

## **To study about the spiritual tourism a tool for social cultural and sustainable development in Maharashtra**

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( Lecturer )

### **AIM, OBJECTIVES & LIMITATION**

#### **Aim: -**

**“To study about the spiritual tourism a tool for social cultural and sustainable development in Maharashtra”**

#### **Objectives: -**

- To explore different spiritual tourist destinations in Maharashtra.
- To compare the difference between spiritual tourism and religious tourism.
- To evaluate experience of tourists about spiritual tourism in Maharashtra.
- To analyse different service provided in spiritual tourism.

#### **Limitation of study: -**

- Constraints of time as project have to be completed within given duration.
- Monitory sources are limited as a student.
- Study of this project is limited to Maharashtra only.
- Sample size is limited 50 only.

## Introduction

**"The world is a book and those who do not travel read only a page."**

- Saint augustine

With a growing number of tourists globally, there is an increased spiritual tourism than ever before. Spiritual tourism is to travel to find purpose and meaning to your life. It elevates your physical, mental, and emotional energies in day to day life . It develops, maintains, and improves body, mind, and spirit. In a nutshell, it connects your body, mind, and soul. spiritual tourism can be defined as traveling on pilgrimage to acquire enlightenment, entertainment, and education to leave your footprints and take your memories back to your home by expressing your gratitude to god.

Spiritual tourism is not connected with any specific religion, It is different from religious tourism. Spiritual tourism is to connect your body, mind, and soul while religious tourism is to seek blessings from god based on your religious faiths and beliefs and attain salvation. Spiritual tourism is a broader perspective than religious tourism. Religious tourism is a subset of spiritual tourism. There are various types of tourism such as spiritual tourism, adventure tourism, cruise tourism, eco-tourism, event tourism, medical tourism, special interest tourism, volunteer tourism, wedding tourism, and rural tourism .

Spiritual tourism falls in the services sector. It increases employment opportunities and contributes to a nation's gdp growth. There are innumerable advantages of spiritual tourism. It brings inner peace and happiness. It provides purpose and meaning to your life. It encourages local cultures and their traditions. It protects their natural gifts, talents, and arts. With the rapid growth in technology, there is more disturbance to locals and natives, but with increased spiritual tourism, there are opportunities to protect the nature and the natural talents of local communities. The local communities are fortunate to see various people and observe their cultures, and customs by staying in their native places. They feel empowered because they take pride in their cultures and customs. They become more interested to protect their history, traditions, and environment. They become more engaged and integrated with mainstream society.

Spiritual tourism encourages foreign investment indirectly as tourists bring foreign exchange. However, there are several demerits with spiritual tourism. Hence, spiritual tourism must be encouraged to enhance empathy, compassion, peace, and prosperity. There is a growing number of employees globally going for spiritual vacations. It helps them reflect and acquire peace, solitude, and relaxation. It improves their decision-making and leadership abilities and skills.

Spiritual tourism has extended the conventional concept the harder the journey, the better the reward to a wider concept of a desire for a change, relief from the dull daily life and enthusiasm and divine nature for a common man accordingly, academic interests in analysing different aspects of spiritual tourism as a new segment have been gaining momentum. Spirituality has become an increasingly significant area in social, health and business research (haq et al., 2008). Travels to spiritual places have recorded a phenomenal increase in the recent years. Believe in spirituality has caused people to travel since long even with poor

travelling and communication infrastructures. However, scientific study on marketing aspects of spiritual tourism is very limited.

With a growing number of tourists globally, there is an increased emphasis on spiritual tourism than ever before. Spiritual tourism is to travel to find purpose and meaning to your life. It elevates your physical, mental, and emotional energies. It develops, maintains, and improves your body, mind, and spirit. In a nutshell, it connects your body, mind, and soul. Hence, spiritual tourism can be defined as traveling on pilgrimage to acquire enlightenment, entertainment, and education to leave your footprints and take your memories back to your home by expressing your gratitude to god.

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Spirituality is based on the premise that we live in this world, but we are not from it. Many of our problems lie in not understanding our fundamental identity. But this is inadequate without us committing to a spiritual practice, or sadhana as it is known in sanskrit.

The simplest way to explain spiritual practice is to describe the hierarchy of connections. At any moment, we can be making three kinds of connections:

Outside ourselves: the majority of our time is spent in connecting with the world-networking, relationships, our work. It's all crucial, but can lead us astray if we have no inner direction. The fear of missing out, thinking that the grass is greener elsewhere, and living a life out of balance are all symptoms of having incorrectly prioritized happiness outside of ourselves.

Inside ourselves: beyond our everyday lives, many look for solace within. People struggling with life, those trying to work on themselves to conquer the external world, those curious about their inner world, and occasionally, a few of those seeking the truth-these are the types of people who will take the journey within.

Above ourselves: those simply voyaging within can get frustrated by their lack of progress or direction. They can feel as though they're on a ship travelling at 70 knots per hour, but without a compass. Connecting above ourselves means re-establishing our relationship with god, or something higher than ourselves. God is one, and is identified differently across different cultures. Therefore, it is not about connecting to my god or your god, it is about connecting to our god. When this happens, it is as if a light bulb is getting connected to an entire powerhouse. A bulb on its own is just a piece of glass with a tungsten filament; it needs an electrical charge to experience light and give light to others. Similarly, it is our relationship with something higher than ourselves that can give us love and allow us to give love to others.

This is the quick information about spiritual tourism a tool for social cultural and sustainable development.



### Purpose of study

The purpose of this study is to find out in the western world, it is currently in vogue to practice elements of far-off religions and spiritually-driven practices.

Yoga studios are cropping up all over the united states, as are practitioners of meditation, and believers in ayurvedic medicine.

It is no surprise that some of these individuals take an interest in journeying to the birthplace of their new found beliefs, and in doing so they participate in "spiritual tourism".

India is perhaps the most popular destination for so-called spiritual tourism, and it is a logical selection based on the number.

## Review of literature

### Religious tour packages Maharashtra (January 2021)

Pilgrims on a lookout for maharashtra pilgrimage tour packages must avail extraordinary services from tour my india. Holding expertise in arranging pilgrimage tours in india, we are one among the best inbound tour operators. Well known for offering outstanding travel and accommodation services to passionate travelers, we chalk out the most revered religious tourism packages to popular pilgrimage holiday places across maharashtra. Individuals seeking spirituality can opt from a wide variety of religious package tours, which take them to the ancient and the most legendary temples and places of worship. Journey with us as we will take you to some of maharashtra's holiest pilgrim places including shirdi (ahmednagar), yamai devi temple (aundh), shani shingnapur (near shirdi), jejuri (near pune) trimbakeshwar(near nashik),grishneshwar jyotirlinga temple (near ellora caves) and many more.

For a pious and soul quenching experiences, you can indulge yourself in meditation at these sacred places of pilgrimage, which are a must visit. Opt for spiritual holidays in maharashtra and will chalk out the most memorable religious weekend getaway or a spiritual sojourn, to some of the most popular shrines in the state. Melt yourself in the heavenly aura of the temple complexes of maharashtra and experience true spirituality. We at tour my india will keep in mind your travel needs and will plan for you, a blessed pilgrimage tour across the celestial state of Maharashtra.

Tourist satisfaction depends on various experience and facilities that provided on spiritual destination. To verify the experience of spiritual tourist there are 14 factors determine to check the level of satisfaction. These are:

Nature in general, local life style, historical sites, walking and excursions, accommodation, nightlife, shopping, hospitality, tourist information, feeling of safety, quality of medical service, money withdrawal facilities (e.g. Atm), value of money, spirituality in area and historical sites.

### Incredible Maharashtra

The spirit of Maharashtra is cosmopolitan, forward-thinking, tolerant and vibrant. There is enough to keep connoisseurs of temples, forts, old monuments and art---gainfully preoccupied here. Forts have played a vital role in the history of the state, given the rocky terrain of the sahyadris. Each fort marks a military triumph, and each tells a story of strategy, warfare, intrigue and planning. All of them reconstruct the tale of an enterprising leader, chhatrapati shivaji- in the deccan arena, who with fortitude went onto become one of the tallest kings of Indian history. Bombay or Mumbai—the capital of Maharashtra is not only seen as the financial capital of India, but is literally the gateway of India which is secular, progressive yet rooted. It is also home to the largest film industry in the world, an industry whose turnover is more than that of the gdp

of several small nations. The film industry in Mumbai sees thousands thronging to the city every year, hoping to make it big. Maharashtra is home to several national parks. Project tiger has 4 major areas of concentration in the state namely tadoba-andhari, melghat, sahyadri and pench. A large percentage of Maharashtra's forests and wildlife lie along the western Ghats or western Maharashtra and eastern vidarbha. The sahyadris hold several beautiful hill stations in their lap, which are cool, beautiful and refreshingly serene. Best of all, they are usually near a city. The experience of Maharashtra is diverse and rich with colorful cultures, woven into one gigantic quilt. The festivals here galvanise the sleepy thousands into fervent motion. The traveller will definitely fall in love with the miles of silver, white beaches, stretched throughout the western coast.

