



## **THE ROLE OF THE HEALTH SECTOR IN THE HOLY KARBALA GOVERNORATE AS A DESTINATION FOR MEDICAL TOURISM ANALYTICAL STUDY AL-KAFEEL HOSPITAL AS A MODEL**

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### **Abstract**

In this paper proposed the external influences of this medical and treatment institution in the holy Karbala governorate, which is Al-Kafeel Hospital as a research sample and a medical and treatment destination, competition in the markets and the growing and rapid development in these two sectors, the researcher wanted, through his research, to show the most important strengths and weaknesses, which are the internal influences, points of opportunities and threats, And through the researcher's numerous interviews with clients of this medical and therapeutic institution and its employees in almost all their different job titles resulted in a summary that included extracting the most important strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in it, which were classified according to a method called the swot method. It is a tool for strategic analysis in several areas, such as business administration, marketing, human development, and others.

### **Introduction:**

Medical tourism is one of the types of tourism industry, which by most measures has become the largest industry in the world. (Scientific Tourism Organization, nd) as it has grown significantly in recent years as an economic activity based on providing integrated services that includes two sectors, namely the medical sector and the tourism sector, and due to the development in these two sectors, the medical tourism market has become internationally competitive in terms of providing treatment service. And tourism of high quality at a lower cost. In light of that competition in the markets and the growing and rapid development in these two sectors, the researcher wanted, through his research, to show the most important strengths and weaknesses, which are the internal influences, points of opportunities and threats, which are represented by the external influences of this medical and treatment institution in the holy Karbala governorate, which is Al-Kafeel Hospital as a research sample and a medical and treatment destination. And through the researcher's numerous interviews with clients of this medical and therapeutic institution and its employees in almost all their different job titles resulted in a summary that included extracting the most important strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in it, which were classified

according to a method called the swot method. It is a tool for strategic analysis in several areas, such as business administration, marketing, human development, and others. This analysis is divided, as I wrote the four letters in English, into S-W-O-T and can be defined as follows:

**Strength:** The strengths of the project that distinguish it from other projects, and it is a translation of the word Strengths

**Weaknesses:** Weaknesses are the project's weaknesses.

**Opportunities:** They are those that can come from outside the project and may lead, for example, to increased sales and also to increase profits, which is a translation of the word Opportunities.

**Threats:** They are those that can come from outside the project and cause disturbances to the project, and it is a translation of the word.

### **Threats**

Due to the importance of the aforementioned research topic, this research was done, which was divided into a theoretical framework and it consists of two studies including a primary study in which it is shown (problem, importance, objectives, hypothesis, methodology and sample of the research). The second topic was describing the concept of tourism in general and then clarifying the concept of medical tourism and a set of definitions for it and also In the same topic, the types of medical tourism were clarified. Also in the end of this topic, reference was made to the historical, economic and medical dimension of medical tourism. Thus, the theoretical framework for the research has been completed. Then followed by the practical framework, in which the statistical analysis of the research sample is carried out and comments are made on it, including the research sample presented in the questionnaire paper, including what it contains. Of the questions related to the main research axes. As for the third topic, it included the findings and recommendations of the research, and finally the sources and annexes of the research.

### **Methodological framework for research**

**Research problem:** The researcher believes that the problem of his research that resulted from it is the limited capacity of health institutions, which are considered to be Attractive services to the tourist (customer) in the Holy Karbala, especially Al-Kafeel Hospital. On the other hand, a statement of the knowledge of the workers in this health institution, in particular, from the knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses, which are considered positive influences, opportunities and threats, and they represent external influences as well. From that, the researcher asks about the problem of his research)) What is the level of awareness of the employees of Al-Kafeel Hospital in the holy Karbala governorate of internal influences (strengths and weaknesses) and external influences (opportunities and threats)?

