

## Factors Influencing Yoga Tourism in Uttarakhand: A Case Study of Patanjali Yogpeeth

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### ABSTRACT

Health and wellness are always remains the prime focus of tourism industry and cater the physical and mental well being of tourists. Yoga is the indigenious therapy of India born and nurtured across the world and attracts visitors to experience. India being a hub of yoga offers a variety of destinations but the geographical location and natural landscapes are the Unique selling Point(USP) of Uttarakhand, which is very prime due to proximity of Himalayan range and the credibility of Patanjali Yogpeeth and his founder Baba Ramdev across the globe makes Utrrakhand attractive for a Yoga destination. The present research focus on factors that influence tourists to visit Patanjali Yogpeeth, Uttarakhand for yoga purpose. The study used positivism-deductive research approach, a quantitative methodology using a survey to collect data of 318 respondents. The findings determined four important factors responsible for growth of yogpeeth as yoga tourism destination and suggested role of age group and occupation as crucial factors which attract people for “yoga tourism”. The study recommended DMO’s and travel agencies to focus their marketing segmentation and targeting strategies as per age groups, occupation levels and to the academicians to explore the role of environment, advertising and culture for promoting Yoga tourism.

**KEYWORDS:** Health Tourism, Yoga, Ayurveda, Patanjali, Uttarakhand, Health, Tourist

### Introduction

Health and wellness tourism has been highlighted as a fast increasing segment of the global economy in the twenty-first century (Smith & Puzko, 2009). A long-term demand for health and wellness services and goods has emerged as a result of the worldwide fitness and health movement (Erfurt Cooper and Cooper, 2009). Many people have travelled to practise yoga because of its universal appeal (Connel, 2006). Yoga tourism (Letho et al., 2006), which is now a significant indicator for motivating tourists, sprang from such travel (CBI, 2016; SRI International, 2016). India, the birthplace of yoga (Aggarawal et al, 2008; Maddox, 2015; Heung et al, 2011), and still most popular yoga locations. Aside from India's worldwide stance as a significant rising

tourist industry (Saltzman, 2000; Shapley and Sundaram, 2005). In 1970s, nation began to attract a growing number of yoga tourists who came to study and practise in its natural setting. India has been aggressively positioning marketing itself as significant yoga destination.

Health and wellness tourism has been seen to frequently overlap, with the terms health, wellness, medical, and spa being used interchangeably at times (Smith & Puzko, 2009). Wellness tourism, on the other hand, is more holistic in nature and does not include medical treatment. It focuses on the physical, mental, and spiritual well-being of the individual.

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Wellness is a spiritual state which can achieve through the Yoga and meditation by controlling through the mind and soul. Yoga leads to get benefits especially for body; mind (conscious and sub-conscious) helps to search inner peace and tranquillity. It helps human to lose distraction, and gets the positive aura which helps in purifying their mind and soul together. It is practiced in India since the beginning of ancient times or it will not wrong to say that birthplace yoga.

At present there are many Yoga schools in India practicing and promoting health and wellness tourism through Yoga and naturopathy among domestic and international tourists among them the contribution of Patanjali Yogpeeth is prominent in the entire country in disseminating the spiritual meditation, yoga and all Ayurvedic and naturopathy treatments. The geographical location and climatic factors of spectacular scenic beauties are very favourable to promote Uttarakhand and develop this place as a Yoga destination. Rishikesh is known as the Capital of Yoga due to unexceptional Himalayan beauty of natural landscapes endowed with several glaciers, lush woods, and rivers, and is rich in natural resources, particularly water and forests. Tourism is aided by abundant natural resources such as hills and forests, while hydropower is aided by large water supplies. The natural beauty of the Himalayas is enhanced by ancient pilgrimages and famous trails. Yoga, Ayurveda, luxury spas, wellness centres, and high-end homestays abound in this country. The state's rural tourism potential is enhanced by the presence of some notably unique Himalayan mountain villages and towns. The tourism and AYUSH industries were recently granted industry status. In terms of interest incentives, financial aid, subsidies, and concessions, the state provides a wide range of advantages. Patanjali Yogpeeth is a Yoga and Ayurveda medical and research centre. Haridwar is becoming a famous destination for Ayurvedic therapy and medication thanks to Patanjali Yogpeeth.