### **Role of Maharashtra spirituality in Indian tourism (26 March 2020)**

People from across the world now come to India for Ayurveda, yoga and meditation in Maharashtra that is practiced since centuries. In fact, India has fast emerged as a health tourism destination because of these. Since time immemorial, India has been known for its spirituality, religious and yoga tolerance and its secular character. India is called the "yoga-boom" and the gateway to the heavens. India is internationally renowned for its ancient healing practices and alternative therapies. For more than thousands of years now, we have followed our own indigenous healing systems and medicinal practices such as Ayurveda, naturopathy, and panic healing to name just a few. It is no wonder then that people from all over the world are turning to the Indian sub-continent for guidance towards a more spiritually satisfying way of life. Of religions that began in India and still flourish there today.

#### **Places of interest:**

Maharashtra has many spiritual places. Many saints have blessed the Maharashtra.

Prominent saints from Maharashtra are saint tukraram, Samarth ramdas swami, gajanan maharaj, shiri sai baba and many more.

Ganpatipule.

Elephantacaves.

Trimbakeshwar jyotirlinga.

Pandavelin caves

Shirdi.

Ellora, aurangabad.

Shani shingapur.

Shree mahalaxmi ambabai temple, Kolhapur

## **Most famous spiritual tourism in Maharashtra**

### **Include a temples and starting from lord Ganesh**

1. Ashtavinayaka temples: ashta means eight and vinakaya is another name for lord Ganesh. There are 8 ganesha temples around pune. Devotees visit these 8 Ganesh temple in a sequence and the journey is considered after visiting the first temple in the end. Many tours and packages are there to visit this popular religious destination. Normally it takes two days to visit all 8 temples (plus the first temple) to complete the spiritual journey.

Lord Ganesh is one of the most popular god in Maharashtra and Ganesh Chaturthi is celebrated with lot of devotion. So around Ganesh Chaturthi many people visit these 8 shrines.

Chintamani ashtavinayaka temples in pune

The ashtavinayaka temples are:

1. Moreshwar temple – morgaon, pune district
2. Siddhivinayak temple – siddhatek, ahmednagar district
3. Ballaleshwar temple – pali, raigad district
4. Varadavinayak temple – mahad, near khopoli, raigad district
5. Chintamani temple – theur, pune district
6. Girijatmaj temple – lenyadri, pune district
7. Vighnagar temple – ozar, pune district
8. Mahaganapati temple – ranjangaon, pune district.

According to shastra, first you have to visit moreshwar temple of moregaon and then proceed to siddhivinayak temple, ballaleshwar temple, varadavinayak temple, chintamani temple, girijatmaj temple, vighnagar temple, mahaganapati temple and then end the journey by visiting the moreshwar temple again.



## Elephanta caves

Elephanta caves are a UNESCO world heritage site and a collection of cave temples predominantly dedicated to the Hindu god Shiva. They are on Elephanta Island, or Gharapuri. The Elephanta caves contain rock-cut stone sculptures that show syncretism of Hindu and Buddhist ideas and iconography. The caves are hewn from solid basalt rock. Elephanta caves hold their significance because: the Shaivite group of caves – while there are many examples of Buddhist caves in India, Elephanta caves stand as a unique and important example as it is influenced by Shaiva traditions and mythology in the Shiva Purana.

2. Jyotirlingas – there are 12 Jyotirlingas in India. These are power spots for Shiva devotees to take blessings of Lord Shiva. Out of 12, few Jyotirlingas are in Maharashtra. There are many tour and packages for doing visiting these Jyotirlingas. Normally 5-6 days' package is there which also include visit to popular nearby religious places like Shirdi Sai Baba and Shani Shingnapur.

The Jyotirlinga in Maharashtra are:

1. Bhimashankar · 2. Trimbakeshwar · 3. Grishneshwar · 4. Aundha Nagnath temple · 5. Parli Vajjnath ·

**Pandavleni** also known as Tirthankar Leni, Panch Pandav or Pandav Leni Jain cave, is an ancient rock-cut sculptures complex located at Gomai River around 6 kilometers north of Shahada, Maharashtra.

**Shirdi** you just can't visit Maharashtra without being to Shirdi. This is the most essential and significant pilgrimage places to visit near Mumbai. This town is the place where Sai Baba preached the message of following one God and being kind to humanity. Well, you can actually join the never-ending queue of devotees in the city all year around. There are various temples located in this city dedicated to Sai Baba and you require at least an entire day to visit them all and pay your respects. Apart from the Samadhi Mandir, the Gurus' sthan and the Khandoba, don't forget to pay a visit to the Sakuri Kanyakumari Ashram here which is a very peaceful place if you want to forget your worries for some time.

**Ellora, Aurangabad** -Aurangabad, which was declared by the government as the tourism capital of Maharashtra back in 2010, is a famous tourist hub which greets its visitors with a richly woven tapestry of sights and sounds. From UNESCO world heritage sites to bustling markets brimming with delicate silk items and exquisite hand-woven garments, Aurangabad promises all tourists an exciting holiday experience. History buffs will be excited to know that Aurangabad has quite a bit of history attached to it. The city used to be the capital of the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb, which is how it derived its current name of 'Aurangabad'. While the city is rapidly heading towards industrial growth and globalization, it still retains most of its past glory, heritage, charms and traditions.

**Shingnapur** this popular temple is dedicated to Lord Shanidev, the popular Hindu God associated with the planet Saturn. The temple is well known amongst the locals and devotees from all around India. Apart from



the temple, shingnapur is a small village which is also famous for the fact that in the whole village no house has doors and despite this no theft has been reported in the village.

### **Shree mahalaxmi ambabai temple, kolhapur**

The shri ambabai/mahalaxmi temple of kolhapur in maharashtra, india, is one of the three and half shakti peethas listed in various puranas of hinduism. According to these writings, a shakti peetha is a place associated with shakti, the goddess of power. The kolhapur shakti peetha is of special religious significance being one of the six places where it is believed that one can either obtain salvation from desires or have them fulfilled.



### **The significance of spiritual tourism (02 February 2020)**

Spiritual tourism falls in the services sector. It increases employment opportunities and contributes to a nation's gdp growth. There are innumerable advantages of spiritual tourism. It brings inner peace and happiness. It provides purpose and meaning to your life. It encourages local cultures and their traditions. It protects their natural gifts, talents, and arts. With the rapid growth in technology, there is more disturbance to locals and natives. But with increased spiritual tourism, there are opportunities to protect the nature and the natural talents of local communities.

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Spiritual tourism encourages foreign investment indirectly as tourists bring foreign exchange. However, there are several demerits with spiritual tourism. It increases sexual exploitation and crimes. It destructs nature and disturbs the ecology. Overall, the merits outnumber the demerits. Hence, spiritual tourism must be encouraged to enhance empathy, compassion, peace, and prosperity.

There is a growing number of employees globally going for spiritual vacations. It helps them reflect and acquire peace, solitude, and relaxation. It improves their decision-making and leadership abilities and skills.

### **What is explore spiritual tourism? (02 February 2020)**

With a growing number of tourists globally, there is an increased emphasis on spiritual tourism than ever before. Spiritual tourism is to travel to find purpose and meaning to your life. It elevates your physical, mental, and emotional energies. It develops, maintains, and improves your body, mind, and spirit. In a nutshell, it connects your body, mind, and soul. Hence, spiritual tourism can be defined as travelling on pilgrimage to acquire enlightenment, entertainment, and education to leave your footprints and take your memories back to your home by expressing your gratitude to god.

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#### **➤ This are the objective of tourism**

- **Tourism promotes economic development.**
- **When there is tourism in our country, there will be lots of foreign currency inflows to the country.**
- **Tourism promotes the health facility.**
- **Tourism indirectly promotes the health facility in the economy.**
- **Social development.**

### **Smart tourism; a step towards sustainable development–case of Ramtek town, Maharashtra (June 2019)**

Tourism is acknowledged to be crucially important for development due to its multifaceted nature encompassing economic, social, political, environmental, cultural and psychological characteristics (britton, 1989). It is also recognized as one of the world's largest industries, contributing 10% to the global gdp, with enormous potential for further growth. In many countries, especially in the developing countries, tourism has become a major source of foreign exchange earnings (unescap, 2005) emphasizing the need for concentrated and sustained efforts towards its development. 'sustainable tourism development' has thus become important

for developing as well as developed countries today. Tourism industry in Maharashtra has a tremendous potential for growth, given the availability of basic infrastructure and the variety of tourist themes offered by various destinations in Maharashtra. Maharashtra has a rich historical and cultural heritage, which has been under-explored by the tourism industry and the government agencies. In this paper we are trying to focus one such pilgrimage tourist place “Ramtek” Nagpur in Maharashtra.

