

# The Components of Yoga Destination Development: A Thailand Case Study

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## Abstract

This article emphasis on study about the components of yoga destination development: A Thailand case study which has objective are 1) to study core resources components of yoga destination development 2) to study supporting resources components of yoga destination development. The qualitative research methodology was used for this study. In addition, the qualitative data were collected by semi-structure interview from 20 relevant yoga developing stakeholders which were public sectors, yoga entrepreneurs and yoga instructors, analyzed by content analysis.

The results reveled that, firstly, core resources components of yoga as led to efficiency destination development were; the readiness of space and equipment, the surrounding attractions, the famous of yoga destination, the safety, the expertise of yoga instructors, the service quality, the authenticity of yoga, the well-being activities and a variety type of yoga. Secondary, supporting resources components of yoga as led to efficiency destination development were; the accessibility, the facilities and amenities, accommodation, a variety of tourist attraction, the local infrastructures and the promoting policy of yoga destination.

Finding of this study could be analyzed and transformed to be guidelines the efficiency of yoga tourism development. Composed of components of the development of yoga tourism destinations in the core resources which is divided

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into 3 aspects: 1) the development of yoga studio 2) the development and enhancement of yoga tourism personnel and 3) the development and promotion of traditional characteristics of yoga and components of the development of yoga tourism destinations in terms of supporting resources.

**Keywords:** Types of Yoga, Yoga Destination Development, Core Resources Components, Supporting Resources Component

# การพัฒนาองค์ประกอบของจุดหมายปลายทางโยคะ : กรณีศึกษาประเทศไทย

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## บทคัดย่อ

การศึกษาวิจัยในครั้งนี้มุ่งเน้นการพัฒนาองค์ประกอบของแหล่งท่องเที่ยวโยคะ กรณีศึกษาประเทศไทย โดยมีวัตถุประสงค์ คือ 1) เพื่อศึกษาการพัฒนาองค์ประกอบของแหล่งท่องเที่ยวโยคะ ด้านทรัพยากรหลัก 2) เพื่อศึกษาการพัฒนาองค์ประกอบของแหล่งท่องเที่ยวโยคะด้านทรัพยากรสนับสนุน การศึกษาวิจัยครั้งนี้ใช้ระเบียบวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพ ซึ่งเก็บรวบรวมข้อมูลโดยการสัมภาษณ์แบบเก็บโกรงสร้างจากผู้มีส่วนได้ส่วนเสียในการพัฒนาแหล่งท่องเที่ยวโยคะในประเทศไทยที่เกี่ยวข้องจำนวน 20 ราย ได้แก่ หน่วยงานภาครัฐ ผู้ประกอบการสตูดิโอโยคะ และครูฝึกโยคะ รวมถึงการวิเคราะห์ข้อมูลที่รวบรวมได้โดยการวิเคราะห์เชิงเนื้อหา (content analysis)

ผลการศึกษาพบว่า ประการแรก องค์ประกอบของแหล่งท่องเที่ยวโยคะด้านทรัพยากรหลัก ที่นำไปสู่การพัฒนาแหล่งท่องเที่ยวโยคะในประเทศไทยอย่างมีประสิทธิภาพ ได้แก่ ความพร้อมของพื้นที่และอุปกรณ์ สถาปัตยกรรมโดยรอบแหล่งท่องเที่ยวโยคะ ซึ่งสืบสิ่งของแหล่งท่องเที่ยวโยคะ ความปลอดภัย ความชำนาญของครูฝึกโยคะ คุณภาพการบริการ ความเป็นเอกลักษณ์ดั้งเดิมของโยคะ กิจกรรมเพื่อส่งเสริมสุขภาวะ และประเภทของโยคะ รวมถึงองค์ประกอบของแหล่งท่องเที่ยวโยคะ ด้านทรัพยากรสนับสนุนเพื่อนำไปสู่การพัฒนาแหล่งท่องเที่ยวโยคะที่มีประสิทธิภาพ ได้แก่ การเข้าถึงแหล่งท่องเที่ยวโยคะ สิ่งอำนวยความสะดวก ที่พัก ความหลากหลายของแหล่งท่องเที่ยว โครงสร้างพื้นฐาน และนโยบายส่งเสริมการท่องเที่ยวโยคะ

ผลการศึกษานี้สามารถนำวิเคราะห์และนำเสนอแนวทางในการพัฒนาการท่องเที่ยวโยคะ อย่างมีประสิทธิภาพต่อไปในอนาคต ประกอบด้วยองค์ประกอบของการพัฒนาแหล่งท่องเที่ยวโยคะ ด้านทรัพยากรหลัก โดยแบ่งออกเป็น 3 ด้าน ได้แก่ 1) การพัฒนาสตูดิโอโยคะ 2) การพัฒนาและเพิ่มประสิทธิภาพบุคลากรด้านการท่องเที่ยวโยคะ และ 3) การพัฒนาและส่งเสริมเอกลักษณ์ดั้งเดิมของโยคะ และองค์ประกอบของการพัฒนาแหล่งท่องเที่ยวโยคะในด้านทรัพยากรสนับสนุน

**คำสำคัญ :** ประเภทของโยคะ การพัฒนาแหล่งท่องเที่ยวโยคะ องค์ประกอบแหล่งท่องเที่ยวโยคะ ด้านทรัพยากรหลัก องค์ประกอบแหล่งท่องเที่ยวโยคะด้านทรัพยากรสนับสนุน

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## INTRODUCTION

It has become more attractive among wellness enthusiasts who seek to enhance their overall well-being. The phenomenon of yoga has been practiced for therapeutic purpose in India for thousands of years (Iyengar, 1989). Additionally, it could also serve as a target market for tourism. Until roughly a decade ago, yoga was regarded as a type of tourism. (Öznalbant & Alvarez, 2019).

