



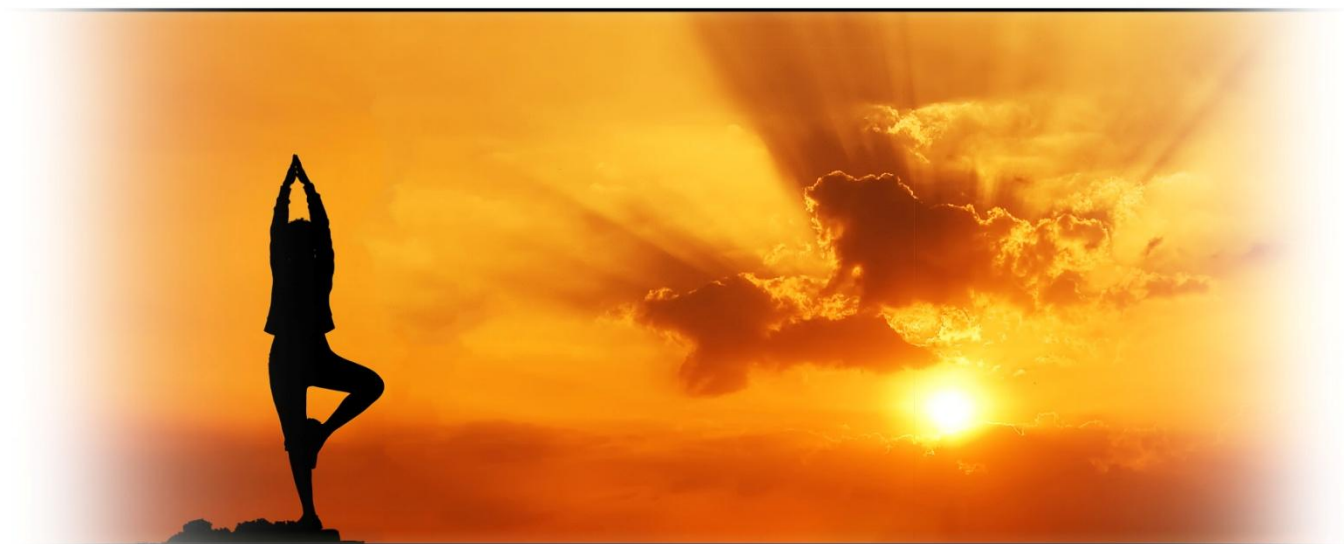
AALBORG UNIVERSITET

School of Culture and Global Studies  
Study Board of Cross-cultural Studies  
MA in Tourism

# Qualitative Research on German Yoga Practitioners' Motivation and Needs to Travel for Yoga

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MASTER THESIS



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I strongly believe that with all the presented data in this master thesis, the academic research has been further developed with the improved perception of the needs and motivations of the yoga tourists. My greatest hope is that other researchers will be motivated to extend the academic research on the topic, which will empower the industry to better cope with the needs and expectations of yoga tourists in future.

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## Abstract

Traveling for yoga develops the yoga tourism in a worldwide phenomenon. In Denmark, this trend is developed as well. However, there is no existing data on foreigners visiting the country because of yoga. Moreover, the field lacks a deep academic research on needs, expectations and motivations of yoga tourists. Therefore, it is interesting to investigate what influences foreigners' behavior when travel for yoga. More precisely, the thesis aims to explore the role of various factors that motivate the German yoga practitioners to travel abroad for yoga. Once this information is reached, it is possible to better understand the market and accommodate various offers to meet their needs and expectations.

The exploratory study progresses within a constructivist paradigm working with a qualitative method approach, which employs a two-step collection and analysis of the empirical data. The first step includes the literature review together with an expert interview, which provides an insight about one of the aspects of the researched area. The second step is the conducting of 10 individual in-depth semi-structured interviews with German yoga practitioners over 40 years of age. The first step helped the researcher to create the interview guide for the following individual interviews. To help the analysis of the collected data, a matrix table with the key points from the interviews was used. The analysis and the interpretation of the collected data provided the following findings of the research.

None of the interviewees has visited Denmark for yoga related reasons. However, certain needs and motivations towards this type of travel were defined. The most important findings related to the German yoga tourists' needs were that the need of relaxation and escape from the stressful everyday life were the most common motivations that push the tourists to travel for yoga. Afterwards, the need to meet like-minded individuals during a yoga holiday and share common interest with them was also from great importance for the interviewees. The third essential need related to the sample group was their willingness to acquire new knowledge, which defines German yoga tourists as educational tourists. Regarding the motivation, six different groups were distinguished. However, only the first three were considered important findings about the German yoga tourists' motivation. As it was expected, the program of the yoga course was the most common motivation mentioned from the interviewees together with the price of the yoga

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holiday and the facilities of the yoga destination. This group includes only factors concerning the practicalities of the tourism product while the second one – mostly factors that will fulfill the yoga tourists’ needs. These were nature, teacher and food. The third group includes concerns about accessibility and distance from home.

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## Introduction

According to many scholars, yoga is a global phenomenon increasing its popularity very fast and for just a decade, the number of people interested in yoga has increased significantly, turning the field into a worldwide trend (De Michellis, 2005; Alter, 2004; Eliade, 2009, etc.). Although people traveling for yoga further develop it into a phenomenon of yoga tourism (Lehto et al. 2006), there is no official data on foreigners visiting Denmark because of yoga. At first hand, it is interesting to investigate what motivates the international yoga vacationers to travel for yoga related experiences. On the other hand, this area is too broad to research for only few months. Therefore, this master thesis focuses on German yoga practitioners as research subjects together with their needs and motivation to travel for yoga as a research area. One of the reasons for choosing this particular country is because Germany has the most significant share of incoming tourists to the Danish tourism market (VisitDenmark, 2012). Another reason is its geographical proximity to Denmark, which, however, might have diverse influences on the researched topic.

The research in this thesis might be beneficial for the Danish DMOs (destination marketing organizations) because it aims to collect specific data that can be used for a better understanding of the German yoga tourists. Based on that knowledge, the Danish DMOs may offer better services to the German yoga practitioners and thus satisfy more of their needs. This thesis might also serve as a foundation for a further and more in depth research in the future, in regards to other nationalities and their potential for the Danish tourism market. First, a definition of yoga tourists might be needed in order to specify their special interests and needs, which may differ from the regular leisure tourists' ones. Different typologies and definitions related to the different types of tourists will be used in the Theory chapter and deriving from them, a suggestion for a definition of yoga tourists as an independent segment will be suggested. As for the empirical data collection in this research, semi-structured interviews will be conducted with several German yoga practitioners. Afterwards, the collected data will be analyzed based on different theories concerning tourists' needs and their motivation to travel. Finally, the analysis might show certain delimitations that



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Denmark can meet in order to become more competitive yoga destination in the region.

“(S)piritual and religious tourism remains a most understudied area” (Ron, 2007 cited in Robinson, Heitmann and Dieke, 2011:249). Therefore, the research will explore how interpretations of spirituality may influence the German yoga tourists’ choice of a yoga destination. An expert interview will be conducted in order to give the researcher a better understanding of kirtan practices. Based on the literature review, chanting kirtans is a spiritual practice, not connected to the physical aspect of yoga but still a type of yoga – yoga of the sound (Johnsen and Jacobus, 2007). In addition, De Michelis (2005) claims that in the modern world yoga is accepted not only as a physical practice but also as psychological (self-improvement) and scientific (study of self, philosophy of yoga) ones. Nevertheless, the tendencies in the Western yoga practices are focused on the physical aspect of yoga but not on the psychology or the philosophy of living according to yoga (Eliade, 2009). Moreover, based on my previous empirical study in the boundaries of Denmark, very few people know what exactly kirtans are and even less practice them. In addition to that, as a multinational city where many different cultures meet, Copenhagen did show that certain yoga centers practice this type of yoga on a regular basis. However, this is not a popular practice for the rest of the country (Koseva, 2013). The main reason to focus on that particular type of yoga is that the kirtans unlike most other types of yoga practices does not necessarily require outside experience. This makes kirtans not as vulnerable to the seasonality yoga practice, which is a prerequisite for an all year round tourism. This is essential for countries like Denmark where the weather conditions throughout the whole year are not always favorable for tourism in the country.

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### *1.1. Problem Formulation*

To sum up, the aim of the project is to find out as precise as possible definition of the yoga tourists. Afterwards, to sum up what motivates the German yoga practitioners to travel for yoga, and what needs stay behind their choices of a yoga destination and finally, to find out whether interpretations of spirituality may influence yoga tourists' choices of a yoga destination.

By gathering this information, the thesis might outline certain similarities from the interviewees' responses and thus, to find out how Denmark may attract more German yoga practitioners in its boundaries. Moreover, this thesis might be used as a foundation for further research in future on other nationalities.

### *1.2. Research Questions*

- What motivates German yoga practitioners to travel for yoga, and what needs stay behind their choices of a yoga destination?
  - What characterize yoga tourists? What they look for their yoga holidays?
  - How a spiritual practice as chanting kirtans may influence the German yoga practitioners' destination choice?
  - What may attract the German yoga tourists in Denmark as a yoga destination and what possible challenges the country may face to become such for the region?

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### *1.3. Structure of the Thesis*

The thesis will be constructed as a document following the regulations of Aalborg University. Components such as acknowledgment, abstract, tables of content, figures, tables and charts; followed by chapters of Introduction, Methodology, Theory, Data analysis and Conclusion; followed by Bibliography and Appendixes chapter will be included.

The introduction chapter will present the problem formulation and the research questions that will be discussed in the master thesis.

The methodology chapter will introduce the philosophy of science that the thesis follows, philosophy of science, research strategy and methods, choice of researched area, choice of researched subjects and limitations of the master thesis.

The theory chapter will be combined with the literature review in order to avoid repetition. Different theories and models concerning tourists' behavior (Mathieson and Wall's theory, push and pull theory, Pearce's travel career ladder) and tourists typologies which are considered the most relevant to the research questions, will be introduced in this chapter.

The data analysis chapter will introduce a matrix table with the key points from the interviews as method of analysis. This method helps the author not to spend much time on transcribing but to focus on the real issues in the collected empirical data instead. Apart of the analysis, a CD with all the audio recordings of the interviews will be attached in the appendixes chapter.

The conclusion chapter will summarize the result of the analysis. They should not be taken as normative recommendations or explicit final conclusions. They serve only for the aims of this project, trying to distribute a better understanding of the yoga tourists. Afterwards, further in-depth research on other nationalities should follow in order to understand completely how Denmark could become a yoga hub for international yoga travelers.

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## Methodology

Due to the fact that there is no existing data on the incoming foreign yoga tourists to Denmark, the academic purpose of this thesis is to gather qualitative data for a better understanding of the German yoga vacationers' needs and motivation to travel for yoga. For the purpose, one semi-structured expert interview and ten semi-structured individual interviews with German yoga practitioners are conducted. The collected data in this research would fill partially the lack of the empirical data related to yoga tourism. It can contribute further studies as a solid foundation for more in-depth research on the topic.

This chapter will present as follow: Philosophy of Science, Research Strategy and Methods, Choice of Researched Area, Choice of Researched Subject, and Limitations.

### *2.1. Philosophy of science*

The aim of this thesis is to explore needs and motivation of the German yoga practitioners to travel for yoga. The approach used in this research is based on the idea of a social construction of reality or in other words, the project proceeds under the social constructivist paradigm. According to Guba a paradigm is "a basic set of beliefs that guide action" (Guba, 1990:17), which means that the paradigm influences the process of carrying out the research. There are three aspects within the constructivist paradigm - ontology, epistemology and methodology. The first aspect to consider while working under this paradigm is the ontology. It represents the human knowledge as individually and socially constructed and when individuals interact, they create a new knowledge based on their personal perceptions and understandings of the world (Somekh and Lewin, 2005). The knowledge construction of this thesis is based on the idea that the researcher and the interviewees create a new understanding of the world while interacting during the interviews. Thus, there can be no absolute truth about needs and motivation of the German yoga travelers for yoga traveling because the variables in this research (researcher, interviewees, interpreter, etc.) can change and subsequently, the results might do so too. Thus, there are no "right" and "wrong" interpretations while working under constructivist paradigm (Burr,

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2003). Thus, the researcher tends to accept multiple interpretations of the reality or multiple realities in order not to converge the interviewees towards a single reality (Yin, 2011).

In order to produce scientific knowledge, it is important to discuss the reality of the researcher, which in the constructivist approach means that the reality is subjective and accurate only for the studied situation (Guba, 1990). This leads to the epistemology of the constructivist paradigm. According to Kvale (2007) the researcher and the subject of the research act and influence each other with their actions, language and choice of words. This means that the produced knowledge between the researcher and the interviewees in one study might not be the same as the knowledge that will be produced in another set with changes in the related variables. In addition, Guba (1990) claims that this subjective interaction seems to be the only way to access one's constructions or realities held in individuals' minds. In the context of this thesis, this means that each person involved in the study (researcher, interviewees or interpreter) has different perceptions and understanding about the studied topic, which influence further developments of the situation. In addition, the researcher is not of a German origin and thus, cultural differences, language barriers, perceptions and prejudices might influence the understanding of the various needs and motivation of the German yoga travelers to travel for yoga. Even though the subjective reality of the constructivist paradigm contrasts the positivism paradigm, where the reality is described as more objective (Altinay and Paraskevas, 2008), these two paradigms should not be seen as two opposite ends of a continuum because the researcher often uses both of them in different stages of the same research process (Altinay and Paraskevas, 2008).

The last aspect of the constructivism paradigm is the methodology. According to Guba (1990), the constructivist's methodology is to represent all individuals' constructions in a research as accurate as possible (including the researcher's ones) and consequently, to compare them and to confront one with the other in order to reach the closest point to a consensus. Therefore, the duty of the researcher under the constructivist point of view is to have an open mind, to welcome all the subjective opinions and beliefs and to include them in the following analysis. In addition, multiple viewpoints provide better accuracy of social constructions on the same phenomenon and "enhance our belief that the results are valid and not a methodological artifact" (Bouchard, 1976:268). Therefore, the intention of the research is to collect all possible opinions of the

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German yoga tourists about their related to yoga needs and what motivates them to travel for yoga. Afterwards, the most common factors are to be outlined. This data could be of use to the Danish DMOs while developing particular product for this segment.

## *2.2. Research Strategy and methods*

This part contains information about the research process, research methodologies, method of data collection and method of analysis.

### *2.2.1. Research Process*

The study aims to explore an area, where there is a lack of empirical data. Within the constructivist paradigm, it is interesting to investigate what motivates the German yoga travelers to travel for yoga and what needs stay behind their choices of a yoga destination. A qualitative approach is considered more relevant to obtain an in-depth understanding within the topic of the problem formulation and thus, such is implied in this research. Both, first- and second-hand resources are used in the working process. According to Finn, Elliott-White and Walton (2000), the second-hand data aims to discover the conclusions of someone else that has worked on the same subject as the studied one. Therefore, academic books, journals, articles, reviews and online channels related to the topic of the thesis are used in order to provide a more practical insight into the researched area. In other words, this method serves as the most suitable starting point for the thesis. However, second-hand data about needs and motivation of the German yoga vacationers traveling for yoga is hardly to find. Therefore, it is necessary certain first-hand data to be collected in order to answer the research questions of the thesis. According to Finn, Elliott-White and Walton's definition (2000), the first-hand data is the original data generated by a new research using techniques as surveys, interviews or observation. Hence, ten semi-structured individual interviews with German yoga practitioners and one semi-structured expert interview are conducted for the aims of this project. According to Yin (2011), this approach of combining multiple methods for data collection, gives deeper understanding of the problem area. Moreover, it combines the insight from each one of the

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approaches (Pearce and Lee, 2005). According to Salkind (2010), the practice of using multiple methods of data collection or multiple approaches of analyzing the data is known as triangulation. The same author claims that this technique serves to facilitate validation of the data from the sources and to enhance the credibility of the research. Thus, by using the triangulation technique the researcher overcomes certain weaknesses, which come from a single method of collecting empirical data.

In addition, Bryman (2014) alleges that the social world must be interpreted from the perspective of the people being studied, through their eyes. Therefore, a qualitative research strategy is used in order to reach and better understand the various individual constructions of the world. A hermeneutic approach throughout the writing process is applied. This is to say that the researcher moves back and forth between the parts of the study and relates them back to the study as a whole. Authors like Gadamer (1997) address this process to the hermeneutical circle where none of the parts can be completely finished during the writing process until the conclusion is reached. In other words, certain parts might be revised and rewritten over and over again being constantly corresponding to the research questions. While studying a problem area and reading relevant literature the researcher's knowledge increases and this might again result in changes in certain parts. Moreover, this is needed in order to keep the information valid and the data updated during the whole working process.

### 2.2.2. Research Methodologies

As Yin (2011) claims, a deductive approach can be used in qualitative research. This approach tends to let the concepts lead to the definition of the relevant data that need to be collected. However, the same author adds that most qualitative research follows an inductive approach, which tends to let the data lead to the emergence of concepts (Yin, 2011). In relation to the latter, another approach is also applicable and this is the abductive approach. According to Bryman (2014), the abduction has an element of induction in its core but the distinction between these two approaches is based on that the theoretical account of the research is grounded in the viewpoints of the interviewees about the world. In this way, when an empirical research starts with studying the

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individuals' perspectives about the world, it relies on the researcher's explanation and understanding of those viewpoints but also the scientific account of the empirical study lies on the interviewees' subjective perspectives of the world. Thus, this research follows the abductive approach aiming to better understand the motivation of the German tourists to travel for yoga and the needs behind their choices of yoga destinations with the collected empirical knowledge in this research. The collected data will lead to conclusions valid only within the examined sample group but it will also lead to a greater understanding of the specified segment. The purpose of the research is not to generalize needs and motivation of the whole group of German yoga practitioners, but to give an insight of what might be interesting for them, which is important for the Danish DMOs while developing a product for this segment. A summary of the collected data and the following analysis is provided in the Analysis chapter.

### 2.2.3. Method of Data Collection

As it was mentioned before, in this research is used qualitative approach. The reason for that is that the project aims to collect different viewpoints on what makes German yoga practitioners to travel for yoga and what influence them to choose specific yoga destinations. According to Gratton and Jones (2010), a qualitative research aims to generate huge amount of data from a small sample group until the point where any different information from what is already collected, cannot be provided. Furthermore, the qualitative research has the advantage of being more flexible with its unstructured nature (Bryman, 2014). It gives the opportunity to change easily its direction during the investigation, which might be harder with a quantitative method as the questionnaires, for instance. To put it differently, once questionnaires are applied it is more difficult to change anything in the process of collecting the data than while conducting individual interviews. Moreover, Krauss (2005) adds that qualitative research is based on "a relativistic, constructivist ontology that posits that there is no objective reality" (Krauss, 2005:760), which makes it the most appropriate approach for collecting first-hand data for the aims of a project within a constructivist philosophy of science. Therefore, using a quantitative method might not be relevant for the



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project because it will limit the research by not reaching potential important information stored in the individuals' minds.

The first-hand data in this thesis is gathered by one semi-structured expert interview and ten individual semi-structured interviews. As it was mentioned above, the semi-structured interviews are a flexible way to collect qualitative data. They give the researcher the freedom to follow the conversation without being limited by the strict rules of the structured interviews (Bryman, 2014). According to the same author, for a semi-structured interview, there is usually a list with questions prepared before the actual interview – interview guide (which can be found in the Appendixes chapter) to keep the validity of the discussion. A questionnaire, in four sections, is designed to investigate the German yoga practitioners' needs and motivation to travel for yoga. The first part includes questions about basic socio-economic characteristics and the background data on the interviewees. The second part of the questionnaire is based on open questions about needs, expectations, motivation, experience and attitude in order to get more knowledge about the major self-reported factors that the interviewees consider important. The third part tries to identify interviewees' personal perceptions on religion and spirituality, while the forth part is based on open questions about needs, expectations, motivational factors, experience and attitude in relation to Denmark as a yoga destination. Even though there is a certain structure of the interview guide, there are no obligations to go through all of the questions or avoid asking additional ones, which might arise during the interview. Moreover, while the researcher interviews the interviewees, the direction of the research might change and this might be important for the research. In this way, the interviewees may give more solid answers and suggest new points for the research that have not been considered before the actual interviews. Therefore, the qualitative approach is more suitable for the aim of this research because a quantitative approach does not give the opportunity to reach new viewpoints. Although the researcher receives accurate knowledge about the interviewees' interpretations of the world, it is essential to be noticed that the interaction between a researcher and interviewees is inevitable during a conversation/interview. Thus, the latter are influenced by the choice of the researcher's words, behavior, prejudices, etc. and the outcome of each interview depends on that interaction (Bryman, 2014). Therefore, a complete standardization of the interviews might not be possible. In addition, although the number of the conducted interviews is relatively small in

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comparison to the actual number of people practicing yoga in Germany, the results still might uncover important motivational factors for German yoga practitioners to travel for yoga. Moreover, ten interviews are considered enough data for an internal validity of the research and with the existing variables (researcher, interviewees, interpreter, etc.), the number of the interviews is also considered enough to reach that stage where any further collection will not provide any different information from what the researcher already has reached (Gratton and Jones, 2010). However, it is not correct to relate the results derived from the research to the whole group of German yoga practitioners.

