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# The Natural and Therapeutic Components of Tourism in Najaf Governorate

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Hussein Munaam Khalaf\*

\* Department of Tourism, Najaf Technical Institute, Al-Furat Al-Awsat Technical University  
31001 Al- Najaf, Iraq.

Corresponding Email: \*Hussein.m.altaee1973@gmail.com

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*Abstract: The current study is interested in studying the most critical natural potentials that characterize the province of Najaf and the possibility of investing them in the field of tourism due to the active and prominent role that it plays in the growth of the economies of most countries of the world, as it provides additional financial resources for the population and works to improve their social and cultural level, as it represents one of the effective invisible exports. It is an essential element of economic activity. It is closely related to development. And it works to solve several financial problems that these countries face, including, for example, the issue of unemployment. Tourism works to mitigate its exacerbation rates by its ability to create new job opportunities, as well as its role in developing Regions and cities that enjoy natural and human tourism potential by providing infrastructure facilities and necessary facilities to serve tourists and citizens alike, because tourism has a set of economic, social, cultural, environmental and political developmental influences on the tourist destination.*

**Keywords:** Najaf, Regions, Political, Economic, Therapeutic.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Natural tourism is one of the essential elements of tourism demand for its active role in increasing national income, which is reflected in the field of achieving the welfare of society, in addition to being a factor of entertainment and relaxation for a large and vital segment of society in spending leisure time and acquiring new experiences. It is based on the natural ingredients that can attract tourists without human intervention, as the human role is limited to preparing the place to receive tourists without harming the site's natural environment. The diversity of natural potentials has an impact on stimulating the tourism movement. The more natural resources diversify, the more tourism activities practiced by tourists diversify. Research and studies concerned with tourism in the province of Najaf, in general, are characterized by



their lack compared to the tourism importance of the province of Najaf. Most of them focused on religious tourism only, ignoring that this province is characterized by other tourism advantages and potentials, whether (natural or human), as the study area has innate potential capable of developing tourism and its sustainability if exploited optimally. To motivate the official and unofficial authorities to invest and promote this sector and make it one of the leading sectors in the process of economic development in the province.

### **Problem of the Study**

The province of Al-Najaf has natural elements capable of developing tourism activity. However, most attention is focused on religious tourism and its development.

### **Hypothesis of the Study**

(Al-Najaf Governorate is distinguished by its possession of many natural and therapeutic ingredients, considered among the essential and primary factors in tourism activity.) as it is possible to invest them in a scientifically planned and thoughtful way, which helps to overcome the obstacles that prevent this, and in a way that achieves fair development and investment for these resources in all districts and districts Preservation by following a future strategy to achieve optimal utilization of these natural resources in tourism activity.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The study aims to identify and diagnose all the natural and therapeutic ingredients and work to highlight their important role in tourism activity to achieve optimal investment for this economic activity and access to tourism that has an active role in the economies of the province and the country.

### **The Importance of Study**

The increasing importance of tourism is due to its significant role in achieving the desired goals of economic development plans and the importance of the natural tourism potentials enjoyed by the province of Najaf, which did not take the necessary attention to invest in a fruitful economic way.

### **Chapter One**

Natural potential in Najaf Governorate and its role in tourism The connection of man and his investment activity with the environment and the natural ingredients has become a must, as it constitutes the natural basis for the human environment in general. The physical and biological environment surrounding man is the natural basis for him. It is keen to provide all his basic needs, present and future, and its contribution to meeting and fulfilling his other desires (1). The natural environment for tourism activity represents the elements of tourist attractions and is one of the most important pillars and essential elements of tourism activity, at least the land element, which is represented by the temptations in which the region is unique and distinguished over others and represents the original values of the tourist product, and accordingly, despite the heterogeneity of the distribution of these elements and ingredients in However, all parts of the globe or within different areas of spatial and temporal space arouse the individual tourist's desire to practice such a type of human activity and then work to attract



him to visit a specific tourist destination or destination. These include the natural elements found in nature or the natural components, representing the fragments resulting from an action. Nature is not man's work and includes all-natural wealth, temptations, and attractions of tourist value. (2)