Many scholars have defined yoga tourism term in various meanings. It can be concluded that Yoga Tourism is organized into different forms of tourism. (Aggarwal et al., 2008; Lehto et al., 2006; Liberman, 2004; Maddox, 2015; Nichter, 2013; Sharpley & Sundaram, 2005) Under Special Interest Tourism, Yoga Tourism is categorized as Wellness Tourism. (Ali- Knight & Ensor, 2017; Smith & Puczkó, 2009). The journey to the yoga destination for deep practicing and related wellness activities that will enhance the physical, mental, and spiritual balance of yoga tourists. In other words, yoga tourists are special interests whose motivation and decision-making are primarily determined by their interest in yoga (Ali- Knight, 2009). However, Others argue that it is also a type of spiritual and cultural tourism. (Connell, 2006; Gerritsma, 2009; Koncul, 2012; Smith & Kelly, 2006; Smith & Puczkó, 2009). On the other hand, yoga tourism is regarded as a form of alternative tourism. As an alternate for tourists who really seek to practice extremely developed abilities that are different from other forms of tourism (Konu, 2010; Lehto et al., 2006), it avoids negative impacts and sufficient nutrient impacts on society, culture, and the environment. This is particularly the case in a setting such as a beach resort or one surrounded by amazing scenery with pleasant climate (Lehto et al., 2006).

Yoga Tourism is one of the key economic drivers in many countries throughout the world, growth can be attributed to its economic impact (Kayar & Kozak, 2010). The yoga destination's characteristics in different regions need to be developed to fulfill the needs of yoga tourists and to attract yoga tourists whose behaviors and needs change over time. Similarly, people involved with the development of yoga tourism locations must be able to deal with key resource limitations. The competitiveness of the providers is directly influenced by the performance of the destination tourism

development stakeholders in the global market and the constant transformation of the market (Enright & Newton, 2004). Furthermore, the rapid growth of the yoga tourism industry, the destination tourism industry has a larger market share and increased competition in the yoga tourism industry as well as the level of competitiveness has become. It's important to measure the performance of a destination compared to competitors (Croes & Kubickova, 2013; Dwyer et al., 2016).

An important indicator measures a yoga destination's readiness as a method for identifying components that are critical to a tourist's experience and decision-making. It has been stated that the potential of any yoga destination will be determined by the development and evaluation. Additionally, it depends on the tourism resources accumulated in each attraction (based on Resource Endowments), which includes natural resources, historical and cultural resources and tourists expect facilities and infrastructure to be readiness and capable of satisfying tourists, and resource deployment leads to result, the yoga tourism industry's growth and development has contributed to the competitive advantage (Dwyer and Kim, 2003; Ritchie & Crouch, 2010).

Developing and planning strategies for continuous improvement in quality and development progression. It encourages the expansion and growth of the yoga tourism industry, as well as the creation of an impressive image for tourists visiting yoga destinations, along with satisfaction with the changes that have occurred since their last visit to that destination. It is a magnet for tourists to revisit to travel because of the growth of yoga tourist attractions to have greater service and tourism potential concerned of sustainability (Buhalis, 2000; Hassan, 2000).

When the Covid-19 pandemic occurred in the world, it was this phenomenon that changed the concept of BCG from an alternative to survival in turning the Thai tourism industry back to be the main industry that generates income for the country. Also, makes the Thai economy strong and sustainable again with the mechanism of this BCG concept (TAT Academy, 2016). it will be a part that can help tell stories that make tourists see the value of tourism products and services. Both the public and private sectors involved in the tourism industry must try to offer quality products and services. for tourists to have a good experience along with

having to build on biodiversity and culture connected to the philosophy of sufficiency economy to make the BCG economic model in the tourism dimension more concrete (NSTDA, 2020).

However, stakeholders involved in the development of yoga tourism should consider strategies to drive and develop yoga tourism destinations with the BCG economy model to transform the economic and social development. Hence, promoting and development of yoga destination to be the high-value services, based on the country's biodiversity and cultural diversity. Adopting modern digital innovation technology that contributes to breaking down barriers to development, generating long-term economic growth, distributing income, opportunity, and security to all yoga tourists, and maintaining a balanced resource base and biodiversity.