Primarily it is a pilgrimage centre also known as kashi of vidarbha for the existence of ambala lake which is considered as ganga. Ramtek town observes the yatra three times a year during period of dashahara, kartik poornima and shriramnavmi which attracts the people from all-around the region to enjoy the same. The number of pilgrims coming to visit yatra was around one lakh at some time, nowadays reduce in thousands. Ramtek pilgrimage is seen under different religions like jainism, hindus and muslims. The water bodies in the form of lakes, baolis (stepped wells) are the part of rituals. Some of these are also termed as ‘ganga’, holy water hence deity is placed inside it. Agasthi ashram at ramgiri has got its historical and religious importance in ramtek. This paper would be an attempt to exhibit the existing condition of the ramtek town and try to bridge the sustainable solutions for smart tourism for the upcoming bright future of this small town, Ramtek.

### **RAMTEK TOWN, MAHARASHTRA:**

Ramtek is one of those strategically located areas wherein diverse civilization and cultures met in past. The various hills – Kaikai hills, Ramgiri hills, Nagarjun hills, Hidimba hills covers the area. The Sur River and Kapila River flow through the region. This area was very much famous for its natural beauty and also its association with the lord Ram. It is believed that lord Ram had stayed in this area while in exile and took oath of killing demons here in agasthi ashram so it is termed as Ramtek. Due to this mythical association this area started developing as a pilgrimage center.

### **EVOLUTION OF RAMTEK TOWN:**

The evolution of Ramtek or Ramagiri from a local holy place into a sacred centre has risen in the thirteenth century under the establishment of the Yadava king of Devagiri. The geographical location and the story Meghdootam by Kalidasa (great Sanskrit poet from Ujjain) must have attracted the yadava king of Devagiri to built temples on this Ramtek hill. In the 13th century, Ramagiri as a sacred centre seems not to have emerged directly out of a local pastoral culture. Since the 4th century AD, the sanctuaries on the hill have attracted the attention and care of those in power. This area was known as the “Mahadwar of Kashi” (gate for Kashi) as the pilgrimage route started with this area for the people going to Kashi. Ramtek is also called as kashi of Vidarbha.

### **Introduction - religious tourism (2017)**

In a 2011 national geographic article, man pondered the complex relationship between the origins of civilization and religion. While presenting his discussion, he proposed that from the very beginning of human settlement, pilgrimage has been a fundamental element of society to this day, travel such as this for ‘spiritual’,

linked to 'spectacle' motives has remained important, and in few countries is this more obvious than countries such as Italy, Israel, India, France and many others. Thus, religious / faith-based / spiritual tourism / pilgrimage are a significant and constant element of the tourism industry. Many industry-focused publications talk of how religious tourism is a 'rapidly growing segment within the tourism industry', however, this present paper is based on the understanding that this has always been a robust element of tourism, and perhaps.

The world tourism organization (unto) is clear in its enthusiasm for religious tourism, with secretary-general, taleb rifai, suggesting that 'religious tourism can be one of the most effective tools to foster inclusive and sustainable development'. In so doing, three main benefits of religious tourism are identified:

1. Religious tourism raises awareness of humanity's common heritage and provides resources for preservation.
2. It can contribute to local development.
3. It builds cultural understanding.

However, at the same time, the unwto highlight what they call 'crucial challenges' which include:

1. The preservation of religious sites and monuments.
2. Upholding respect for local traditions and religious practices.
3. The inclusive development of local communities. (raffia, 2015)

Any consideration of religious tourism must work to maximize these benefits, while simultaneously ensuring that the challenges are effectively managed



**Importance of tourism policy in promotion of tourism with reference to Maharashtra tourism policy (May 2017)**



Tourism is fast growing industry with creating a billion job opportunities every year. Government is making the tourism policies for the development of the destination, their upkeep and maintenance. Policies implemented well help the tourism industry to achieve the better result. Tourism creates direct and indirect job opportunities and opens the various segments for revenue generation. Foreign exchange is important for any country to make the economy stronger; tourism is one of the service industries which support in economic development. Proper evaluation of the policy after certain period shared with the service provider and proper data management system for the same can help all the tourism support industry to improve on the services to achieve the great tourist satisfaction.

### **Spiritual tourism: a tool for socio-cultural and sustainable development (10October 2015)**

A tourist destination can be considered as a complex product of tourism industry consisting of natural resources, distinctive local features, infrastructure, superstructure, services, and cultural attributes (mcintosh and goeldner, 1990; inskeep, 1991; kim, 1998). Most of the studies related to tourism have focused on developing the conceptual framework to create destination image. The image of a tourist destination is an impression that a person holds about a state in which they do not reside (hunt, 1975). It can be considered as the mental construct developed by a potential tourist on the basis of a few selected impressions among the pool of total impressions (fakeye and crompton, 1991).

It can be viewed as the sum of the beliefs, ideas and impressions that a person has about a destination (crompton, 1979). Studies have been carried out to find out the attractiveness of a tourist destination based on attributes of a destination (gearingm, 1974; ritchie and jins, 1978; tang and rochananond, 1990). Some studies proposed the image building towards a tourist destination based on the feelings, belief and opinion that individuals have about a destination's perceived capacity to provide satisfaction in relation to their different levels of needs (hu and ritchie, 1993). Latest studies emphasize on both multi-attribute approach and holistic impressions of the tourist site to find out its image (baloglu and mcclary, 1999; choi, 1999; beerli and martin, 2004).

The information provided through various advertising media arouses lot of interest and expectations in the minds of the visitors about the tourist destination in respect of its key attributes and support services, creating a powerful impression in the minds of the visitors about the destination (un and crompton, 1990; fakeye and crompton, 1991; gartner, 1993; baloglu and mcclary, 1999, beerli and martin, 2004).

### **Elements of spiritual experience**

**Ashrams:** -Ashrams are typically set deep in the natural world and at the simplest level are a place of religious hermitage. Typically, inhabitants of the ashram are involved in activities like yoga, music, or meditation.

**Gurus:** -the role of the guru varies with different religious practices, but they are uniformly respected and revered. Additionally, one need not be in residence at an ashram to follow a particular guru.

**Yoga:** -Yoga is a way of life that offers guidelines for behavior and beliefs, and the "asanas" (poses) are one small aspect of these guidelines. Although yoga stems from the vedas and the hindu religion, it has been co-opted by those of many different faiths.

### **Spiritual tourism in india**

In the western world, it is currently in vogue to practice elements of far-off religions and spiritually-driven practices. Yoga studios are cropping up all over the united states, as are practitioners of meditation, and believers in ayurvedic medicine. It is no surprise that some of these individuals take an interest in journeying to the birthplace of their new found beliefs, and in doing so they participate in "spiritual tourism". India is perhaps the most popular destination for so-called spiritual tourism, and it is a logical selection based on the number. There are, it seems, no western spiritual tourists who are wholly ignorant of India's spiritual heritage and of the history of similar western travelers venturing there in search of ways of enlightenment. Simple branding and advertising theory would suggest that none would be there in the first place were it not for the dissemination of such knowledge; how can one know to go to a place if one does not know one can go there? This suggests at least two things; first, that there is a history of spiritual travel to India, and second that this history has become, or resulted in, a tradition of travel to India for spiritual reasons. Thus, in order to properly examine the present practice of spiritual tourism by western travelers in India one must first look at the history of such travel to ascertain how it came to be understood as not only 'good to think' but also good to do.

Since the 1960s India has come to be regarded as the epitome of the spiritually touristic destination (Sharpley and Sundaram 2005); however, finding scholarly information on the history of spiritual tourism to India is a difficult task. Few histories of the tourism industry in India exist, and none are to be found that examine spiritual tourism; this despite the clear popularity that India has as a spiritual destination over the past 50 years. Rishikesh in particular gained popular spiritual-touristic attention in 1968 when the Beatles went there to study with Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. A growing tide of western youth, fresh out of school or university, and looking to discover the nature of reality, had been trickling into the country for years by that stage. Even the great Mircea Eliade visited Rishikesh while researching his doctorate, apparently in search of 'authentic yoga practice to complete his education' (Strauss 2002, 227). While Eliade chose Swami Sivananda, whom he had heard of in Delhi, as his teacher. In this way India has been attracting westerners interested in its religions and in practices such as yoga and meditation for over 200 years. But it is most recently that India has appealed to the spiritually inclined in the west. In particular, over the past 50 years India has produced numerous gurus who have attracted thousands, even millions, of visitors who come to receive an audience or darshan (literally a glimpse

of god'). Their ashrams often become locations with high concentrations of western travellers, some of whom make no other travels while in the country.



### **Economic beneficiaries of spiritual tourism in Maharashtra**

**Religious** – religious stakeholders are mainly those who live in or are attracted due to spiritual purposes.

**Ashrams**- these are many big organizations like the divine life society and swarg ashram which are run by trusts. They are involved in charitable work like running hospitals and giving out kutirs and at the same time spread the spiritual message.

**Temples**- there are many temples in Maharashtra, devoted to many different gods, like theashtavinayaka temple and Shree Mahalaxmi Ambabai Temple, Kolhapur there isalso cave a. So it is a focal point for the meeting of many religions.

**Kutirs**- many saints are leased small huts by bigger organizations for meditation, like the ones given on the left bank by swarg ashram.