It consists of the following:

First, the geographical location The importance of the geographical location in terms of tourism is highlighted in that it determines the degree of relationship between the regions intended for tourism development and the international tourism movement in the other areas and the creation of so-called intermediate sites, as the tourist region cannot be considered the beneficiary only. Still, the benefit includes the areas that mediate between Tourist attractions (3). A set of necessary conditions and conditions must be available for the process of successful development of tourism, as the tourist regions must enjoy natural conditions suitable for tourist travel and residence for healthy people (pure climate, diverse terrain, the presence of water sources, etc.). In other words, several reasons must be available. Comfort in natural conditions. (4) The geographical location has multiple effects on tourism. The latitude location determines the type of climate, the wild and non-wild plants and animals, and the number and shortness of daylight hours. This spatial character impacts the type and nature of tourism movement and its seasonality. Or its distance from the areas of tourist demand; the closer the location is to these markets, the more this contributes to increasing the tourist attraction due to its impact on travel prices. (5) As for the location of Al-Najaf Governorate, it is located in the southwestern tip of Iraq, as it takes a geographical extension from the northeast to the southwest, its western and southwestern edges are included within the eastern boundaries of the plateau, while its eastern and northeastern borders are located within the sedimentary plain region, and the province of Najaf is taken In its extension, it resembles a rectangle, whose short side is a southern border with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the area of the province of Najaf is (28824) square kilometers, and it is located in the center of Iraq and is considered one of the provinces of the Middle Euphrates region and is surrounded by the provinces of Karbala and Babel from the north, the areas of Qadisiyah and Muthanna from the east, and the province of Anbar from The west and the international borders with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia from the south, and thus the Najaf governorate is also considered one of the governorates of the southern Badia (6), and this site has a number of influences on the governorate as it made it enjoy environmental diversity by containing two regions, each of which is characterized by characteristics that differ from the other, and it also provided The location is the easy connection of the governorate with the central and southern governorates, as well as its connection with neighboring countries such as the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (7).

### **Second: the Climate**

In light of the climatic elements, tourism is divided according to the climatic seasons into summer, spring, autumn, and winter. And that tourism depends on natural resources, including the climate and its various elements, which is an adequate tourism wealth that cannot be dispensed with in the tourist attraction process (8), as the practice of some recreational activities called recreational tourism or recreation tourism in which the tourist seeks comfort, whether by Through the place that provides this rest or the conditions that achieve comfort for his body and to move away from the activities that he is used to in his daily life, and rest does not mean



not to engage in any muscular activity, but instead it is possible to engage in some different sports activities during the recreation period such as walking, swimming, and Therefore, we say that what is meant by rest is the mental and intellectual rest from the labor of work and away from the problems of daily life, which depends on the climatic elements that are characterized by a mild weather and sufficient levels of solar brightness and clear skies, which are among the tourist attractions (9) . As for the study area, it enjoys high temperatures, which are among the components of tourism development. Some studies indicate that the relaxed human body, to be in complete comfort, needs a temperature of (29°C), which decreases to (25°C) if He is wearing regular clothes. There is a physiological fact that a person can perform his muscular actions better under thermal conditions than those that are ideal or usual (). Some studies have indicated that comfort depends on temperature, including Bailey's study, where he divided it into six regions characterized by moderation. As for Gaffney, he used temperature to express human comfort as He determined the degree of comfort for humans in general (24.9 - 17 m5), while Thom determined the degree of comfort for humans as (24 - 21 m5), depending on the air temperature, relative humidity, and temperature (10). Therefore, the study area has thermal potential that contributes to the tourism development process, especially summer tourism, if it is invested optimally. The total annual amount of rain falling in the study area is (104) mm. It reaches its peak in December (17.7) mm, while it does not fall in June, July, August, and September, as it is zero, and precipitation begins in October ( 4.7) mm in shape. The amount of rainfall begins to rise gradually, meaning that rainfall is characterized by fluctuations and infrequency, which impacts tourism activities. Not every rainfall is of benefit or value to tourism activity, as rain falls continuously and with showers. Heavy rain may have a negative impact, as it causes soil erosion and affects vegetation cover and human activities, including tourism activity. Therefore, it is not the lack or abundance of rainfall that determines the practice of tourist activities, but rather the moderate amount so that it is not obstructive. Human movement and transportation would affect tourism activities. (11)