According to a previous literature review, many nations are still developing academically and practically. Particularly, it was observed that while some research had been deeply committed to the idea, style, and relevance of yoga tourism as well as spiritual retreat, there had been relatively few studies on yoga in the context of destination tourist strategy and management. (Ali-Knight & Ensor, 2017; Lehto et al., 2006; McCartney, 2020; Öznalbant & Alvarez, 2019; Sharma & Kumar Nayak, 2019). Academics all over the world, especially in Nepal, India, and Thailand, have recently started to place a greater emphasis on it. (Cheer et al., 2017; Maddox, 2015; Sharma, 2020). As a result, little research has been carried on wellness tourists who travel to practice yoga. To bridge that gap, this study uses Hua-Hin, Thailand, as a case study and focuses on guiding principles for the growth of yoga tourism in Thailand. In order to respond to the yoga principle, increase experience with current changing trends in tourism, develop destination image, add value, and learn/manage an acceptable approach to boost creative activity and experience for yoga destinations, it is crucial to understand the stakeholder perspectives with regard to the two components of the yoga destination development. (Ashton, 2021; Bhumiwat & Ashton, 2020a, 2020b; Neupane, 2019).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### The concept of Yoga Tourism

People seek healing and rehabilitation because of the tensions and pressures of modern life (Ali-Knight & Ensor, 2017), and yoga is regarded as a way of resolving lifestyle problems (Aggarwal et al., 2008; Sharma & Kumar Nayak, 2019). In recent years, yoga has gained popularity among wellness enthusiasts all over the world (Sharma & Nayak, 2018). Furthermore, it has transformed into a type of tourism that is developed by the combination of yoga and tourism and has become a component of building a balanced lifestyle for many wellness enthusiasts throughout the world. This is referred to as yoga tourism. (Sharma & Kumar Nayak, 2019; Lehto et al., 2006).

Yoga tourism has been categorized into many types of tourism by numerous scholars in a variety of ways. Yoga tourism is a part of wellness and health tourism; it is traveling to yoga destination to engage in yoga and other wellness practices that balance one's physical and emotional well-being (Aggarwal et al., 2008; Lehto et al., 2006; Liberman, 2004; Maddox, 2015; Nichter, 2013; Sharpley & Sundaram, 2005). The emphasis on the harmony of the body, mind, and spirit in religious beliefs is also known as religious and spiritual tourism (Connell, 2006; Gerritsma, 2009; Koncul, 2012; Smith & Kelly, 2006; Smith & Puczkó, 2009). It can also be considered as an alternate form of tourism that minimizes negative impacts and encourages favorable social, cultural, and environmental impacts (Konu, 2010; Lehto et al., 2006). Perhaps yoga tourism falls under the category of special interest tourism, which targets a niche market designed to serve local residents' specific interests in order to encourage their distinctive interests and offer them distinctive experiences (Redekop, 1999). It can be classified as a new form of slow tourism that emphasizes leisurely travel and in-depth experience. Likewise, to this, yoga tourists enjoy their surroundings and take their time when traveling and practicing about yoga (Tiyce & Wilson, 2012). However, for the sake of this study, the researchers classified yoga tourism as a type of wellness tourism, when tourists visit to partake in yoga and other wellness-related activities in order to improve their overall sense of body, mind, and spirit balance.

### **The concept of Yoga Destination and Sustainable Development**

The market share of yoga tourism has grown quickly, increasing rivalry, and it is now important to assess the competitiveness of a destination attraction in order to assess how effective it is in contrast to its rivals. As a result of rising competition, significant changes are taking place globally that affect the yoga tourist experience (Dwyer et al., 2016).

Development of a tourism destination refers to the strategic planning and improvement of a specific area to accommodate the changing needs of visitors to a destination that attracts tourists on a regular basis. Emphasis on the supply side of tourism leads in a favorable experience that can be distinguished by high-quality facilities and first-rate services to counterbalance customers (Destination British Columbia, 2020). The effectiveness of the destination is also considerably improved by tourism. The destination has to have better infrastructure and tourism amenities to become more competitive (Nagle, 1999). Furthermore, The success of a destination also depends on decisions on investment, hiring, and training. Moreover, tourism marketers and developers need to advertise their location to build a brand that appeals to and targets this tourist market (Laws, 1995).

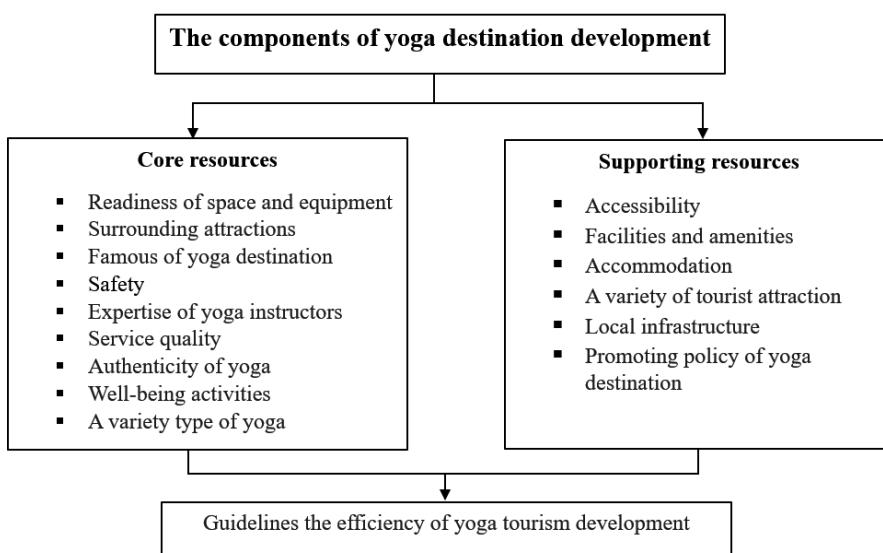
However, Ritchie and Crouch (2010) and Dwyer and Kim (2003) models of destination competitiveness and sustainability have been utilized in this study. It serves as a valuable tool for identifying qualities that are essential to a tourist's success and decision-making, and it is a sign of how prepared a yoga destination is. Moreover, it was emphasized that the development and length of any tourist attraction will determine its potential, and that it must have tourism resources, including human, cultural, and economic resources, in order to be sustainable.