Patanjali Yogpeeth, named after Maharshi Patanjali (narrator of Yogsutra) was established by Yoga Guru Ramdev in 2006. Currently managed by Patanjali Yogpeeth trust, it offers a variety of services and activities, including Ayurvedic treatment at hospitals, labs, research centres, and other amenities including a canteen and ATM.

Famous pilgrimages like as Char Dham, Hemkund Sahib, Haridwar, Rishikesh, Reetha Sahib, Kaliyar Sharif, and others are present. Many well-known Yoga centres may be found throughout the state. The state boasts a good temperature and atmosphere that is ideal for health tourism. In hilly locations, a large

range of herbal medications are produced. In the state, there is a well-developed infrastructure for Ayurvedic treatment and education.

Yoga is fundamentally spiritual, and it is both an art and a science of healthy living that focuses on bringing body and mind into balance. Yoga is widely practised across the world because to its spiritual values, therapeutic qualifications, and function in illness prevention, health promotion, and the management of lifestyle-related ailments.

The main objectives of study are two-fold. First, the study is conducted to obtain the factors that are responsible for promoting yoga tourism in Patanjali Yogpeeth, Uttarakhand. Secondly, it studies demographic details about respondents participating in study.

### **An USP of Patanjali Yogpeeth**

Patanjali Yogpeeth is a world renowned centre, considered a pioneer of health and wellness tourism in India conceptualized the vision of Maharshi Patanjali (Founder of Yoga Sutra). An initiative of Patanjali Yogpeeth is commendable for familiarizing Yoga and Wellness among tourism fraternity. Establishment of Yog Gram (Yoga Village) near the Haridwar adjoined with the Raja Ji National Park developed with the view of providing psychological, physiological and spiritual health to all those health seekers across the globe. Yoga Gram is the visualization of Yoga Guru Swami Ramdev Ji who made Yoga popular across the world specially offers holistic naturopathy treatments to tourists suffering from various incurable diseases and stress through integrated therapy of Ayurveda in vibrant and verdant nature. 'Yog Gram' started working for Yoga tourism since 2006 with a vision to heal tourists with Yoga and naturopathy is one of the largest institutes in India dedicated for national and international visitors provides residential facilities in a very calm and natural environment practise therapies under the blessing and supervision of Swami Ramdev Ji and Acharya Balkrishna Ji. 'Yog Gram' has been developed on the innovative pattern of adjoining science and spiritualism where the wellness tourists get mental and physical rejuvenation inside the well established four types of accommodation facilities provided to required health seekers are as- :

- Rajrishi Cottage
- Muniraj Cottage
- Maharishi Cottage
- Tapasvi Cottage

Patanjali Yogpeeth's 'Yoga Gram' offers a wide range of therapies based on the principal of Ayurveda

and Naturopathy particularly to health and wellness tourists.

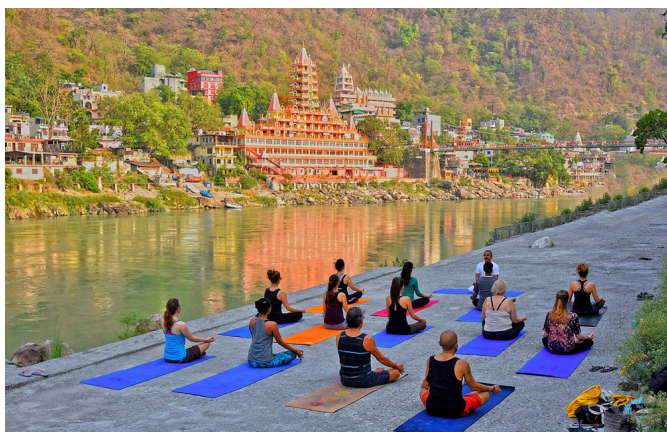
- Hydro Therapy
- Acupuncture Therapy
- Yoga Therapy
- Mud Therapy
- Pyramid Therapy
- Pranic Healing Therapy
- Water Wave Therapy
- Whirlpool Bath Therapy
- Sand Therapy
- Ozone Steam Sona Bath Therapy
- Magnet Therapy
- Mud Swimming Pool Therapy
- Color Thermolian Therapy
- Reiki Therapy
- Massage Therapy
- Sun Therapy
- Aero Therapy
- Acupressure Therapy
- Colon Irrigator Hydro Therapy