**The research hypothesis:** - Through the researcher's review of many scientific books and theses, he was based on the fact that the main research hypothesis, which is considered as a primary solution to the research problem in the theoretical framework, is:

**First:** The workers in health institutions, specifically in the research sample (Al-Kafeel Hospital) in the holy Karbala governorate, have knowledge and awareness of all the challenges they face, represented by internal and

external influences that increase or weaken the level of their medical and therapeutic activity for the customer (the tourist)

**Second:** Also, through the practical framework of the research, the researcher assumes the awareness of the internal influences (strengths and weaknesses) and external influences (strengths and weaknesses) and external influences (opportunities and threats) in Al-Kafeel Hospital. Also, through the question that emerged from the main research problem, two sub-hypotheses emerge that are answered according to the practical framework as well. Friedman's test are: -

- There are no statistically significant differences between the internal factors represented by "strengths and weaknesses" and the external factors represented by "opportunities and threats."
- There are statistically significant differences between the internal factors represented by "strengths and weaknesses" and the external factors represented by

### **Opportunities and threats**

The importance of the research: The researcher believes that the competition between international health institutions for the medical services they provide is a challenge

In attracting the tourist (the customer) on the health side, and therefore it is necessary to know the internal influences that are (strengths and weaknesses) and external influences, which are (opportunities and threats), specifically the research sample (Al-Kafeel Hospital) to keep up with this competition occurring between those global health institutions that attract tourists (the customer)

**Research objectives:** - Shedding light on medical tourism in the institutions of the holy medical city of Karbala and what it offers

Health services, after knowing all the challenges that specifically face the research sample (Al-Kafeel Hospital), which is the researcher's goal for this research.

**Research Methodology:** The researcher relied on the descriptive and analytical method in his research by relying on books, letters and the Internet in

Writing the theoretical framework for the research, while a questionnaire form and its paragraphs analysis were adopted in the practical side of the research, using the statistical method by SPSS program in this aspect.

The study sample: - The study sample was represented by selecting a number of workers and customers (tourists) who are in Al-Kafeel Hospital.

Located in the holy province of Karbala randomly to obtain objective answers to the questionnaire questions.

### **Theoretical framework for research**

First: - The concept of tourism: - The concept of tourism differs from one source to another and from one person to another. There is no consensus on a concept And the definition of tourism. Where each institution demonstrates the concept and definition of tourism differently. But when it comes to explaining it In basic terms, we can summarize them as follows. Tourism is a group of activities, services, and industries that provide a travel experience that includes transportation, accommodations, eating and drinking

establishments, retail stores, leisure companies, and other hospitality services provided to individuals or groups traveling away from home (<https://www.tugberkugurlu.com/>-, nd )

### **Tourism is a language and idiom:**

Tourism in the language: it came from the water melt if it ran on the face of the earth. Tourism is derived from the verb sah, which is to move in The country is for the sake of hiking, exploration or exploration, and it means moving from one country to another, so tourism is the movement of individuals or groups from the place of permanent residence to another place and then back to the original place. (Al-Hasnawi, 2013) As for the convention, it means: wandering in a country for hiking or watching, or otherwise, as it is a tourist, a gathering of tourists and tourists, and the public says tourists. And it falls within the term travel, which is going out with the intention of crossing the legal distance of shortening and above. It means the set of activities that It is practiced by persons traveling or residing in unusual places for them seeking pleasure and recreation, and the period of their stay in them does not exceed one year. (Al-Hasnawi, 2013, p. 13) .

### **Second: - Types of tourism**

Tourism has many types according to the purpose of tourism. Therefore, the following types of tourism can be defined

1- Cultural tourism: It includes a wide range of tourists with the intention of expanding their horizons in seeking knowledge and knowledge. (Al-Qudah, 2009)

2- Social tourism: the aim of it is to visit relatives and friends

3- Religious tourism: to visit holy places and places of worship

4- Sports tourism: it is associated with the courses

5- Recreation tourism: the aim of it is to enjoy the beaches, mountains, forests and the desert and to visit tourist facilities.

6- Medical tourism: which depends on the use of specialized clinics, medical centers, or modern hospitals that have medical equipment and highly qualified human cadres that are spread in all countries of the world.

7- Hospital tourism: which depends on medical elements in the treatment and recovery of patients, such as mineral and sulfur springs, sand and exposure to sunlight for the purpose of recovery from some skin, rheumatic and orthopedic diseases, and it launches medical tourism to all.

### **Third: - The concept of medical tourism**

Many governmental or non-governmental tourism organizations have organized tourism work

The return from it is raising tourism health awareness and raising the interest of the international community and its cooperation towards a better future in which the human being enjoys well-being, health, security and psychological safety, and medical tourism is one of the types of tourism, which is travel with the aim of treatment and recreation in the two health resorts in various parts of the world. (Al-Ashimi, 2006)

### **Definition of medical tourism: -**

It is the movement of the tourist from one town to another country, motivated by the desire to achieve recovery from some or satisfy the needs of his body from natural elements whose presence in the environment lacks citizenship and finds them in the natural environment in another country.