Some of the interviews are conducted in English, some - in Bulgarian, while the rest of them - with the help of an interpreter, from/to German to/from Bulgarian and English. That is because some of the interviewees do not understand English, some of them do understand it but cannot use it fluently. Therefore, the first interviewee is a Bulgarian yoga teacher with a German citizenship, living and working in Germany and thus, fluent in German, and partially in English. She will help the researcher with a translation. There are certain complications when an interpreter is between the researcher and the interviewees because the researcher is dependent on the interpreter and loses some measures of control of the interview (Kadushin, 2013). Moreover, the interpreter may take over the interview and in this way influence the results. However, this is not the case because the interpreter is a friend, or a teacher, or an acquaintance to all of the interviewees and thus, they trust her. Additionally, because of her presence, they are more open to share their thoughts and experiences. Moreover, the interpreter translates as accurate as the languages allow her. The interviews are planned to last not more than an hour and the interviewees are promised that the whole process will not exceed sixty minutes. Hence, the double translation might become a potential prerequisite for the interviews to be rushed.

The individual semi-structured interviews are conducted with ten German yoga practitioners. Having in mind Gratton and Jones' (2010) notion that a qualitative research aims to generate huge amount of data on a specific topic from a small sample group is the reason why the random sampling is not considered relevant for the project. The sampling methods that are used to identify the interviewees are purposive and snowball sampling (Yin, 2011). According to Yin (2011), the purposive sampling consists of those individuals who are considered useful sources for the research. The same author describes, the

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snowball sampling should be purposeful and should serve as a supplement to the existing number of interviewees (Yin, 2011). For instance, during an interview the researcher might find her next interviewees that are relevant to the research. Another example is the researcher to use the social networks to contact a specific group that corresponds to the needs of the research.

Only the first interviewee is chosen for the research based on a purposive sampling. Some of the interviewees are her students or colleagues. The rest of the interviewees are their friends or close to them people, with similar interests in yoga. All of them are chosen based on the snowball sampling method. Some of the interviewees have been traveling for yoga only in the boundaries of Germany; some of them – only abroad; others have tried both of the previously mentioned while the rest have not traveled for yoga at all. Most of the interviewees are females, which makes the sample group unbalanced in relation to gender, but women are more willing to participate in the research. Thus, this may slightly influence the results. The interviews are done through Skype and they last between 41 and 73 minutes. Some of the interviews contribute with more relevant information than others. All of them are recorded with a recording device because this gives the possibility for the researcher to focus on the conversation and what is happening in the surrounding instead of redirecting the attention into writing the answers down (Bryman, 2014). However, it seems that due to different distractions in the interviewees' surrounding, the Skype interviewees do not have the same involvement in the process as the face-to-face interviewees do. Moreover, some interviewees are more open and relaxed while being interviewed, whereas others do not seem to give detailed answers due to certain discomfort during the dialogue. The interviews include questions about motivation, expectation, previous experiences, influences from the environment, behavior after the visit, etc. but also about religion and spirituality, general knowledge about Denmark and expectations from the Scandinavian country as a yoga destination. Some of the questions are asked several times during the interviews with different formulation in order to check if the replies remain the same throughout the interview or they change when the formulation changes. In addition, to make a person comfortable enough to talk, first the researcher has to provide a safe environment (Zastrow and Kirst-Ashman, 2009). Therefore, non-judgmental environment is created to make the individuals feel safe and frank during the interview. Moreover, no redundant academic language is used during

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the process of interviewing so that the interviewees can feel comfortable. In addition, before each of the interviews, they are informed about anonymity in the written version of the thesis in order to provide safe environment making them feel more confident to share their experience.

As for the semi-structured expert interview, Flick (2009) claims, it is a qualitative research method, which has recently been gaining momentum as fast access to a new or an unknown field. Meuser and Nagel (2002, cited in Flick, 2009) add that the expert interview is a specific form of applying semi-structured interviews. In this research, one semi-structured expert interview is conducted in order to reach an insight in the field of the kirtans because the knowledge of the researcher is based mostly on personal experience. The experts in the research are two individuals, a couple, that have been popularizing kirtans in Bulgaria. The interview is only one because it aims exploration or orientation in a new field and it helps the researcher to generate a hypothesis (Bogner and Menz, 2002, cited in Flick, 2009). Thus, due to both of the interviewees work and live together, it is assumed that the information that they will give together or separately is going to be similar and it will not alter the final results from the analysis. According to Meuser and Nagel (2002, cited in Flick, 2009), an expert is a person who is responsible for the development, implementation or control of solutions, strategies or policies. That, related to the studied topic, is to say that the interviewees are considered experts in that context that they are responsible for the development and the implementation of the kirtan practice in Bulgaria. Moreover, the expert has privileged access to information and knowledge about groups of persons or decision processes (Meuser and Nagel, 2002, cited in Flick, 2009). Therefore, they can give technical knowledge – very specific and detailed knowledge, from the field of kirtans to the researcher (Bogner and Menz, 2002, cited in Flick, 2009).

The experts are selected through the purposive approach of sampling (Yin, 2011). According to Palys (2008), it might also be defined as an expert sampling, where the researcher looks for subjects who have particular expertise that is relevant to the research in process, which might possibly introduce new perspectives on the topic.

An appointment for a Skype interview is arranged according to the expert interviewees' calendar and availability. The interview is conducted through Skype because of the distance between the two countries. Bulgarian language is used as both researcher and interviewees are of Bulgarian origin, and thus, none of the

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answers in the interview will be misunderstood because of linguistic issues. Both experts have started expanding the knowledge of kirtan in Bulgaria a few years ago and today kirtans are considered their field of expertise. Their work can be found on their official webpage – House of Kirtan (2011). Thus, they are considered important for the research because of their experience. Both of the interviewees have been in Germany for yoga tourism, which is only one more reason that makes them appropriate interviewees for the research. The expert interview might give stronger knowledge for deeper understanding and clearer idea of what may attract German yoga practitioners into a kirtan practice. Moreover, this interview might influence and alter the interview guide for the individual interviews with the German yoga practitioners. In addition, the acquired knowledge during the expert interview is also dependent on the interaction between the researcher and the interviewees (Bryman, 2014). Again, a non-judgmental environment is provided from the researcher. The weak side of this type of collecting data is that it is often applied as a complementary instrument (Flick, 2009) as is the case of the current project.

All semi-structured interviews are conducted within two months time frame – April and May 2014.

#### 2.2.4. Method of Analysis

As a beginning, all of the interviews are recorded as audio files saved on a personal computer. According to Heritage (1984, cited in Bryman, 2014), there are several advantages of recording interviews. The most relevant for this study are that the recording helps to correct the natural limitations of our memories and gives the opportunity to re-examine more thoroughly the interviewees' answers. The next step is to transfer the interviews from speech to text for easier and faster access to the information in them (all audio files can be found in the Appendixes chapter, recorded on an audio disk).

Patton (2002) claims that when there are audio-recorded interviews, the researcher is the one who decides whether their analysis is best supported by transcripts or by researcher's notes deriving from a review of the audio files. Although transcribing interviews is considered a sufficient method of keeping intact the interviewee's and the interviewer's words, it cannot convincingly

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demonstrate that an exact written record of an interview is superior to other methods of managing interview data (Britten, 1995 in Halcomb and Davidson, 2006). In addition, it is time-consuming process, which yields vast amounts of paper (Bryman, 2014). Moreover, McCracken (1988) claims that when an investigator transcribes their own interviews, they get familiar with the data and that does not serve the later process of analysis. Therefore, the chosen method for this thesis is presented as structured and/or as standardized as possible summaries of each interview. The amount of information from the individual interviews is handled with the help of a matrix table in Excel framework. The rows present anonymously the interviewees as Interviewee 1, Interviewee 2, etc. The columns present the questions of the interview guide that are considered related to the analysis (a full version of the matrix can be found in the Appendixes chapter). All the relevant important points from the recorded interviews are included in the cells, which according to Weber (1990) means that the material from the audio files is reduced to more relevant and manageable bits of data. Therefore, exact quotations from the interviewees are not included in the Excel table. Furthermore, most of the interviews are conducted in Bulgarian or in German and they need translation to English. Thus, mine and the interpreter's interpretations of what the interviewees might have said, relate to Guba's (1990) claim that the reality is subjective and accurate only for the studied situation. The summaries of the interviews are organized in a table, which is considered easier for visualization, access and analysis. Moreover, this construction of the collected data allows the researcher to identify faster whether any tendencies among the replies related to the research questions emerge.

According to McLellan et al. (2003), selected sentences or passages relevant to the research questions or theory may be all that is needed for an analysis. Therefore, the analysis of the expert interview is done based on the researcher's notes taken during the interview and supplemented with additional information from the review of the audio files. Aiming to gain only explanatory knowledge, this type of analysis saves valuable time and focuses on the content of the interview. Moreover, this analysis will give information on a similar case as the studied one in this research, where the interviewees have started the process of popularizing kirtans in Bulgaria, when few have known about its existence. Afterwards, the results from the expert interview are eventually going to help the researcher to point out what might be important to be included in the individual

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interviews' guide. Thus, particular questions are to be created to check whether the German yoga practitioners meet the expectations and perceptions of them as an independent segment.

The analysis is based only on the researcher's notes taken during the interview and supplemented with additional information from the review of the audio files.

### 2.3. Choice of Researched Area

The researched area in this thesis is an in-depth understanding of what motivates the German yoga practitioners to travel for yoga and where and why they prefer to go for a yoga vacation. An in-depth discussion about that will follow in the Theory chapter. Having in mind that a qualitative research might produce a wide variety of results, the research puts focus on a particular potential motivator – kirtans. The latter increases its popularity quite rapidly and for a decade it ignites the Western world (Johnsen and Jacobus, 2007; Kripalu, 2014). However, this type of yoga is not as popular in Denmark (Koseva, 2013). From my personal experience, this is a type of yoga where people chant in a group and the vibrations of the common sound that they produce help empty and relax their minds from the accumulated stress, while also enhance their energy. Johnsen and Jacobus (2007) describe the kirtan as close to the personal experience of the author as possible as a process where:

*"...the kirtan wallah (performer) sings a mantra, or sacred word, and the audience sings it back. The wallah is not there simply to entertain you, but to lead you to the depths of your own being. The wallah and the audience chant to each other, often singing faster and faster as the chant progress. A single chant can last from five minutes to forty. ... The problems that weigh at your hearth fall away. ... You connect deeply with the musicians, with the other participants, and with yourself. The experience is amazingly profound. You leave feeling emotionally refreshed, mentally cleansed, and spiritually energized."* (Johnsen and Jacobus, 2007:8)

In Germany, this is very well developed and popular yoga practice, which even produces famous kirtan performers like Deva Premal. Some examples of how



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exactly a kirtan looks and sounds can be found on Internet and on official web pages of the different yoga communities or performers around the world (YogaVidya, 2014, House of Kirtan, 2011). After a short research in Internet, one can notice that most of the videos show that kirtan practices take place not outside in the nature but inside. Moreover, the tourists flow can be constant throughout the whole year if the educational courses' structure is built in that way. Thus, this type of practice and the related to it tourism are not influenced as harsh by the seasonality in comparison with other tourism types like ski or leisure tourism, for instance. In this way, kirtan practices could contribute to the all year round constant flow of incoming German yoga tourists to Denmark. For this to happen, special facilities should be in place. Ashrams are the places where the yoga vacationers practice different type of yoga during their yoga trips. These ashrams provide a place to sleep and special organic, in most cases vegetarian food to its visitors. A person can stay there for a short (several days) or long (it could be years) period of time. It depends on whether the person would like to have a holiday there or would like to devote himself/herself to a higher understanding of yoga, meditation in trying to find the enlightenment. Ashrams, or yoga retreat centers as they are known in Denmark, are situated all over the world and as it was mentioned before the biggest retreat center in Europe is situated in Germany. However, this close location of such large and popular retreat house might have a negative influence on Denmark as a yoga destination. Such retreat centers exist also in Denmark - they are very modern and well equipped. Examples can be found on the following links ([innerfreedom.dk](http://innerfreedom.dk); [bornholmyoga.dk](http://bornholmyoga.dk); [buddha-lolland.dk](http://buddha-lolland.dk), etc.).

## *2.4. Choice of Researched Subjects*

The researched subjects in this study are the German yoga practitioners. Germany is chosen not only because it is a neighboring country to Denmark but also because of the percentage of German tourists coming into Denmark in general (VisitDenmark, 2012). Although the biggest share of incoming tourists to Denmark comes from Germany, this does not necessarily mean that the biggest share of yoga tourists coming into Denmark are from Germany as well. However, due to the lack of information of the incoming yoga tourist to Denmark, the thesis



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proceeds with the presumption that Germans, being the biggest share of incoming tourists to Denmark, provide the biggest share of incoming German yoga tourists as well. Moreover, in Germany is situated the Europe's leading and largest yoga educational organisation with the Europe's largest seminar house (YogaVidya, 2014), which might mean that most of the needs for yoga practices are concentrated there.

Some individuals connect tourism with negative connotations and therefore, they do not like to be defined as tourists (Decrop, 2006). Although they do not accept themselves as tourists, they are consumers in tourism. Thus, words like yoga vacationers, yoga travelers and yoga practitioners are used throughout the project but all of them refer to yoga tourists. In addition, a yoga tourist could be a yoga practitioner, but it is not necessary a yoga practitioner to be a yoga tourist. As it was mentioned previously, some of the interviewees have traveled for yoga only in the boundaries of Germany; some of them – only abroad; others have tried both of the options and the rest of them have not traveled at all. In addition, more detailed information and analysis of the interviewees' characteristics follow in the Analysis chapter, where a table with the basic socio-economic characteristics and background data on the individuals can be found. Structured in this way, the collected data will be easier analyzed and summarized.

## *2.5. Limitations*

Finally, all the limitations that have been mentioned throughout the content of the Methodology chapter will be organized in this section. The most important for this project is the limitation in time. This is to say that with more time available, more comparative cases similar to the current one would have been done within different nationalities of yoga tourists interested in visiting Denmark for yoga. Because of the lack of time, however, only German yoga practitioners are studied as potential incoming to Denmark yoga tourists.

While searching for the literature review of that project, contemporary theories within the field of tourists' behavior studies are not found. The newer theories are built upon older ones and therefore, the older theories are used. Therefore, the findings of the project might not be presented appropriately towards the current way of thinking about tourists' behavior.

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Another limitation in the research is the different aspects of the languages. First of them is that most of the interviews are conducted in English. It is not a native language for none of the variables in the research and thus, different linguistic issues arise. Because some of the German yoga practitioners do not speak English fluently, they cannot understand completely the questions and/or cannot respond in the way that they want to express themselves. Therefore, a mixture of English, German and Bulgarian is used between interviewer, interviewees and interpreter in order to understand one another. The limitations here are two: first, the time needed for the interview is doubled because of the translation and still to keep the promised duration of an hour, and second, the researcher is constantly dependent on the interpreter's translation. However, the latter has been in the past a professional interpreter and her interpretation is believed to be as close as possible to what the interviewees are saying and as close as the languages allow. The interpreter is a native Bulgarian, living and working in Germany for a number of years and thus, she is fluent in German, too. In addition, the interpreter does not have personal interest and thus, does not have interest to produce misleading interpretations (Kadushin, 2013). In this way, the results of the research are not strongly influenced by the interpreter's interpretation. Another aspect of the language limitation is related to the literature used in the project, all of which is in English and thus important for the research information in other languages might not be reached.

The last but not least limitation is that most of the interviewees are females. This makes the content of the sample group unbalanced in relation to gender. Thus, this might influence the final conclusions to a certain extent.

This chapter was to explain the reader what choices have been taken during the process of writing this project and how and why the research was carried out.

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## Theory

This chapter incorporates the literature review in itself. The argument behind this decision is that the thesis will have a better structure in this way, it will give a better content of the discussion and it will facilitate the flow of the main idea. There are many theories, models and typologies in the field of tourism that can be used for this project. However, only the ones considered best suitable for answering the research questions of the project are presented in this chapter in order to analyze the tourist behavior and eventually to predict their expectations and needs. Thus, different theories and models about consumer behavior, yoga tourism and spirituality will be included. Moreover, to avoid becoming too descriptive, only brief introductions of the latter will be used. The point here is to provide an academic discussion concerning these theories and models instead of describing them. In addition, the results from this research might benefit the DMOs in Denmark and help them to be able to fulfill more completely the expectations and the need of the incoming tourists.

This study will try to get a better understanding of the various motivational factors that influence the German yoga practitioners to travel for yoga. Moreover, it will offer a discussion of what type of tourism yoga tourism is and a discussion that will try to define yoga tourists as an independent segment. It might be essential for the Danish DMOs to be able to differentiate it in order to send a well-formulated message that will eventually address precisely the exact same segment (Shannon and Weaver, 1949). The chosen models, theories and typologies in this project are considered complementing each other, by minimizing each other's weaknesses because each theory and/or model has their own set of strengths and limitations or potential weaknesses (Bowen and Clarke (2009). In addition, this thesis does not claim that it will offer fundamentally new knowledge but it might provide some indications of similarities among the group of interviewees that might be important for further research on this topic.

### *3.1. Yoga Tourism*

According to Lehto et al. (2006), one of the main reasons the phenomenon of yoga tourism has gained popularity and has developed so rapidly is because of

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the pressures and stresses of today's hectic everyday life. The same authors add that people search for a more holistic approach to life and yoga appears to have become one of the answers to that need.

Holloway and Plant (1988, cited in Tikkanen, 2007) summarize the consumers' needs for travel and tourism in relation to the Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Thus, they suggest few different categories of tourism: holiday travel, business travel, health travel, visiting friends and relatives, religious travel, travel for an economic benefit, travel for educational purposes, and finally sports and activities travel. Based on the interviewees' replies, it can be assumed that the yoga tourism takes place in four of the mentioned categories. According to that categorization and the interviewees' responses, holiday, health, educational purposes, and sports and activities are part of a yoga travel. However, this is too broad definition for what the yoga tourism is. Therefore, a more in depth discussion follows.

According to Voigt, Brown and Howat (2011), the term health tourism can be used as umbrella definition either for medical tourism or for wellness tourism. The difference between these two types of tourism is that medical tourists tend to travel to cure or treat a certain illness or medical condition, while the wellness tourists tend to go on a holiday to maintain or improve their health and well-being (Muller and Lanz Kaufmann, 2001 cited in Voigt, Brown and Howat, 2011). This distinction between illness and wellness is the starting point for defining yoga tourism as health tourism. Most of the authors classify yoga tourism as a niche of well-being practices (Lehto et al., 2006; Smith and Kelly, 2006; Smith and Puczko, 2009). Furthermore, Smith and Kelly (2006) add a sub classification between wellness and yoga tourism, defining yoga tourism as spiritual tourism. Willson (2010) and Lalonde (2012) agree that yoga tourism is a spiritual tourism (both cited in Kaur, 2013). However, the importance of health and wellbeing in yoga tourism should not be understated, even in case of spiritually motivates yoga tourism (Lalonde, 2012 cited in Kaur, 2013). In addition, wellness tourism is characterized as a journey that lasts at least one night at a facility that is specifically designed to enable and enhance people's physical, psychological, spiritual and/or social well-being (Voigt, Brown and Howat, 2011). As a combination between Voigt, Brown and Howat's (2011), and Smith and Kelly's (2006) concepts, a self-designed Figure 1 below illustrates where the yoga tourism is placed according to both theories. The thesis follows this positioning of viewpoints.



Figure 1. What type of tourism is yoga tourism? (Adapted from Voigt, Brown and Howat (2011) and Smith and Kelly (2006))

Even though yoga tourism is seen mostly as subdivision of well-being tourism, yoga vacationers practice yoga activities during their travel not only because they are on a holiday but also because yoga is a part of their everyday's life (Smith and Puczko, 2009). Moreover, the most common forms of yoga in the Western world have focus on the physical culture and are consistent of mostly physical exercises (Ulrike, 2014). Based on these two claims, it can be assumed that practicing yoga activities during travel or/and holiday defines yoga tourism as active tourism or even as sport tourism.

