies issued around 600.000 medical visas in a single year. Gulf cooperation council (GCC) countries alone spend approximately 25 billion dollars annually on healthcare abroad, as reported in one of the publications, Many neighboring countries have recognized the importance of the medical tourism industry. Turkey, for instance, considers it a cornerstone of its national economy, aiming to achieve 7.5 billion dollar in revenue by the end of 2023, in 2020, Dubai attracted half a million medical tourists, contributing 8 billion dollars to the local GDP, The regional market value was estimated at around 40 billion dollars in 2015.

1.1. The importance of Medical Tourism services sector

The medical services sector has become one of the important sectors for economies, given the changes it brings about and the impacts it has on the overall structure of countries, this has

prompted many countries to strive for the development and improvement of the contribution of this sector to their economies, The importance of the medical tourism services sector can be translated into the positive effects it has on the economies of countries, which include: (AL-Nasor , 2008, p. 29)

- Medical tourism is considered one of the largest sectors contributing to job creation and new employment opportunities, therapeutic resort, and tourism projects in remote areas where unemployment rates are on the rise, it is also associated with restaurants and hotels where patients and their companions stay for treatment.

- The sector considered a primary source of exports, Through the medical services provided by hospitals, tourist resorts, and other treatment centers, local foreign currency reserves increase as patient and their companions spend foreign currency on purchasing medical services, accommodation, transportation, restaurants, and more.

- The tourism services can be relied upon to stimulate other economic sectors in the country, especially construction, transportation, industry, technology, and communication, given the volume of supportive and accompanying services required for the growth of this sector, which are executed by other sectors and activities, this, in turn, enhances the integrative relationship between medical tourism services and other sectors in the country.

1.2. Medical Tourism services features

The medical tourism industry relies primarily in the quality of available medical services for its development and marketing effort, Despite the differences that distinguish medical services from other services, they share several characteristics, which outline below: (AL-Nasour, pp. 58-60)

- **Intangibility:** the absence of tangible assets for medical services, and their characteristics that are difficult to measure, intangibility includes the following features:

- * Difficulty in evaluating medical services before the purchase
- * High accompanying risk ratio for medical services
- * Intangibility weakens after the purchase

Marketing literature indicates that overcoming these characteristics by promoter's medical services

- * Transforming intangible medical services into tangible ones, such as therapeutic technology, the physical environment of medical services like hospitals and natural surroundings, and others.
- * Encouraging word-of – mouth communication about the medical service
- * creating strong perception of the various hospitals and treatment facilities that produce medical services
- * Activating the promotional and marketing communication process that take place before the service is purchased

- Demand fluctuate, and therapeutic services characterized by volatility instability. Unlike physical goods, demand does not fluctuate seasonally, but rather varies from day to day and from hour to hour.
- Interdependency, which reflects the difficulty of separating production and consumption steps from each other, often results in the service being consumed while it is being produced, without allowing the opportunity to inspect quality and rectify error as they occur. This is unlike the case with physical goods.
- Asymmetry, as often is difficult to standardize therapeutic services when providing them or attempting to consistently deliver them at the same level, especially if these services rely on the human element, this characteristic also includes:
 - * Difficulty quality control of therapeutic services compared to manufactured ones
 - * Lack of coordination and harmony
 - * The degree of patient involvement in the production process of therapeutic services.

Despite the above, therapeutic services differ in their concept from services in general in several aspects, while still sharing the aforementioned characteristics, Being directly related to humans makes them highly sensitive compared to other services, and they represent the highest degree of interaction seen in services in general, furthermore, it is difficult to postpone or cancel their consumption due to their direct impact on an individual's health. Additionally, the demand for therapeutic services has a wide-ranging impact on various sectors such as transportation, hotels, healthcare centers, and others, they often come with high acquisition costs due to their capital-intensive nature.

1.3. Challenges of medical Tourism in the Arab World

All changes occurring within any framework of global and local environment systems may directly or indirectly impact the dynamics of the tourism sector, including medical tourism, We can translate the most significant obstacles that could negatively affect Arab medical tourism as follow: (<https://www.rowadalaamal.com>)

- **The absence of Arab countries on the world map as an economic bloc:** The Arab world, with area comprises 11% of the world's landmass and a population of approximately 270 million, boast over 100.00 tourist sites known for their authenticity and heritage, However, the Arab region's position does not align with significant capabilities and resources, The absence of Arab countries as an economic bloc or a common Arab market diminishes their potential to support their economies, shield them from crises and problems, and limits their share of opportunities in the global market.
- **Weak infrastructure for medical Tourism and healthcare facilities:** healthcare facilities in most Arab countries lack global competitiveness due to their absence of international quality standards on one hand and a lack of understanding among their staff about healthcare quality standards in medical tourism on the other.
- **Weak infrastructure in Tourism sector:** statistics indicate that Arab countries will require over 300 billion dollars over next ten years for the development of their infrastructure. Hence, the decision by the Arab council of ministers to connect the Arab region with nine major rail axes, consisting of 20000 kilometers, requiring 10.000 carriages. Additionally, transportation by sea, which carries approximately 2.2 million passengers, plays role in boosting medical tourism.