### Literature Review

Yoga tourism is the specific travel associated with the vision of experiencing spiritual and postural therapy of Ayurveda and naturopathy (**Kapferer and Laurent, 1985**). The worldwide fascination with Yoga has inspired health seekers to travel in order to practice this activity (Conell, 2006). India is considered one of the favourite Yoga destinations in the world arguably where the Yoga practices originated (Lehto et al., 2006). English Rock Band Beatles visited to Rishikesh in 1968 for participating in 'Transcendental Meditation' training courses at Maharishi Mahesh Yogi's Ashram was a maiden efforts to promote Yoga as a tourism activity (Aggarwal, 2008). The promotion of Yoga as a subset of spirituality and wellness in order to explore the untapped potential of India's Yoga market (Chen et al., 2013). A joint initiatives of Ministry of Ayush and Ministry of Tourism, presented India as 'Yoga Tourism' hub where people can heal their bodies and calm their minds. Country raised a slogan that India is the 'Land of Yoga' when United Nations has passed the resolution of accepting 'World Yoga Day' at 21<sup>st</sup> June every year since 2014 where 193 countries passed resolution and even participated in international Yoga day events (Singh, &

Ranjan;2019). National tourism Policy (2002) associated tourism campaign 'Incredible India' with wellness and health tourism through Yoga and naturopathy. The development of health tourism and medical tourism in modern practice is often associated with the SPA industry. These are wellness programs consisting of special hydrotherapy procedures using mineral or fresh water combined with the healing effects of therapeutic mud, algae, plant products and other components of natural origin. According to the UNWTO definition (UNSD and UNWTO, 2008), health tourism includes services that vary widely from visits to spa centers to surgical operations (Vetitnev et al., 2012). Hajioff (2007) defines this concept as a trip to other countries or territories for the purpose of acquiring medical and related health services, which is close to the concept of medical tourism as the main factors leading to high level of life stress, health tourism is a choice for those who decide to avoid their daily stressful lives, giving more consideration to their health and welfare. At present, with respect to the low cost and high income of this industry, many countries interested in tourism development, have focused their attention on this section of tourism industry and are planning in this regard.

India is an emerging giant hotspot for health and wellness tourism centre contributes towards the socio-economical development of the society through optimum exploration of tradition and knowledge mentioned in Ayurveda and naturopathy (Sharma, 2008). Tourism focusing on health and wellness has been recognised as a rapidly growing segment of contemporary travel motivation (Smith & Puzko, 2009). In the present industrialized, urbanized and very fast modern life travelling for health and wellness is very common. The global movement for fitness and health has created a huge market demand at a destination offers health services (Cooper, 2009). Yoga activities are the best way to achieve physical and mental peace through spiritual meditation and Pranayam. At present tourists are moving to India and specially to Haridwar and Rishikesh for health and wellness where Patanjali Yopeeth's 'Yog Gram' has been offering yoga to international and domestic tourists. Yoga tourism is defined as an instrumentation to establish physical and spiritual health at same time used interchangeably with health, wellness, medical and spa promote tourists to visit a destination (Smith & Puzko, 2009).



## Research Methodology

The study follows deductive approach using quantitative methods measuring the factors that are responsible for promoting yoga tourism. A structured questionnaire was prepared which includes constructs measured from the items adopted from various literature. The research was conducted during October to December, 2019 through purposive sampling. The forms were filled and analysed for their correctness and any inconsistencies. Total 318 forms were selected for final study of literature. The items in the questionnaire were measured using 5-items Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The results of the study was analyzed by SPSS 25.0 applying Univariate and Multivariate analysis. Analysis and Results are discussed in the next sections.