In order to develop a yoga destination, two components are important. Firstly, one of the key components of a destination's appeal is yoga destination development (YDD), particularly in terms of core resources. These are the main characteristics that influence tourists to visit a specific location, including geography and climate, culture and history, connections to the market, a variety of activities, special events, and entertainment. Yoga lessons are provided for the transformative

experience, which causes certain mental, emotional, and physical changes. Additionally, tourists who integrate yoga with other wellness activities to broaden their knowledge and maximize their time and money (Dillette, Douglas, & Andrzejewski, 2019). Secondly, yoga destination development (YDD) in terms of supporting elements serve as a foundation for the growth of a prosperous tourism industry. Although a destination may have an abundance of primary resources and tourist attractions, its tourism industry may nevertheless encounter considerable difficulties.

These elements include infrastructure; accessibility; facility; hospitality; enterprise and political will. Especially, the readiness of facilities will be more tourists' comfortable in their surroundings when facilities are ready. In order to meet their demands, tourists make use of a variety of supporting resources, including parking, gas stations, gift stores, shopping centers, and hospitals (Kartika Maharani, Supriadi & Wisnu Parta, 2020).

Figure 1 shows the research framework for the current study.



**Figure 1:** Research Framework for this study

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Data Collection**

This study employed an in-depth interview for this study, which is a semi-structured interview that allows for in-depth information and is less time-consuming than interviewing with clearly specified questions (Mashuri, Sarib, Alhabsyi, Syam, and Ruslin, 2022). It allows interviewers to express their opinions and mutually clarify more specifics with no information constraints. It involved in the core and supporting resources components of yoga destination development.

This study has collected primary data which is the data that the researcher has collected newly for the purpose of research, especially stakeholders involved in the development of yoga destination in Hua-Hin District, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province in order to obtain in-depth information on the yoga destination development issue toward analyze and describe the content.

Data from the in-depth interviews was collected in 2021 between January and February. Additionally, a number of yoga Hua-Hin studios were contacted for interviews by first contacting their managers or owners and the presidents/committees of their respective yoga associations; once permission was obtained, the researcher started to interview from the target samples.

### **Data Analysis**

This is qualitative research with data collected through a semi-structured interview. The researcher analyzed the data and conducted content analysis by categorizing it into relevant groups. After that, they were analyzed, synthesized, and interpreted. Following that, the data was collected and presented in a descriptive format, with questions covering the research objectives and scopes in each section (Kabir, 2016). The researcher categorized the intriguing groups. Next, data components were categorized in order to organize coding and correspond with the objectives. The findings will develop the yoga destination in Thailand as a consequence of the analysis of the results based on the literature review.

## **Study area**

The study focused on the in-depth interview on guidelines the efficiency of yoga tourism development for the yoga destination in Hua-Hin, Thailand from stakeholders' perspective relevant to develop yoga destination including the public sectors, yoga entrepreneurs, and yoga instructors. Most importantly, Hua-Hin was considered as the most suitable location because it is a relatively new Thai wellness destination in the Prachuap Khiri Khan region in the south, which is rapidly gaining popularity as a Bangkok alternative (Born Distinction, 2011). In addition, Hua-Hin has maintained a five-year plan for sustainable tourist arrivals during and after the Covid-19 pandemic. It was predicted to rebound faster than other tourist destinations in the country due to its strategic location and proximity to Bangkok. (C9 Hotelworks, 2020).

## **Participations of this study**

The population target in this study was comprised of stakeholders involved in the development of yoga destination in Hua-Hin District, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province, including the public sectors, yoga entrepreneurs, and yoga instructors. The sample group was chosen by using non-probability sampling with purposive sampling method. For qualitative research, the number of the group to be interviewed should be between 20 and 30 people, or the interview should be extended until the same information is presented repeatedly. In this study, the sample group consists of 20 participants. Most of the participants were male (60%) and the remaining female (40%). It can be regarded to be essential for this study since they can provide in-depth information, especially when the results involved in the experience of yoga destination development.