- **Weak Marketing and Promotion of medical Tourism:** statistics indicate that the Arab world spend 45 billion dollars on promotion, which is a modest amount compared to countries like Australia which spends 88 million dollars, Spain and the UK spending 79 billion dollars, and France spending 73 billion dollars.

- **Complex Routine procedure:** These are barriers and complications faced by Arab travelers, ranging from accountability and long waiting times to stringent regulations for residence and complicated entry visas, hindering the progress of tourism in the Arab world. Despite relatively recent development in tourism establishments, more than 70% of Arab tourism projects are considered small, as they do not match the sales of a single restaurant in an advanced country.

- **Tourism and security are interconnected:** when there is a security disruption, the tourism sector is the first to be affected, the intended impact here is:

- * Global and local demand for the activities of the medical tourism sector concerned country
- * The form, characteristics, and components of medical tourism and the country's tourist offerings to increase income.
- * The distinctive nature of the country's tourism sector and its competitive position on the global map.

1.4. Electronic promotion of medical tourism

Technological advancements in information and communication technology have imposed modern forms to interaction, with electronic services at the forefront. These services have become an inevitable necessity that no tourism activity can afford ignore in the present time. Discussions about these services have attracted the attention of numerous legal and tourism studies aiming to establish legal and regulatory framework for them.

As a result of the integration of information technology into the tourism sector, this industry has become more flexible and responsive to individual's needs. Additionally, efficient use of information technology reduces costs and increases profits, through the use of information technology, it is possible to redesign modern methods of promoting and marketing tourism by capitalizing on the unique opportunity that technology offers in identifying and satisfying individual needs (Mukesh, Chandra, 2000, p. 223).

1.4.1. The advantages of online electronic promotion

The internet is, first and foremost, a primary information tool due to the distance and lack of physical contact with medical tourism service providers before using the service. The internet is considered a primary source of information. For example, a survey of American medical tourists revealed that 73% of the participants used the internet to gather information. Furthermore, the internet provides information at a very low cost (Hallem, Barth, 2015, p. 55). The internet also provides information at a very low cost.

The internet can be considered as a mitigating factor in reducing risks and building trust in medical tourism, through its informational and social functions. This role can also help explain the increase in online promotion of medical tourism services, as medical tourism services remain

theoretically less credible compared to online sales. We can summarize the key advantages of using the internet in promoting medical tourism as follow: (Tribe, 2011, p. 188)

- * Broad presentation of services, increase tourist's choices
- * It uses communication and information technology at a lower cost.
- * The ability to easily instantly obtain information about prices and types of services
- * Innovative booking and purchasing options
- * Clear understanding of service specifications and easy accessibility
- * The ability to collect and analyze data, markets, and tourism trends.

1.4.2-The most important methods used electronic promotion (El Sayed Hanafi, Elsharqawi, 2008, pp. 213-220)

- **Electronic promotion through search engine:** is considered one of the most important methods for attracting visitors to any website. It relies on several factors, including keywords density, website design, page linking within the site, the frequency of content updates, and more

- **Promotion through advertisements:** in this method, websites categorized into two categories: websites that advertising services and websites that purchase advertising services.

- **Promotion using email marketing:** This is considered a form of direct promotion and a means of delivering messages to the audience. It aims to improve customer relations, encourage communication, increase loyalty, and boost purchasing levels or even acquire new customers through advertisements included in these messages.

- **Viral promotion:** This is a term used in the world of the online marketing, and it can be explained with the following example: imagine that someone contracted a contagious viral disease, and the rate of spreading this disease from one person to another will be very fast. Hence, the shape that this spread takes has been borrowed to become one of the techniques employed in online promotion.

2. Showcasing the experiences of some Arab countries

Some Arab countries have shown great interest in medical tourism as a means to diversify their source of income and leverage their natural and therapeutic resources to achieve significant economic returns. The experiences of certain Arab countries in the field of online promotion of tourism in general and medical tourism in particular are noteworthy. For instance, countries like the UAE, Jordan, and Egypt have employed information technology to benefit from online tourism promotion applications on the internet, aiming to enhance their medical tourism sector and compete with leading countries in this field.