**Pilgrims**- from all over india and the world, pilgrims tend to start the ashtavinayaka ganesh temple.

**Bookshops**- there is a lot of bookshops selling books on religion and spirituality for the tourists.

**Religious accessories** - a lot of shops sell incense and herbs which are very culturally significant.

**Yoga** –there are many yoga instructors and schools and many spas also offer traditional services to tourists like ayurveda.



**Transport-** a wide variety of vehicles such as jeeps, taxis, ferries, buses, tempos and cater to the transportation needs of both the local and the tourist populations. Jeeps ply on the road through temple, carrying about 8 to 10 passengers. These jeeps do not have pollution checks and tend to be very noisy

**Travel agencies-** many travel agencies available for Maharashtra darshan.

**Eating-** Maharashtra spiritual is filled with a variety of restaurants all offering multi-cuisine. Their specialty is that they are all vegetarian due to religious purposes. Also since there are a lot of foreign tourists, the restaurants are now offering Mexican, Italian, Israeli and german cuisine also. This food is relatively expensive while compared to north and south indian but overall the food is very cheap for tourists from bigger cities.

**Living** –there are a huge variety of living places for tourists and pilgrims alike – hotels, guest houses and ashrams. Depending on what a person wants to do in maharashtra, there is accommodation available. These can be five star or very small.

**Foreign tourists-** compared to anywhere in india, except for probably maharashtra might have the highest number of per capita tourists. There are many foreigners- americans, italians, chinese, britishers, germans and people from many other countries seeking yoga and spirituality. Also, they love the spas and massages that they get in various places all over Maharashtra.

### Experience of tourist (June 2014)

The experience of tourist is the main factor that determines the post behavior and satisfaction level about tourist destination. Tourist satisfaction depends on various experience and facilities that provided on spiritual destination. To verify the experience of spiritual tourist there are 14 factors determine to check the level of satisfaction. These are: nature in general, local life style, historical sites, walking and excursions, accommodation, nightlife, shopping, hospitality, tourist information, feeling of safety, quality of medical service, money withdrawal facilities (e.g. Atm), value of money, spirituality in area and historical sites.

### Motives of tourist



## **Belief**

The first and most motivational factor is belief because of 1<sup>st</sup> rank on the behalf of which is highest in comparison to others. So we can say that belief is the primary factor that influences the tourists to visit spiritual destination. Tourists have belief on god so that they come to spiritual destination to search the god and supreme power of god. They believe that there is a power that controls the whole universe.

## **Experience**

Experience is the second largest factor that influences the tourists to visit spiritual destination. Goodness is an inner feeling that arises due to experience, word of mouth, some religious factors, etc.

## **Inner peace**

The third most influence factor is inner peace. Tourists are visit to spiritual destination because it gives peace of mind and spiritual satisfaction.

## **Family/friend suggestion**

The last factor that influenced the pilgrims to some extent to visit the spiritual destination was the suggestion by primary influence group.

## **Advertisements**

The advertisement did not play significant role to influence the pilgrims to come for spiritual visit.

## **A social aspect of tourism development in Maharashtra (2013)**

Through bound to his hearth and home, his land of birth on domicile, man is a creature who loves to travel, if only to search for new adventures or explore new lands to conquer and occupy. Since the beginning of human history, this urge to move about has been an important human activity. Form the earliest historic times man has cherished the desire to discover the unknown, the explore new and strange places, to seek changes of environment and to undergo new experiences. There was a time when men and women along with their families or tribes roamed about in search of food and shelter, and in the process, discovered new areas to settle down. The search for food and shelter led to new conquests and adventures. The mythologies, epics and historic of various nations contain decryptions of such adventure. (bhatia ak 1982)

The process has continued through the age, which have perhaps also corresponds with different states in the development of technology and the changes in the mode or travelling and the facilities available. Meanwhile new worlds have been discovered, new areas brought under human occupation, new nations have emerged

and there have been relooked changes in technology as well as human expectation, but the urge to travel has remained unchanged. Over the countries the passion for travelling has become stronger and more popular among the average citizens. New motives have been added to the reasons for people undertaking long or short journeys, for example, the curiosity or urge to see different people or just to have some adventure, a change from the normal ways of life, some elation and fun. In fact, this latter type of travelling has become more common and rewarding during recent decades. This hobby or traveling largely goes under the broad and general term of tourism.

### **Economic impact of tourism on Kolhapur district of Maharashtra. (10 July 2013)**

The tourism industry in India is substantial and vibrant, and the country is fast becoming a major global destination. India's travel and tourism industry is one of the most profitable industries in the country, and also credited with contributing a substantial amount of foreign exchange. This is illustrated by the fact that during 2006, four million tourists visited India and spent US \$8.9 billion.

Tourism industry in Maharashtra has a tremendous potential for growth, given the availability of basic infrastructure and the variety of tourist themes offered by various destinations in Maharashtra. Maharashtra has a rich historical and cultural heritage, which has been under-explored by the

Tourism industry and the government agencies. The strong basic infrastructure availability throughout the state would provide a perfect platform for fresh private investments in development of tourism in the state, and in the process creating many direct and indirect employment opportunities to local residents. In Maharashtra Kolhapur is prominent because of the Mahalaxmi temple and other tourist's attractions therefore here Kolhapur district has been selected for the assessment economic impact on Kolhapur district.

### **Development on Kolhapur district**

Tourism has major effect on the economics of destination areas. It often brings new and sometimes necessary sources of capital and income that may supplement or replace traditional sources of earning at destination; and for that purpose tourism development has often received support from the government and local residents. While talking about those economic impacts of tourism, more is known about the economic benefits of tourism than the associated costs. The emphasis on the positive economic impacts of tourism has created the optimum that tourism is stimulating economic development, but these economic benefits have been accompanied by variety of costs which have been largely ignored. Therefore, for the sustainable development of tourism there should be balanced approach towards the economic impacts of tourism, which assess both the benefits and the cost of tourism development. Here the economic impact of tourism on destinations is understood at the local level mostly for understanding the present status development of tourism in the Kolhapur district and selected case studies. At the local level tourism is encouraged due to its ability to generate employment, increased standard of living and provide linkage effects with other sector of the economy. One of the major benefits local communities expect from tourism is a significant contribution to their economy; increased local income as well as new jobs. Local business operator's profits directly from tourists spending. As they pay their employees, and as the business operators and employees spend their increased wealth locally in other businesses, the entire community eventually benefits. Economists consider the revenues gained from tourism as 'basic income' in the sense that they result from the export earnings.

Money spent by tourists is new money in the local economy; not just a recycling of wealth already existed there. As a result, the basic income from tourism helps to pay for goods and services imported from other regions and contributed to governmental revenues through taxes.

### **Development of spiritual tourism circuits (01 October 2012)**

Global financial crisis has seen many giant industries crashing to the ground with an exception of tourism. With the economies collapsing around the world, a rise in spirituality and related matters has been observed. A combination of both has created a new product called as spiritual tourism. This product is inclusive unlike religious tourism and pilgrimage. Many countries offering religious tourism and pilgrimage have struggled to reshape their products into multi-faith based tourism. India as a country has the ability to redesign its tourism and present the image of a multi-faith or spiritual tourism destination. A religion based tourism circuit is being introduced by the Indian government that is assessed as a narrow and exclusive approach in this study. Spiritual tourism circuits are being developed by the Ministry of Tourism India in its 12th five-year plan (2013-17), not only for sustainable development and growth of tourism as a whole, but also to promote India as a spiritual tourist destination. Spiritual tourism is a niche special interest tourism segment. This study emphasizes upon the need to capitalize on the many religious traditions being practiced in the country and presenting a comprehensive spiritual tourism package for domestic and foreign travellers. It further recommends public-private partnerships (PPP) between the key stakeholders to explore the full potential which is essential for the competitive advantage and sustainability of the packaged spiritual tourism circuits, but also to promote and practice religious secularism, integration and peace.

### **Socio-economic impacts in pilgrimage tourism (2012 January)**

Most studies that measured specifically the impacts of pilgrimage tourism agree that sacred destinations are strongly affected by the stream of pilgrimage tourists visiting them (Collins Kreiner et al., 2006; Rinschede, 1992; Vukonic, 1996; Din, 1989; Walpole and Goodwin, 2000). Shinde (2003) proposes a model of the dynamics of pilgrimage tourism, which allows us to further understand the interaction between pilgrimage tourists and host community and the associated impacts.

As such, religious tourism can have similar economic impact as we see in other forms of tourism such as job creation, population growth and infrastructure development. The Catholic pilgrimage site Lourdes is a good example of how pilgrimage tourism can affect a destination's population growth. Lourdes, which currently receives some 6 million pilgrims per year from 140 different countries, (Lourdes, 2007) has been experiencing a constant population growth since its beginning as a pilgrimage site in 1858. This is in contrast to other cities at the edge of the Pyrenees and is attributable to the arrival of people from the surrounding area for job opportunities provided by the pilgrimage (Rinschede, 1992). Czestochowa in Poland, a town with a population of 250,000 attracts some 4.5 million pilgrims per year (Czestochowa, 2008; Gray, 2008) saw improving its infrastructure as a result of being a pilgrimage site (Jackowski and Smith, 1992). Some religious sites have been visited for centuries and there the impacts develop over a long period of time but sometimes holy sites are —discovered suddenly, bringing dramatic and sudden changes to the local residents.

