

UGC MINOR RESEARCH PROJECT

**A STUDY ON TOURIST ATTRACTIONS TOWARDS
SPIRITUAL TOURISM AMONG THE FOREIGN TOURISTS AT
ISHA YOGA CENTRE, COIMBATORE, TAMILNADU**

FINAL REPORT

UGC SANCTION NO: F. MRP-6508/16 (SERO/UGC)

Submitted to



**UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION
A.P.S.F.C.BUILDING-IVTH FLOOR -5-9-194
CHIRAG ALI LANE,
HYDERABAD - 500001 (A.P.)**

Submitted by



S.Kiruba Sankari, M.Com.,M.Phil.,PGDCA

Assistant Professor
Department of B.COM PA & BPS
VLB Janakiammal College of Arts and Science
Kovaipudur, Tamilnadu – 641042.
Phone: 0422 2605162 website:www.vlbcas.ac.in

2018-2020

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

Tourism is good for a country's bottom line. All the sectors of the country's economy play an important role in making a stable and long running development. Tourism is one of the sectors which plays an important role in development and also multiply foreign revenues.

The most important economic feature of activities related to the tourism sector is that they contribute to three high-priority goals of developing countries: the generation of income, employment, and foreign-exchange earnings. In this respect, the tourism sector can play a significant role as a driving force of economic development. The impact this industry can have in the different stages of economic development depends on the specific characteristics of each country. Given the complexity of tourism consumption, its economic impact is felt widely in other production sectors, contributing in each case toward achieving the aims of further development. According to WTTC, India ranked 3rd among 185 countries in terms of travel & tourism's total contribution to GDP in 2018. Foreign Exchange Earnings (FEEs) during the period 2018 were Rs. 1,94,892 crores (Provisional estimates) with a growth of 9.6% over the previous year. FEEs during the period 2018 were US\$ 28.592 billion (Provisional estimates) with a growth of 4.7% over the previous year.

The tourism industry has various categories and the most popular categories are Leisure tourism, Business tourism, Medical tourism, Cultural tourism, Adventure tourism, Wellness tourism, Eco tourism, Sports tourism, Religious tourism or Spiritual tourism, Cruise tourism, Wildlife tourism etc. Spiritual tourism is bringing millions of people to Tamil Nadu with statistics indicating that districts with popular temples have emerges as top draws. Tamil Nadu scores a hat trick by ranking first on tourist arrivals since 2014. Tamil Nadu single handedly accounted for around 21% of the total tourist visitation to all states in 2018. The research is aimed to study foreign tourist profile, motives and perceptions towards spiritual tourism, accessibility, attractions, experiences and problems with regard to accommodation, and amenities at Isha Yoga Centre.

The Centre is dedicated to fostering inner transformation and creating an established state of wellbeing in individuals. Isha Yoga Centre provides a supportive environment for healthier lifestyles, seek a higher level of self-fulfillment and realize one's full potential. Every year at Isha Yoga Centre, they celebrate Mahashivaratri in grandeur with renowned artistes performing

music and dance through the night to inspire everyone to participate and benefit from it. Mahashivaratri celebrated in the month of February and the visit of foreign tourists is very high during the months of December to February every year. Various Yoga and Meditation programs are offered at Isha Yoga Centre regularly in a scheduled manner. It is also considered to one of a factor of attraction of foreign tourists.

Through the use of Garrett ranking method, it has been found that among the motives of the foreign tourists behind their visit to Isha yoga centre, Faith in God was ranked first, followed by fulfillment of wish, Family background, Others were ranked subsequently. It is ascertained from the ranking analysis that among the attractions towards Isha Yoga centre, Dhyanalingam is ranked first, Adhi yogi Statue, Lingabiravi and Theerthakunda in next places. Dhyanalingam is the one that was constructed first and Adhi yogi Statue was made popular through many advertisements in various types of media. To measure the overall satisfaction of foreign tourists' visit to Isha, weighted average ranking method was used. It has been found that the tourists who felt very pleased with their visit to Isha Yoga Centre is ranked first, the component of Eager to visit again, Gained a lot of new knowledge and experience, Visit exceeded my expectations are ranked further. It is found that most of the respondents stated that the overall image of Isha Yoga Centre is High. It is ascertained that the highest number of the respondents' express that visiting temple is considered to be very important factor and is ranked in first place.

While measuring tourists' perception on spiritual tourism, it is noted that the maximum per cent of the respondents' express that visiting temples is considered to be very important and hence it stood in the first position and they have ranked the various other attributes such as peace of mind, knowing culture, getting devotional experiences, learning yoga and meditation and experiencing of different spiritual practices as the second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth ranks respectively.

It is concluded that the majority of the respondents stated that they had fair experiences in visiting this place. It is also found that there is a moderate level of satisfaction on the facilities of Isha yoga centre. It is the interesting fact to be noted here that overall image and overall satisfaction about this centre was high among the foreign respondents.