The primary motivation for nature-based tourism is to understand the nature, to appreciate it and to be close to it (Luo and Deng, 2008). However, most of the tourists who visit destinations with exceptional nature are not necessarily interested only in the nature (Mehmetoglu, 2007). In the context of the thesis, the aim that yoga tourists travel for yoga is the yoga in itself. Thus, they visit a destination because of the yoga, not because of the nature in the area. Therefore, the nature appears to be a secondary aspect of their yoga trip experience. Related to the yoga tourists, nature is accepted to be an escape from the everyday life (Mehmetoglu, 2007; Luo and Deng, 2008). Thus, giving the yoga tourists the escape they need, nature becomes appreciated and new need arises in them, to be close to the nature during their yoga holiday. Therefore, yoga tourism can be defined as nature-based tourism with its synonyms eco-friendly and/or green tourism even though nature is not a primary motivation.

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Last but not least, yoga tourism can also be defined as special interest tourism that attracts individual yoga travelers, who are self-aware and tend to socialize with like-minded individuals (Smith and Kelly, 2006). This type of tourism denotes non-commercialized individual travels (Trauer, 2006). Moreover, special interest tourism has focus on new forms of tourism that have the potential to meet the needs of tourists and thus, can be specified as “new tourism” (Trauer, 2006). In addition, Butcher (2003) defines this new tourism as new moral tourism presenting it as the solution of the negative effects that the mass tourism causes. To describe mass tourism, the author uses terms like sameness, crude, destructive and modern, and for the new moral tourism, their oppositions are valid – difference, sensitive, constructive and critical of modern progress. This can be also related to Poon’s (1993) idea of old and new tourism, where the author describes the differences in a similar way – search for the sun-experience something different; follow the masses-want to be in charge; here today, gone tomorrow-see and enjoy but do not destroy; having-being; superiority-understanding, etc. This, related to yoga tourism might be interpreted as the latter is a new, different, sensitive and constructive type of tourism.

The discussion above might contribute to defining yoga tourism to a certain extent. However, in order to define a segment, first its entities should be identified. Therefore, the next subchapter is to suggest as specific as possible definition of the yoga tourists as an independent segment in the field of tourism.

### *3.2. Yoga Tourists*

In this part different tourist' typologies will be presented in order to find out where the group of yoga tourists may take place.

For example, Cohen 's five tourist types typology (1979) includes: recreational (seeking relaxation), diversionary (seeking pleasure), experiential (seeking authentic experiences), experimental (seeking contact), and existential (seeking immersion in the culture and lifestyle) types of tourists. Based on that, yoga tourists can be linked to each of these types because as tourists:

- they look for relaxation, escaping the stressful everyday life;
- they look for pleasure, which can be seen in the relaxation, but also in the acquiring of new knowledge;

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- the authentic experience of yoga might not be found at home, therefore they look for it in a different place;
  - yoga vacationers look for contact with other like-minded individuals;
  - the immersion in the culture and the lifestyle during the trip away from home might be transferred at home once the trip is over.

Another typology that might be relevant to the yoga vacationers is the typology of the 15 leisure-based tourist roles (Foo, McGuiggan and Yiannakis, 2004) (a full version of the typology can be found in the Appendixes chapter). Although, not all of the fifteen roles are relevant to yoga tourists, the ones that concern them in certain degree will be mentioned here. Based on that typology, yoga tourists can be defined as:

- seekers – looking for spiritual and/or personal knowledge to better understand self and meaning of life;
- escapists – enjoying getting away from it all in quiet and peaceful places;
- sport tourists – primary emphasizing while on vacation is to remain active, engaging in favorite sports;
- educational tourists – participating in planned study programs, primary for acquiring new skills and knowledge.

From that it can be noticed that certain roles from Foo, McGuiggan and Yiannakis' typology (2004) correspond in certain extend to the Cohen's five tourist types typology (1979). For instance, the recreational type corresponds to the escapist, the experiential and the existential – to the seeker.

However, it seems that both of the typologies are more theoretically oriented than based on empirical research because they do not take into account that the experience creates new needs in tourists (Pearce and Lee, 2005). That is to say, that tourists change their roles when the need that they have to fulfill changes, they do not belong to only one role.

From the Smith's typology of tourist (1989), the yoga tourist can be found only in the type of incipient mass tourist. In other words, although the number of the tourists increases at a particular destination, they usually travel as individuals or in small groups. In addition, they look for western amenities and if they can find them, they tend to ignore factors as price for example. A full typology can be

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found in the Appendixes chapter. In addition, from the Cohen's typology of four tourists' roles (1972), being organized mass tourist, individual mass tourist, explorer or drifter; the yoga tourists take place only in the definition of the explorer. This means that they arrange their trips alone, try to associate with the people they visit, retain some of their basic routines and comforts of their native way of life (Cohen, 1972). Both of the typologies, however, describe tourists' practices than types of people (Edensor, 2001). Therefore, additional explanation on yoga tourists has to be reached.

While all the definitions are linked to tourists in general, Smith and Puczko (2009) give a concrete description of who the yoga tourists are. They claim that yoga tourists do not see yoga as fitness or exercise program, they accept it as a spiritual path, which aims to balance body, mind and soul. Moreover, De Michelis (2005) alleges, in the modern world, yoga is accepted as not only a physical practice but also psychological (self-improvement) and scientific (study of self, philosophy of yoga). Smith and Puczko (2009) add that yoga tourists are people who already tend to practice yoga at home and/or are interested in vegetarian/organic food and/or in alternative medicines. Letho et al. (2006) add to that description that the typical yoga tourists are predominantly females in their 40s, working as professionals. Smith and Kelly (2006) add that although the primary focus may be on the self-development, the yoga tourists wish to enter into a physiological, emotional or spiritual communion with others and this may explain why more women than men currently engage into yoga tourism, as men might be less willing to share their personal feelings in front of others. Smith and Puczko (2009) agree on that there are more women than men that tend to practice yoga.

Based on the critical reading and the presented literature review, the definition of yoga tourists bellow is generated. It involves many of the aspects mentioned above combining them in one more comprehensive and in the same time, more focused towards that particular segment definition. Each time when yoga tourists, yoga travelers or yoga vacationers are mentioned throughout the text, this will be the definition that the text will refer. In addition, while preparing the Analysis chapter, this definition will be examined whether it works not only on theory but also on a real empirical data.



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Yoga tourists:

- seek relaxation away from stress and noise;
- look for authentic experience, sought in spirituality;
- seek immersion in yoga culture and with like-minded individuals;
- arrange their trip alone and travel alone or in small groups;
- remain active while on vacation;
- participate in study programs in order to acquire new skills or knowledge;
- retain some of their basic routines and comforts of their native way of life;
- are predominantly females over 40;
- might be interested in vegetarian/organic food;
- might be interested in alternative medicine.

It may be added to that definition that when deriving from the idea of special interest tourism, the yoga vacationers can be described as special interest tourists, too, because these tourists by definition tend to share a common hobby or interest that bonds them (Lehto et al., 2006). In the similar way, community is a group of people linked by their closeness and commonality of goals (Butcher, 2003). Thus, yoga vacationers share a common interest or goals in yoga and because of that, they travel and socialize with people that share the same kind of values in order to fulfill their needs. However, there are yoga tourists that value most the remoteness and isolation (Godfrey, 2006) which does not make them special interest tourists. The data analysis will show whether the German yoga vacationers are special interest tourists or whether they are not.

The researcher acknowledges that all of the typologies used for the aims of the project have their pitfalls and limitations. Examples of some of the limitations in accordance to Bowen and Clarke (2009) can be seen below:

- that there is lack of practical relevance (ex. Foo, McGuiggan and Yiannakis, 2004 and Cohen, 1979);
- that the typologies are aging (ex. Cohen, 1972 and Cohen, 1979);
- that they do not take into account the movement through the categories (ex. all of them);

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- that they do not tell anything about the reasons for particular behavior (ex. all of them);
  - that the differentiation between certain types is not very distinct (ex. Cohen, 1979 and Smith, 1989).

Moreover, the researcher acknowledges that there are many other tourists' typologies and classifications with their own sets of strengths and limitations available in the field of tourism (an example of different typologies can be found in the Appendixes chapter). However, only the ones considered relevant to the problem formulation are incorporated in this project. In addition, the discussion above might serve as a foundation of further development of the suggested definition.

The current part of the project suggested a definition characterizing yoga tourists in general. The next subchapter focuses on German yoga practitioners and what influences them to travel for yoga or to choose particular yoga destination.

### *3.3. What Influences the German Yoga Practitioners to Travel for Yoga or to Choose a Particular Yoga Destination?*

First, it will be discussed what motivates German yoga practitioners to travel for yoga and what influences their choices of destination. For the aim, the leading theory for answering the main research question is Mathieson and Wall's theory (1982) concerning tourists' behavior. Moreover, this will improve the structure of the thesis. Mathieson and Wall (2006) claim that their work lacks a strong conceptual base, it is aging and remains largely descriptive and exploratory. However, they have provided useful inventories of social impact indicators such as the four behavioral characteristics model that will be used in this project (Mathieson and Wall, 1982). Although the authors see a limitation in their work being specific only to small communities, the model is considered appropriate for the aims of this master thesis, which focuses on relatively small sample group (Mathieson and Wall, 2006).

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Mathieson and Wall (1982) define four behavioral characteristics: needs, motivation, travel awareness and attitudes. When a discussion for needs arises, this might lead to notions such as expectations, both of them being related to one's motivation (Gnoth, 1997). The experience of a travel or the gathered knowledge influences the tourists' attitude or the next tourists' choice of a destination but influences the needs and the expectations too (Mathieson and Wall, 1982; Moutinho, 1987; Bowen and Clarke, 2009; Milyavskaya and Koestner, 2011; Pearce and Lee, 2005). Based on that, the aspects of the tourists' behavior are interrelated to a certain extent and thus, they influence each other. In addition to that, another theory strengthens the viewpoint that all of these aspects are connected. It claims that the motivation is a partially mediator between the needs and the well-being of a person, meaning that the need satisfaction leads to certain positive outcomes (Milyavskaya and Koestner, 2011).

A self-designed model (Figure 2) based on Mathieson and Wall's theory and model (1982) and on Moutinho's model (1987) (both models can be found in the Appendixes chapter) is created in order to better understand the theories behind the two models. According to Decrop (2006), Moutinho's model (1987) is the most encompassing process model concerning tourists' behavior. Because of the complicity of both models, it is important for the researcher to understand and present them in such way that both can be implemented in the research. Thus, the purpose of the model in Figure 2 is to visualize the idea of the interrelations between the tourists' behavioral characteristics. Furthermore, it is to visualize the idea that tourists' travel experience might be perceived as either positive or negative, and thus, it can be considered a previous experience for a next travel, too. In addition, the model is illustrated as a cycle, which shows all these connections of direct or indirect influences on each other. The self-designed model does not pretend that it is improved version of the already existing ones or that it is suggesting fundamentally new knowledge. However, in the framework of the master thesis, it offers a practicable and easy to understand and to use structure. In addition, the model gives partially the broader answers of the research questions in this study because all needs, expectations, motivation, experience and attitude are aspects that influence the tourists to travel and where to travel.

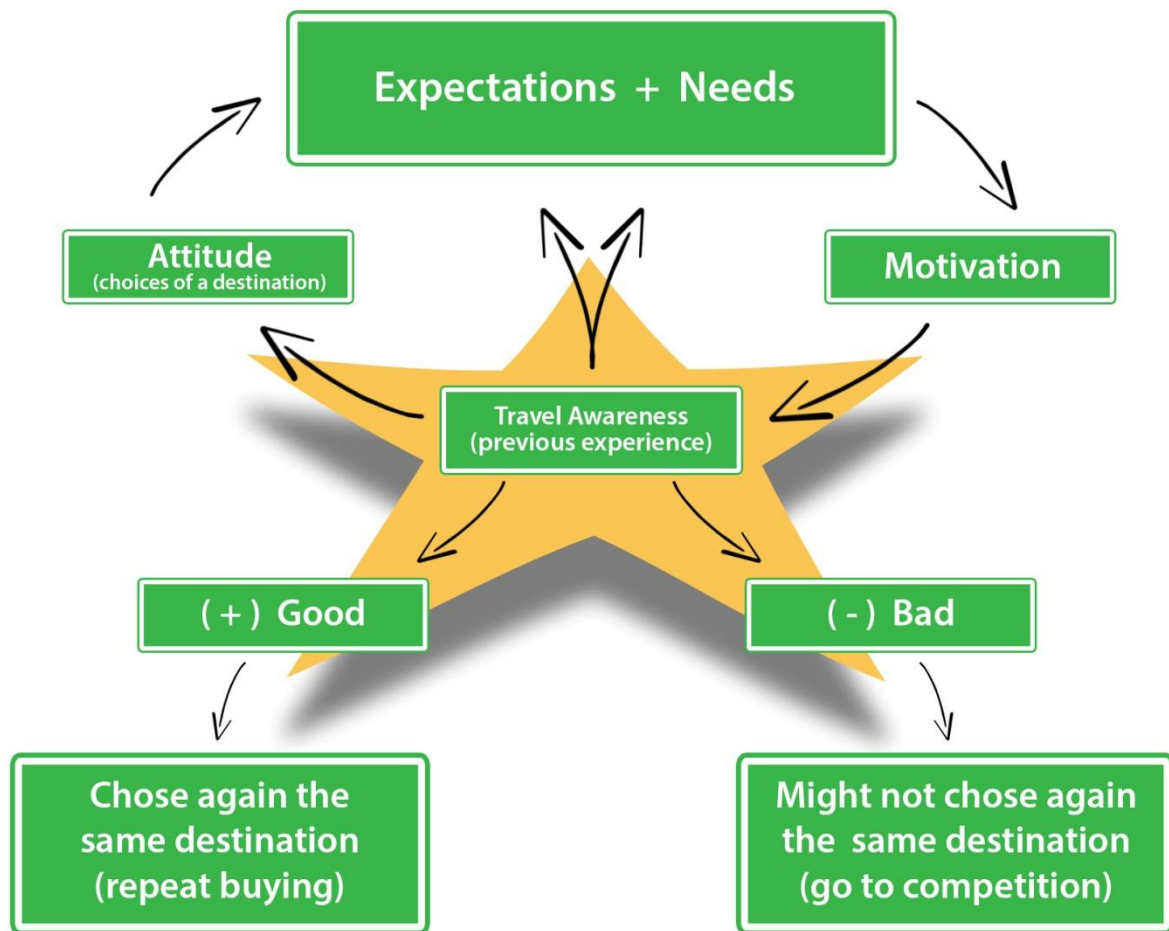


Figure 2. Self-designed model about the links between the tourists' behavior characteristics (Adapted from Mathieson and Wall, 1982 and Moutinho, 1987)

### 3.3.1. Needs

According to Mathieson and Wall (1982), a person's need is derived from an internal condition, based on a lack, which could have an impact of the well-being of that person. In order to understand one's motivation, it is essential to find what needs the individuals have and how these needs can be satisfied. Crompton (1979) suggests that disequilibrium in the motivational system occurs when a need arises and hence, the equilibrium needs to be reestablished. In this part of the project, the theory of Maslow hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1943) should be mentioned as being the most obvious choice when discussing needs. Although Maslow's pyramid (1943) leaves space for different interpretations and it acknowledges that people and their motivation are complex, it can be used as a

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simple but applicable guide for understanding and explaining human behavior. A brief clarification why it is relevant for the thesis will be presented here. In the first place, needs are the focal matter in his model, making it directly linked to the Mathieson and Wall's theory (1982). Thus, it corresponds to the idea of finding out what the yoga tourists need when they decide to travel for yoga tourism. Although Maslow did not develop the hierarchy with tourism in mind, "it is used extensively in the tourism literature to describe the needs and experiences of travelers" (Beeton, 2006:35). If applying the levels of Maslow's pyramid (Maslow, 1943) (from lowest to highest: physiological, safety, social, self-esteem, self-actualization) to the current study case, only the last two levels seems to be relevant to the thesis. These could be fulfilled by self-developing, gathering new knowledge or understanding of yoga or simply by socialization with other like-minded individuals. Tikkanen (2007) adds, "Even if all these needs (A/N meaning the lower levels of Maslow's pyramid) are satisfied, we may still often expect that a new discontent and restlessness will soon develop, unless the individual has an inward vocation (A/N meaning the self-actualization or self-esteem)." (Tikkanen, 2007:723).

Similarly, Pearce's travel career ladder offers another theory of tourists' levels of travel motivation (Pearce and Lee, 2005) that is considered relevant to the problem formulation. It is based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1943) and it consists of (from lowest to highest) relaxation needs, stimulation needs, relationships needs, self-esteem and development needs, and self-actualization/fulfillment needs (Pearce and Lee, 2005).

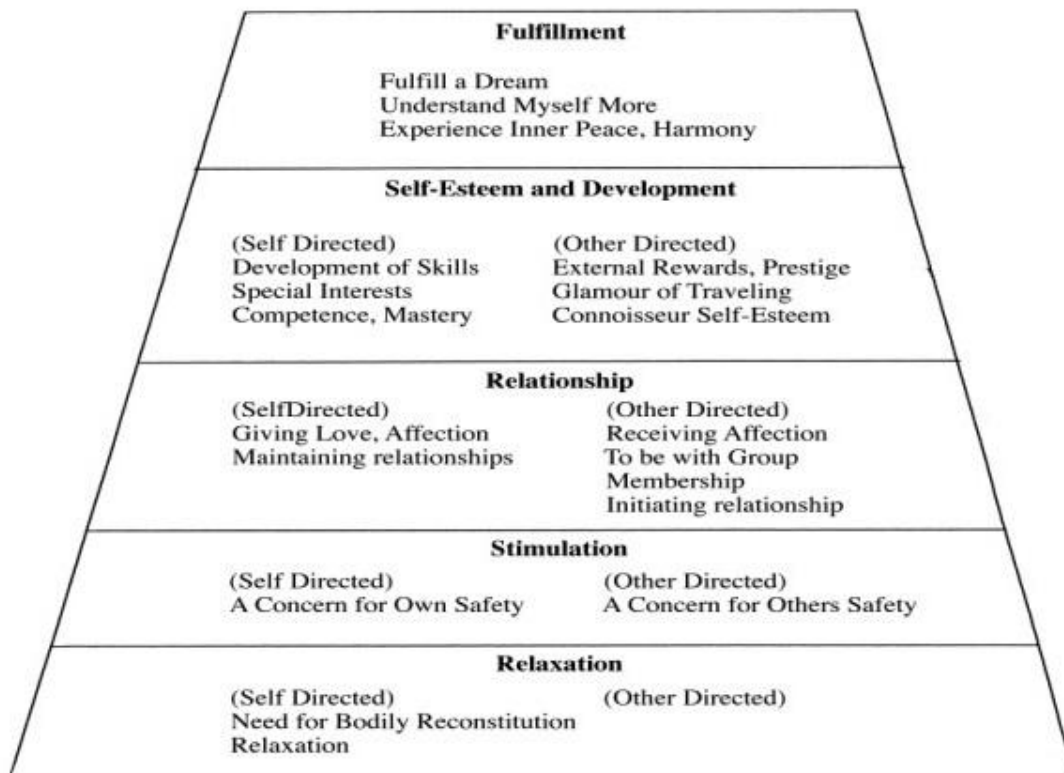


Figure 3. Pearce's Travel Career Ladder (Adopted from Pearce and Lee, 2005)

Based on my previous research (Koseva, 2013), the Danish yoga travelers' needs take place in all levels of motivation and thus, it might be interesting to analyze whether the case with the German yoga travelers is the same. According to Koseva (2013), the findings are:

- yoga vacationers travel outside Denmark because of stress (relaxation),
- the safety issue is linked to the concern of unknown (stimulation),
- the will to meet like-minded individuals (relationships),
- to develop new knowledge (development),
- to understand themselves and to reach the inner peace (fulfillment).

The limitation of this model is that it predisposes to the presumption that the tourist has to progress upward through the levels of motivation as it is in the Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Pearce and Lee, 2005) but "individual's motivation changes with their accumulation of travel experience" (Bowen and Clarke, 2009:35). Respectfully, if yoga tourists are motivated to travel by a particular level from the ladder and the gathered experience from the trip is close to nothing, then (s)he might stay on the same level for the next trip; or if the gathered

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experience is slightly higher, (s)he might move to the next level of motivation; or even progress through the levels up to the top if the gathered experience is significantly higher. Ryan (1998 cited in Pearce and Lee, 2005) claims that there is a lack of predictive certainty in the approach because the tourist behavior is irrational and it cannot be measured. Thus, the social complexity of how people respond and the diversity of response options should be taken into consideration. The same author claims Pearce's travel career ladder is an appealing conceptual framework with no strong empirical evidence that supports the theory behind the model. However, it will be interesting to apply this theory in the empirical research of this project and to reflect on the theoretical model based on the results from it.