### **Medical Tourism: -**

It is a term given to a type of tourism that people move to countries where there are places of health care, and mostly natural sources such as sulfur water, warm baths and hot sand. (Hassan, 2010)

### **Fourth: - The history of medical tourism**

The phenomenon of medical tourism goes back to the distant past, according to what has been proven by natural studies in this field and by reviewing the history of treatment with mineral water are sacred places, and they thought that the curative effect of this water comes from divine supernatural powers, and so was the belief that water is the god who brings healing Therefore, people worshiped rivers as was the case in ancient times in the Nile. (Ashi, 2011) Medical tourism gradually became known with little experience, as man found some diseases (rheumatic and thoracic) that could be cured by moving to certain places characterized by a special climate. Then the therapeutic properties of mineral springs were discovered. The Romans built curative services and set up beautiful statues with them and attached them to entertainment halls, and when the Renaissance arrived in Europe, tourism to curative cities became a kind of luxury for the rich, and these cities included the largest hotels and the most beautiful parks. After the Second World War, frequenting these cities did not become limited to the rich, but rather included the middle classes due to the spread of health insurance and the high standard of living, and this is what contributed to the great prosperity of this type of tourism. As for the modern era, most of the European Dom were interested in this type of tourism and then entered the field of Japan and the United States of America, where the countries of Eastern Europe are among the countries that have achieved widespread success. The 1960s, and this was reflected in the reputation of this country, as it became a major destination for medical tourism, which was adopted by many Western European countries in this field.

Like Italy in competition, as it expanded in the establishment of therapeutic cities (more than 40 therapeutic cities that include mineral water), and achieved a large tourist income other than cities that exploit the climate and sea water in tourism treatment. Therapeutic cities have developed at the present time to include centers for medical research on the properties of water and its effects and climate and other means of treatment, as each city specialized in a specific type of treatment for specific diseases. (Al-Qudah H. S., 2009)

### **Fifth: - The importance of medical tourism**

The importance of medical tourism at the state and tourist level lies in the following:-

- 1- Contribute to revitalizing the health and hotel sector.
- 2- It activates the buying and selling movement and the economic wheel.
- 3- Contribute to revitalizing the investment process in the health and hotel sector.
- 4- It helps to provide new employment opportunities, especially in countries suffering from high unemployment. (Al-Hamari, 2008)
- 5- It serves as a means of promoting its products and other tourist attractions for those countries.
- 6- Provides training opportunities
- 6- Contributes to providing hard currency that supports the national economy.
- 8- It allows the beneficiary to obtain high-quality medical and hospital services within international standards and at competitive prices

### **Sixth: Tourism in the holy Karbala**

The city of Karbala can become an important destination for medical tourism in addition to its pioneering and distinguished center in religious tourism due to the spread of many mineral springs and sulfur wells, especially in the Ain al-Tamr oasis, as the oasis is 80 km to the west of the city of Karbala, and the tourist Whoever cuts the road between them passes historical evidence of archaeological sites, the Tire Caves, and after that comes Al-Ukhaidir Fort, which is considered one of the warm buildings, especially in the month of May until October, and is free of sources of environmental pollution. Ain al-Tamr oasis is characterized by the beauty of nature, its sedimentary soil and its underground water resulting from rainwater flowing in the valleys. It is a secret of the Western Sahara's secrets due to its tourist landscape as it is located in the middle of a forest of palms, pomegranate trees, olives and apples. (Al-Jumaili, 2021). Its climate is characterized by the characteristics of a dry climate, and the temperature fluctuations between night and day, winter and summer are sharp. The study area possesses many natural potentials represented by the desert land surrounding the oasis and the abundance of groundwater that comes out to include flowing eyes, and among the most important of these springs are (the large blue eye), (Ain al-Hamra and Ain al-Seeb). The advantages of these eyes to know the possibility of using them for the purposes of medical tourism, as these features are as follows.