## **Participant profiles**

Regarding the data collected using in-depth interviews of the participants' general information about gender, age, and working backgrounds of yoga tourism in Hua-Hin, it was found that the 5 participants from public sector can be divided into males (60%) and females (40%), with most aged between 31-40 years (60%) and ages between 50-60 years (40%). Moreover, the participants' current positions vary widely which is a project coordinator, 2 persons, followed by a marketing officer,

1 person, and tourism and sports in Prachuap Khiri Khan Province, 1 person, and deputy mayor of Hua-Hin Municipality, 1 person, respectively. In part of yoga entrepreneur, it was found that the 5 participants were females (80%) and males (20%) with most aged between 41-49 years (60%) and between 50-60 years (40%) as for the current position, they are owners of famous yoga studios in Hua-Hin. Besides, the last group was yoga instructors for 10 persons can be divided into females (70%) and males (30%) with aged between 41-49 years (70%), between 31-40 years (20%), and between 50-60 years (10%), respectively as shown in Table 1 below.

No.	Gender	Age	Type	Position
1	Female	36	Public sector	Marketing officer and Head of Yoga Hua-Hin Festival - Tourism Authority of Thailand
2	Female	55	Public sector	Tourism and sports - Tourism and sports of Prachuap Khiri Khan Province
3	Male	38	Public sector	Project coordinator - Tourist Information Center of Hua-Hin
4	Male	35	Public sector	Project coordinator - Tourist Assistance Center of Hua-Hin
5	Male	54	Public sector	Deputy Mayor – Hua-Hin Municipality
6	Male	42	Yoga Entrepreneur	Shakti Yoga Hua Hin
7	Female	50	Yoga Entrepreneur	Life Studio Hua Hin
8	Female	44	Yoga Entrepreneur	Rachaya studio Hua Hin
9	Female	51	Yoga Entrepreneur	Yoga & I
10	Female	45	Yoga Entrepreneur	Fit Station Hua Hin
11	Male	42	Yoga Instructor	Shakti Yoga Hua Hin
12	Female	50	Yoga Instructor	Shakti Yoga Hua Hin
13	Female	43	Yoga Instructor	Shakti Yoga Hua Hin
14	Female	43	Yoga Instructor	Shakti Yoga Hua Hin
15	Female	46	Yoga Instructor	Rachaya studio Hua Hin

No.	Gender	Age	Type	Position
16	Female	48	Yoga Instructor	Yoga & I
17	Female	47	Yoga Instructor	Freelance
18	Female	47	Yoga Instructor	Freelance
19	Male	38	Yoga Instructor	Freelance
20	Male	34	Yoga Instructor	Freelance

## FINDINGS

### Information about yoga destination in Hua-Hin

Since there is a variety of yoga for practice at numerous well-known yoga destination in Thailand, the country is growing in popularity with tourists looking for treatment for the rehabilitation of the body, mind, and spirit. (Wellness Tourism Worldwide, 2011). In addition, Thailand hosts more yoga festivals and events to meet the demands of discerning tourists who wish to travel there to engage in yoga-related activities. Additionally, through promoting Thailand through a variety of tourism avenues, building its brand, and assisting associated industries like the fashion, yoga equipment, and food industries, among others (Ali-Knight & Ensor, 2017).

The fact that Hua-Hin is one of Thailand's most well-known seaside resort cities with great tourism potential is among its most notable characteristics. Thai tourists have recognized it as a top weekend getaway location for more than ten years. In addition, Hua-Hin is an extremely popular vacation destination for tourists from abroad and is making investments in the tourism industry. As a result, Hua-Hin's sector generates the majority of the province's income, which is used for a range of initiatives, such as the improvement of people's quality of life and the expansion of public utilities (Janchai, 2016).

### The components of yoga destination development

The findings revealed that, firstly, core resources components were applied into yoga destination development were; the readiness of space and equipment, the surrounding attractions, the famous of yoga destination, the safety, the expertise

of yoga instructors, the service quality, the authenticity of yoga, the well-being activities and a variety type of yoga. Secondary, supporting resources components of yoga as led to efficiency destination development were; the accessibility, the facilities and amenities, accommodation, a variety of tourist attraction, the local infrastructures and the promoting policy of yoga destination. The findings for these components are discussed below.

### Core resources components

#### 1) Readiness of space and equipment

As indicated by stakeholders involved in the development of yoga destination in Hua- Hin, the guideline of efficiency yoga destination development in terms of place and equipment readiness found that some participant highlighted that "*The focus is on renovating the yoga studio to have the original identity of yoga and outstanding, more inviting to experience the atmosphere, including improving the condition of the yoga studio to make it always available and checking the condition of the equipment used in conjunction with yoga practice including the strictness of the cleanliness of the equipment and the yoga practice area is the most important thing to consider,*" (OT1 and OT5). However, readiness of equipment for practicing yoga, that is, basic equipment is required for yoga tourists from the beginning level to the professional level, which the yoga studio owner considers the convenience of the tourists, therefore has prepared all necessary equipment is provided to help tourists develop deeper yoga postures and safer. However, if yoga tourists are very aware of cleanliness, some will bring equipment to practice by themselves to prevent infectious diseases according to their own needs.

