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A CRITICAL EVALUATION OF YOGA TOURISM IN INDIA

Sanoop Kumar PV*

Dr. Deleep D. **

Dr. K.L. Ajay***

Abstract

India is the land of yoga and the west has always been fascinated by the spiritual culture of India. Yoga has become part of life in many western countries as it is in India, and its practice as well as paraphernalia has undergone transformation at their hands, which is being imitated in India as well. Health and wellness tourists travel increasingly to the place of origin of the practices to have an authentic experience of yoga. This paper critically explores the practice of yoga-tourism happening in India, and attempts to suggest bridging of the pitfalls to ensure the sustainability of the original tradition of the practice. This article is an attempt to compare and contrast the growth, changes and development of yoga in India and the world in the last two centuries, and the status and as well as opportunities of yoga tourism of India.

Keywords: Yoga, Spirituality, Wellness, Tourism, India

Introduction

India's contribution to the world, Yoga, can be properly traced to the Vedas, which are estimated to be more than three thousand years old. The various yogic practices such as *asana* (physical postures), *Pranayama* (breath regulation), *dhyana* (meditation), and other more esoteric practices like the *bandha*, *mudra*, *drashti* and *shaktikriyas* have evolved over thousands of years in the hands of austere practitioners who belonged to various schools of yogic traditions like *hathayoga*, *tantrayoga*, *mantrayoga*, *rajayoga*, *bhaktiyoga*, *jnanyoga* etc, with theoretic bases on the *vedanta* and the *yoga sutras* of *Patanjali*. Yoga is now a global phenomenon, and Indians seems to follow the west in the rekindled interest on Yoga in the country.

India is rich and diverse with numerous tourism resources, culture, heritage covering

* Assistant Professor of Travel & Tourism, Pazhassiraja College, Pulpalli.

** Assistant Professor of Travel & Tourism, Govt. Arts & Science College, Kondotty.

*** Research Associate, KIITS