Pilgrimage tourism is of course not free from negative impacts. El-Bakry (2003) notes that the high cost of an Umra or Hajj trip for Muslim people plus the increase in the number of people performing Umra, gave rise to a black market for the exchange rate of the Saudi Riyal. More precisely, the Saudi Riyal increased 16% between Novembers. Impacts of pilgrimage tourism. Source: Shinde, 2003, p. 93. Residents' perceptions of

pilgrimage tourism. Against the central bank of Egypt's rate. In addition, the flow of riyal to the black market caused a cash deficiency forcing local banks to refuse grants even for small amounts to travellers (el- bakry, 2003). In fact, according to rashid (2007), operations and contracts are now set up to ensure that any element of speculation, uncertainty and gambling are eliminated or minimized. changes in the local economy and society due to the large number of pilgrimage tourists may contribute to a process of cultural commoditization and acculturation (ichaporia, 1983; joseph and kavoori, 2001; cohen, 1988). For example, the authentic pilgrimages have given way in sri lanka to large-scale tourism (pfaffenberger, 1983), which combines both recreation and pilgrimage (singh, 2005). In vrindavan, a popular Hindu pilgrimage centre in india, the improvements in accessibility and availability of transportation have long replaced the traditional pure form of —pilgrimage on foot for the majority of visitors to the particular site (shinde, 2006, 2007; timothy and olsen, 2006; jackson and davis, 2000).

In accordance with changes in visitor patterns and the expansion of pilgrimage travel, many tourist enterprises (hotels and tour operators) have emerged in the vicinity of the most popular temples, indicating growing tourism activity (shinde, 2007) and diminishing the sacred atmosphere. Similarly, in el camino, spain, the process of secularization has been accelerated by the council of europe's designation of the pilgrimage route to santiago as the first european cultural itinerary (morpeth, 2007). In fact, the transformation from local religious rituals to national festivals, as is also the case in anda-lusian pilgrimage, raised conflicts and problems for the local population (crain, 1992). On the other hand, the positive impacts caused by the pilgrimage tourists often motivate residents to seek preservation of their religious sites and festivals not necessarily for purely religious reasons but also in order to safeguard the stream of pilgrimage tourists (cohen, 1992). For instance, in lisbon each year on June 13 on the day of the feast of st Anthony, the town hall sponsors the weddings of poor couples. In the year 2000, approximately 2,000 couples were married at the town hall and thousands more came to enjoy parades and other events citywide, making it an important event in the city 's tourist calendar (tilson, 2001). in summary, a pilgrimage site is connected to the non-sacred world and pilgrimage tourism impacts both positively and negatively on the local community.

### **The socio-economic development through pilgrimage tourism**

The economic impact of pilgrimage tourism can be seen its contribution to a country, the largest contributions to pilgrimage tourism is seen in the many pilgrimage places in india (bruner 1994). Many small places economies are highly depend on pilgrimage tourism as evidenced by the significant share of pilgrimage tourism in their total earnings. In 2009, pilgrimage tourism alone contributed 44.5 percent of the total export earnings of indian tourism. Tourism in india has also provided a substantial contribution to indian tourism, amounting to 13.7 percent in 2009, taking full advantage of the potential of their natural, pilgrimage tourism resources, countries like india and foreign countries are benefiting from the pilgrimage tourism. Bruner 1994; daniel 1996). in 2009, pilgrimage tourism in india and neighbouring countries accounted respectively for 23.3 and 22.5% of their total foreign exchange earnings. In the other countries of the region, the contribution of pilgrimage tourism and is averaged between 50 to 60% mainly because of their potentialities and wealth. However in the light of the excreted continuing growth of the pilgrimage tourism in the foreseeable future, it can be assumed that the share of pilgrimage tourism in the indian economy will be more significant. (silberberg 1995, while there are various definitions of them converge around the concepts of improving the well being of country citizens, promoting higher standards of living, employment and conditions of economic



and social progress. Therefore in the absence of better indications to measure the impacts of pilgrimage tourism, its importance for employment has been used in the present document. The pilgrimage tourism contributes significantly to the creation of employment, both directly and indirectly in 2009, the industry in indian region provided jobs for about 21% people. Representing an average of 8.9% of total employment. Taylor 2001), pilgrimage tourism employment in north-east-asia is estimated at 9 million jobs or 6.1% of total employment. This situation is attributed mainly to china where 1 out of 10 people works in a pilgrimage tourism related industry. (shinde, 2007) the importance of pilgrimage tourism becomes more significant. When the structure of the work force in indian economy is analysed. A comparison with countries in other sub regions indicated that the share of total employment in pilgrimage tourism sector in 2009 varied from 2.4 percent in india to 5% in other countries. Fueled by sustained growth, the pilgrimage tourism industry has managed to become a significant provider of employment in india. Handler and saxton (1988), thereby improving the economic situation at the people in india. In addition, revenue generated from pilgrimage tourism has enabled govt. To allocate pilgrimage resources, for improving pilgrimage tourism.

## **Economic dimensions of pilgrimage tourism**

### **Economic significance**

Tourism has major economic significance for a country. The receipts from international tourism can provide a valuable source of earnings for many countries both developed as well as developing. Visitor spending generates income for both public and private sector besides affecting wages and employment opportunities. Although tourism is sensitive to the level of economic activity in the tourist generating countries, it provides more fixed earnings than primary products. The income from tourism has tended to increase at a higher rate than merchandise export in a number of countries especially in countries having a low industrial base. There is now and almost assured channel for financial flows from the developed countries to the developing countries rising the latter's export earnings and most important source of income for a number of countries both developed and developing.

### **Dimensions of religious tourism (2008 November)**

Religious tourism, sometimes called spiritual tourism, has gained an increasing role throughout the world. Due to its initial component, pilgrimage, it is often considered the oldest form of tourism, dating thousands of years back. Travels to the ancient holy places didn't have today's logistical support, but they had the same human motivation: faith. This faith, sometimes extreme, was the basis for shaping religions. Religions' variety and complexity can be justified through human typology, the environment in which their adepts live, culture, and last but not least, society's stage of development. The present paper wishes to investigate aspects related to religious tourism, identify some features it must react to, and highlight its determinants as well. Information is based on an up-to-date documentation, difficult to obtain in a field which hasn't been thoroughly investigated. The results refer to some original aspects, such as identifying the stakeholders of religious tourism and the way they can be involved in order to support a tourist activity which is benefic especially for the local community. Other conclusions result from the analysis of data related to religious travels both throughout the world and romania. At a global level, the cultural openness from the past few

years is also benefic for religious tourism. The world is an interesting religious mosaic: it could be an interesting mosaic for religious tourism as well.

### **Religious tourism's stakeholders**

The dimensions of religious tourism and specialists estimations lead to the following conclusion: today we are dealing with a religious tourism industry, despite the seeming opposition of terms (industry – religion). Ignoring this reality would be a mistake for all the parties involved.

### **Religious communities**

Must be interested in this type of tourism at least for two reasons: first of all, because of the possibility of gaining notoriety regionally, nationally and even internationally, and secondly because income can be gained.

International organizations interested in the religious tourism phenomenon can belong to both domains: tourism and religion. In this respect we must mention the foundation of the world religious travel association, in October 2007, based in the usa. Under the motto “the source and voice of the religious travel industry”, wrta wishes to reunite tour operators, tourism services providers, tourism agencies but also churches and religious organizations. It is a way of creating partnerships, promoting certain tourism products through the internet. This association is the first of this kind, but if it will function properly, it may be the incentive for other possible initiatives. The world tourism organization, as the main tourism authority, was involved in organizing the first conference on religious tourism, in cyprus. This means international recognition for religious tourism.

### **A key stakeholder is the host community**

Its “psychology” must be adapted to all the religious tourists flow supposes. There must be positive, cooperation relations between them and the community. A major risk of this type of tourism is its rejection by the community. Here, the problems are complex and can be solved through the direct and strong involvement of the authorities and church leaders as well. Strong rejection attitudes may appear in the communities composed of many atheists and agnostics, and also if there are many disorganized tourist flows. On the other hand, if the community accepts tourism as an opportunity for development and raise of its social and economic status, it can gain multiple benefits – direct and indirect.

### **Transport companies**

Which have a good product policy will take into account the religious events of different areas and ensure the necessary number of vehicles. This thing could mean additional income. Moreover, if the marketing staff observes an increase in the number of people visiting religious objectives, they can add new transport lines, either permanent or non-permanent (in certain days or at certain hours).