#### 2) Surrounding attractions

According to the data collection from stakeholders involved in the development of yoga destination in Hua-Hin, the guideline of efficiency yoga destination development in terms of surrounding attractions found that some participant commented that "*Maintaining the cleanliness of public area to have a beautiful view suitable for a holiday and practicing yoga that stakeholders need to consider and collaborate to make the city a better place,*" (OT3). Due to its

location in the scenic surroundings of Hua Hin, a well-known tourist destination, the area is ideal for yoga practice. So, yoga tourists feel a peaceful, fresh atmosphere with the sea and mountains. Therefore, protecting the natural environment is essential if they want to continue having unrestricted access to natural resources. This includes protecting the area around tourist attractions. The management team of Hua Hin City highly values the notion that appealing tourist attractions require a healthy environment, and cleanliness is an important factor.

### **3) Famous of yoga destination**

As mentioned by stakeholders involved in the development of yoga destination in Hua- Hin, the guideline of efficiency yoga destination development in terms of famous of yoga destination. The competence and reputation of yoga instructors played a key role in establishing a respectable yoga studio in Thailand by fostering a sense of trust and persuading both domestic and international participants. The yoga management team also provides as a venue for marketing and advocacy efforts to raise tourists' awareness of the importance of both physical and mental wellness. Hua-Hin is also one of the famous resort town destinations and is popular with both Thai and foreign tourists. Which is beautiful, surrounded by nature, has a quiet atmosphere, not busy, suitable for practicing yoga. Moreover, it is also a city with an old style that reflects the classics with a unique identity that is attractive.

### **4) Safety**

According to the data collection from stakeholders involved in the development of yoga destination in Hua-Hin, the guideline of efficiency yoga destination development in terms of safety found that some participant commented that "*The emphasis is on security to cover the full tourist destinations both inside and outside of the city by employing security personnel. And nighttime CCTV to give tourists to participate in the yoga activities more confidence,*" (GT2). In addition, the participant (GT4) also stated that "*Focusing on more strict sanitation and hygiene to avoid the spread of COVID-19. as well as offering services for cleaning equipment such disinfectants Alcohol gel at various places in tourist regions or public areas*".

However, consideration must be given to safety as a key component of the yoga destination's quality. It is also necessary to manage tourist property and life safety, which, in order to be effective, requires for widespread cooperation and sector to aid in developing long-term tourism security measures.

### 5) Expertise of yoga instructors

According to the data collection from stakeholders involved in the development of yoga destination in Hua-Hin, the guideline of efficiency yoga destination development in terms of expertise of yoga instructors. Yoga provides an opportunity to start working in a wellness field that is popular with yoga tourists around the world. Many yoga studios in Hua-Hin require yoga instructors to pass a basic yoga training course or have obtained a minimum of 200 hours of Certified Yoga Instructor Training (RYT) from an affiliated institution of the Yoga Alliance,

USA, or the non-profit Yoga Association of America. Also, professional groups for yoga instructors are recognized for providing high-quality, safe, accessible, and equitable yoga courses. Most of the instructors travel to take a yoga training course from India, where yoga was born, a great opportunity to gain experience and the authentic philosophy of yoga.

### 6) Service quality

This stated with stakeholders involved in the development of yoga destination in Hua- Hin, the guideline of efficiency yoga destination development in terms of service quality found that some participant stated that "*The important in the service quality is to instill a service mind for the staff, yoga instructors who are involved in creating satisfaction and impressed for tourists to revisit intention,*" (IT2) . Hence, providing quality yoga services, entrepreneurs recognize the importance of a good image of a yoga studio by impressing and creating admiration for their yoga studio by providing a good service. It will be a service of reception staff, yoga instructors, as well as entrepreneurs themselves, who will work together to help drive the development of wellness services by yoga to be of quality and efficiency, bringing the impression of tourists.

### 7) Authenticity of yoga

According to the data collection from stakeholders involved in the development of yoga destination in Hua-Hin, the guideline of efficiency yoga destination development in terms of authenticity of yoga found that the transmission of the authentic of yoga truly recognizes one's body, leading to the training of the mind to achieve unity between body, mind, and spirit, with tourists coming to the attraction to experience yoga. True self-fulfillment is an essential part of the travel experience, as well as a higher level of marked physical and mental transformation is a key component in deciding to travel to yoga destination.

### 8) Well-being activities

As indicated by the data collection from stakeholders involved in the development of yoga destination in Hua-Hin, the guideline of efficiency yoga destination development in terms of well-being activities found that some participant commented that *“To provide tourists more variety in their well-being experience, yoga should be integrated with other well-being forms of activities such zumba, dancing, and boxing”*, (OT1). In addition, some participants stated that *“Having a variety of well-being activities readiness to tourists coming to Hua-Hin has chosen the service as something that can create satisfaction and lead to word of mouth and return visits”*, (IT7). So, yoga combined with other well-being promoting activities provides a full balance of their body, reducing the pain of heavy exercise, and making yoga more exciting and challenging to practice and not getting tired of traditional activities.