### **Third: Water resources**

It includes all water sources, such as oceans, seas, rivers, lakes, waterfalls, springs, streams, marshes, and hot and cold mineral water. All of these constitute elements of tourist attraction for tourist sites frequented by tourists from various parts of the world, especially if most of the features of tourist attraction are combined, as it allows tourists to practice. Water tourism activities such as (swimming, rowing, diving, using motorboats and sailing boats, etc.) (12) In addition to its role in softening the atmosphere when water bodies have large areas, groundwater also represents elements of attraction for the medical tourism movement in most countries of the world in which there are mineral water springs. It forms the center of the urban agglomeration of Aachen in Germany (13) and is of great importance for many other countries, such as (Italy) and (Poland) (14). The water resources in the study area are represented by the Euphrates River, which enters the province of Najaf when it branches to the south of the city of Al-Kifl at a distance of (2 km) into two main branches: Shatt Al-Abbasiya (Shatt Al-Shamiya) and Shatt Al-Kufa, which represents the second branch of the Euphrates River passing through the city of Kufa. It is 18 km long and has a discharge rate of 200 m/s (15).



#### **Fourth: Bahr Al-Najaf**

Bahr al-Najaf is transitional between the western plateau and the sedimentary plain. For a distance of 40 km from the northwest to the southeast, and its average width is about (10.5) km (16), the sea of Najaf is characterized by its historical depth, which dates back to the era of the Prophet Noah and Abraham, according to the unanimous agreement of history books and biographies, and evidence indicating the interest of both the state of the Munathira and the Abbasids in this sea, as well as evidence and poems And ancient historical texts, the Najaf Sea is located at the edge of the desert plateau in the southwest of the city of Najaf. The Bahr al-Najaf is also considered one of the most important natural phenomena in the province. It is a line of refraction that occurred with a refractive movement in the earth's crust and led to its subsidence, which indicates the longitudinal shape of the elevated eastern edges (17). The area of the Bahr al-Najaf depression and the adjacent lands is estimated at (421.9) km<sup>2</sup>. The height of the land in the depression ranges between (9) m above sea level at the Al-Habasa Marsh and (18) m above sea level at the grounds of Al-Hirah. Three main streams flow into the feet of the depression sea, branching from the (Jahat) stream that radiates from the Shatt Al-Kufa, which is a stream Al-Sudair (Al-Ghazi), Al-Nu'mani (Abu Jadoua) and Al-Hira (Al-Badiriyya) in addition to the fourth branch, which is bordered on the eastern side by the Dasm (Al-Hashimi) creek. (19) These natural and human potentials available in the Bahr al-Najaf depression make it a fertile ground for tourism investment in a way that provides an economic resource for the governorate. In addition to that, it will be a tourist outlet, and it is possible to benefit from it on religious occasions in which the number of visitors is significant, as the governorate center cannot accommodate these. Many visitors can spend time there after completing the visitation ceremony if appropriate conditions are available due to its proximity to Najaf. It has the elements to create a tourist city by developing a comprehensive development plan, as it is possible to invest in the extensive, flat lands inside the depression by establishing tourist resorts, including hotels, restaurants, casinos, entertainment areas, and small playgrounds. It also has the potential to create a lake, in part in the part near the city of Najaf, which can be converted into a permanent lake, provided that the necessary water is provided for this by increasing the drainage rates of the streams that head toward the northwest, which It takes its water from the Euphrates River near the city of Al-Hirah. (20)