### 3.3.2. Expectations

Understanding customers' expectations and preferences is essential for all marketing efforts (Bowen and Clarke, 2009; Xiang et al., 2011). Therefore, the destinations need to adjust to the market dynamics and to adapt to the market needs and expectations (Pearce, 2011). According to Pearce (2011), an expectation is anticipatory belief about what a destination can offer as experiences to the tourists. In addition, they are linked with pre-visit knowledge that may influence the motivation (Theodossopoulos and Skinner, 2011) of the German yoga practitioners to travel for yoga. Expectations can differ substantially from person to person or from culture to culture, the latter being a critical factor in shaping tourist travel expectations (Xiang et al., 2011). Therefore, predictions on the German yoga tourists' expectations about their yoga traveling or their expectations about a yoga destination cannot be made. Moreover, as it was already mentioned above tourists' expectations are not a static variable (Pearce, 2011; Theodossopoulos and Skinner, 2011). In addition, the expectancy disconfirmation paradigm (Moutinho, 1987) explains the correlation between expectations and satisfaction as when the destination performance is higher than the tourist's expectations, the result is satisfaction and good experience from the travel. Thus, this might influence the tourist to revisit the same destination in order to experience the same satisfaction and good experience. Moreover, if "one motivated by relaxation, comfort, and rest, a familiar or well-known setting, certainty and assurance, and a reduction in non-monetary travel costs would tend



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to revisit if their experience there had been satisfactory” (Alegre and Juaneda, 2006:686). In addition to the latter, positive experience might develop tourists’ destination choices into destination loyalty. On the other hand, when tourist’s expectations are higher than the perceived services, then tourists are more likely to evaluate the services quality less favorably (Weber, 1997). Thus, the travel expectations may have a negative effect on tourists’ travel or on the choice of certain destinations. When this happens, the probability a tourist to choose the same destination has less potential than turning to the competition (Moutinho, 1987). In both cases, expectations can be regarded as a powerful motivating force (Theodossopoulos and Skinner, 2011).

To sum up, both, needs (Crompton, 1979) and expectations (Theodossopoulos and Skinner, 2011) are crucial factors for the tourists’ motivation because they affect it directly and each change in needs and expectations reflects on the motivation. This is also illustrated in the self-designed model in Figure 2.

### 3.3.3. Motivation

The next tourists’ behavioral characteristic, which Mathieson and Wall (1982) mention in their theory is that of motivation. There are many existing theories about tourists’ motivation but still none of them can define what exactly and why it motivates people to travel (Dann, 1977). Traveling to improve an individual’s health has long been a motivation for travel (Mathieson and Wall, 1982). Although travel motivation has been extensively studied in tourism literature over the time, the discussion of motivation has not reached yoga tourism yet because the latter is relatively new and academic research in this area is in its “infancy stage” (Lehto et al., 2006). Therefore, a collection of empirical data will be needed. The latter will be gathered by individual interviews, analyzing the different replies and concluding whether certain similarities appear among them.

Motivation is seen as a driving force (Bowen and Clarke, 2009). Moreover, it can be defined as “the process by which an individual will be driven to act or behave in a certain way” (Decrop, 2006:9). A better understanding of travel motivation is crucial to maintain and/or improve the performance of any tourism destination (Crompton, 1979). Therefore, in this project, an analysis of the



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motivational factors will try to explain why tourists travel for yoga and why they choose one destination over another.

Pearce and Lee (2005) identify few difficulties in the study of motivation such as: large diversity in human needs and wants, cross-cultural differences and methodological difficulties (Pearce and Lee, 2005). Dann (1981) adds that problems with motivation research occur because tourists may not wish to reflect on real travel motives, they may be unable to reflect on real travel motives, they may not wish to express real travel motives, they may not be able to verbalize or otherwise express real travel motives (cited in Bowen and Clarke, 2009). Therefore, "there is no shortage of writing on human motivations and it is certain that no single motivation theory can lead to full understanding" (Bowen and Clarke, 2009:88). However, a theory that has been generally accepted in the tourism field (Crompton, 1979, Dann, 1981) is the push and pull theory. Therefore, it has been chosen as the most relevant for answering the research question theory.

#### A) Push and Pull

This theory is appropriate for this research because it will help distinguishing different motivational factors for German yoga practitioners' travels related to yoga and different appealing aspects with regards to the yoga destination. Dann (1977) explains that push factors are internal to the person and predisposes one to travel while pull factors are those aspects of a destination, which attract tourists. Bowen and Clarke (2009) suggest that pull factors can be geographical proximity, accessibility, availability of attractions/services, affordability, peace, stability and safety. According to the same authors, both motivational factors, push and pull, can be engaged simultaneously (Bowen and Clarke, 2009). In other words, push and pull motivational factor can be matched between each other in interrelationships. By this, it is meant that certain push factor corresponds to certain pull factor. For example, when there is huge amount of stress in one's everyday life, he or she wants to travel away from that stress and relax. Hence, the stress is a push factor and the destination that offers calmness and relaxation - pull factor. However, push and pull should not be accepted as opposite ends of a dichotomy because they are not two separate points in time; tourists are simultaneously pushed by internal factors and pulled by the destination attractiveness (Bowen and Clarke, 2009; Crompton, 1979). Dann (1977) adds that tourists' motivations are

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a function of both push and pull factors. Bowen and Clarke (2009) observe most common push and pull factors, which are presented in the following Table 1:

Push	Pull
<p>Tourist's intrinsic desires</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Escape</li><li>• Rest/relaxation</li><li>• Adventure</li><li>• Health</li><li>• Prestige</li></ul>	<p>Destination attractiveness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Geographical proximity</li><li>• Accessibility</li><li>• Availability of attractions/services</li><li>• Affordability</li><li>• Peace, stability, and safety</li></ul>

Table 1. Push and pull model (Adapted from Bowen and Clarke, 2009)

Push/pull theory gives insight into tourists' motivation. Even though the academic research in the field of yoga tourism is still in its beginning (Lehto et al., 2006), the literature based on motivation of the yoga tourists exists. For instance, Lehto et al. (2006) define the three most common push factors for yoga tourists: 1) get away from routine work; 2) seek authentic yoga experience (the biggest target group for the yoga associations' efforts); 3) enjoy yoga fun. In addition to the first of these three push factors that makes people travel for yoga, Iso-Ahola (1982) confirms that tourists have the desire to leave the everyday life environment behind in order to obtain psychological rewards through traveling to a contrasting environment. These psychological rewards correspond to the inward vocation that Tikkanen (2007) describes earlier in this chapter. Moreover, the first two push factors overlap with certain points in the definitions for yoga tourists discussed in the paragraphs above. However, the last one does not seem to correspond to them because yoga tourists do not practice yoga as fitness or exercise program, both of which can be seen as synonyms of fun in this case, but they accept yoga as a spiritual path (Smith and Puczko, 2009). Therefore, it might be argued that the third push factor that Lehto et al. (2006) have described, refer more to regular leisure tourists who choose yoga as additional service, rather than to yoga tourists for whom yoga is the main motivator for traveling.

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Some of the motivations that push today's health and wellness tourists to travel may also represent certain factors that influence yoga tourists' travel motivation as well, such as: to look and feel better, to relieve pain or discomfort, to manage stress or to improve their health (Letho et al., 2006). The focus on tourists' health is obvious but to a certain extent, they all correlate to the definitions of yoga tourists above. In addition, Smith and Puczko (2009) allege that the top five motivations of yoga tourists to travel are: 1) to renew self; 2) to relax; 3) to let go of stress from a busy life; 4) to be more flexible in body and mind; 5) to help gain a sense of balance. From that, it can be noticed that all of the five motivations correspond to the definitions above for what the yoga tourists seek in their yoga holiday. The analysis afterwards will show whether there are more relevant motivational factors than other. The examination and the understanding of the motivational factors will also be favorable for the differentiation of the segment. Hence, the Danish DMOs would be able to design promotional programs or develop different marketing strategies in attempt to fulfill more of the tourists' needs and expectations in that segment.

#### B) The Dimensionality of Yoga Tourism Motivation

Another model that may be considered an addition to the push and pull theory and in the same time as more focused on yoga tourism model, is the dimensionality of yoga tourism motivation suggested by Lehto et al. (2006). They claim that the motivation for traveling for yoga can be separated in four groups: enhancing physical conditions, enhancing mental well-being, controlling negative emotions and seeking spirituality (Lehto et al., 2006:32). From that, it can be noticed that this model corresponds almost completely to the Voigt, Brown and Howat's (2011) wellness tourism characterization. The pitfall in this model might be found in the fact that it cannot define which of the groups has the strongest influence on the vacationers' motivation or whether one, few or all of them influence the interviewees' behavior at once. A full version of the model can be found in the Appendixes chapter.

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### 3.3.4. Experience or Travel Awareness

The next tourists' behavioral characteristic from Mathieson and Wall's theory (1982) is their travel experience or travel awareness gained after the consumption of the tourism product.

According to Moutinho (1987), the destination performance might meet tourists' expectations and thus, the experience to be positive. On the other hand, it might be lower than the tourist's expectations, which results in a negative experience due to the expectancy disconfirmation paradigm that explains the correlation between expectations and satisfaction (Weber, 1997). In both cases, Lederman (1996 cited in Lehto et al. 2006) suggests that a vacation should affect a person in a meaningful and permanent way. Hence, if the experience is positive, the tourists may choose again the same destination but if the experience is negative, they might go to the competition (Moutinho, 1987). However, for any experience to be positive or negative, it depends on subjective evaluations because "an experience is inherently personal, no two people can have the same one. The effect differs based on past experiences and current state of mind." (Pine and Gilmore, 1999:172). In addition, new needs arise in tourists with the accumulated experience, (Pearce and Lee, 2005). Therefore, the self-designed model in Figure 2 is to illustrate that the interrelations between the tourists' behavioral characteristics are in a continuous cycle linking the dependant elements inside the model.

Next, in order to travel, tourists must be aware of the opportunities available on the market. Both informal and formal sources are used in order to reach the tourists/ potential tourists. According to Mathieson and Wall (1982), formal sources are magazines, travel brochures, advertisements on radio and television, and discussions with travel intermediaries and the informal sources refer to comments or recommendations from relatives, friends or other travelers. Magazines, travel brochures and guides implement three main promotional objectives: to satisfy tourists' need for information, to create an image and to influence tourists' choice (Tian-Cole and Crompton, 2003 cited in Bowen and Clarke, 2009:117). Information found in formal sources is highly appreciated because of its credibility and quality (Mathieson and Wall, 1982). However, mostly informal sources represented by friends' recommendations from word-of-mouth are identified among the interviewees' replies. This appears to be the strongest motivational factor, which

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eventually will push the German yoga practitioners to travel for yoga. There are still few interviewees who would use the internet to gather information but this search would be more focused on pricing and other practicalities around individuals' traveling.

### 3.3.5. Attitude

The last point that Mathieson and Wall (1982) considered important in their theory is that of the tourists' attitude.

Attitude is a settled behavior of thinking or feeling about something (Oxford Dictionary, 2014). The reason individuals hold certain attitudes is that these attitudes serve psychological needs, satisfying the need (Fodness, 1994). According to Gnoth (1997), tourists' attitudes towards holiday experiences derive from emotions and cognitions. Emotions are feelings, instincts or drives; cognitions refer to mental representation such as knowledge or beliefs (Gnoth, 1997). With this definition, attitudes are similar to the expectations where the value system of the tourists is emotionally or cognitively motivated. Tourists' attitudes represent a crucial component in travel motivation because they are reflection of the past experiences and in the same time very influential towards future decisions in regards to returning or not to the same place (Mathieson and Wall, 1982; Moutinho, 1987).

### 3.4. *Spiritual vs. Religious*

In this part, the perceptions over spiritual and religious are discussed. Journeys related to religious sites and festivals, pilgrimage or spirituality, have long been a feature of human travel (Morpeth, 2007). According to Willson et al. (2013), religion and spirituality are closely related with overlapping definitions and as a result, many scholars use the terms synonymously. However, there are certain differences between the two concepts. According to Iyengar (1989 cited in Smith and Puczko, 2009), yoga is not a religion, it is meant for individual growth and for physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual balance. Moreover, as it was already mentioned in the previous paragraphs, yoga in the Western world is considered a spiritual practice (Smith and Kelly, 2006; Johnsen and Jacobus, 2007) and yoga

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tourism is considered spiritual tourism (Willson, 2010 and Lalonde, 2012 both cited in Kaur, 2013). Willson et al. (2013) adds that the religious tourism and pilgrimage literature focus mainly on the external elements of the tourist experience, as religious sites, festivals, etc. while spirituality is internal element into a person's values system. While traditional religions have sacred beliefs, customs and places and thus, they are sacred systems, the spirituality is something personal, therefore, it is specific to the individuals and not part of any system (Butcher, 2003). That is to say, that one's culture and philosophical background can influence how one defines and experiences spirituality (Reinert and Koenig, 2013). There are many definitions of spirituality but Speck (2005) claims that being human beings, everyone has spirituality. Willson et al. (2013) add to that, that the interconnectedness represents the very core of spirituality and that it can be the seeking of harmonious relationships (oneness) with self, others (including other people, animals, nature) and/or God/higher power. However, although everyone has spirituality, not all humans are religious, and thus religion may or may not be part of one's spirituality (Sessanna et al., 2011). For instance, atheists have spiritual needs that have no religious underpinnings (Sessanna et al., 2011). Therefore, spirituality can be seen as a broader concept than religiosity (Sessanna et al., 2011; Willson et al., 2013) and at the same time both, religion and spirituality, are two distinguishable and distinct concepts. Hicks (2003 cited in Speck, 2005) even alleges that attempts to transfer religiously particular values into common spiritual or secular values are inaccurate. On the other hand, Speck (2005) states that the distinction between them is not clear and it appears to be hazy. Willson et al. (2013) even add that it is probably impossible to wholly separate religion from spirituality. Nevertheless, this thesis follows the positioning of the first point of view, that religion and spirituality are two different concepts and when connected to tourism – two different types. Framing spirituality in the context of tourism, many scholars argue that spirituality concerns the higher levels of Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Willson et al., 2013). Moreover, spiritual tourists seek something in addition to or as alternative to religion (Morpeth, 2007). In addition, traveling for spirituality provides an opportunity to fulfill one's desire to be away from the routines of everyday life in order to seek changes. In most cases, people quest to transform themselves through their travel (Butcher, 2003).

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Table 2 (can be found in the Appendixes chapter) is used as a helping tool for the following analysis of the interviewees' responses. It suggests different terms in religious or spiritual context that will help the research to outline what type of context the interviewees use mainly while being interviewed.

### *3.5. Kirtans as a spiritual practice*

In the recent years, yoga increases its popularity among Western societies (Alter, 2004; De Michelis, 2005; Lehto et al., 2006). Kirtans practice is yoga chanting, or type of yoga called yoga of sound (Mattson, 2008). The most important instrument is the voice and when the music stops, the mind (already directed towards spiritual dimensions by the kirtans) spontaneously enters the meditative state (Johnsen and Jacobus, 2007). This might be the form of relaxation and/or the escape from everyday life that yoga tourists look for, according to most of the typologies that were previously mentioned. Mattson (2008) adds that this practice has been gaining popularity in the West for the last decade and that more people may consider exploring this type of yoga in the future. One of the reasons for that might be the pressure and the stresses of today's hectic everyday life (Lehto et al., 2006). Johnsen and Jacobus (2007) explain that people from any religion or no religion at all can participate because this is spiritual practice that allows people go deeper inside and connect themselves to the God or to the Goddess within them (Mattson, 2008). This corresponds to the idea of interconnectedness as a core of spirituality too (Willson et al., 2013). In addition, kirtan is at once both a very personal practice and a dynamic group experience and while the chanting one connects deeply with the musicians, with the other participants and with self (Johnsen and Jacobus, 2007; Orecklin, Duros and Stukin, 2003). Kirtans facilitate social connections but for these connections to work, people should participate in the call and response format of the kirtan chanting (Orecklin, Duros and Stukin, 2003). Johnsen and Jacobus (2007) add that kirtan is best understood through direct experience and that one of the intoxicating things about kirtan is that it is participatory. To put it differently, intoxicating may be related to the positive effects that kirtan has on people, because during the chanting, they focus in their minds, access inner peace, calmness, connection and non-thinking (Mattson, 2008). After the kirtan practice people feel emotionally refreshed, mentally



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cleansed, spiritually energized and the problems that weigh at one's heart fall away (Johnsen and Jacobus, 2007). Based on that, kirtans can be defined as a relieve therapy.

Kirtans are connected in certain extend to the needs and the motivation of the yoga tourists to travel for yoga in order to fix the disequilibrium in their motivational system (Crompton, 1979). The research intentionally puts focus on that yoga practice because there is no research done in that field and it is interesting to explore kirtans as a motivator that may push German yoga practitioners for a yoga trip. The exploration on the topic will show whether they are a strong motivator to make German yoga practitioners' travel or something else is of a greater interest to them. The analysis will show whether the yoga tourists' destination choice depends on where the kirtans are or it depends on other variables.

To sum up, this chapter was to introduce the chosen theories, models and typologies that are used in order to help the following empirical data analysis. In the first place, it was clarified that yoga tourism is a fast growing phenomenon in tourism (Lehto et al., 2006) and thus, it is an important feature to put focus on and to be studied. Therefore, the research tries to identify yoga tourists and what they look for in their yoga holidays. This is also the first sub question of the research question. This definition will help further research both in the limits of this project and in a broader context. Afterwards, different theories and models are used in order to answer the main research question of what motivates German yoga practitioners to travel for yoga, and what needs stay behind their choices of a yoga destination. For the aim, Pearce's travel career ladder, push and pull theory and the model of dimensionality of yoga tourism motivation are implied. All of them correspond directly to the main research question and using them for the following analysis, aims to give as complete as possible answer of the research questions. Then, discussions over spirituality and over the spiritual practice of chanting kirtans are created in order to apply the final conclusions from them into the answer of the third sub question of the research questions. Finally, the answers of these questions might contribute to a more focused analysis on what may attract the German yoga tourists in Denmark as a yoga destination.



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The research will allow the researcher to learn what suits the best such type of research and what is important to be included in future or excluded in similar research on other nationalities.

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## Analysis

In this chapter will be presented the analysis of the collected through semi-structured interviews data, based on the theoretical background from the previous chapter. The data analysis is divided into 6 main themes: interviewees' characteristics, expert interview insight, yoga tourism and yoga tourists, spirituality vs. religion, needs and motivation to travel for yoga, Denmark as yoga destination and possible challenges to become such for the region. This type of structure aims to make visible the interrelations between the methodology chapter, theory chapter, and research questions.

First, the analysis of the expert interview will take place. In this order, it will first enhance the researcher's knowledge about what exactly kirtan practice is, what people expect from such practice and what they may gain from it. Thus, this knowledge might contribute to a better understanding of the German yoga practitioners' responses. In addition, it will give the insight how the kirtan practice has been popularized in Bulgaria and thus, this information can be transferred into a Danish context in order to popularize the kirtans in the Danish yoga centers which might turn Denmark into more competitive yoga destination for the region. Afterwards, the individual semi-structured interviews with the German yoga practitioners will be analyzed and summarized. The results might show some indications of similarities or differences among the group of interviewees of what the German yoga practitioners need and what motivates them to travel for yoga. The areas that the analysis will focus on are based on the theories used in the previous chapter – namely: needs, expectations, motivation, previous experience, relatives and friends' influences on tourists' decisions, tourists' loyalty towards a destination, perceptions about religion and spirituality, and kirtans as a motivation to travel. In addition, from the interviews, only information linked to these focus points will be used and discussed in this chapter as the rest of the information in the interviews is considered not important or not relevant to the research questions.

#### 4.1. Interviewees' characteristics

As already mentioned in the Methodology chapter, qualitative semi-structured individual interviews are conducted with 10 German yoga practitioners. In addition, an interview with two experts in the field of kirtans is also taken in order to develop the researcher's knowledge about this type of practice and thus, to better understand and analyze more accurately the interviewees' responses.

The following Table 3 illustrates the basic socio-economic characteristics and background data on the individual semi-structured interviewees (excluding the expert interview).

<b>Inter- viewees</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Marital status</b>	<b>Chil dren</b>	<b>Type yoga - perceptions</b>
Int. 1 J	57F	before - interpreter; now - yoga teacher	married	2	Hatha - physical, advanced
Int. 2 B	48F	owner, shop consultant	widow	1	Hatha - physical, beginner
Int. 3 M1	75F	before - self employed; now - retired	widow	3	Hatha + Art of living - spiritual, advanced
Int. 4 U	67F	former shop owner; now - retired	partnership	3	Hatha - spiritual, advanced
Int. 5 I	49F	before - tour guide; now - physician	married	0	Hatha - combination between both, beginner
Int. 6 M2	63F	before - handicap teacher; now - retired	married	3	Hatha - both physical and spiritual, advanced
Int. 7 V	62M	before - manager; now - retired	married	3	Hatha - physical, beginner
Int. 8 H	49F	teacher	married	2	Hatha - physical, not a beginner, not an advanced
Int. 9 C	59F	teacher	divorced	3	Hatha - physical, advanced
Int. 10 V	50F	yoga teacher	divorced	1	Hatha - spiritual, advanced

Table 3. Interviewees' characteristics

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From this table can be noticed that the participation of females is predominant. Only one male has participated in this research, which makes the sample not balanced when it comes to gender. The reasons for that can be various. For instance, one of them might be, as it was previously explained in the Theory chapter, that women are more willing to participate in the research. Another one might be that men might be less inclined to share their personal feelings in front of others (Smith and Kelly, 2006). It is not clear whether the male participation will change drastically the results of this research but I assume it might influence them in a way due to males and females want different products, and they are likely to have different ways of thinking about obtaining these (Mitchell and Walsh, 2004).