1- Sulfates are concentrated in high proportions in the water of these springs from the foul-smelling hydrogen sulfide gas, which helps treat acne diseases, some eczema diseases and all cases of war diseases.

2 - It contains calcium, which helps treat psoriasis after heating its water.

3- Its containment of mineral compounds contributes to the construction of hot baths that can be used in the treatment of rheumatic diseases, pain of the body, and sovian diseases of the joints and vertebrae.

4- High electrical conductivity, which is a feature that helps in activating the injured nerve cells.

5- Its temperature contrasts with the temperature of the climate, as its temperature is 20 m in the summer, while its temperature rises in the winter and is warm, which makes it an appropriate element for tourist activity.

6- Non-toxicity of its water, but the concentration of salinity and some chemical compounds is much higher than the limit permitted by the World Health Organization, which makes it unsuitable for drinking, but can be used for agricultural and therapeutic symptoms (i.e., using the water of these springs in external treatment) (Al-Taie, 2005)

In this aspect, the clinic located in the unique sites in southern Ukraine uses hot mineral spring water in the treatment and healing of patients, and the use of modern technologies prevailed in the springs to heal patients and improve their general health condition, and treatment is carried out in four stages: - Take a bath with mineral water, Treatment in swimming pools with mineral water, Hydrotherapy massage therapy, and Relaxation therapy. (Ghoneim, 2004)

On the other hand, the Babylonians used douches, ceramics and infrared rays to treat patients with mineral water, as the Japanese mentality created a shower head and water filters that convert the normal flute into mineral water exactly similar to that in therapeutic spas, just as the Japanese used the finest types of vital

ceramics that emit negative ions And infrared rays, the presence of negative ions in the water helps to get rid of nervous tension, increase vital fluency in the body and increase immunity to maintain health, and infrared rays work to remove clots and blockages that occur in blood vessels and lead to an increase in blood velocity and its free flow. It strengthens the metabolic processes and improves the body's resistance to diseases. (Gharaibeh, 2012)

The study considers that the availability of natural potentials, including mineral water that can be facilitated in private bathrooms, infrared rays derived from natural sunlight, as well as the high conductivity of electricity, makes the study organization with potentials for medical tourism in it with the importance of having the necessary services that start from the transportation routes and end with the site Al-Oyoun at Ain El-Tam oasis. Which must be available in the tourist hotel services

In addition to the availability of medical staff to supervise the treatment homes and build baths for swimming, recovery and relaxation. The third topic / the practical side, First: analysis of personal data, Second: Analyzing research data, and Descriptive analysis of the sample (demographic factors)

**Table No. (1) shows a descriptive analysis of the demographic factors of the sample (the researcher's numbers)**

| Sex          |        |        |  |
|--------------|--------|--------|--|
| Percentage % | Number | Sex    |  |
| 56.0         | 28     | male   |  |
| 44.0         | 22     | female |  |
| 100.0        | 50     | Total  |  |

| Academic achievement |        |              |  |
|----------------------|--------|--------------|--|
| Percentage %         | Number | Certificate  |  |
| 16.0                 | 8      | PhD          |  |
| 16.0                 | 8      | M.Sc.        |  |
| 16.0                 | 8      | Bachelor     |  |
| 16.0                 | 8      | High Diploma |  |
| 16.0                 | 8      | Diploma      |  |
| 20.0                 | 10     | Secondary    |  |
| 100.0                | 50     | Total        |  |

Friedman's test of research axes and variables according to the spss statistical program.

Table No. (1) the internal factors represented by "strengths and weaknesses" using Friedman's test {researcher's numbers }

| Axes          | the scale<br>Ratio of agreement paragraphs                         | mean | Standard Deviation | Mean Rankings |
|---------------|--|------|--------------------|---------------|
| Strong Points | Existence or availability of client therapeutic infrastructure     | 1.60 | 0.571              | 3.03          |
|               | Ease of access to therapeutic and hospital places in the province. | 1.58 | 0.573              | 2.95          |
|               | Prices for curative medical services are acceptable.               | 1.66 | 0.593              | 3.13          |