## **Local tourism services providers**

(accommodation, public alimentation, etc.) may benefit directly from the increase in the religious tourist flows. A thing which must be taken into account is tourist typology. Thus, offer adaptation has to be highly rigorous when it comes to pilgrims. Pilgrims are in search for quiet places, where they can meditate and have their intimacy. Moreover, the categories of food composing the menu must be taken into account (certain religious interdict alcohol, others certain types of meat, others are restricted during certain periods). A service provider which operates in a pilgrimage area, will take this into account and will treat his clients according to their religion. The academic environment is interested in religious tourism, as it can bring understanding to the dimension of this phenomenon. Through studies and research, it can provide information related to the number of tourists, their preferences, the possible disadvantages of tourism consumption etc. In addition, it can disseminate information related to the tourists' behaviour, the ethic norms they must obey. As the religious tourism phenomenon is monitored, specialists who are able to design adequate tourism products and correctly promote these products can be trained. Other stakeholders of the private sector may be banks, who gain from the currency exchange, souvenir shops, libraries, and stores in general, etc. Religious tourism's stakeholders must work together in order to reach their individual objectives: meetings can be held, seminars debating religious tourism related aspects from certain areas. Today is time for collaboration, involvement and finding advantageous solutions for everybody. Only this way can religious tourism be efficient socio-economically.

## **Forms of religious tourism today (1992)**

### **Short-term religious tourism.**

Short-term religious tourism distinguishes itself by spatially limited travel over short distances. The goal of such tourism is to go to a religious center with local, regional, or supraregional catchment area (pilgrimage sites) or to participate in a religious celebration, a religious conference or a meeting. The german term wallfhrt (pilgrimage) may be used here because the distances involved are small in both space and time. (the german term pilgerfahrt (pilgrimage journey) implies the crossing of greater distances over a longer period of time. Local wal2fahrt sites, which are located in the immediate neighbourhood of the pilgrims, are sought out, as a rule, only several times per year by the pilgrims. The parish priest offers any additional necessary religious services. An additional infrastructure, which extends beyond that of the normal community

Or city, is neither available nor is it necessary. Today, as in earlier times, the distance to the pilgrimage site is covered on foot in a procession over paths across the fields. Seldom does one employ an automobile or public transportation. At regional wallfahrt centers, with a larger catchment area, the number of annual pilgrims lies in the tens of thousands. The church no longer has any other function except that of a pilgrimage church. It is, nevertheless, spiritually administrated from the nearby parish. A corresponding infrastructure such as park and picnic places, restaurant, and religious article shops are on location. Of all transportational means, pilgrims travel least of all on foot, especially on certain ceremonial days of holy persons. Up to 500,000 believers annual seek out supraregional wallfhrt centers that extend beyond the catchment area of the diocese. Most of these pilgrims travel by car or bus, even where the traditional foot journey is preserved. The influence of pilgrimage tourism is apparent in population and settlement development, as well as in the function of facilities: the religious center, the inns, the restaurants, and several religious article shops.

In addition to the pilgrimage, there is yet another form of religiously motivated tourism. It can be characterized through the visitation of religious ceremonies and conferences that take place annually, or as a jubilee at regular intervals. Diocese festivals have a permanent ceremonial location-mostly in the bishop's city. However, conferences of church organizations and associations, as well as provincial church meetings, have a changing location. As a result of the single gathering of at times several hundred thousand believers at religious festivities of changing locations, the economic influence on the city is not determinable.

The influences are only evident for a period of time, especially in the form of heavy traffic, employment of special trains and buses, and provision of parking places, festival tents, and other necessary facilities.

### **Long-term religious tourism.**

Long-term religious tourism involves visits to religious centers for several days or weeks. It does not limit itself to the visitation of national and international pilgrimage sites (and so merely representing a mere extension of wullfahrt tourism); rather, it includes the visitation of other national and international religious centers.

Significant pilgrimage centers began mostly as local and regional pilgrimage sites. This can be demonstrated by the example of Lourdes, which has developed since its beginning as a pilgrimage site in the middle of the nineteenth century into an international pilgrimage center (Nolan and Nolan 1989; Rinschede 1985). Such centers are sought out by one to ten million pilgrims every year. Fluctuations are generally subject to increases during special ceremonies and jubilees or to decreases due to political upheaval, recession, and war. Rome and Mecca are distinct international pilgrimage centers. They hold a special position among the world churches as a result of the pilgrimage journey that is at times required of believers.

### **Organizational forms of religious tourism**

For a further understanding and as an explanation for the phenomenon of religious tourism, even more organizational forms must be systematized according to certain definitive characteristics. These characteristics may include number of participants, means of transportation, season, and demographic data.

Number of participants- every type of tourism (classified by motivation) has a social aspect, which culturally, politically, or religiously motivated holiday seeking travellers build upon. Individual travel enables the tourist to follow his or her interests and wishes, to choose travel goals and routes, and to prepare independently. Travel with family and friends in a private vehicle or with public transportation makes organization and social contacts easier. In religious tourism, the person travelling alone (individual tourism) represents the minority. This has been shown in studies of pilgrims.

## Forms of religious tourism (1992)

Religious tourism is that type of tourism whose participants are motivated either in part or exclusively for religious reasons. Listed here as a separate form, it could just as well be a subgroup of cultural tourism within this classification. On the whole, the differences between the single forms are not clearly definitive, and often one can distinguish transitional forms. Often a journey may have several motivations and other subordinate goals. For example, economic or political tourism often involve aspects of holiday or cultural pursuits. Similar

Points of transition and contact become evident between religious tourism, on the one hand, and holiday, cultural, economic, and political tourism on the other. Pilgrimages and other religious journeys are tied to other types of tourism, perhaps more closely today than ever before.

They are multifunctional journeys even when the religious factors seem to dominate-in industrialized countries more so than in developing countries. Today, religious tourism is closely connected with holiday and cultural tourism. For the participants of organized pilgrimages, a free day is often planned in the program so that the pilgrims can also make day trips into the surrounding area.

Religious and holiday tourism are especially interconnected in the Maharashtra, where many significant pilgrimage centers are located

In the immediate area of large tourist attractions where the religious sites are simultaneously significant cultural sites, the connection between pilgrimage and cultural tourism is especially pronounced.

Religious tourism has a strong affinity with social and group tourism as well. For many tourists today, it is very important to travel with a group of believers who think similarly and who are consequently in the same age division. In developing countries family groups define the combinations of pilgrims more than friends do.

## Research methodology

The study was conducted on the basis of a large number of information sources including a mix of primary and secondary sources.

The methodology sections describe the rationale for the application of specific procedures or techniques used to identify, selection and analyse information applied to understanding the researcher problem, thereby, allowing the reader to critically evaluate a study's overall validity and reliability.

The detailed methodology adopted for the study has been discussed below.

Research design: it is the backbone of study which has to be carried out in a proper and systematic way.

## Selection of area

Maharashtra only

## Selection of sample

The sample selected for study was with the help preparing random sampling method.

### Size of sample

The size of sample is 50 for general public of nagpur city.

### Collection of data: -

- A) **Primary data:** -the primary data consist of information collected through questionnaires. The questionnaires consist of basic information about topic and survey done on it.
- B) **Secondary data:** -the secondary data consist of individual information gathered by the researcher through text book, internets &different websites.

### Results & discussions

### LIST OF TABLE

**Table 1**

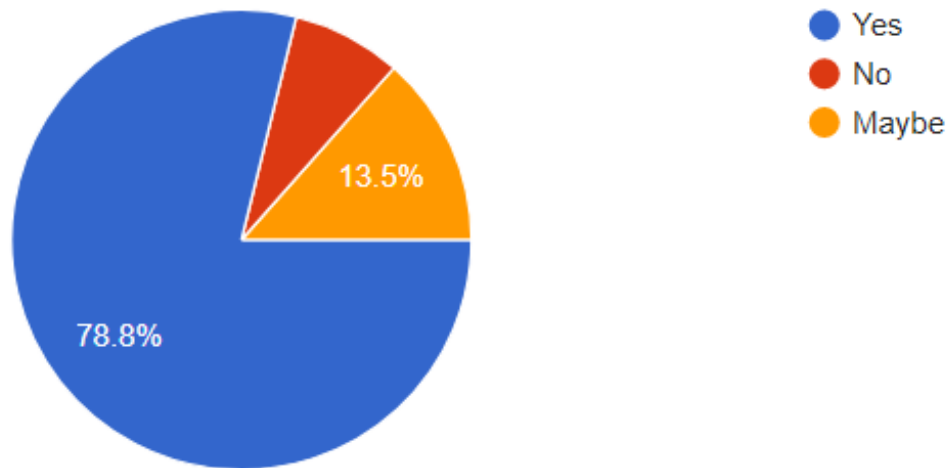
**Awareness of spiritual tourism.**

Sr.No	Options	No. Of sample	Total percentage
1	Yes	41	78.08%
2	No	7	13.05%
3	May be	4	08.87%
4	Total	52	100%

From the above table we have concluded that 78.08% of people are aware of spiritual tourism and 13.05% are not aware and 08.87% may be aware.