Another point that needs to be marked is the fact that the age span of the interviewees ranges between 48 and 75 years old, which do not exactly correspond to the Lehto et al. concept (2006) that the yoga tourists are predominantly women in their 40s as only three of the interviewees fit in this definition. The sample group, however, is not sizeable enough to disprove that concept. The generated definition about the yoga tourists in the Theory chapter, which suggests another formulation about yoga tourists being predominantly females over 40, appears to be more relevant to this research. In addition, the fact that some of the interviewees know each other in the life outside of the research might also have influenced the age span of the interviewees. Nevertheless, this is not believed to be a factor that will alter significantly the final results of the analysis.

Most of the interviewees are married or live with a partner, which is a prerequisite for a syncretic decision-making among husbands and wives, where “the decision is made jointly or equally between husband and wife” (Davis and Rigaux, 1974 cited in Bowen and Clarke, 2009:185). Three of the interviewees; their partners have significant but indirect influence on the interviewees’ choices. Even though most of the interviewees are married, more than a half of them take individual, autonomic decisions. This means, “the decision is taken by an individual partner independently, sometimes described as solitary or unilateral.” (Davis and Rigaux, 1974 cited in Bowen and Clarke, 2009:185). In addition, children, being part of the interviewees’ families, have also significant but indirect influence on their parents’ choices when planning their holidays. The actual role of the children takes place before the real process of deciding to start (Bowen and Clarke, 2009). Yet,

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the results from the analysis show, that does not refer to mature offspring that have already left the family nest and live on their own.

At last will be introduced the personal perceptions on how the interviewees identify the type of yoga that they practice and different perceptions of the individuals about themselves. All of the interviewees practice the same type of yoga - Hatha yoga, which normally in the literature related to yoga is defined as a physical type that applies special postures (known as asanas) for a state of equilibrium of all systems of the body (Reisinger, 2013:101). However, the results of the question how the interviewees accept this physical type of yoga show that nearly half of them accept Hatha yoga as a physical practice but the rest accept it as a spiritual one. In addition, some of the interviewees define themselves as advanced yoga practitioners based on the number of years that they have been practicing it disregarding the level they are actually at. This is a result of the various subjective realities of the interviewees where the different interviewees have diverse perceptions and understanding about the world (Bryman, 2014). Because of the subjectivity, these results might not be the same when repeating the same research but with different variables. Nevertheless, this is not an issue from a constructivist point of view.

As for the experts, both of the interviewees are well known in the kirtan environments in Bulgaria and partially in Germany with their spiritual names. The spiritual name of the first expert (Ivaylo Cvetanov) is Janmejaya, the spiritual name of the second expert (Daniela Dimitrova) – is Divyatirtha. They are considered appropriate choice for this research because they have started the process of popularizing the practice of chanting kirtans in Bulgaria 5 years ago, which might be perceived to be similar to the situation in Denmark – kirtan practice being not such a popular yoga practice in the country. Today, kirtans practices with Janmejaya and Divyatirtha are organized all around Bulgaria. Moreover, they have already performed a few times in Germany with and/or for the German yoga practitioners. In this way, they get more experienced with different nationalities. Moreover, they have the opportunity to gather personally first-hand impressions on the German yoga practitioners. Both of the experts have traveled to India, gaining valuable first-hand experience in the field of kirtans where yoga originates from (Mattson, 2008). The aim of this interview is for the researcher to acquire explanatory knowledge about this practice and to understand what people can gain from it. Moreover, it might help the researcher to better

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understand and thus, analyze more accurately the following interviewees' responses.

To sum up, the individual interviews are done with German yoga practitioners, predominantly females, between 48 and 75 years old. Most of them have families and thus, the family's members might influence their choices over yoga destinations. In addition, the expert interviewees are from Bulgaria and the interview with them is used in order to gather explanatory knowledge on the topic of kirtans. This might help the following analysis of the German interviewees' replies.

#### *4.2. Expert Interview Insight*

In this part, the independent analysis of the expert interview will take place in order to give better understanding of the yoga practice called kirtan. It is considered that in-depth explanatory knowledge will be reached after the analysis of the expert interview.

Firstly, this part suggests a discussion on the different understandings of the kirtan practices. Kirtan practice in the Western world is considered not a physical type of yoga (Johnsen and Jacobus, 2007) and the physical body (muscles, bones) is even perceived as a limitation for this type of yoga (Janmejaya). Furthermore, one's mind and accumulated knowledge over lifetime seems to limit the benefits from the practice, too. The idea of practicing kirtans is to free the body and the mind from all the limitations that keep people away from feeling free and happy (Johnsen and Jacobus, 2007). Therefore, kirtans work with the "emotional body" of the participants (Janmejaya and Divyatirtha). That is to say, that people free themselves from negative influences and emotions while chanting kirtans because they express themselves while doing it. This corresponds to both Lehto et al. (2006) theory about yoga tourists' motivation and to Smith and Puczko (2009) theory that one of the five motivations of yoga tourists to travel for yoga is to let go of stress from a busy life.

The factor that makes this type of yoga so attractive for people seems to be that it does not require any musical education or special facilities where people can gather to practice kirtans (Janmejaya). From tourism point of view, that is to say, kirtan practices are easy to implement during all seasons in indoor facilities or

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outdoor areas in the warmer months of the year. Another finding from that interview is based on Janmejaya quote that music is a “common language that everybody understands”. When people in a group use that common language to communicate, it helps the communication in three different levels:

- people in the group communicate among themselves at another level while chanting kirtans,
- they communicate with their inner self and focus on themselves,
- they communicate over the mind with a higher power out of the body.

Moreover, in this case, the communication while chanting kirtans in a group can be perceived as the interconnectedness that represents the very core of spirituality (Willson et al., 2013), where one seeks harmonious relationships (oneness) with self, others (including other people, animals, nature) and/or God/higher power (Willson et al., 2013).

The second benefit that can be taken out of the context of the interview is that kirtan practices like many other types of yoga can be healing (Divyatirtha). The tones and the sounds’ vibrations are believed to influence the chakras (A/N spiritual center of the human body) in certain way that they clear the mind, relax the thoughts’ flow, make the person more focused after the practice, improve a person’s health, etc. Muscles, temperature, or cough decrease while chanting kirtans, which happens because the “vital inner energy starts moving” in one’s body, releasing internal blockages being the source of the pain (Divyatirtha). There are people with repressed emotions all over the world and these repressed emotions influence negatively the person’s health (Janmejaya and Divyatirtha). Therefore, the idea of the kirtan practice seems to make people comfortable and safe enough to sing even if they do not perform on a high level. It is to give them the environment, in which they can express themselves and release the negative emotions. All of the examples given by Divyatirtha about the healing effects of kirtans on people are directly related to Smith and Puczko (2009) theory and to Lehto et al. (2006) theory about the motivation of yoga tourists to travel for yoga. The first theory includes motivations such as: to renew themselves, to relax, to gain a sense of balance; and the second one – to feel better, to relieve pain or discomfort, to improve their health. In addition, for one to understand and feel the “group energy” of a kirtan practice (Divyatirtha) (s)he should participate, “not

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watch in Youtube (A/N the kirtans)” (Janmejaya). Only then it should be evaluated whether kirtan practices are appropriate for the individual.

The third benefit deriving from the expert interview is that the kirtan practices, being part of yoga, appear to be one of the answers to the interviewees’ search for a more holistic approach to life and yoga (Lehto et al., 2006). This is based on the experts claim that that practice is spiritual in its core and thus, it contributes to self-defining of the interviewees as spiritual individuals.

Having the experience of the observations and the interactions with the German yoga practitioners, the interviewees suggest that the latter are educational tourists who tend to participate in planned study programs, primary for acquiring new skills and knowledge (Foo, McGuiggan and Yiannakis, 2004). In addition, willingness to acquire new knowledge corresponds to Cohen’s typology (1979), too. For instance, seminars, workshops or educational program might attract the German yoga practitioners. Another observation of the experts on the German yoga practitioners that might be important for the research is that they can outline a trend in the yoga circles in Germany. A popular practice is while a group of people practice their physical yoga to hear kirtans on the background (Divyatirtha). This might be implemented in the Danish yoga studios in order to attract international tourists who already look for such tourism experience.

After the analysis of the viewpoints of the two experts a discussion on yoga tourism and yoga tourists will follow. It will be the link towards the most important part of the analysis where the ten individual interviews with the German yoga tourists will be examined.

#### *4.3. Yoga Tourism and Yoga Tourists*

This part of the analysis aims to answer the first sub question from the part with the research questions in the Introduction chapter. It will explore whether the collected data from the individual interviews with the German yoga practitioners corresponds to the theories, models and concepts that are used in the Theory chapter but also will try to identify the yoga tourists and what they look for their yoga holidays.



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#### 4.3.1. Yoga Tourism

As it was explained in the Theory chapter, yoga tourism rapidly gains popularity because of the pressure and the stresses of today's hectic everyday life (Lehto et al., 2006). According to Holloway and Plant's categorization of the tourism types (1988, cited in Tikkanen, 2007) and from the interviewees' responses, holiday, health, educational purposes, and sport and other activities are important part of each yoga travel. All the interviews includes either three or all of the four of these four elements. This however, it is too broad concept for defining yoga tourism. Moreover, these four elements are the same four elements that frame the leisure tourism (IUOTO, 1963:14 cited in Leiper, 1979). Therefore, further investigation is needed in order to propose as precise as possible explanation on yoga tourism as an independent segment in the field of tourism.

Based on Figure 1 (Theory chapter, p.25), the placement of yoga tourism as a niche of well-being practices suits best the German yoga practitioners' responses. The interviewees frequently use expressions like relaxation, releasing the stress accumulated at home and at work, attempts to improve their health habits, availability of wellness facilities as massages, sauna, pools, etc. in support of the above statement. The main component in their yoga holiday, however, is the yoga and that makes this type of holidays different from a typical leisure ones where the main component is the relaxation. Moreover, the sub classification of the yoga tourism being spiritually defined is 100 % confirmed by the interviewees' responses. With different variables of the research, the percentage might slightly decrease but it is believed that the number will remain big. Further discussion on spirituality and how it can influence yoga tourists' choices will follow in the next part of this chapter.

Furthermore, yoga tourism seen as sport tourism might be partially excluded because none of the interviewees mentions anything related to yoga as a sport-oriented activity. However, it may be accepted as an active form of tourism because all of them expect to practice yoga during their holiday. As to the idea that yoga tourism might be defined as nature-based tourism, this can be 100 % supported by the interviewees' responses. In each interview, the researcher can find expressions related to the nature. This, however, does not mean necessarily that yoga tourism is a nature-based tourism but the sample group expresses expectations that nature should be an integral part of their yoga trip. Afterwards,

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the idea that yoga tourism is special interest tourism can be supported partially because most of the interviewees tend to share their common interest in yoga with other like-minded individuals (Lehto et al., 2006). However, two of the interviewees do not share this viewpoint, even if they are in a yoga center, where they can still practice yoga. It is more likely for them to meditate in solitude and go deeper in the understanding of the philosophy of the yoga type they practice. It is believed that with a bigger sample group the results will remain in similar proportions because the human being is a "social animal" (Homer, 2001) and tend to socialize with like-minded individuals in order to satisfy their needs on the relationships level of Pearce's travel career ladder (Pearce and Lee, 2005). From these results, it can be said that the majority of the yoga tourists are special interest tourists but there is a share that does not fit in the definition, which should not be ignored. Therefore, a further research with more participants should be conducted in order to conclude whether yoga tourists are special interest tourists or not.

To sum up, the research confirmed that the yoga tourism is best defined as a niche of the well-being practices, which is spiritually defined in its core. Moreover, it is an active form of tourism and the nature is an integral part of a tourism product that will eventually be advertised to the German yoga tourists' segment. The latter is to be analyzed in the next part.

#### 4.3.2. Yoga Tourists

In this part will be examined the generated definition about yoga tourists that was suggested in the Theory chapter (p.23). The results will show whether it can be used not only on theory but also with real empirical data.

The first point from the definition, as it was already discussed in the previous part, is that yoga tourists seek relaxation away from the stress and the noise of the everyday life. The next point is that they seek authentic experience, sought in spirituality. This might be argued because for some of the interviewees, spirituality and yoga are essential part of their everyday life but this is not the case of the majority. In contrast, for the other part of the interviewees, the spirituality does not seem to be the most important motivator that pushes them to travel for yoga. Afterwards, during the analysis it is outlined that the majority of the interviewees seek new learning experiences: new breathing techniques, new exercises; to learn

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more for yoga and for themselves; to experience different types (philosophies) of yoga, etc. This corresponds to the sixth point of the definition, namely, to participate in study programs in order to acquire new skills or knowledge. Moreover, this defines German yoga vacationers as educational tourists who tend to participate in planned study programs, primary for acquiring new skills and knowledge (Foo, McGuiggan and Yiannakis' typology, 2004). The next point of the definition that will be examined is that yoga tourists seek immersion in yoga culture and in groups of like-minded individuals. As it was explained above, the vast majority of the interviewees' yoga trips are motivated by the idea of meeting other like-minded individuals. Moreover, as Interviewee 3 states, meditation in a group is more effective, which refracted through the researcher point of view means that the immersion in yoga is deeper in a group and thus, the findings overlap that point of the definition. The next point is that they tend to arrange their trip alone and travel alone or in small groups. This corresponds completely to the definition that majority of the interviewees prefer arranging their yoga holidays by themselves and traveling alone or with their life partners. Hence, the decisions about the trips are autonomic or syncretic as it was explained previously in this chapter and they are based on the information that has reached them through friends and personal recommendation, or through brochures, magazines and internet. From the sum up of the previous part, it becomes clear that yoga tourists remain active while on vacation. Thus, the point is 100 % confirmed. The following one, which claims that yoga tourists retain some of their basic routines and comforts of their native way of life, might be supported to a certain degree. The replies of almost half of the interviewees express their expectations to consume during their yoga holiday the light and organic food, which they normally consume in their everyday life. This means that the food habits remain unchanged. In addition, practicing yoga in itself can be seen as a basic routine that is a constant element, which retains during a holiday. This finding overlaps one more point, which suggests that yoga tourists might be interested in vegetarian/organic food. Afterwards, the formulation of the next point that the yoga tourists are predominantly females over 40 seems to be more relevant to this research than the Lehto et al. one (2006), according to which, yoga tourists are predominantly females in their 40s. The last point of the generated definition is that yoga tourists might be interested in alternative medicine. That does not really correspond to the

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replies of the German interviewees because none of them mentions anything about any kind of alternative healing methods.

As it was explained previously, a part with a focus on the influences of the spirituality over the German yoga vacationers' choices about yoga destinations is included in the analysis. The next subchapter represents the two concepts of spirituality and religion and their role in the yoga tourists' decisions.

#### *4.4. Spirituality vs. Religion*

The distinction between these two concepts needs to be part from the analysis because it is important for the researcher to understand whether the German yoga practitioners accept as synonyms or as different concepts religion and spirituality. This distinction is needed as all of the interviewees described yoga traveling as spiritual and some of them are explicit it is definitely not a religious type. It is important for the researcher to understand whether spirituality is just an expression that the interviewees use or there is a deeper meaning of that notion. For the aim, the interviewees are asked to describe the difference between these two notions. The results from this question are as follow:

Religion is described as: this is not very flexible system built from people, based on a special form (the church) with traditions, dogmas, obligations and a frame (Int.9, Int.5, Int.6, Int.10);

Spirituality is described as: personal way to believe, without frame, it is over all religions; it is more private and inside-focused, not outside expression as it is for religions (Int.10, Int.6, Int.8, Int.1);

However, one interviewee could not define a difference (Int.2) and three more did not think there is any difference between the two notions (Int.3, Int.4, Int.7).

Even almost half of the interviewees had no clear response on the question, everybody replied that yoga traveling is spiritual. These results might be due to the fuzziness between the concepts because yoga is religious in its place of origin. Therefore, Table 2 (can be found in the Appendixes chapter) is used to help clarifying the expressions used by the interviewees (consciously or subconsciously) in the content of the interviews. Most of the interviewees use expressions related to

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spirituality like connection with others, harmony, inner peace, meditation, etc. Thus, spirituality seems to be deeply embedded into the interviewees' lives and even if there is no clear conscious distinction between religious and spiritual for some of them, this does not necessarily mean they are not spiritual individuals.

After these clarifications, the analysis of the 10 individual semi-structured interviews that have been gathered will follow in the next paragraphs.

#### *4.5. Needs and Motivation to Travel for Yoga - based on the individual interviews with the German yoga practitioners*

This part of the analysis sets a direct focus to answer the main research question presented in the Introduction chapter. Therefore, it is the most important piece of the analysis. The analysis might show essential aspects of the German yoga tourists' behavior that should be taken into account when the Danish DMOs develop a product for this segment. It might be difficult to divide the subchapters for needs, expectations, motivation, experience and attitude. However, such division is essential for the sake of the project and therefore is present in the project.

##### 4.5.1. Theoretical Review

A range of relevant for the analysis theories are chosen in regards to the research questions. The theoretical review is used as a guideline for this part of the analysis. First and foremost, the Mathieson and Wall theory about tourists' behavior characteristics (1982) is used to analyze what motivates the German yoga practitioners to travel for yoga. It might identify the underlying needs, expectations, motivation, experiences (travel awareness) and attitudes but it will also shape the structure of the analysis.

The Pearce's travel career ladder (Pearce and Lee, 2005) will be used as a tool to approach eventual similarities in the needs arising from the interviewees' replies.

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Furthermore, push and pull theory is chosen to emphasize what are the motivational elements that makes German yoga practitioners travel for yoga and what attracts them to a yoga destination. In addition, the model of dimensionality of yoga tourism motivation (Lehto et al., 2006) is incorporated as it supports and completes the answer on the research question. Afterwards, Moutinho's model (1987), with its ideas of external forces and previous experiences' influence on the future decisions, is used in order to depict the importance of these two elements.

The analysis will investigate whether patterns become apparent when looking at the interviewees' replies or whether there is a lack of patterns within the research group. Thus, it might become clearer which motivational elements, expectations and needs are perceived as more important and which as not so. Ultimately, this part of the analysis is seen as the most significant for the project conclusions being the most relevant to the research questions of the project.

#### 4.5.2. Needs

In this part, the analysis will be based on the Pearce's travel career ladder (Pearce and Lee, 2005). Lowest level of this model and interviewees' responses show that for the German yoga tourists the relaxation needs turn to be as important as the yoga activities during a yoga holiday. Based on the received replies during the interviews, everybody expects to have an intensive yoga program of the course, surrounded by calmness, quietness and relaxation. These needs show their willingness to be away from their problems, stress from home and work, and separation from the everyday life. Moreover, this is the point where the yoga practitioners need a holiday in order to recover their health condition (Crompton, 1979). In addition, some of them share that except the yoga course, they also need free time to focus only on themselves during such holiday. At a more abstract level, this might also be interpreted, as they are concerned for their own safety, which is the next level from the Pearce's ladder, named stimulation. With other words, because they might be concerned for their health during their stressful everyday life, they want to escape, focus on themselves and regain their health strength. In relation to the next level of the ladder, the relationship needs, the interviewees' responses show that eight from ten German yoga practitioners need to be in a group of like-minded individuals while on yoga holiday. Moreover,

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they are willing to maintain these relationships after the holiday is over. The reason for this might be that the individuals are more productive in groups than when working alone (Shaw, 1932) or as Interviewee 3 described it earlier: “to be more effective”. In addition, Interviewee 9 shares her expectations of yoga practice on a yoga holiday: “to last more than at home” (N/A where she explains she practices alone). The next level of Pearce’s ladder, the self-esteem and development needs, is very clearly outlined by almost each interviewee willing to gain certain new knowledge about yoga and thus, to develop new range of skills. The last level represents the self-actualization or the fulfillment needs. Although some of the German yoga tourists express that they need time only for themselves to focus and understand better themselves, other need the time to reach more intensive inner experience and/or full immersion in the culture of yoga, inner peace and harmony. To reach that, they need to be in complete separation from the everyday life with no distractions and more calmness (Int.5 and Int.2). This need corresponds to the existential type of tourists in Cohen’s typology (1979), where the immersion in the culture and the lifestyle during a holiday away from home might be transferred back home once the trip is over.