#### **Fifth: Hur Ibn Najm**

When studying the natural sites in the province of Najaf, which can be developed as a tourist destination, it is necessary to address the depression of Hawr Ibn Najm, as Hawr Ibn Najmons is located on the northeastern side. Itince and it represents a joint crossroad between provinces (Najaf Al-Sharaf, Babil, Al-Qadisiyah). It is bordered by Al-Kifl district to the north, Al-Tali'ah district to the east, Al-Shinafiyah to the south, Al-Abbasiya and Al-Hurriya districts to the west, and the marsh is surrounded from the north and east by the eastern drain of the Euphrates. (21). The area of the marshes is (27,000 dunums), and it is located on a low land fed by drainage water and a percentage of river water due to the absence of a water meter. The marsh depression is several streams of the Shatt al-Abbasiya branching from the Euphrates River, which is (Wahhabi, Al-Haidari, Abu Gharb, Al-Arian, Al-Ama, and Al-Khamasi, in the sub-branch of Abu Halan and Al-Khamasi Al-Fari' and finally Al-Zaidi, which in turn branches into the Ghazali and Nile streams. During the year 1991 AD, the marshes were narrowed and



dried by making drains for the waters of the streams close to it to pour into the main drain (the rig) without feeding the marshes with water and obtaining agricultural areas after burying these areas with clay soil to be able From its cultivation, which led to the consumption of vast quantities of fish and waterfowl, which are considered essential resources to meet the needs of Najaf Governorate and the nearby governorates for fish wealth. Fish wealth and waterfowl rapidly and return to a kind of environmental balance again, albeit in a simple way. The Marshes were included within the Ministry of Water Resources plan to revive the marshes for the year 2007 AD (22), and the Environment Directorate in Najaf Governorate carried out many studies on the wetlands for Inclusion in the marshes recovery project. (23)

## **Chapter Two**

### **Medical Tourism in Najaf Governorate**

#### **First: The Importance of Medical Tourism**

The concept of tourism with the intention of treatment and hospitalization emerged as a result of the availability of therapeutic ingredients and advantages, which differs from the rest of the tourism patterns because of its connection to human life and its continuity, as it has become one of the most critical sectors that work to accelerate the pace of growth in tourism activity in general, at a time when the relative importance of tourism patterns has decreased As a result of this demand, medical tourism companies appeared, as these companies work to link patients on the one hand and therapeutic sites on the other hand, and they also work to stimulate the latent medical tourism demand. Medical tourism depends on the availability of specific natural characteristics and ingredients in the environment, such as mineral or sulfur water springs, mud baths, radioactive sand, and hot water fountains. These components and natural resources in the background, such as (24) burial in warm sand containing radioactive elements to treat rheumatism and arthritis.

- Steam therapy to get rid of excess weight and treat gout.
- Exposure to the sun and seawater with high salinity.
- Drink mineral water to treat anemia and asthma attacks.

The most important medical tourism sites in Najaf Governorate The desert area in Al-Najaf Governorate is rich in hot and cold mineral water springs, as in other regions of Iraq, which were discovered in ancient times, and its benefits were exploited in the treatment of several skin diseases, joint and stomach pain by swimming in the basins of these springs, as several springs spread in The desert region of the governorate, which is considered one of the oldest, which is (Shejeej, Sayed Saeed, Al-Rahba) (25) The locations of these springs are distributed west of the Al-Najaf Governorate and in a pattern that matches the extensions and directions of the range of the Hit-Abu Al-Jir faults and the Euphrates faults, as the connection is close between the marks and the springs, as the defects act as outlets for the leakage or flow of groundwater of different origins, and the quality of these springs is generally sulfurous. Its water is used for agriculture and emits a sulfurous smell (26). Groundwater in the desert areas of the study area is of great importance as it is suitable for various uses, in contrast to what is found of this water in the alluvial plain region of the governorate, which is considered unfit for drinking due to its salinity. (27) Third: The eye of Imam al-Hasan (peace be upon him). One of the most well-known springs in the province of Najaf is (the spring of Imam Hassan, peace be upon him), which is about (60 km) away from the city of Najaf, as it is located to the south