2.1. The Emirati Experience

The United Arab Emirate was crowned at the best global destination for medical tourism in the last ranking, shedding light on the UAE'S effort the tourism sector and its infrastructure. According to a report released by " Vitch Solution" in 2019, Dubai and Abu Dhabi ranked 16th and 25th,

respectively, as the top global destinations for medical tourism, based on the latest data from the medical tourism index. The UAE is among the top 14 markets for medical worldwide, including the UAE, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Mexico, Brazil, Taiwan, and turkey, South Korea, Costa Rica, India, the Philippines, and Indonesia (<https://www.albayan.ae/across-the-uae/news-and-reports/2023-09-24>).

According to the Dubai chamber of Commerce and Industry, Medical tourism sales in the United Arab Emirates in 2018 reached 12.1 billion dirhams, with a growth rate of 5.5% compared to 2017. The Dubai Chamber's analysis outlined the future growth prospect for the medical tourism sector, given that the UAE is considered an attractive destination for tourists seeking medical treatment from East Asia, the Middle East, and European countries, According to recent analysis by the chamber, it is expected that the sector will continue to grow, reaching over 20 billion dirhams by 2024, with a cumulative annual rate of 10.7%.

The analysis, based on recent data and statistics, confirmed that medical tourism sales, according to "Euromonitor International", Achieved a cumulative annual growth of approximately 11.9% during the period 2014-2019. This reflects the attractiveness of the medical tourism sector in the country. According to same report, healthcare spending in the United Arab Emirates reached about 50.3 billion dirhams in 2018, with an annual growth rate of 5.4%, This spending includes the purchase of healthcare services and goods by both public and private entities (<https://middle-east-online.com> 1. , 2023).

Regarding the electronic promotion of medical tourism in the United Arab Emirates, the country has undertaken numerous initiatives and effort to attract medical tourists. For example, the Dubai health Authority established "Dubai health experience" as the first online portal for medical tourism in the region. It assists tourists in booking all the details of their medical vacation online, from entry procedures to flight booking and hotel accommodation, Additionally, in 2018, the Department of health and the department of culture and tourism in Abu Dhabi launched the "Abu Dhabi Electronic medical tourism portal", a digital platform that provides visitors to the emirate with comprehensive information about medical services and healthcare facilities through their visit.

Experts in the field of medical tourism emphasize the importance of researching the strategies to promote this type of tourism in the country, especially since it's not a common topic on social media network, which are currently considered the most important channels for promotional campaign, they affirm that building a medical tourism plan without promoting it doesn't yield any result, so focusing on the internet and social media networks is a priority for the success of this campaign.

They explained that statistics indicate that 87% of travelers turn to the internet for planning their trip. therefore, it's essential to make the most of this idea by engaging with global search engines, this can be achieved by including videos by medical specialists, patient testimonial, as well as photos and information that capture attention about the desired destination and the country's attractions and features that would help the patient achieve an ideal medical tourism experience.

2.1.1. The Emirate of Abu Dhabi

Medical tourism is one of the pillars of Abu Dhabi's economic vision for 2030 to diversify the Emirate's economy. This drives them to raise awareness about the tourist destination and its medical tourism programs regionally and globally, attracting diverse segments of medical tourists from targeted markets where Abu Dhabi has witnessed significant growth. These markets include China, India, Russia, and the Gulf countries, along with traditional countries that have shown interest in Abu Dhabi for many years, such as Germany, Britain, and the United States.

In 2018, the Department of Health and the Department of Culture and Tourism in Abu Dhabi launched an online portal for medical tourism. This portal assists individuals interested in visiting the emirate to benefit from its healthcare services and offers a comprehensive range of services and products they require from the moment they decide to visit the emirate until their recovery and departure. The portal includes a list of healthcare facilities within the medical tourism network, comprising 40 healthcare providers that meet conditions according to the Quality program under the Department of Health Abu Dhabi. Additionally, there are more than 287 medical packages provided by over 173 doctors in the emirate. The portal also allows users to access specialized medical tourism insurance packages, which are the first of their kind in the region; furthermore, it offers a wide range of services that medical tourists may need, including direct communication with healthcare providers, visa issuance, appointment booking, accommodations, transportation, and various other recreational activities.

