



**IDENTIFY THE POTENTIALS TO DEVELOP
YOGA TOURISM**
(With special reference to western province of Sri Lanka)

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ABSTRACT

Yoga Tourism means celebrating the destination with yoga. In other words, "It is an art of relaxing in a physically uplifting tourism destination". Currently Yoga has become a new trend around the world and there are more than 300 million Yoga practitioners in the world. Considering the Sri Lankan context Yoga tourism is not much ample area and Sri Lankan tourism authorities not take sufficient actions to develop Yoga in Sri Lanka. The aim of the research study is to identify the potentials to develop Yoga tourism in Western province. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were adapted to gather data by using data collection methods of self-administrative questionnaire and structured interviews. Convenience sampling technique has been used as a sampling technique. As a research sample researcher has gathered data from 50 Yoga tourists, 10 Yoga establishments' in charge person/ Yoga operators and 10 Yoga instructors. Factor analysis and content analysis used to analyze quantitative and qualitative data and SWOT analysis were used to identify the potentials. According to the research findings majority of Yoga tourists have come from the Europe and they have represented the age category of 40-59 and most of them were female tourists. The study found that majority of tourists doing Yoga for the purpose to maintaining their health as well as Yoga activities and competencies of Yoga instructors were the most influence factor for Yoga tourist expectation and behavior. Considering the current situation of web advertise Yoga centers/ Yoga centers in hotels, 100% of Yoga establishment use websites for promotion. Out of ten Yoga establishments, seven Yoga establishments provide accommodation with food and beverage facilities for tourists (70%) in good condition. There were very few Yoga establishments (20%) who introduced Yoga packages. Considering the legal background of Yoga establishments there were four (40%) SLTDA register hotels which is conducting Yoga sessions in their places and other Yoga establishments not registered under any authority. Considering the competencies of Yoga instructors six Yoga instructors have professional qualifications for Yoga (60%). Most of the Yoga instructors' Yoga tradition was Hatha Yoga (70%). Most popular asanas introduce are Vrikshasana (Treepose), Tadasana (mountain pose), Adho Mukha suanasana (Downward- facing dog pose), Baddha konasana (cobbler pose), Paschimottanasana (seated forward bend pose), Sethu Bandhasana (Bridge pose). In addition to asanas they provide information relevant to daily routine and dieting plan also. According to SWOT analysis potentials identified. As a recommendation researcher has suggested the contribution of SLTDA, further promotion of Yoga, enhance the qualifications of local Yoga instructors as well.

KEY WORDS: Spiritual Tourism, Wellness Tourism, Holistic Tourism, Special Interest Tourism