of Al-Hira district in a desert area. It is a spring of water surrounded by reeds and papyrus. It has been flowing for about a thousand years but is within its water spring limits. Fourth: The most critical therapeutic purposes of natural spring water in Najaf Governorate. (28) Given the mineral presence of spring water in the governorate, it can be used for many therapeutic purposes. It can be divided into two main uses in treatment, namely: 1- Treatment of several rheumatic diseases: This is done by constructing hot baths to treat joint diseases in a significant way using the latest methods. Among the most critical cases that this hot mineral water helps to treat are: A - chronic rheumatic diseases. B - Suffering diseases of the joints and vertebrae and increasing their mobility and softness by performing special exercises prescribed by the doctor. C - Waxing of the vertebrae, as swimming is one of the main elements of treatment, with a secondary role for medicines for it. D - Chronic back pain, regardless of its causes. C - Diseases of the nervous system, such as paralysis, diffuse peripheral neuritis, and muscle atrophy, for which there is no effective treatment. H - Using sauna baths to lose weight. 2- Treatment of several skin diseases: The presence of sulfur in this water helps treat several skin diseases and mitigates their severity, as the sulfur substance in varying proportions helps treat (acne). Some disorders of seborrheic eczema and all cases of scabies, and the presence of the element calcium aids in treating modern psoriasis diseases. However, the water is not hot; it needs some heating in private therapeutic and recreational baths.

## **2. CONCLUSION**

The development process is not only looking at addressing the problems the region suffers from, but it goes further in knowing the motives for travel. For example, medical tourism involves a clean environment and a clean atmosphere free of pollution, with a medical staff capable of treating patients. Patients with a particular disease and mineral water may participate, such as water that treats some skin diseases. Developing such a type requires a series of requirements to attract and attract tourists of different nationalities according to health motives. In other words, identifying the reasons for tourists provides a tourist demand, and This motivation is available to the tourist when there is a desire to move and travel. After the desire to move, the tourist finds everything he wants and what he desires. Tourism qualifications with all that the region contains, and so the existence of tourism potential does not mean anything unless it is done and invested for the benefit of the area. The investment process is not linked to developing plans that only deal with the current situation but rather to a future vision so that the development process is comprehensive and not limited to tourism activities. Natural potentials represent a group of elements resulting from NatureNature and not from human work, and it includes all natural resources of tourism value that affect the investment and development of everything that qualifies for tourism. Given the preceding, these natural potentials in the study area are considered real potentials. It is possible to make them a destination for tourists if they are invested in the best way and provide all the necessary needs, represented mainly in hotels, restaurants, roads, means of transportation, and everything the tourist needs. Shedding light on the security aspect in the Badia region, which constitutes a barrier that must be overcome if the area is to be exploited within the activities of desert tourism, and it is necessary to emphasize the importance of desert tourism activities in sustainable tourism development, by achieving tourist attractions for desert tourist destinations



in the governorate, and from that Developing cultural and heritage tourism festivals and organizing rally races, in addition to the importance of the Tourism Authority playing a leading role in developing this type of tourism festival in cooperation with the public and private sectors. For these festivals to achieve the goals set for them, the study area has cultural and heritage elements, customs, and traditions that can be employed by setting up a tourism festival for heritage and culture associated with the desert to contribute to providing an essential element for the development of tourism movement in the region and highlighting the aspects of tourism preservation. And that the natural ingredients are among the best tourist attractions for foreign tourists, especially when the media plays a vital role in giving a media image that achieves its goal of attracting tourists and how it can be developed, exploited, and invested in the tourism aspect. Given the advantages enjoyed by these areas that were mentioned above from the elements that are elements of ecotourism in the province of Najaf, as ecotourism is based on the enjoyment of observing plants, animals, and wild birds that live or trying to fit in with the conditions of the natural environment, so it has been proposed to establish reserves Nature in these areas to preserve wild animals and plants, and work to develop and bring many species to such resources for reproduction and increase their numbers, as well as developing these protected areas by participating and hosting conferences and seminars that care about the environment and its protection and work on the development of ecotourism, as well as the enactment of laws and legislation Which would work to protect the cultural and natural heritage, and issue a law regulating hunting birds, wild and aquatic animals, and preserving the environment from pollution. There is also interest in the eyes of natural therapeutic waters. They have an essential role in stimulating the local and international tourism movement because they possess medicinal properties that are less similar in many tourist countries.

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