|                 |  |       |         |      |
|-----------------|--|-------|---------|------|
|                 | The medical and curative service is distinguished by its diversity and high quality.   | 1.58  | 0.810   | 2.80 |
|                 | Human medical resources are experienced in all levels of medical services.   | 1.66  | 0.658   | 3.09 |
|                 | Axis score   | 2.020 | 0.76050 | 2.55 |
| Weakness points | There is no distinct government support.   | 1.66  | 0.961   | 2.45 |
|                 | There is no coordination between the curative and tourism services between the ministries of health and tourism.   | 1.90  | 1.035   | 2.87 |
|                 | There is no coordination between the various administration such as transportation, hotels and travel agencies with the therapeutic and hospital places. | 1.76  | 1.001   | 2.51 |
|                 | Lack of a comprehensive and integrated information system for expatriate customers.  | 2.62  | 1.308   | 3.62 |
|                 | The advertising system is very weak with regard to the institutions and companies associated with medical tourism.                                       | 2.58  | 1.295   | 3.55 |
|                 | Axis score   | 1.932 | 0.90946 | 2.10 |

It is evident from Table No. (1), in which the internal factors are recorded, represented by “strengths and weaknesses” and knowing the study sample's options for these factors, represented by the strengths and weaknesses of this medical institution that provides curative services in Al-Kafeel Hospital, where the sum of the averages ratios for the strength axis according to Friedman's test was {2.55} The sum of the mean ratios of the arithmetic mean was {2.0200} and the sum of the percentages of the standard deviation was {0.76050} and the sum of the averages ratios for the axis of weakness according to Friedman's test {2.10} while the sum of the ratios of the arithmetic mean was {1.9320} and the sum of the percentages of the standard deviation were {0.90946}. We conclude from these results, "The presence of strengths greater than the weaknesses of Al-Kafeel P. Hospital."

**Table No. (2) the external factors represented by "opportunities and threats" using Friedman's test {researcher's numbers}**

| Axes          | the scale<br>Ratio of agreement paragraphs   | mean       | Standard Deviation | Mean Rankings |
|---------------|--|------------|--------------------|---------------|
| Opportunities | Creating and enhancing employment opportunities through interest in medical tourism. | 1.94       | 0.712              | 2.22          |
|               | Supporting medical tourism more than government agencies.                            | 2.16       | 1.184              | 2.46          |
|               | The use of new technologies for tourist attractions through medical capabilities.    | 2.64       | 1.290              | 2.77          |
|               | A reasonable reduction in medical and health services.                               | 2.30       | 1.182              | 2.55          |
|               | Axis score   | 2.27       | 0.47873            | 3.07          |
| Threats       | Authorities neglecting the tourism industry to attract medical tourism.              | 2.14       | 0.926              | 2.84          |
|               | The strength of competition between tourist countries in attracting medical tourism. | 1.88       | 1.043              | 2.34          |
|               | Frequent bribery and collusion in the medical and health sector.                     | 2.16       | 1.325              | 2.44          |
|               | The migration of qualified doctors out of the country.                               | 2.00       | 1.325              | 2.38          |
|               | Axis score   | 2.04<br>50 | 0.81393            | 2.28          |

It is also evident from Table No. (2) in which the external factors represented by "opportunities and threats" are recorded, and the study sample's options for these factors, represented by opportunities and threats, in this medical institution providing treatment services, Al-Kafeel Hospital, where the sum of the averages ratios for the axis of opportunities according to Friedman's test was {3.07} The sum of the mean percentages of his arithmetic was {2.2700} and the sum of the percentages of the standard deviation was {0.47873} and the sum of the averages ratios for the threat axis according to Friedman's test {2.28} while the sum of the mean percentages of his arithmetic was {2.0450} and the sum of the percentages of the standard deviation were {0.81393}. We conclude from these results, "The discovery is that there are opportunities greater than threats in Al-Kafeel Hospital." N The figure 1 below shows the degree of the statistical differences function "Asymptotlc Sig" was "01.00"

In favor of the axis of strength in relation to the internal factors, followed by the axis of opportunities in relation to the external factors