## Data Analysis and Results

Data Analysis and Results Data has been collected with the help of questionnaire having ten statements named as components. The first section explained demographic details of respondents (Table 1).

Gender	Frequency	Age Group	Frequency
Male	192	Less than 18	37
Female	126	18-35	183
Occupation	Frequency	35-60	76
Student	41	More than 60	22
Government job	102	Nationality	Frequency
Private job	126	Indian	236
Self-employed	12	Foreigners	82
Unemployed	37	Education	Frequency
Annual Income (in INR)	Frequency	Primary	13
Less than 2.50 Lakhs	62	High School	21
2.50 Lakhs - 10 Lakhs	205	Intermediate	66
10 Lakhs -25 Lakhs	44	Graduate	123
25 Lakhs or above	07	Post Graduate and above	80
		Others	15

**Table 1: Demographic Details of Respondents (Source : Author’s data)**

In the survey questionnaire, we received respondents from 236 from domestic travellers while 82 International Visitors. Among them 192 were males and 126 females participated in survey. Most of them belong to age group 18 to 35 years (135) and 35 to 60 years (76) followed by Below 18 years (37) and above 60 years (22). The educational background of most of the respondents were graduate degree holder (123) and post graduate or above (80) followed by Intermediate level (66) and High School (21), Primary education (13) and others (15) respectively. When taking Annual Income into account, Majority

of our respondents belong to the upper middle and upper-middle class and their income level among them were 205 respondents annual income were in the range of 2.50 Lakhs to 10 Lakhs annually. While 44 respondents belong to strong economically sound groups were in range of 10 Lakhs to 25 Lakhs followed by 7 respondents whose annual income were more than 25 Lakhs.

Second section of the questionnaire explained the factors that constitute yoga tourism in Patanjali Yogpeeth Uttarakhand. The data is measured on the five point Likert scale to know about the agreement

or disagreement of respondents. The present study used factor analysis which is a multivariate statistical tool with main focus to define the underlying structure in a data. The broader objective of factor analysis is to address the problem of analyzing the structure of the interrelationships (correlations) among the large number of variables. According to Hair et al. (1998), factor analysis serves the two primary uses which are summarization and reduction of data. The primary data for the present study consists of 318 filled in questionnaires and the description of the same is provided here as under.

The KMO and Bartlett's test indicated that the measure of sampling adequacy is 0.724, with an estimated chi square value of 91.629 with degree of freedom 45. All the measures tested shows that the test of variables in the study is appropriate for factor

analysis (Lam and Zhang, 1999) Factor analysis of summated construct is presented in Table 2. The four factors retained represent 64.79% of the total variance explained. Following fig. shows the Eigen values marked on a screen plot.

The rotated component matrix shows the value of elements in the four factors which are retained at  $>.5$  (Lam and Zhang, 1999). Total four components were extracted with eigenvalue more than one in 13 items. All the four factors were given separate labels as: (i) Yoga for Health Tourism which constitute 22.52% of variance (ii) Awareness which constitute 19.70% of variance (iii) Strengthening International Relations which constitute 12.30% of variance and (iv) People's participation which constitute 10.27% of variance. The labeling of factors is provided diagrammatically:

S. No	Statement	Component			
		1	2	3	4
1	Mental fitness	0.652			
2	Physical fitness	0.745			
3	Remedy of various disorders	0.652			
4	Reduces stress	0.746			
5	Organisation like this promote yoga as Health Tourism component		0.647		
6	Awareness about yoga for treating disorders		0.689		
7	Peoples aware about the Health and benefits of Yoga		0.615		
8	Yoga is attractive among international peoples in the world			0.721	
9	Many International Tourist visit Patanjali Yogpeeth for Learning and Practicing Yoga			0.645	
10	Yoga plays role in strengthening international tie-up with countries			0.785	
11	Generates employment opportunities for people				0.765
12	Spread harmony and peace among communities				0.732
13	Promotes cultural exchange among communities				0.635
	Eigen values	9.425	7.628	4.326	2.192
	% of variance	22.52	19.70	12.30	10.27

**Table 2: Factor analysis of the results (Source: Authors data)**

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization

a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

Taking above factors into consideration, a proposed model Health Tourism in Uttarakhand is designed which takes into account the overall development of Health tourism as a vehicle for Health and Wellness, International Relation, People's Participation and Awareness. The overall impact of this will result in the showcasing of unique ethos of Yoga as Health Tourism component which is the backbone for the promotion and development of Healthy environment and sustainable health tourism in the India.