### 9) A variety type of yoga

As mentioned by stakeholders involved in the development of yoga destination in Hua- Hin, the guideline of efficiency yoga destination development in terms of A variety type of yoga found that yoga styles have different poses and levels of difficulty, and there are different types of breathing methods in which each trainer has different training abilities in each individual, which must begin to train appropriately for their body in order to achieve the purpose of practicing yoga. Moreover, the yoga studio has managed a variety of yoga classes

to accommodate a variety of yoga tourist, starting from the beginning to the top of the yoga. Each instructors have a different teaching and training style. By the way the instructors have to choose to suit the needs of the results and their body's ability to fit the yoga style. The popularity of yoga style is mixed because yoga tourists have variety of age groups. Hence, tourists have different skills. Therefore, instructors must also have a variety of yoga styles to be ready to serve variety tourists. The schedules should be diverse and arranged to serve tourists more efficiently.

### Supporting resources components

#### 1) Accessibility

According to the data collection from stakeholders involved in the development of yoga destination in Hua-Hin, the guideline of efficiency yoga destination development in terms of accessibility found that some participant commented that *“Giving importance to transportation services to be ready to serve long-distance tourists who want to travel both in HuaHin City and outside Hua-Hin comfortably,”* (OT5). The GT1 participant further stated, *“Most visitors to the city experience the issue of unfair taxi charges. To prevent problems in the future, it is necessary to ensure that the service and standard taxi charges are regulated”*.

#### 2) Facilities and amenities

This stated with stakeholders involved in the development of yoga destination in Hua- Hin, the guideline of efficiency yoga destination development in terms of Facilities and amenities found that some participant stated that *“The development of wireless internet service, or Wi-Fi, to cover all tourist sites in Hua Hin is what needs to be taken into consideration as the next point in order to accommodate tourists,”* (GT5). Moreover, participant commented that *“in Hua-Hin, tourist destinations still need to be developed and renovated in view of the fact that public toilets at service locations are still unclean and not available to use, despite the fact that these are important for tourists,”* (IT5). So, facilities and amenities can make yoga tourists traveling to Hua Hin comfortable. And always impressed, which led to re-visiting again, as most of the participants commented in the same way that the facilities and amenities that meet the needs of yoga tourists in the Hua Hin area are well-equipped and diverse can accommodate many tourists.

### 3) Accommodation

According to the data collection from stakeholders involved in the development of yoga destination in Hua-Hin, the guideline of efficiency yoga destination development in terms of accommodation found that some participant suggested that *“Hua Hin is a distinctive city worth seeing, thus pertinent organizations and lodging providers ought to encourage the development of accommodation or the preservation of the lodging’s traditional Thai personality. In addition to preserving Thai culture for the future, this will be a novel experience for foreign tourists who have never seen anything like it before,”* (OT1 and IT1) . Furthermore, the coding participant at OT3 commented, *“Currently, people tend to turn to health care increasingly. In order to increase revenue following the covid-19 pandemic and improve the vacation experience, concerned business owners can encourage additional packages to provide their hotel guests with wellness courses to explore new routes”*.

### 4) A variety of tourist attraction

As mentioned from stakeholders involved in the development of yoga destination in Hua-Hin, the guideline of efficiency yoga destination development in terms of A variety of tourist attraction found that some participants highlighted that *“SHA is a project to upgrade the Thai tourism industry to sanitary safety standards to ensure tourists that everyone will be safe, sanitary, and happy from each trip. It places great importance on strict guidelines for the preparation of guidelines for visiting or accessing tourist attractions, including any prohibitions that should be followed for the safety of tourists,”* (GT5). Furthermore, according to the participant code at OT4, *“Public sector should cooperate with the private sectors to promote more eco-tourism by conserving and restoring natural resources and the environment of Hua-Hin tourist attractions including the continuation of Thai arts and culture to be widely known to tourists and can create value for local products and tourism services as well.”* However, the destinations in Hua Hin are one of the components to produce a pleasant experience and impress the wellness tourists who are traveling to join the yoga practice, with most of these tourists focusing on relaxing and must take traditional tourism more seriously and benefit from it rather than contemporary tourists.

### 5) Local infrastructures

According to the data collection from stakeholders involved in the development of yoga destination in Hua-Hin, the guideline of efficiency yoga destination development in terms of local infrastructures found that some participants commented that *“Hua-Hin area’s water supply system must be improved and developed to be more effective so that locals and visitors who stay overnight can benefit from it”*. Additionally, *“during the rainy season, there are difficulties with road flooding where the drainage system is not good. To prevent flooding, which is a problem for the local population, relevant agencies should enhance and build drainage infrastructure. and vacationers who are on the road,”* (OT2 and OT4).