The Department of Culture and Tourism in Abu Dhabi has also signed a memorandum of understanding with the Medical Tourism Organization to coordinate strategic marketing efforts that enhance Abu Dhabi's position on the map of distinguished preferred medical tourism destinations worldwide; this includes the establishment of a regional office for the organization in Abu Dhabi to develop and promotional strategies for attracting medical tourism visitors from key target markets, including Russia, China, India, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries. The memorandum also outlines areas of cooperation between the department and the organization, including conducting a comprehensive assessment of the current medical tourism strategy in Abu Dhabi and coordinating digital promotional initiatives.

2.1.2. The emirate of Dubai

Recent studies estimate that medical tourism is worth approximately 100 billion dollars globally each year. Medical tourism in the United Arab Emirates is currently valued at 1.6 billion dollars, with the majority of it coming from the Emirate of Dubai. The Dubai government has identified the medical tourism industry as a key component in its economic development plans and has ambitious strategies to capture a significant share of these 100 billion industries (<https://investingroup.org/snapshot/267/dubai-medical-tourism-united-arab-emirates/>).

According to the Dubai Health Authority, Dubai treated 107,000 international tourists in 2012, 120,000 in 2013, 135,000 in 2014, 269,000 in 2015. The Dubai Authority anticipates that the number of visitors seeking medical treatment will increase by approximately 12% annually.

It's worth noting that the city currently hosts than 450 specialized tourism companies on various information-related industries. In 2016, the emirate launched the world's first comprehensive electronic portal for medical tourism, known as the Dubai Health experiences, it provided access to a comprehensive list of health-related services, including hospital treatment and physical therapy. This has significantly contributed to the promotion of Dubai and its position on the global medical tourism map (<https://www.alittihad.ae/article/67725/2023>, 2023).

The Dubai Health Experience (DXH) platform, launched by Dubai Health Authority, represents the world's first medical tourism gateway, it provides medical tourists with easy access to comprehensive information about high-quality healthcare, travel services, and visa-related details, The DXH website also features healthcare packages designed in collaboration with 26 distinguished healthcare facilities, both private and public. These packages include discounted airfares, visas, and medical insurance covering any unexpected health complications during treatment and stay in hotels, as well as recreational activities and airport hospitality services, The portal can also be accessed through the Dubai Health Experience application.

2.2. The Jordanian Experience

The tourism sector in Jordan has witnessed a significant increase in its performance indicators, as official figures show a notable rise in the number of tourists until late 2018, with a total of 4,922,169 tourists compared to approximately 4,565,158 tourists in 2017, representing an increase of about 7%, these numbers also reveal an increase in the performance indicators of the tourism sector in 2019 compared to the same period in 2018. Jordan is considered one of the leading countries in medical tourism, thanks to its naturel assets that contribute to natural therapy, including mineral waters Jordan is considered one of the leading countries in medical tourism, thanks to its naturel assets that contribute to natural therapy, including mineral waters, waterfalls, and volcanic mud, Additionally, it distinguished itself by providing specialized hospitals (El-Gallad, 2010).

Medical tourism is a national achievement that has elevated Jordan's reputation globally. It is considered a fundamental to the national economy and one of the most important sources of national income, Jordan holds the first position in the Middle East and north Africa as a leading hub for medical tourism, attracting annually over 250, 000 patients from various countries worldwide, along with more than 500, 000 accompanying individuals (https://lusailnews.net/article/_/miscellaneous/08/10/2023, 2023).

Jordan has made a notable presence in international medical market in recent years. The country achieved recognition by winning the award for the Best Medical Tourism Destination in 2014 (Alsarayreh, Al nawaish, Mahasnch, 2017, p. 180), and it continues to strive to maintain a distinguished position in this field. Medical tourism is considered a crucial economic pillar due to its impact on the healthcare sector, as well as a source of income, employment, and overall economic and social development in the country.

Regarding the online promotion of medical tourism in Jordan, there is a significant reliance on social media platforms and the dissemination of agency advertisement on well-known websites such as Open Sooq, among others, there is a clear impact of using online promotion for medical tourism

on the popularity of medical tourism destinations in Jordan, moreover, several studies have shown that promoting medical tourism in Jordan relies primarily on the social media platform Facebook, given its widespread use by users worldwide (Qatishat and others, 2012, p. 163).

In 2017, the kingdom signed a memorandum of understanding to launch the wellness gateway the first comprehensive and specialized online portal for the development and promotion of medical and wellness tourism in the kingdom. The aim of launching the electronic portal is to promote local medical tourism and its diverse capabilities on all levels: local, regional, and international. It also aims to provide all medical service information online, thus offering a central address easily accessible to interested parties worldwide around the clock.