Factor	Statement
<b>Factor 1</b> Health and Wellness	1) Mental fitness 2) Physical fitness 3) Remedy of various disorders. 4) Reduces stress
<b>Factor 2</b> Awareness	1) Organization like this promote yoga as Health Tourism component 2) Awareness about yoga for treating disorders 3) Peoples aware about the Health and benefits of Yoga.
<b>Factor 3</b> Strengthening International relationship	1) Yoga is attractive among international peoples in the world 2) Many International Tourist visit Patanjali Yogpeeth for Learning and Practicing Yoga 3) Yoga plays role in strengthening international tie-up with countries
<b>Factor 4</b> People's participation	1) Generates employment opportunities for people 2) Spread harmony and peace among communities 3) Promotes cultural exchange among communities.

### Discussion

Despite in its early phase, medical and health tourism in India is set to become the next large source of revenue following India's IT outsourcing boom (Singh & Singh, 2021). India is in a unique situation since it provides comprehensive medical services that include Yoga, Ayurveda, and contemporary medicine.

The Patanjali Yogpeeth is now days become a place of learning and served as an important sector for the health promotion in the world through the Yoga and Ayurveda. out of the Other yoga and Ayurveda centre The Patanjali Yogpeeth has emerged as one of the important hub of yoga and made its name and fame nationally and Internationally in the field of health and wellness Ayurveda and also promoted Uttarakhand as a new emerging Health Tourism Destination in India after Kerala. The various Yoga camps organized by Patanjali in all over India as well as around the different corners of the world as it has increased the name and fame of India as a Health tourist Destination.

The researcher observed age group and occupation to be crucial factor for rise of yoga and wellness sector in PatanjaliYogpeeth, Uttarakhand. Majority of respondents are in range of (18-35) years which explains its gaining popularity among young people. The major purpose of joining yoga for them through interview obtained was fitness and weight loss, destressing and healthy lifestyle. This is in light with studies of Gamble & Gilmore (2013). The people were either students or in working class, living irregular routines. Hence, yoga offers body-mind matrix and is testament for overall body conditioning capacity. The study observing occupation also have an impact on interest of people towards yoga. It was observed that people associated with mental task and sedentary lifestyle were more keen to join yoga. This is due to the fact that yoga provide recuperation from illness and prevent onset of lifestyle related diseases.

They were also interested in joining yoga due to reducing the stress levels and improve fitness and maintain weight. These discussions confirms the role of age groups and occupation in promoting yoga tourism.

### Conclusion

The study explores how yoga tourism significant for promoting Patanjali Yogpeeth Uttarakhand as a prime yoga destination. The study identified four factors which is responsible for promoting yoga tourism- Health and Wellness, Awareness, Strengthening International Relationship and People Participation through Patanjali Yogpeeth. Yoga, like many other types of intangible heritage, is governed by a variety of norms, values, beliefs, and meanings of the term that serve to determine if behaviours related to this intangible legacy are "desirable, suitable, or acceptable" (Suchman, 1995).Major issues in promoting yoga tourism is related with market segmentation, targeting and branding (Smith et al.,2009;Singh, 2017).This study serves as basis for segmenting the market for promoting yoga tourism and provide theoretical backgrounds to the literature. Although the study adds to the basic knowledge on Yoga tourism, it has certain limitations which may serve as future direction for research work. The study is conducted in one centre (Yogpeeth). Future works can be carried out in other areas and different cultural conditions for generalized findings of the studies. The respondents response may vary at different period of time, thus generating possibility of more factors that are responsible for emergence of yoga tourism. It is recommended that DMOs and travel agencies should focus their marketing strategy according to different age groups, and occupation level as they appear to be dominant factor while selecting destinations associated with Yoga. Future studies can explore role of environment, advertising and culture in promoting yoga tourism.

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