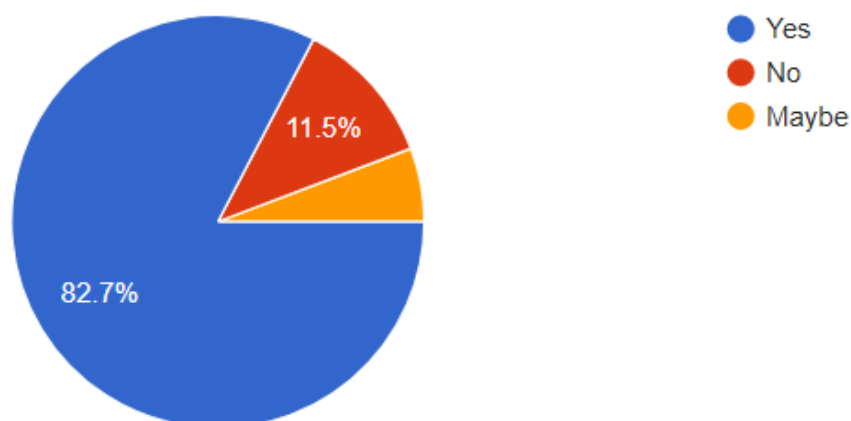
**Table 2**

**Visited any spiritual place in Maharashtra.**



Sr.no	Options	No. Of sample	Total percentage
1	Yes	43	82.07%
2	No	6	11.05%
3	May be	3	06.88%
4	Total	52	100%

From the above table we have concluded that 82.07% of people are visited of spiritual place in Maharashtra and 11.05% are not visited and 06.88% may be visited.

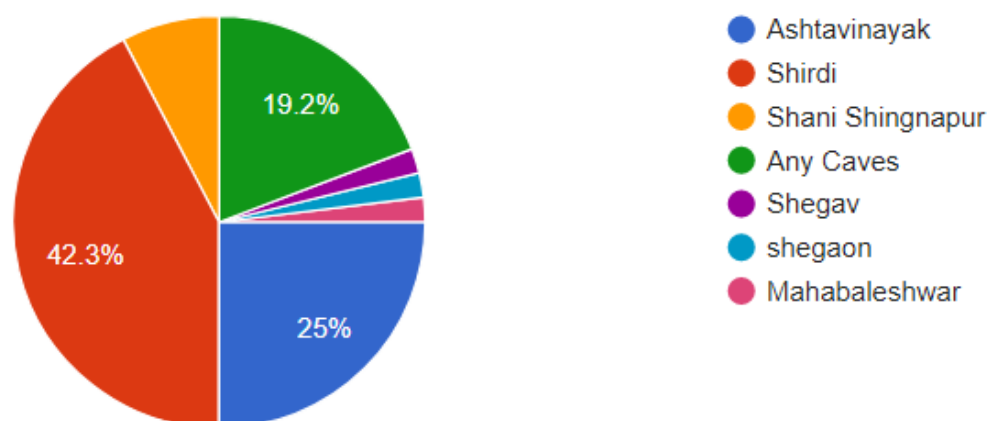


**Table 3**

**Most famous spiritual place in Maharashtra.**

Sr.no	Options	No. Of sample	Total percentage
1	Ashtavinayak	13	25.00%
2	Shirdi	22	42.03%
3	Shani Shingnapur	04	05.95%
4	Any caves	10	19.02%
5	Other	3	08.00%
6	Total	52	100%

From the above table we have concluded that 25.00% ashtavinayaka, 42.03% Shirdi, 05.95% Shani Shingnapur, 19.02% famous caves and 08.00% famous other spiritual place .42.03% Shirdi most famous in Maharashtra.

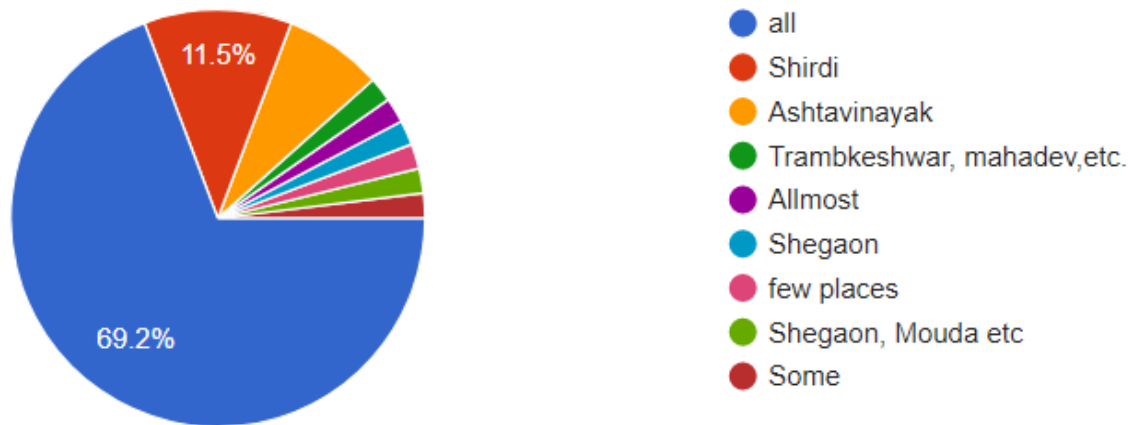


**Table 4**

**Which spiritual place you have visited in Maharashtra.**

Sr.no	Options	No. Of sample	Total percentage
1	All	36	69.02%
2	Other	16	30.98%
3	Total	52	100%

From the above table we have concluded that 69.02% of people are visited all spiritual place in Maharashtra and 30.98% visited other spiritual place.



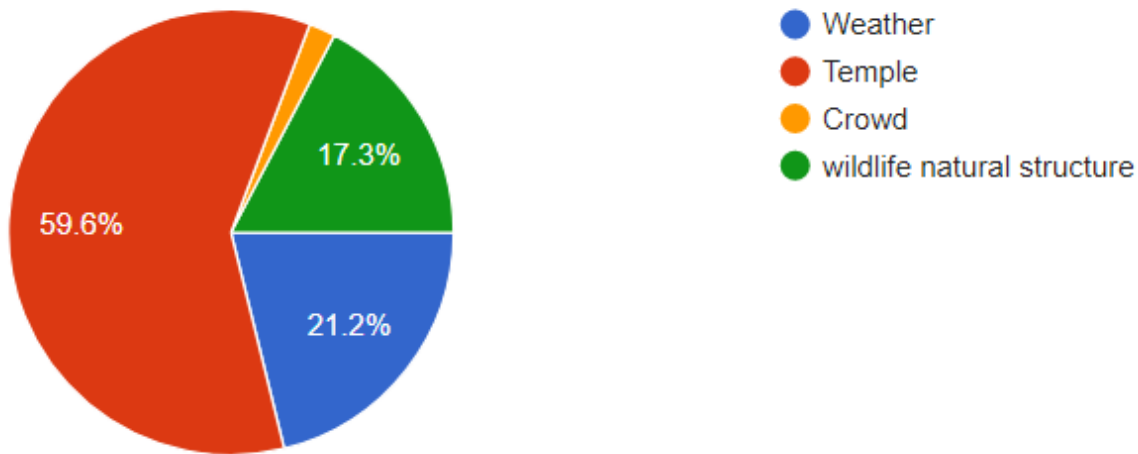
**Table 5**

**What are the different elements attracting to spiritual tourism products?**

Sr.no	Options	No. Of sample	Total percentage
1	Weather	11	21.02%
2	Temple	31	59.06%
3	Crowd	1	02.89%
4	Wildlife natural structure	9	17.03%
5	Total	52	100%

From the above table we have concluded that 21.02% attract weather, 59.06% attract temple 02.89% attract crowd and 17.03% attract wildlife nature structure.



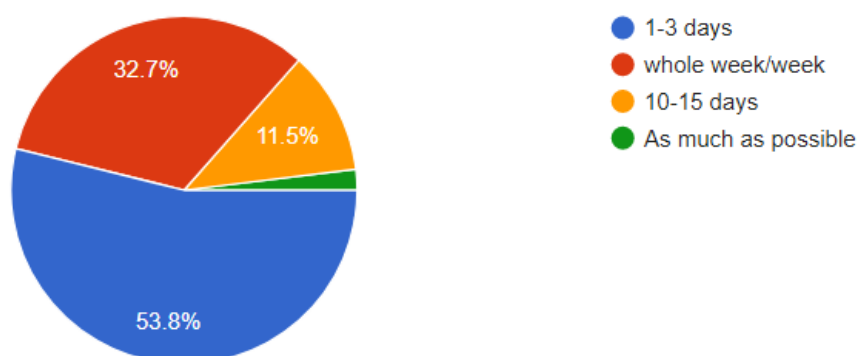


**Table 6**

**How many days do you like to stay in spiritual tourism?**

Sr.no	Options	No. Of sample	Total percentage
1	1-3 days	28	53.08%
2	Whole week	17	32.07%
3	10-15 days	06	11.05%
4	As much as possible	01	03.08%
5	Total	52	100%

From the above table we have concluded that 53.08% people like to stay 1-3 days, 32.07 people like to stay whole week, 11.05% people like to stay 10-15 days and 03.08% other as much as possible.