In a similar way to the Danish yoga tourist (Koseva, 2013), the analysis of the German yoga tourists’ needs shows that their needs can be found in all levels in Pearce’s ladder (Pearce and Lee, 2005). Certain levels might be more clearly defined than others due to possible misunderstandings between the researcher and the interviewees, or due to interviewees’ use of vocabulary, which does not correspond to the vocabulary of the model. However, the last two levels seems to be the main reason for this sample group to travel for yoga. Moreover, the results from the analysis do not mean that each level should be climbed in order to step on the next one. It means that in one single trip, the tourist can experience all of the levels. This is one of the pitfalls that this model sets (Theory chapter, p.23).

This part was to analyze the German yoga tourists’ needs to travel for yoga, while the next part will address their expectation for a yoga holiday.



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### 4.5.3. Expectations

In this part, the most important expectations that the interviewees consider important for their yoga holidays will be summarized. It is difficult to separate the needs from the expectations because both are essential for one's motivation. However, expectations are not part of the Mathieson and Wall's theory (1982) and hence, some points of the needs analysis can also be found in this part. These that have already been discussed in the previous part will be just briefly indicated in this section.

As it has been discussed above, the German yoga vacationers expect not only to have intensive yoga program but also to relax, rest and have their own personal time for other activities, which are not part of the course's program. From tourism point of view, additional services or other activities at the destination, excluded from the yoga holiday, might be important to be available. The German yoga tourists expect to meet other people that have similar to their interests in yoga, which might be interpreted in different ways. Firstly, most of them can be defined as special interest tourists that tend to socialize with like-minded individuals (Smith and Kelly, 2006). Secondly, they might not receive the full understanding and support from their families, relatives or friends. For instance, Interviewee 3 shares, that she does not have "anyone to share with", because nobody around her is interested in what she is doing in relation to yoga, which appears to be an important part of her life. Thus, this need brings her to other people with similar interests. In addition, all of the interviewees hope to learn new exercises, breathing techniques, different lines of yoga but also to learn more for themselves – for the mind and the body. Therefore, diverse schedules and educational programs might be considered a significantly influential factor on German yoga tourists' choices of a yoga destination. Apart from already discussed needs/expectations, there are a few expectations that need the researcher's attention. Deriving from the idea that yoga tourism takes into account nature as integral part of the yoga holiday (Luo and Deng, 2008), all of the interviewees expect to be close to the nature. Closeness to water is the most common expectation that appear in nine from ten interviews. As Interviewee 9 suggests, this is "very strong motivator to travel". Other expectations concerning nature are: "beautiful landscapes" (Int.6), "mountains" (Int.7) and "natural materials for the buildings" (Int.10). Another expectation for a yoga holiday is the organic food that can be described as a basic routine and/or



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comfort of the German yoga tourists' native way of life (Cohen, 1972) that retains during the holiday.

The next two factors that influence the German yoga tourist's expectations are the family and friends as an external force and the factual knowledge about certain destination (Moutinho, 1987). Family and friends as an external force influence the interviewees' expectations and choices with their comments and recommendations. These are informal sources of information (Mathieson and Wall, 1982), which are evaluated by the researcher as the most trusted sources for the interviewees. In addition, formal sources like yoga magazines and brochures and official WebPages (Mathieson and Wall, 1982) are considered influential on the interviewees' expectations, too.

Afterwards, the factual knowledge about a yoga destination is important in order people to become interested in a particular place. Otherwise, one never will experience a yoga destination if (s)he does not have that factual knowledge about it. Therefore, it is considered very important for the Danish yoga studios to advertise themselves more on the German yoga market.

After going through the discussion about the tourists' expectations, the German yoga tourists' motivation to travel for yoga will follow.

#### 4.5.4. Motivation

Based on the push and pull theory, the analysis shows similarities among the interviewees' responses. Deriving from the Dann's explanation (1977) of pull factors being those aspects of a destination that attract tourists and based on the interviewees replies I can distinguish between six groups of motivational pull factors for the German yoga vacationers. The first one consists of the most referred motivational factors and each subsequent one - of less important and less referred ones:

- program of the yoga course, price and facilities;
- nature, teacher and food;
- accessibility and distance from home;
- like-minded individuals;

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- language, time of the year and length of the vacation (availability in regards to work schedule) the interviewees can afford to go on a holiday;
  - free time for other activities, wellness services, quietness, closeness to a city and type of yoga.

Some of them overlap with the Bowen and Clarke's suggestion (2009) that pull factors can be geographical proximity, accessibility, availability of attractions/services, affordability and peace.

Deriving from the Dann's explanation (1977) that push factors are internal to the person and the Mathieson and Wall's (1982) definition that a person's need is an internal condition, based on a lack, which could have an impact on the well-being of a person, the push factors might be defined as person's needs. In addition to this, as it was explained in the Theory chapter, the three most common push factors for yoga tourists that Lehto et al. (2006) define are: 1) get away from the routine work; 2) seek authentic yoga experience (the biggest target group for the yoga associations' efforts); 3) enjoy yoga fun. From the analysis of the interviewees' replies is obvious that the first two factors can be found almost in each interview. However, the third one does not correspond to the perception of the German yoga tourists as they define themselves as spiritual individuals.

Furthermore, escape, relaxation and health taken from the push factors' group, and all other factors but stability and safety from the pull factors' group are recognized as motivational factors for the German yoga vacationers (Table 1, p.38). In other words, the latter are motivated by the most common push and pull factors that Bowen and Clarke (2009) suggest. Therefore, this theory cannot be applied in order to distinguish the yoga tourists as an independent segment in the field of tourism. However, the findings correspond to the claim that tourists are simultaneously pushed by the internal factors and pulled by the destination attractiveness (Bowen and Clarke, 2009; Crompton, 1979). For instance, the desire to be away from the stress of everyday life is the push factor, while the calmness and the quietness of the yoga destination are the pull factors. Thus, the results from the analysis might help for the establishment of a product focused on that segment of tourists and more specifically on the fulfillment of the needs and the expectations of the interviewees.

Another model that can contribute to the analysis of the yoga tourists' motivation is the model of dimensionality of yoga tourism motivation. The

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interviewees' responses show that all of the groups defined in this model are valid for each interviewee, namely, enhancing physical conditions, enhancing mental well-being, controlling negative emotions and seeking spirituality. As mentioned in the theory chapter, the pitfall of this model is that it does not define whether one, few or all of the groups influence the interviewees' behavior at once. During the analysis, it becomes clear that all of them together influence each of the interviewees. However, it is not sure whether the results will be the same if the variables of the research change. Therefore, further research should follow in order to support or to disagree the results of the current research.

The next part discusses kirtans as a motivation for the German yoga tourists to travel for yoga.

#### 4.5.5. Kirtans as motivation for travel

This part of the analysis focuses on the second sub-question in the research questions' part from the Introduction chapter: how a spiritual practice as chanting kirtans may influence the German yoga practitioners' destination choice.

From the analysis becomes clear that half of the German yoga vacationers are ready to travel for experiencing kirtan practices in Denmark, however it is only on condition that their friends or relatives have already experienced the practice and have recommended it to the interviewees. The interesting result from the analysis is that the other half of the interviewees respond in very different directions – some of them claim that kirtans are strong enough motivator to make them travel to Denmark without any conditions while the rest reject completely that idea. Even if the sample group is bigger, I assume that the proportions of the replies will remain similar until there is no advertisement in the German yoga centers about the variety of opportunities offered by the Danish yoga centers.

The next part will address the experience of the interviewees or their travel awareness if the Mathieson and Wall's vocabulary (1982) is used.

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#### 4.5.6. Experience or Travel Awareness

In this part, a reflection on the interviewees' experience takes place. As it is explained in the Theory chapter, there is a correlation between tourists' expectations and tourists' experience, which is illustrated with the expectancy disconfirmation paradigm (Moutinho, 1987). However, there is no data found in the interviews whether the German yoga vacationers' expectations correspond to their experience or not. For some of the interviewees, there is data about their past experiences, which have been satisfactory. In these cases, the experience has met the expectations and thus, the interviewees have visited the same destination at least one more time because of the positive experience. Moreover, half of the interviewees show that their positive emotional experience from a past traveling to a particular yoga destination develops into a destination loyalty (Moutinho, 1987; Alegre and Juaneda, 2006). However, there is no data whether they will remain loyal to the destination even if the experience does not meet the expectations anymore. Another interesting thing is that some of the tourists that describe themselves as loyal to a yoga destination define themselves at the same time as curious about new destinations. For instance, half of the interviewees are willing to try new destinations recommended by friends or expect to do so when a better opportunity appears. This shows the irrationality in tourists' behavior that Ryan (1998 cited in Pearce and Lee, 2005) talks about. In addition, as it was mentioned in the part of Expectations, the researcher evaluates the recommendations from friends as the most trusted sources of information for the interviewees. Moreover, they are seen as a motivational factor in themselves.

Another experience that the interviewees have gained through the years is to define what the perfect duration of their yoga holidays should be. Most of the interviewees define it between one and two weeks in order to have time to relax and then, to immerse into the yoga experience. This might be useful information when preparing a yoga product that aims to satisfy as much as possible the expectations of that particular segment.

The last behavior characteristic from Mathieson and Wall theory (1982) is the attitude of the tourists. In the next part, this will be the focus of the discussion.

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#### 4.5.7. Attitude

In the first place, many of the interviewees describe themselves as spiritual individuals. Therefore, it might be important for them the yoga product that they will consume (course, holiday, retreat, etc) to be spiritually oriented. Secondly, as all of the interviewees define nature as an integral part of their holiday, it might be important the product that they consume to be nature-based. Moreover, most of them practice yoga at home on an everyday basis or often in the week and thus, yoga seems to be a very important part of their lives. This is the reason why some of the interviewees define themselves as advanced in yoga. However, some of the interviewees that have been practicing yoga on a basic level for years define themselves advanced, too. This is a result of the interviewees' various subjective realities where the different interviewees have diverse perceptions and understanding about the world (Bryman, 2014). Therefore, the product that will be produced for the German yoga tourist might need precise and careful formulation.

Another element of the German yoga tourists' attitude is their accumulated traveling experience. Thanks to the past experiences they develop their needs over the time and hence, they make their choices over yoga destinations more carefully and with less compromises.

To sum up, the whole subchapter was to analyze the behavior characteristics of the German yoga travelers and thus, to reach certain conclusions about their needs, expectations, motivation, experience (travel awareness) and attitude. In the next part of the analysis, which is also the last one, the focus is on Denmark as a yoga destination.

#### *4.6. Denmark as Yoga Destination and Possible Challenges to Become Such for the Region*

This part of the analysis puts focus on the third of the research sub-questions in the Introduction chapter – What may attract the German yoga tourists in Denmark as a yoga destination and what possible challenges the country may face to become such for the region?.

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The most important challenge that Denmark can meet is the close proximity to Germany, where is situated the biggest educational organization and yoga center in Europe (YogaVidya, 2014). This might have negative influence on the tourist flow to Denmark. However, as it was mentioned before, most of the programs there are conducted in German. This can be interpreted as advantage for Denmark, which can put focus on the international yoga tourists.

Based on my previous research (Koseva, 2013) it is clear that in order to fulfill the needs of the Danish yoga practitioners, different styles of yoga exist in Denmark; some of them more developed than others. However, from the current analysis, it becomes clear that there is a huge lack of communication between the German and the Danish yoga circles about what is offered by the Danish yoga centers. This claim is supported by the interviewees who have never heard about anything related to yoga in Denmark. Moreover, according to Interviewee 6, Denmark does not make “enough noise” so that German yoga practitioners can get aware of the Danish qualitative yoga products. Thus, the German yoga practitioners do not have the factual knowledge about Denmark in order the country to be defined as a yoga destination. Another reason for that lack of communication might be the largest yoga center in Europe situated in Germany. Some of the interviewees visit it on a regular basis and thus, they are loyal to the destination. Therefore, they are not interested in any other competition.

The next similarity identified from the responses is that the most of the German yoga practitioners express their prejudices about Danish mentality over yoga being different in comparison with their own. Examples for that are found in the following: Danes are not as spiritual as Germans (Int.4), also that they are not focused on the mind but only on the body (Int.7) and that yoga is more about the sport for the Danes (Int.8). Such notions can be found in almost half of the responses. The most critical responses to the questions what the German yoga practitioners know about Denmark as a yoga destination was that “yoga is not born in Scandinavia” (Int.8) and it is not a country for yoga because it is a cold country (Int.7, Int.9 and Int.10). These responses show that the German yoga vacationers’ reluctance to travel to Denmark for yoga, except if it is not during the summer time when it is warmer (Int.7, Int.9) or if it is in a warm wooden house plus sauna (Int.2, Int.10). Although yoga is everywhere and in everything (Stone, 2008), none of the German yoga practitioners’ responses supports that idea.

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To sum up, all of the results show that Denmark with all its yoga products, including yoga courses, yoga holidays, yoga retreats, etc. is not a popular yoga destination for the German yoga practitioners in that sample group. This might be due to the lack of interest from the Danish side to attract more international yoga practitioners in its boundaries. On the other hand, the German yoga practitioners might lack factual knowledge in order to become willing to visit that particular destination. Any of the cases do not favor the yoga tourism in Denmark.

This chapter was to present the analysis of the empirical data, based on the theoretical background from the Theory chapter. In the first place, the basic socio-economic characteristic of the interviewees were discussed. The results from this analysis confirmed that yoga tourists are predominantly women over 40, some of them influenced by family members while making a decision to travel for yoga, others – not influenced at all. Afterwards, followed the expert interview insight in order to explain what exactly kirtan is and what people gain from it. It revealed that kirtan practice is a spiritual practice that works with the suppressed emotions in people. The most valuable features that one may gain from a kirtan practice are the communication that is carried out in three different levels and the possible healing effects on the human body. Furthermore, the definitions of yoga tourism and yoga tourists, introduced in the Theory chapter, were examined. The results from this examination showed that yoga tourism was best defined as a spiritually defined in its core niche of well-being practices. It is also an active form of tourism and the nature is an integral part of it. The results concerning the German yoga tourists showed that they look for relaxation as much as for yoga activities in their yoga holidays. Moreover, most of them seek something new to learn, which defines them as educational tourists. In addition, they expect to meet like-minded individuals while on yoga holiday and tend to organize their trips by themselves and travel alone or in small groups. Afterwards, a distinction between spirituality and religion was made in order to conclude that yoga trips are spiritually oriented which appears to be not only an expression for the interviewees in the research sample. Once that was clear, the German yoga tourists' needs and motivation to travel for yoga were investigated together with their expectations, experience and attitude. The most important needs for the interviewees to be fulfilled were to relax, to meet like-minded individuals and to gain new knowledge from the yoga

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holiday. The motivations that push the German yoga tourists to travel for yoga were separated in six different groups of pull factors and the most important of them were: program of the yoga course, price, facilities, nature, teacher and food. Kirtan practices were investigated independently as motivation pushing the German yoga practitioners to travel for yoga and the results showed that more than a half of them are interested in doing that. Finally, based on the mentioned above, Denmark was examined as a yoga destination and the possible challenges to become such for the region were outlined. Examples for that were: the close proximity to Germany, the lack of factual knowledge among the German yoga vacationers about what Denmark offers as services in the field, the interviewees' prejudices about Denmark being cold or not suitable for a yoga country.

The findings of the analysis need to be assessed for trustworthiness in order the qualitative research to be concluded as credible, transferable, dependable and confirmable (Hirschman, 1984).



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## Evaluation of the Research

The aim of this chapter is to assess the findings of the qualitative study. Given the qualitative nature and the constructivist approach of the thesis, its trustworthiness need to be evaluated. Hirschman's set of criteria (1986) is considered appropriate to a humanistic inquiry as the current thesis is. The set evaluates whether the inquiry is credible (credibility), whether the interpretations are transferable (transferability), whether the study is dependable (dependability) and whether the conclusions can be confirmed in a further research (confirmability) (Hirschman, 1986).

### *5.1. Credibility*

As a humanist, the researcher tried not to manipulate the interviews in order to ensure reaching the most reliable responses and to ensure the research proceeds correctly (Hirschman, 1986). The interviewees are introduced to the topic of the research and to the further usage of it. To make the data collection even more credible, the interviews are conducted individually giving the interviewees the opportunity to share their own experiences without being influenced by other respondents' opinions. Moreover, the interview guide is not given beforehand the actual interviews in order the researcher to get more honest and spontaneous answers, excluding the possibility for the interviewees to investigate and prepare their answers before the interview.

### *5.2. Transferability*

The thesis presents the findings about the needs and motivation of the German yoga practitioners to travel for yoga. The research transferability is enhanced by thoroughly describing the research methodology. Only German yoga practitioners are the focus of the analysis in order to get as profound and unique replies as possible, which allows more precise findings to be drawn. The findings are transferable because they can be used for a deeper understanding of yoga tourists from other countries, since it is believed that the needs and

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motivation are not geographically limited. However, generalizations based on the current findings are not possible and such are the purpose of the study within the constructivism approach. Moreover, the researcher takes into account that the findings in the thesis may change in time and space because the travel careers of the interviewees constantly develop (Pearce and Lee, 2005).

### *5.3. Dependability*

The study is guided by the constructivism paradigm, which does not allow a precise measurement to examine the case of dependability of the study. Taking into account the qualitative nature of the thesis, if two different researchers use their own sets of measures and although they measure the same study object, the results will be different because of subjectivity, multiple realities, ways of interpretations, constructions of knowledge and analysis. One of the strategies for improving dependability of the results is to use a recording device. Following this approach, recorded versions of the interviews are attached. This allows other researchers to reproduce the research. However, dependability does not seem important in a constructivist research, as the paradigm accepts the existence of various ways of perceiving, interpreting and creating the knowledge (Bryman, 2014).

### *5.4. Confirmability*

This research is conducted by a single researcher, which can increase the individual bias. Confirmability relies on a logical and unprejudiced manner (Hirschman, 1986). In a qualitative research, this is hard to achieve because each researcher has their own set of personal beliefs, values and theoretical inclinations. As Hirschman (1986) claims, to enhance confirmability an external researcher need to be involved in the research process. Therefore, the supervisor of the thesis, being familiar with the research from the beginning and supervising the writing process in order to verify the study as dependable, is considered fulfilling this requirement. Such approach gives a stronger reason to evaluate the final results as being constructed with reduced individual bias.

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## Conclusion

As stated previously in the Introduction, there is no official data on foreigners visiting Denmark because of yoga. It has been acknowledged that yoga tourism is a global phenomenon with increasing popularity in the recent years, which lacks a deep academic research. Therefore, it is interesting to investigate what motivates foreigners to travel for yoga. Collecting such type of information aims to contribute with a better understanding of the various factors that influence the behavior towards yoga tourism and to accommodate offers on the market that meet yoga tourists' needs and expectations. More precisely, the thesis' aim is to explore the role of certain factors that motivate the German yoga practitioners to travel for yoga and the reasons for that. In this part of the thesis, conclusions are drawn based on the findings of the completed analysis and answers on the research questions of this project are extracted.

### *6.1. Identifying the yoga tourists and what they look for their yoga holidays*

In this project, the researcher tried to identify as precise as possible the yoga tourists as a distinct type of tourists. This was needed in order to make the reader aware of the differences between the regular leisure tourists and the yoga tourists and what specifically they are looking for their yoga holidays. Special self-generated definition of yoga tourists was created in order to characterize their specifications as an independent segment. Afterwards, the definition was implemented in practice in the analysis with a real empirical data, collected through 10 individual semi-structured interviews with German yoga practitioners. The results showed that the yoga tourists look for relaxation as much as for yoga activities during their yoga holidays. While the need to escape from the stressful everyday life is a common one and characterizes tourists in general, the need to retain their daily yoga routines during their holiday, distinguishes them. Moreover, most of them seek something new to learn, which defines them as educational tourists. Furthermore, most of them expect to meet like-minded individuals while on yoga holiday and maintain these relationships even after the holiday is over, which defines them as special interest tourists. Finally, they tend to organize their trips by

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themselves and to travel alone or in small groups. All of these characteristics can be implemented in real business marketing strategies, which will target that particular segment more accurately in order to satisfy as much as possible the German yoga travelers' needs and expectations.