The importance of the electronic portal lies in creating a comprehensive database for the healthcare sector in Jordan, showcasing hospitals, and key historical and tourist sites in the kingdom for service seekers through the wellness Gateway. This positively influence the pattern of medical tourism, leading to an increase in tourism income and the gross domestic product, especially medical tourism, has significantly contributed to its global expansion, it has played a crucial role in marketing and promoting medical tourism in Jordan, positioning it as a supportive factor for the national economy and placing it on the map of global tourism. This is achieved by providing access to the database and information through the electronic portal for service seekers both within and outside the kingdom

(http://petra.gov.jo:80/Include/InnerPage.jsp?ID=5430&lang=en&name=local_news).

2.3. The Egyptian Experience

Egypt is considered one of the most important tourist destinations globally, thanks to its diverse tourist areas and the variety of tourism products it offers. Egypt . In addition to outstanding medical centers, there are various tourist areas with the advantage of medical tourism. These areas are renowned for their rich historical significance, such as Helwan, Ain El-Sokhna, Hurghada, Fayoul, the Oasis region, Aswan, Sinai, and the city of Safaga on the red sea coast, known for its black sand, which has the ability to treat certain skin conditions.

The world travel & Tourism (WTC) announced that tourism in Egypt experienced significant growth and revival in 2018, making it the fastest-growing sector in North Africa. The council highlighted the strong recovery in Egypt's tourism sector in its report on tourism in various countries, emphasizing the importance of this sector in economic growth and job creation. The research indicated that the tourism sector in Egypt provides 2.5 million job opportunities, equivalent 9.5% of the total employment in Egypt. moreover, the study revealed that tourism contributed to 11.9% of Egypt's Gross Domestic product in 2018.

(https://www.masrawy.com/news/news_egypt/details/2019/3/22/)

Medical tourism is currently one of the popular forms of tourism in Egypt. Regarding the role of electronic promotion in this type of tourism industry, it can be said that there is general trend in Egypt towards utilizing modern technologies and internet networks to promote medical tourism services. Individuals also contribute by establishing pages on social media platforms to actively engage in promoting this type of tourism through personal efforts

In 2009, Egypt created the " Egypt Tourism campaign" page, which is considered the most content-rich with attached photos and videos. This has significantly contributed to the medical tourism; The page utilizes geographic maps to illustrate tourist's areas.

Egypt aims to increase its share of the medical tourism through its digital gateway launched in 2016. The country collaborates with major medical institution to electronically promote this type of tourism. The Egyptian Tourism gateway (Egypt.travel) aims to support and revitalize tourist resource by introducing the world to the historical and therapeutic sites in Egypt. The goal is to attract a larger number of tourists to the unique destinations in Egypt. The website is designed with latest technology, utilizing responsive Design to be compatible with all devices and accessible to a wide range of users. News and tourist events will be continuously and regularly displayed to engage with tourists. The site is also linked to major global electronic marketing channels, including social media platforms, through the "This is Egypt" campaign for tourism promotion in Egypt.

In the context to promoting medical tourism online, Egypt also launched a dedicated radio broadcast in 2017 to promote medical tourism and environment healing in the country. Programs are broadcast in Arabic, English, and French languages.

3. CONCLUSION

Information technology has become crucial in the tourism industry as a whole, particularly in medical tourism. The importance of implementing electronic promotion and e-commerce in therapeutic tourism companies and associated services lies in attracting new client through high-level strategic and technological approaches. In our current era where dependence on technology is both complete and partial, electronic tourism serves as the gateway to new local and international tourism experiences.

Electronic promotion has gained a distinctive position among participants in the global medical tourism market. It is no longer just an option but necessary imperative dictated by the nature of tourism services, influencing the development of the medical tourism industry and amid competition among various tourist destination. Relying on technology to promote therapeutic tourism services has contributed, on a global scale, to reducing promotional costs and decreasing the workforce.

Medical tourism has become a choice for thousands of patients worldwide seeking good care at reasonable prices. Economic factors are often considered the primary force associated with medical tourism. However, this does not fully explain the evolution of medical tourism as much as the behavior of medical tourists does. Patient now have greater decision- making power, empowered by access to sufficient information about treatment locations in different countries. It can be said that the emergence of information and communication technology as the foundation for promoting therapeutic tourism services has significantly influenced consumer behavior and had a profound impact on their preferences, From this perspective, we emphasize the role of technological factors, represented by electronic promotion, in the growth of medical tourism in Arab countries, similar to other nations.

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