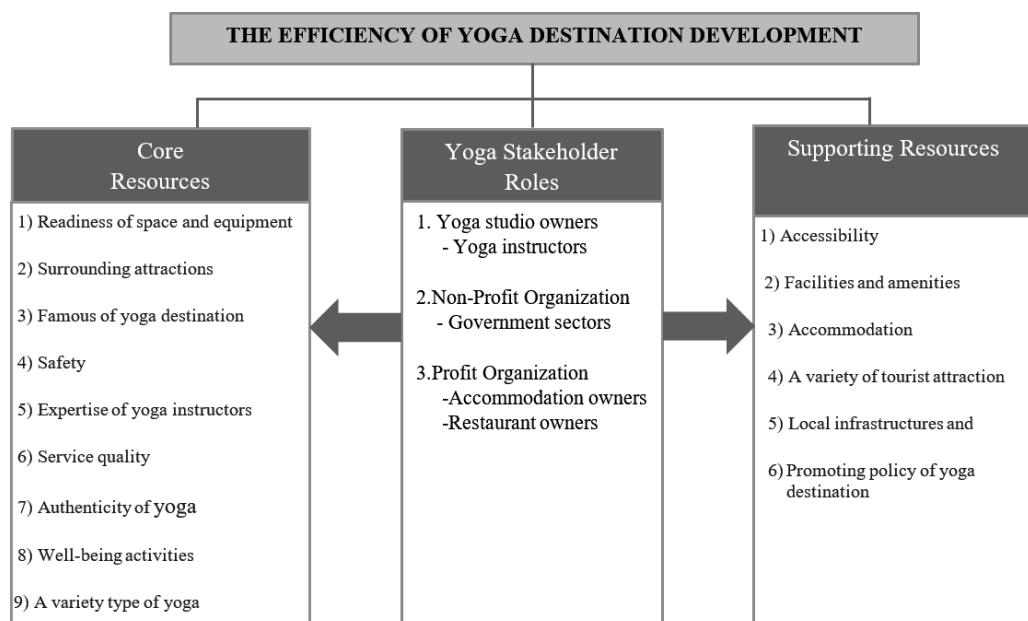
### 6) Promoting policy of yoga destination

According to the data collection from stakeholders involved in the development of yoga destination in Hua-Hin, the guideline of efficiency yoga destination development in terms of promoting policy of yoga destination found that some participants suggested that *“The growth of yoga tourism should require collaboration throughout all industries. To encourage the growth of yoga tourism worldwide, hold a yoga festival called New Normal. This will make Hua Hin the hub of yoga tourism, attracting visitors from all over the globe to practice yoga there in the future,”* (IT1 and IT4). Moreover, *“Focus on stimulating the image of yoga tourism through online media channels that are currently popular and can quickly create awareness for both Thai and foreign tourists as well,”* (OT5).

## THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL CONTRIBUTION

This study provided important contributions to theory, focusing on the effectiveness of the yoga destination development model, and is founded on two primary yoga resources: the core and supporting resources. The core resource includes: readiness of space and equipment, such as yoga mats, straps, blocks, and mat cleaning wipes; nearby attractions; well-known yoga destinations; safety; the skill of yoga instructors; the standard of the service; authentic yoga; and well-being activities, such as Ballroom dancing, Pilates, meditation, Zumba, and various

types of yoga. The supporting resource consists of: accessibility, amenities, facilities (such as restaurants, retail centers, entertainment, and gift shops), accommodation, and a variety of tourist attractions (such as natural, cultural, historical, recreational, and yoga destination-promoting policies). The development of a yoga destination will therefore be pushed forward by stakeholders such as owners of yoga studios, instructors, government sectors, owners of accommodation, and operators of restaurants, giving priority to each element that can enhance and boost tourists' satisfaction and intent to return. As shown in Figure 2 below.



**Figure 2:** Components of yoga destination development (YDD)

Source: Developed for this study

From a practical perspective, the main contribution of this research is that all stakeholders must be involved in the development of the Yoga destination in order to satisfy tourist happiness, and also that core and supporting resources must be developed and supported. Planning an efficient collaboration that makes use of the skills of all stakeholders should be the authority's effort. First and foremost, yoga studio owners and instructors contribute a significant role in the development of tourist-friendly yoga destinations. They need to start developing a yoga program

that incorporates other wellness practices that promote the transformation of the body, mind, and spirit, such as diminished rage, improved emotional regulation, and better physical form. In particular, careful adherence by practicing their body through various asanas and breathing through pranayama principles in accordance with the philosophy of authentic yoga is preferred to creating a modern yoga. Tourists are more interested to more traditional yoga practices. Moreover, yoga instructors must be fluent in English, be able to deliver high-quality services, and have completed training at an institution authorized by the Ministry of Education and the Yoga Alliance USA. Second, the government sectors have a role to manage in developing, planning, and enhancing tourist attractions so that they have beautiful scenery with real naturalness suitable for relaxation and rejuvenation. They also have a role to perform in promoting the image of the region as a hub of yoga tourism by disseminating information through online channels such as Facebook, YouTube, websites, and by hosting yoga festivals. Additionally, it provides global standards for operating a yoga studio and encourages yoga instructors to enroll in additional training programs. The recommendations also include the creation of a yoga association to perform as the primary host for a physical center for yoga tourism as well as the growth of an international yoga network to increase the market for yoga tourism.

## **RECOMMENDATION FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

Therefore, it is recommended that future researchers undertake an in-depth study from the attitudes of tourists in order to gain more clear and in-depth data leading to effective yoga destination development. This study was conducted using qualitative research from stakeholder perspectives. Future studies should use these fundamental ideas to expand the study's concerns to other wellness pursuits.

## **LIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

The study was undertaken during the COVID-19 epidemic, which presented various challenges for the researchers. The health of the stakeholders had to be given priority in the data that was gathered by mobile phone. Additionally, some people declined to participate in the interview, so researchers must continue to gather additional interviews. Future studies on the growth of yoga tourism from the viewpoint of stakeholders can build on these constraints.

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