### *6.2. How a spiritual practice as chanting kirtans may influence the German yoga practitioners' destination choice*

As it was mentioned in the Introduction chapter, the spiritual tourism is not one of the most studied areas in the tourism studies. Therefore, it was interesting to explore different interpretations of spirituality and based on them and the existing literature to define as thoroughly as possible the spiritual tourism. Afterwards, the focus of the research was on a particular spiritual practice, called kirtan chanting, which was analyzed as a concrete motivation to travel for yoga. It appeared that more than a half of the German yoga practitioners are ready to travel to Denmark for experiencing this practice if that existed there. As stated previously, friends and family recommendations have an important role in motivating German yoga tourists to travel for yoga. If there is no one of them that can suggest and share their positive experiences with the interviewees, quality and value of the yoga products might be questioned. According to the interviewees, positive feedback is definitely a prerequisite that eventually would encourage them traveling abroad for yoga tourism.

### *6.3. What may attract the German yoga tourists in Denmark as a yoga destination and what possible challenges the country may face to become such for the region*

From the analysis above became clear that the German yoga interviewees need relaxation with nature as an integral part of the tourism product. Therefore, nature and closeness to water (beaches and seas) are considered the major advantage of Denmark in order to satisfy their needs. Another advantage that interviewees stress on is that traveling to neighbor countries is beneficial in terms of distance and convenience. Thus, Denmark with its close geographical proximity is

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seen as close and convenient country to travel to. Unfortunately, the close proximity to Germany can be defined as challenge, too, because the biggest educational organization is situated there, which is a prerequisite for people to choose it over of Denmark. As none of the interviewees has been in Denmark for yoga tourism, it was interesting to explore the various reasons that prevent them from engaging in such traveling. The findings might have been different if some (or all) of the interviewees have had an experience with the Danish yoga products. For this reason, it is important to note, that these conclusions are not definite or final and can vary depending on the individuals' experiences, needs and expectations. The findings from the current analysis showed the barriers that discourage most of the interviewees to travel to Denmark for yoga were their own prejudices that Denmark is not suitable for yoga tourism being a cold country and far away from the country of origin of yoga (India). In general, Denmark is not a popular yoga destination for the German yoga travelers from this research because of their prejudices and the lack of factual knowledge of what the Danish yoga centers offer as services in the field.

#### *6.4. What motivates German yoga practitioners to travel for yoga, and what needs stay behind their choices of a yoga destination*

Based on the push and pull theory were outlined different motivations for the German yoga vacationers to travel for yoga. Pearce's career ladder was used to analyze their needs. The interviewees did not make a difference between the terminologies from the theories used in the research. Therefore, all their needs, expectations and motivations were grouped according to the theories implemented in the thesis and the personal interpretations of the researcher.

As it was discussed in the Analysis chapter, the push factors might be defined as one's needs. Hence, conclusions will only be drawn based on the theory of push and pull factors. Throughout the project, push and pull factors were broadly discussed among the interviewees and subsequently represented in the research of the thesis.

The most important push factors for the German yoga vacationers were three. The need of relaxation and escape from the stressful everyday life were the

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most common motivations that push the tourists to travel for yoga. Afterwards, the need to meet like-minded individuals during a yoga holiday and share common interest with them was also from great importance for the interviewees. The third essential need related to the sample group was their willingness to acquire new knowledge, which defines German yoga tourists as educational tourists.

The pull factors were divided in six groups. However, only the first three ones will be mentioned being the most important for the research. As it was expected, the program of the yoga course was the most common pull factor mentioned from the interviewees together with the price of the yoga holiday and the facilities of the yoga destination. This group includes only factors concerning the practicalities of the tourism product while the second one – mostly factors that will fulfill the yoga tourists' needs. These were nature, teacher and food. The third group includes concerns about accessibility and distance from home.

### *6.5. Contribution to existing Literature*

The results of this exploratory study created the foundation to fill the gap of this interdisciplinary subject area by providing a deeper knowledge into the needs and motivation for traveling abroad for yoga. In addition, a self-designed model of tourists' behavior characteristics is introduced in order to show the interrelations between the components of the behavior. By knowing the needs and motivation and by understanding the potential yoga tourists, the Danish DMOs can better accommodate their offers and develop an attractive marketing strategy.

A direct theoretical contribution to the discipline of motives towards yoga tourism is recognized in the generated definition for yoga tourists, based on many other typologies in the field, which were not necessarily related to yoga tourists. Another theoretical contribution from this thesis is recognized in the six groups of pull factors that attract yoga tourist in a yoga destination. This knowledge can be used as a basis for further research in this field of studies.

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## 6.6. Further Research

This closing section offers recommendations for further research that are based on the reflections of the main findings this study obtained. It would be beneficial for the real businesses in Denmark to consider the implications of this research for marketing yoga tourism, as this is a fast developing industry all over the world. Moreover, as it was mentioned in the Introduction chapter, certain types of yoga are not affected by the seasonality and could also maintain the flow of incoming tourists in the off-season months.

The thesis is rather explorative and provides insight into the needs and motivation towards yoga tourism. As it was mentioned before, the research is based on the responses of interviewees who have not ever experienced Denmark. Therefore, it would be interesting if future studies looked into the experiences, needs and motivation of interviewees who actually have visited Denmark and evaluated similarities and/or differences between their responses and the ones approached in this thesis. Afterwards, further research should focus on other nationalities which will help filling the existing gap that exists in the contemporary literature on yoga tourism.

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## APPENDIXES

### Appendix 1

#### Interview Guide of the Individual Interviews:

1. Please introduce yourself (age, education, profession, family (marital status/relationship status, children), what type of yoga do you practice, etc.). Do you practice yoga at home? How often? How do you define this type of yoga for yourself – physical or spiritual? How advanced are you in yoga? What does yoga practice mean to you in three words? Is your behavior different from your friends', family's, or colleagues' one? (how)
2. What is a yoga holiday for you? What made you start travelling for yoga? How many times have you been travelling for yoga? Where did you go and for how long did you stay there? Why did you go on a yoga holiday?
3. Before going to a particular place do you check information about local yoga practices or other yoga opportunities in the area? Where and what?
4. What expectations do you have about your yoga holiday?
5. Can you describe the way your travel expectations have developed over time? (how it began and what it is today?)
6. When you choose yoga destinations, what are your choices based on? How do your choices vary? When?
7. What is the role of friends, family or partner in your destination choices? How is it important for you?
8. How do you share your experience about some yoga destinations that you have visited with friends? (take pictures, reviews, social media)
9. Do you revisit some places because of the yoga/yoga courses/yoga events?
10. Are you loyal to any specific yoga destination? Why?
11. How did yoga trip(s) change your everyday habits at home and during the next trips from earlier on? How do you feel about those changes? Why do you think the changes happened?
12. What would you like to find in your next trip in a relation to yoga?

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13. Do you personally believe in religion? Can you tell what the difference between religious and spiritual is and how you define spirituality? Are yoga trips religious or spiritual?
  14. Do you feel yourself a spiritual person? How do you express your spirituality?
  15. Do you know what a kirtan is? Or mantra? Please describe.
  16. Is Denmark a popular yoga destination in general? What do you think is the reason for this?
  17. What is/are the thing(s) that will make you travel for yoga to Denmark? What about kirtans, are they a strong motivator to go to Denmark?
  18. What you will expect to experience from your yoga trip/ yoga courses/ yoga events in Denmark?
  19. When you do check information about the place that you are willing to visit, what type of information are you looking for (prices, language, facilities, teachers, courses, events, etc.)?
  20. What do you think can be done more in Denmark in order to attract more yoga practitioners?

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## Interview Guide of the Expert Interview

1. Please introduce yourself (names, age, education, profession, family (marital status/relationship status, children), what type of yoga do you practice, etc.). Do you practice yoga at home? How often? How do you define this type of yoga for yourself – physical or spiritual? How advanced are you in yoga? What does yoga practice mean to you (shortly)? Is your behavior different from your friends', family's, or colleagues' one? (how)
2. Can you explain what exactly is kirtan?
3. How kirtan practice is different that the other types of yoga?
4. Do you personally believe in religion? Can you tell what the difference between religious and spiritual is and how you define spirituality? Are yoga trips religious or spiritual?
5. Do you feel yourself a spiritual person? How do you express your spirituality?
6. How long have you been teaching kirtans until now?
7. Why people come to the kirtan practices?
8. Do you play on any instrument? How important is that for the whole kirtan experience?
9. What is better and the most common set for a kirtan practice – outside experience in the nature, or in specially designed for the purpose inside areas?
10. What made you start doing so?
11. How did you decide to start doing something like kirtans, when nobody has heard of it at that time? How everything started?
12. Was it hard in the beginning? Is it hard now? What changed during the time – what got better, what got worse?
13. In the beginning, how did you reach the people that might be interested in kirtan? How did you know they might have been interested?
14. What was the most difficult challenge that you met while starting the kirtan practices?
15. What people look for when coming to a kirtan practice with you?

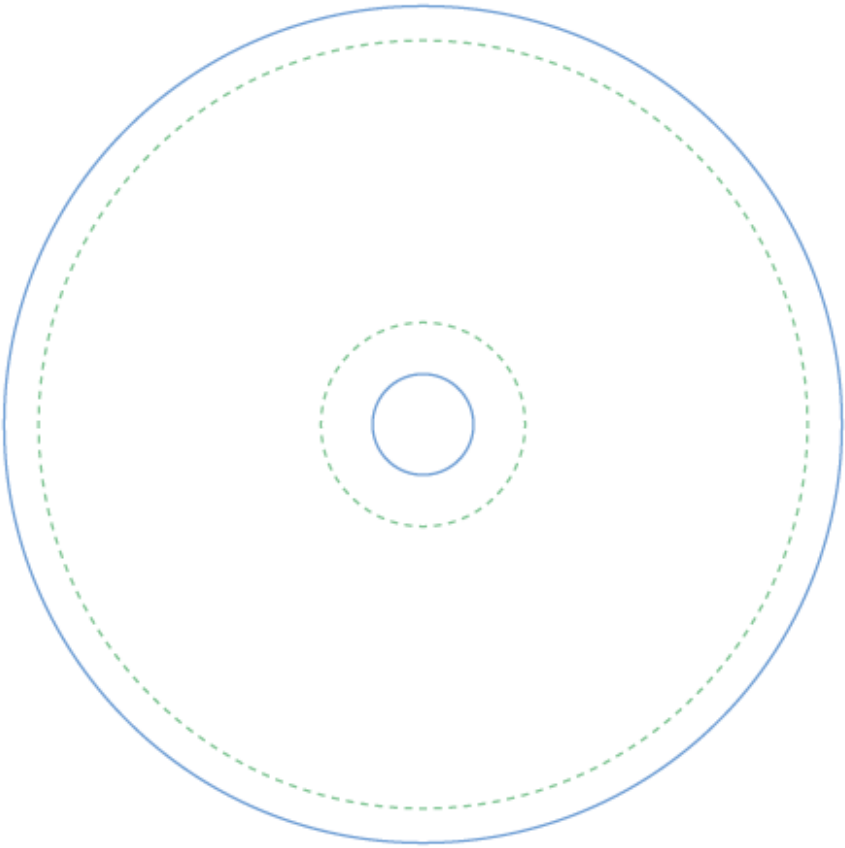


- 
16. Are you famous now?
  17. Do you think whether in Denmark could be done something similar to what you have done in Bulgaria?
  18. Do you think German yoga travelers would be interested in kirtans in Denmark? Why?
  19. Have you been in Germany? When and how long have you been there? What did you do there?
  20. Do you think if something similar can be organized in Denmark? What do you think the similarities and the differences between German and Danish yoga events would be?
  21. With what Denmark can attract German yoga travelers? What do you think Germans are looking for their yoga vacations?
  22. Do you have some additional comments that might contribute to the interview?

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Appendix 2

Audio files with the interviews



## Appendix 3

### Matrix Table with the Key Points from the Interviews

	Interviewee 1 - J	Interviewee 2 - B
Expectations for a yoga holiday in general	more practical things that to implement in her own practice: new exercises, new lines in yoga/ different traditions in yoga; not only work and program but also relax and rest; intensive depth practice; meet new people thinking likewise; learning new techniques; perfect duration - 1-2 weeks; in the beginning - more excited to meet new people thinking likewise, more focused to yoga; now - going in depth into philosophy of yoga and focusing into her inside essence but also to be able to participate in other activities; vegetarian food	calm country, with sea plus yoga workshops; more people thinking likewise; to learn more for herself; to have better understanding of her body; perfect duration - 2-3 weeks; in the beginning - could not understand yoga very well, have made jokes about yoga; now - perceives it more seriously
Expectations for a yoga holiday in Denmark	nature that offers different experience; closeness to sea; calmness; summer - very long days; full immersion in the experience; separation from every day life; recharge with new energy; exploring new country	flat and calm country + sea; wooden house; sauna; more intensive inner experience; less distractions; more calmness
Motivation for a yoga holiday in general	look for yoga practice/program, not for yoga destination; family does not <b>influence</b> her decision but friends easily can make her travel because of their experience and recommendations for a certain destination; <b>revisit</b> - if the experience answers her expectations but also curious for new things; experience change the view point; meeting new people - new things/destinations to experience	calmness and getting away from everyday life; number of participants; price; family and friends do not have <b>influence</b> on her decisions; <b>revisit</b> - if the experience is positive, and not only once; loyal to the yoga teacher, not the destination
Motivation for a yoga holiday Denmark	1) nature in the surrounding + sea 2) the easiest way to reach the place, the itinerary 3) people visiting the place 4) price 5) program of the course 6) when in the year she is able to take her holiday	1) price 2) teacher and language 3) facilities 4) number of participants 5) food 6) whether there is a city nearby
Kirtan as a motivation	she goes everywhere if there are kirtans (very strong motivator)	she would not travel only for kirtans
Difference between spiritual and religious	<b>religion</b> - traditions towards particular church; <b>spiritual</b> - inside self, not about outward expressions; <b>yoga traveling</b> - spiritual	it is not the same but cannot define the difference between the two notions but the spirituality influences one's spirit and soul; <b>yoga traveling</b> - spiritual
Knowledge for Denmark as a yoga destination	never heard anything connected to yoga in Denmark; thinks there is potential if there are ashrams, where people thinking in a like manner can gather with each other	thinks it could be a popular yoga destination but never heard about anything connected to yoga in Denmark
Additional notes	more organized events in Denmark, where people thinking likewise to gather with each other; more advertisement in internet	more advertisement in the web of the fact that they are specialized in yoga; to declare that they offer this type of experience

	Interviewee 3 - M1	Interviewee 4 - U
Expectations for a yoga holiday in general	learn new things; to relax and rest; morning trainings and sat sang in the evenings; to have free time too; <b>perfect duration</b> - 1 week or 3-4 days; <b>before</b> - travel alone; <b>now</b> - does not travel anymore	to relax soul and body; spiritual development of herself; learn new exercises and breathing techniques; people thinking likewise; perfect duration - 1-2 weeks; before - short distances; now - longer distances
Expectations for a yoga holiday in Denmark	international environment = same everywhere; organized; on the coastline	lack of expectations or personal interest towards Denmark because there is no available information at hand; but if there is information about that Denmark offers something linked to yoga, she would go
Motivation for a yoga holiday in general	meditation in a group is more effective; when in the year she is able to take her holiday; sometimes the teacher; nobody has any <b>influence</b> on her decisions; <b>revisit</b> - because of yoga (loyal to art of living), not because of the destination;	inner peace and the belief that does the right thing; full yoga program away from the everyday life; closeness to a sea; family and friends do not have any <b>influence</b> on her decisions; loyal to the yoga destination ( <b>revisit</b> only this particular one)
Motivation for a yoga holiday Denmark	1) type of yoga 2) program of the course 3) language (English) 4) price	1) nature 2) facilities 3) teacher 4) price 5) holiday duration
Kirtan as a motivation	would not have the interest to go, except if somebody she knows has a course there or something special happens there	feel better after kirtans; might go if there are recommendations from friends that have already experienced a destination
Difference between spiritual and religious	there is not a big difference but the meditation in yoga give deeper consciousness' development; <b>yoga traveling</b> - spiritual	there is no difference for her; for both people believe in something; however spirituality is more opening one's spirit; <b>yoga traveling</b> - spiritual
Knowledge for Denmark as a yoga destination	never looked for something particularly connected to yoga in Denmark	prejudices of people in Denmark are not keen on spirituality
Additional notes	she does not know at all what it is offered as yoga in Denmark	flyers and brochures in the destination to take home with

	Interviewee 5 - I	Interviewee 6 - M2
Expectations for a yoga holiday in general	less compromises with her way of living; nature (countryside but not far from home); complete separation from the everyday life; deep knowledge about yoga; liberal way of education; to be able to choose for herself what to do with her personal free time; perfect duration - 4 weeks; before - asanas more physical; doubts about Hinduism and her singing; meet more people thinking likewise; relaxing wellness; now - not only asanas but meditation, also kirtans; smaller places that are not so crowded; look for a spiritual background	organic food; learn something new; not in a city, in the nature; to be able to walk in the nature and observe; calmness; to release the stress from home and work; to hear music/kirtans as important part of the practice; to get more healthy; to have more time only for herself, to find and better know herself; <b>perfect duration</b> - 1-2 weeks; <b>before</b> - yoga is something only for the body; <b>now</b> - yoga is also for the clearness and calmness of the mind, found kirtan and thus, it to be present in her yoga vacation; look more for her health
Expectations for a yoga holiday in Denmark	more international experience than in Germany; beautiful nature; water - beaches and seas	expect only beautiful landscapes; does not have any other knowledge for Denmark; will check internet for ideas or ask her friends what to expect
Motivation for a yoga holiday in general	lifestyle - from the attitude and the food to the cleaning products; she wants to be together with her husband on a holiday, thus, the <b>influence</b> from her family is strong but not 100 % dependent; will <b>revisit</b> a destination if the experience is positive but wants to visit other places as well	nature, to be in a group with people who like yoga; short distance from home; good program; very important to make holidays together with her husband => family has strong <b>influence</b> on her decisions, her friends too but less influence; <b>revisit</b> - if likes the place (the yoga); loyal to the destination (because of yoga) but when friends recommend something new, she is ready to try
Motivation for a yoga holiday Denmark	1) liberal education (if it is too fundamentalistic, even if it is the most beautiful place, would not go) 2) place (nature and location) 3) people visiting the place 4) program of the course	1) program of the course (yoga + free time) 2) teacher 3) organic food 4) facilities 5) price
Kirtan as a motivation	kirtans are not a special interest in yoga for her but they are strong enough motivation for her to go to Denmark	kirtans are strong motivator for her, but only in neighbor countries (short distance from home); like more to listen, than participate
Difference between spiritual and religious	both - personal; <b>religion</b> - systems built from other people; <b>spirituality</b> - human capacity to get in contact with the higher power; <b>yoga traveling</b> - spiritual	<b>religion</b> - special form (church), not always ok; <b>spirituality</b> - wider; over all religions; <b>yoga traveling</b> - spiritual
Knowledge for Denmark as a yoga destination	does not know anything special for yoga, has not ever searched for it	never heard in Denmark somebody makes yoga; Denmark has not made enough noise about it
Additional notes	suggests the information about what (connected to yoga) exists in Denmark to be spread on site in the yoga centers in Germany	more advertisement in Internet, flyers, to show that they make yoga vacations; never would look for yoga there before the interview, now she is interested in

	Interviewee 7 - V	Interviewee 8 - H
Expectations for a yoga holiday in general	nice destination, good feelings; nature (either mountain or beach, but not a city), water, view; people around him; meet people thinking likewise; to relax; yoga but also other activities; perfect duration - 2 weeks; before - various teachers; now - only one, that is more experienced with yoga and more sensitive towards the people	yoga on the beach, walk on the beach; quiet house; to relax - wellness, massages; learn how to live as yoga - new ideas for exercises, how to prepare healthy food; to meet good teachers; to meet people thinking likewise; to have time only for her; perfect duration - 1 week, 2 weeks; before - open for everything, would try everything; now - would go for something specific, specially for her, if she has to go in a yoga house
Expectations for a yoga holiday in Denmark	Denmark is not a good destination for yoga - cold; he will not go there for yoga; will go only for the nature and in the summer - great beaches	a lot of beaches but mentioned that it might be close to a city although is not so important; good program of the course; sight-seeing
Motivation for a yoga holiday in general	good facilities; light food (not only vegetarian); very important to make holidays together with his wife => family has strong <b>influence</b> on his decisions; will revisit certain place if it makes him feel better (his teacher should be there as well, to teach); he is loyal to the teacher (yoga), not to destination	to get calm; to have time only for her, away from everyday's problems; her family has strong <b>influence</b> on her decisions as being practical ones - near home, not expensive/ her friends influence her when going somewhere after their recommendations; <b>revisit</b> the same place over and over again because of the place (the destination), not loyal to the yoga
Motivation for a yoga holiday Denmark	1) nature (beach or mountain) 2) program of the course 3) teacher 4) facilities 5) light food	1) practicality (distance, price, accessibility) 2) program of the course 3) facilities (do not need luxury) 4) vegetarian kitchen 5) to have time for going outside, jogging (time only for herself) 6) wellness (pool or sauna)
Kirtan as a motivation	like to participate in singing but would not go to Denmark only because of the kirtans	she would travel because of kirtans if her friends tell her it is a very good place or a practice
Difference between spiritual and religious	no difference between them; but <b>yoga traveling</b> - more spiritual	<b>religion</b> - have to do more, go to church, God; <b>spirituality</b> - can be all, more mind, more private, you do not need God; <b>yoga traveling</b> - spiritual
Knowledge for Denmark as a yoga destination	prejudices of people in Denmark are not so spiritual - more in the body than in the mind	"yoga is not born in Scandinavia" - not a country for yoga; it has more sport according to her
Additional notes	Denmark to offer more information about it is actually possible to do yoga there	Denmark should be advertised as a yoga destination in order to become a popular one but she will not search there if searches for yoga