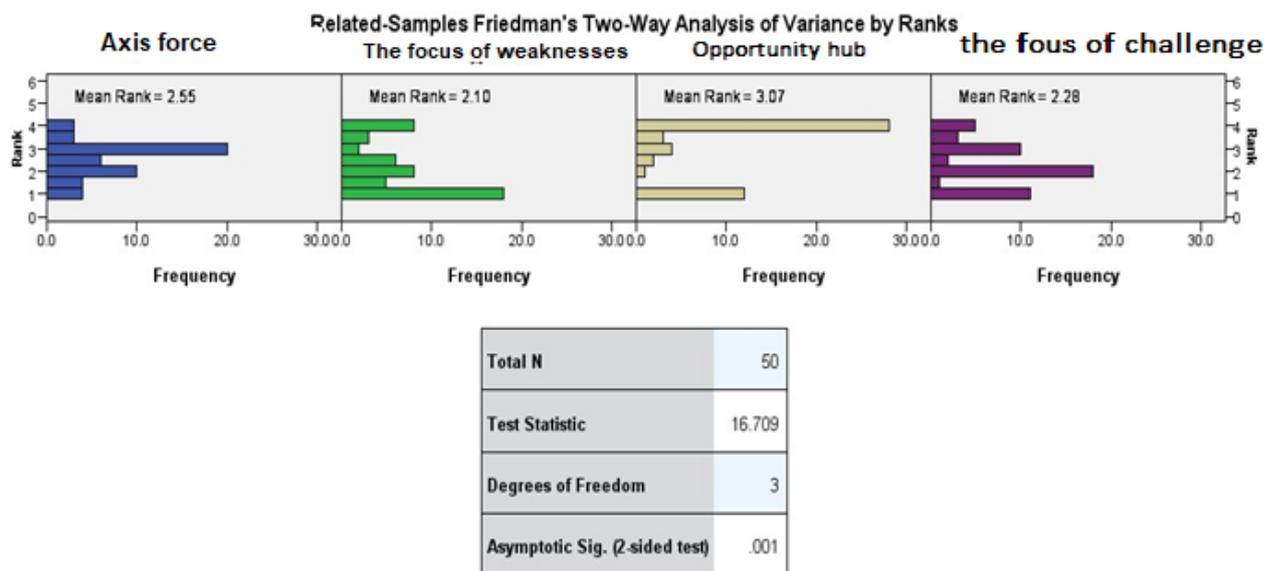


Figure 1: Below shows the degree of the statistical differences function "Asymptotlc Sig" was "01.00"

We conclude from finding the statistical differences function, which was at an error level {0.001}. There are statistically significant differences between the research axes, and at the same time they represented the internal factors (strengths and weaknesses) and external factors. (Opportunities and threats) in favor of the axis of strength, followed by the axis of opportunities. It means that Al-Kafeel Hospital in the city of Karbala has strengths and opportunities that enable it to be a medical and therapeutic tourist destination to be taken by the rest of the holy Karbala hospitals if it has strengths and opportunities as well as the number of opportunities available in Al-Kafeel Hospital.

## Results

The results included the following:

First: - Through the matrix of internal factors within the axis of strength of Al-Kafeel Hospital, the following is revealed ...

- 1- Prices for curative medical services are acceptable.
- 2- Availability of human medical resources with experience in all levels of medical services.
- 3- Existence or availability of treatment infrastructure for the customer.
- 4- Ease of access to therapeutic and hospital places) Al-Kafeel Hospital in the holy Karbala governorate.
- 5- The medical and curative service is distinguished by its diversity and high quality.

Second: - Through the matrix of external factors within the axis of opportunities for Alkafeel Hospital, the following is revealed ...

- 1- New technologies will be used to attract tourism by means of medical capabilities.
- 2- The possibility of a reduction in medical and health services.
- 3- There is a tendency to support medical tourism more than government agencies.
- 4- It will create and enhance job opportunities through interest in medical tourism.

**Recommendations: -**

The study presents a set of recommendations, and we hope that they will be of interest to the tourism organizations in the study community

As it included the following ....

- 1- The possibility of creating a comprehensive and integrated information system for customers coming to the country with regard to providing medical and therapeutic services to them

In order to keep abreast of developments in providing this type of services.

- 2- Intensification of publicity and advertising with regard to the institutions and companies associated with medical tourism in the country.
- 3- Coordination between the various departments such as transportation, hotels and travel agencies with the therapeutic and hospital places in the country.
- 4- The necessity of coordination between the curative and tourism services between the ministries of health and tourism of the country.
- 5- Reducing the negligence of the authorities to the tourism industry in attracting medical tourism to the country.
- 6- A statement of knowing the reason for the emigration of qualified doctors outside the country, and working to treat it in a manner

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