	Interviewee 9 - C	Interviewee 10 - V
Expectations for a yoga holiday in general	hours of practice yoga (more than at home); but also free time only for her; meet nice people thinking likewise; good meals; perfect duration - 7-10 days; before - visited places to meet many people thinking in a like manner (Bad Main berg), looking for what suits her best; now - knows better what she wants; small house with only few people	quiet place in the nature (nature is the most important for her); does not need luxury; natural materials used for the buildings; retreat is the real yoga holiday for her; organic food; <b>perfect duration</b> - 1 week; <b>before</b> - open to try many different things; not so important to be a quiet place (Bad Main berg, India); <b>now</b> - it is important to be quiet smaller and not crowded places; does not make such compromises with the food anymore
Expectations for a yoga holiday in Denmark	do not want to travel to the north, want warmer countries; however, to be near the sea is a strong motivator	cold country, like to go to the sea but to the warm seas; nature, wooden houses in the woods + sauna; yoga+nature+sauna is the perfect combination for her
Motivation for a yoga holiday in general	time for herself; relax from everyday life at home and at work; body fit; healthy food; nice people; family or friends do not have any <b>influence</b> on her decisions; she <b>revisits</b> a destination if the experience is positive; for now she is loyal to the destination but thinks after 3-5 years maybe it will be something new	to find an enlighten master, or to find her personal teacher; family does not have <b>influence</b> on her decisions but friends have slight one giving her new information for new places; <b>revisit</b> - because of the destination that she already knows but has not found the place that she would be loyal to
Motivation for a yoga holiday Denmark	1) facilities, teacher, closeness to the sea 2) good meals 3) price (not so expensive) 4) distance from home	1) price 2) nature 3) program of the course 4) teacher 5) organic food 6) facilities 7) quietness
Kirtan as a motivation	now kirtans are not a strong enough motivator but it is new for her; in a few years - maybe it will be strong enough	describes herself as passionate singer; much nicer is singing in a group; it is a motivation but in a combination with her type of yoga
Difference between spiritual and religious	<b>religion</b> - not very flexible form, does not like people tell her this is right and this is not; <b>spirituality</b> - we are all one, spirituality goes deeper; <b>yoga traveling</b> - spiritual	<b>religion</b> - out-dated, dogmas, traditions, frame; <b>spirituality</b> - personal way to believe, no frame, can be more experimental; <b>yoga traveling</b> - more spiritual
Knowledge for Denmark as a yoga destination	good buildings; sea; good yoga teachers; but never heard of what Denmark can offer as yoga	thinks that Danish mentality for yoga and in general is different than the Germans' one
Additional notes	would not look for yoga in Denmark because she is happy for nearby destinations	if Denmark wants to be popular as yoga destination => to be more present in German yoga centers; more information in their yoga newspapers

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## Appendix 4

### Typology of 15 Leisure-Based Tourist Roles

(Adapted from Foo, McGuiggan and Yiannakis, 2004)

- sun lover (interested in relaxing and sunbathing in warm places with lots of sun, sand and ocean),
- action seeker (mostly interested in partying, going to night clubs and meeting the opposite sex for uncomplicated romantic experiences),
- anthropologist (mostly interested in meeting local people, trying the food and speaking the language),
- archaeologist (mostly interested in archaeological sites and ruins; enjoys studying history of ancient civilizations),
- organized mass tourist (mostly interested in organized vacations, package tours, taking pictures and buying lots of souvenirs),
- thrill seeker (interested in risky, exhilarating activities which provide emotional highs, such as sky diving),
- explorer (prefers adventure travel, exploring out of the way places and enjoys challenges involved in getting there),
- jetsetter (vacations in elite world class resorts, goes to exclusive night clubs, and socializes with celebrities),
- seeker (seeker of spiritual and/or personal knowledge to better understand self and meaning of life),
- independent mass tourist (visits regular tourist attractions but makes own travel arrangements and often ``plays it by ear’’),
- high class tourist (travels first class, stays in the best hotels, goes to shows, and dines at the best restaurants),
- drifter (drifts from place to place living a hippie style existence),
- escapist (enjoys taking it easy and getting away from it all in quiet and peaceful places),
- sport tourist (primary emphasize while on vacation is to remain active, engaging in favorite sports) and
- educational tourist (participates in planned study programs or education-oriented vacations, primarily for study and/or acquiring new skills and knowledge)



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## Appendix 5

### Types of Tourists

(Adapted from Smith, 1989)

TABLE 1  
FREQUENCY OF TYPES OF TOURISTS AND THEIR ADAPTATIONS TO  
LOCAL NORMS

<i>Type of Tourist</i>	<i>Numbers of Tourists</i>	<i>Adaptations to Local Norms</i>
Explorer	Very limited	Accepts fully
Elite	Rarely seen	Adapts fully
Off-beat	Uncommon but seen	Adapts well
Unusual	Occasional	Adapts somewhat
Incipient Mass	Steady flow	Seeks Western amenities
Mass	Continuous influx	Expects Western amenities
Charter	Massive arrivals	Demands Western amenities

## Appendix 6

### Tourist Typologies

(Adapted from Decrop and Snelders, 2005)

Table 1  
Tourist typologies based on segmentation criteria

Author(s)	Major variable(s)	Tourist types
Anderson and Langmeyer (1982)	Age	The under-50 and over-50 travelers
Etzel and Woodside (1982)	Distance traveled	Distant and near-home travelers
Fodness (1992)	Family life cycle	Young couple, young parents, mature parents, mature couple, senior couple
Hsieh et al. (1992)	Activities	Visiting friends and relatives, outdoor sports, sightseeing, full-house activity, entertainment
Lang, O'Leary, and Morrison (1997)	Destination	Within-Asia and out-of-Asia (Taiwanese outbound tourists)
Moscardo et al. (1996)	Travel benefits and activities	Escape/excitement, self-esteem/self-development, family relationships, physical activity, safety-security, self-esteem/social status, escape, relaxation
Shoemaker (1994)	Benefits sought	Get away/family travelers, adventurous/educational travelers, gamblers/fun oriented travelers
Spotts and Mahoney (1991)	Expenditure	Light, medium and heavy spenders
Woodside and Jacobs (1985)	Benefits sought	Rest and relaxation, cultural experiences, family togetherness
Woodside, Cook, and Mindak (1987)	Frequency of travel	Light and heavy travelers

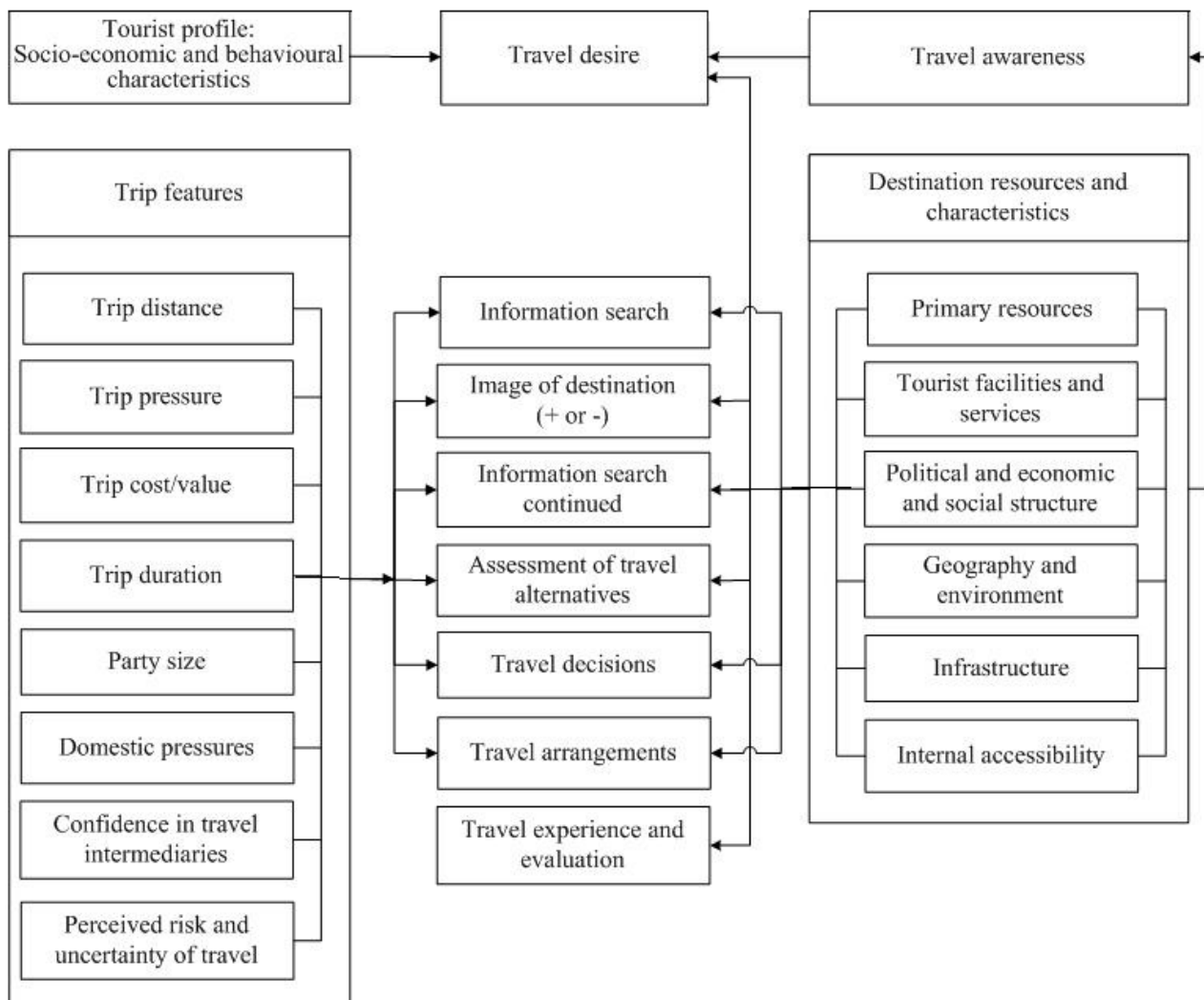
Table 2  
Tourist typologies based on socio-psychological variables

Author(s)	Major variable(s)	Tourist types
Cha et al. (1995)	Push factors (motives)	Sport seekers, novelty seekers and family/relaxation seekers
Cohen (1972)	Roles, motives and level of risk aversion/novelty seeking	Drifter, explorer, individual mass and organized mass
Cohen (1979)	Roles, motives and sought experiences	The recreational, the diversionary, the experiential, the experimental and the existential tourist
Davis et al. (1988)	Attitudes, interests and opinions	Five clusters of differing degrees of attitudes towards the state's tourism efforts
Madrigal and Kahle (1994)	Values and lifestyles	External locus of control (sense of belonging and security), enjoyment/excitement, achievement, egocentrism
Mayo and Jarvis (1981)	Psychographics	The 'peace-and-quiet' traveler, the overseas traveler, the historian traveler, the recreational vehicle traveler and the 'travel now/ pay later' traveler
Mazanec (1994)	Socio-styles	Dandy, rocky, business, squadra, protest, scout, pioneer, olvidados, vigilante, romantic, defence, prudent, moralist, citizen, gentry, strict
Plog (1974, 1994)	Personality traits	Psychocentrics and allocentrics (plus intermediate categories: near-psychocentrics, midcentrics, near-allocentrics)
Smith (1989)	Motives and lifestyles	Explorer, elite, offbeat, unusual, incipient mass, mass, charter
Thrane (1997)	Personal values	The modern materialist, the modern idealist, the traditional materialist and the traditional idealist

## Appendix 7

## The Tourist Decision-Making Process

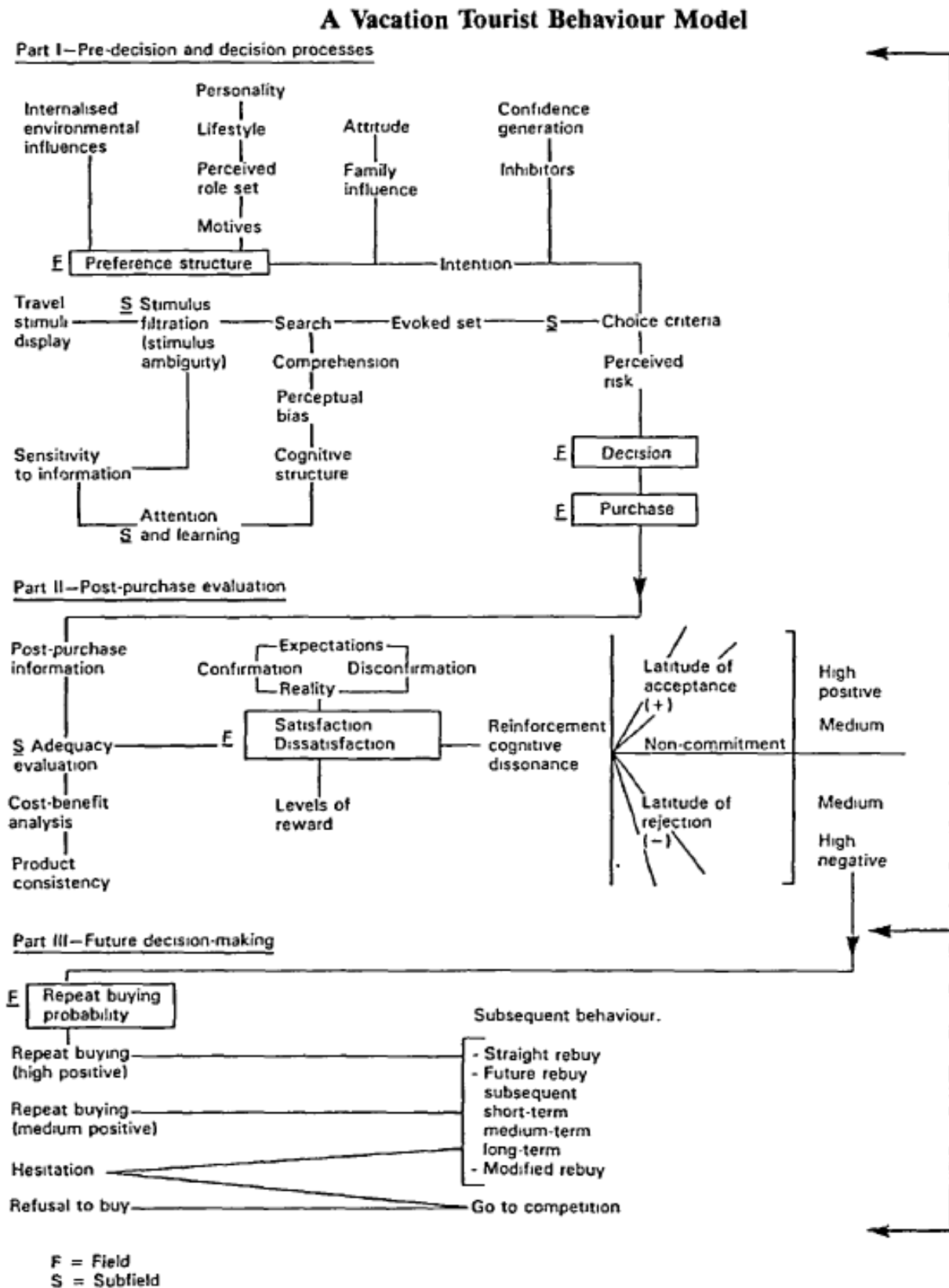
(Adapted from Mathieson and Wall, 1982)



## Appendix 8

### A Vacation Tourist Behavior Model

(Adapted from Moutinho, 1987)

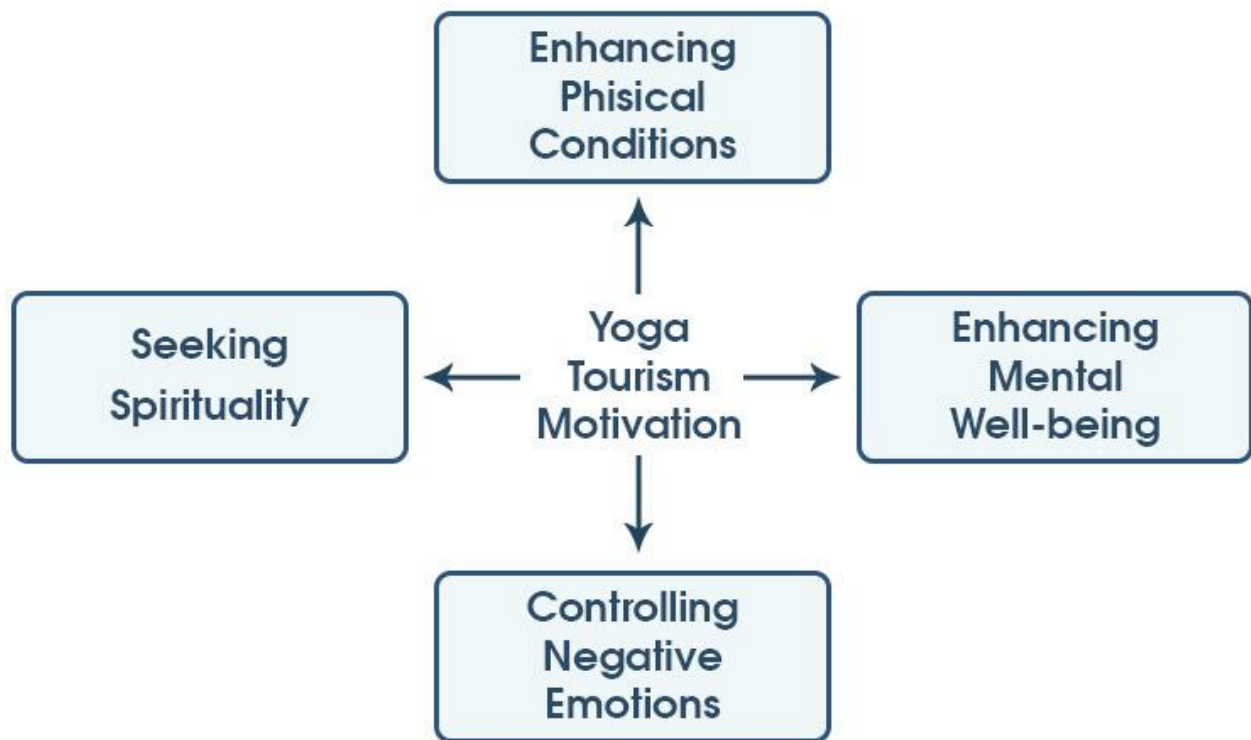


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## Appendix 9

### Model of the Dimensionality of Yoga Tourism Motivation

(Adapted from Lehto et al., 2006)



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## Appendix 10

Table 2. Spirituality and religiosity attributes

(Adapted from Sessanna et al., 2011)

Spiritual attributes	Religiosity attributes
Acceptance; accepting the differences in others; appreciating art; appreciating beauty or the natural environment/ outdoors; awe; care, caring, cared for or about; celebrating life; comfort; compassion; connection with others, the world, the universe; contentment; creativity; feeling supported; forgiveness of self and others; giving; giving and receiving love; gratitude; harmony; helping; hope; inner peace; interconnectedness; life fulfillment; life meaning; life mystery; life purpose; meditation; peace, peacefulness; reason to exist; reason for living; respecting others and nature; secular; sense of belonging; serenity; inner strength; thankfulness; transcendence (non-religious); valuing, being valued; volunteering; and well-being.	Afterlife; Bible; church; closeness to God; Divine; Divinity; Devotion; faith; faith community or group; God; God's acceptance; God's anger; God's help; God's love; God listening to prayers; God's presence; Higher Being; Higher Power; Higher Presence; holy; organized religion; power greater than self (religious); pray, prayers, praying; relationship with God; religion; religious beliefs; religious ceremony; religious community; religious customs; religious experience; religious interests; religious items/relics; religious leaders (clergy, pastors, pastoral care, priests, rabbis); religious literature or scripture; religious practice; religious restrictions; religious rituals; religious service; reverence to God; Sacred; Supreme Being; Supreme Power; Ultimate Other; union with God; and worship.