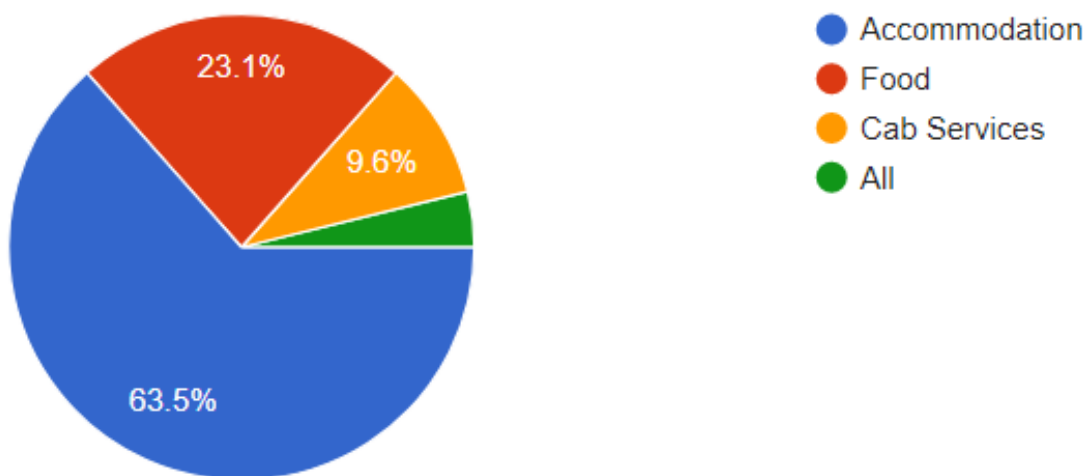


**Table 7**

**What kind of services do you need when you travel to spiritual place?**

Sr.no	Options	No. Of sample	Total percentage
1	Accommodation	33	63.05%
2	Food	12	23.01%
3	Cab services	05	09.06%
4	All	02	04.88%
5	Total	52	100%

From the above table we have concluded that 63.05% people need accommodation, 23.01 need food, 09.06% need a cab services and 04.88% need all types of services.

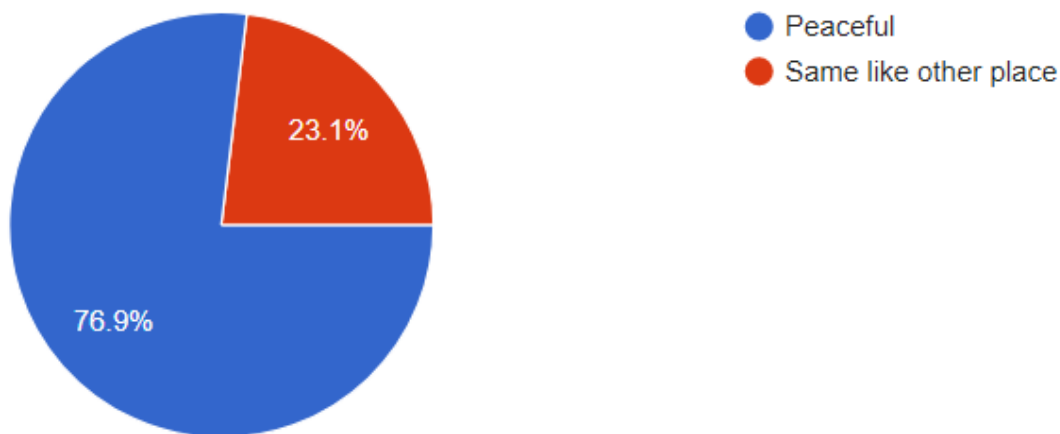


**Table 8**

**How was your experience about spiritual place?**

Sr.no	Options	No. Of sample	Total percentage
1	Peaceful	40	76.09%
2	Same like other place	12	23.01%
3	Total	52	99.01%

From the above table we have concluded that 76.09% people experience peaceful and 23.01% people same like other and 0.9% people not visited so no experience.

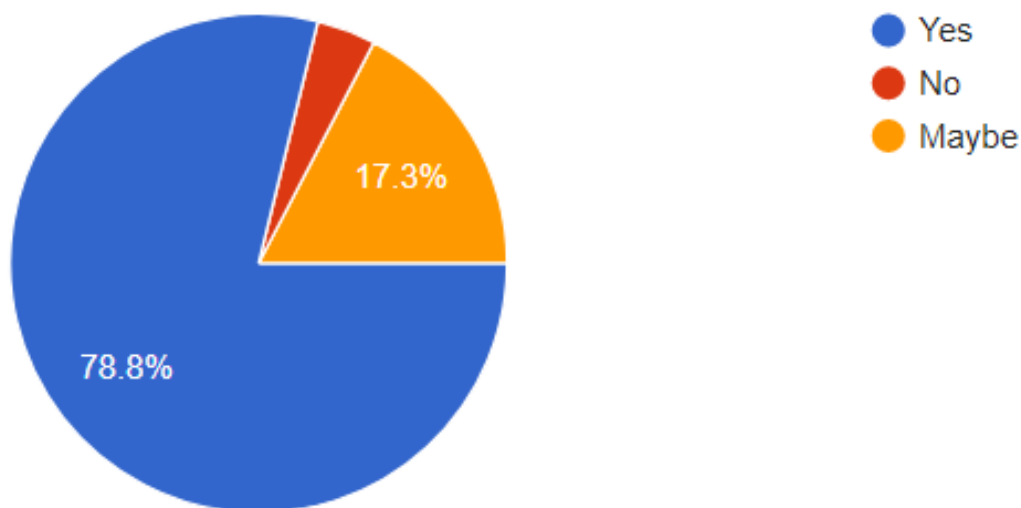


**Table 9**

**Do you think spiritual place help to promotes Maharashtra tourism?**

Sr.no	Options	No. Of sample	Total percentage
1	Yes	41	78.08%
2	No	02	04.89%
3	May be	09	17.03%
4	Total	52	100%

From the above table we have concluded that 78.08% people think spiritual place helps to promote Maharashtra tourism, 04.89 think no and 17.03% people think may be helps to promote Maharashtra tourism.

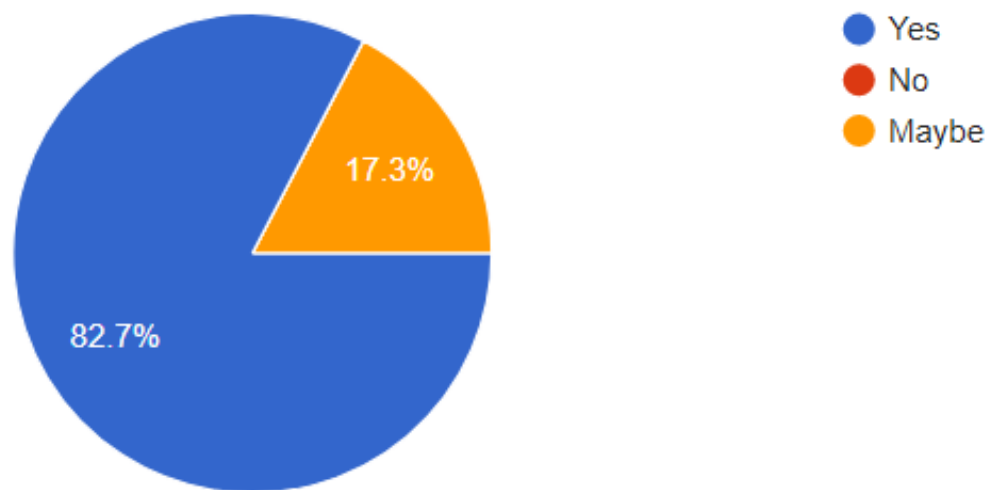


**Table 10**

**As you looking for any spiritual tourism for future vacations.**

Sr.no	Options	No. Of sample	Total percentage
1	Yes	43	82.07%
2	No	01	00.09%
3	May be	08	17.03%
4	Total	52	100%

From the above table we have concluded that 82.07% looking for spiritual tourism for future vacations, 00.09 % no and 17.03% think may be for future.



## Summary & Conclusion

### Summary

- ✚ More than half of population of Maharashtra is aware of spiritual tourism.
- ✚ One third population of Maharashtra travel maximum spiritual and regions places.
- ✚ Shirdi is a famous spiritual place in most of the Maharashtra.
- ✚ According to the survey most of the people visit all spiritual place in Maharashtra.
- ✚ According to the survey temple are different elements of spiritual tourism products.
- ✚ According to the survey 1-3 days' people like to stay in spiritual tourism.
- ✚ Most of the people want accommodation when they travel to spiritual places.
- ✚ Most of people find peaceful with a spiritual place.
- ✚ Almost people think that spiritual tourism helps in the promotion of Maharashtra tourism.
- ✚ Many people are looking for spiritual tourism for future vacations.

## Conclusion

In spiritual tourism a tourist seeks for peace of mind and a sense of spiritual satisfaction. Even though the visitors to the spiritual tourism spots of Maharashtra district are satisfied with peaceful atmosphere they experience and the friendliness of the local people, they are satisfied with the basic infrastructure like sanitation and drinking water facilities, lack of cleanliness and exploitation by the local vehicle operators. Spirituality is found to be one major attraction for Indian tourists in Maharashtra. This study identifies some basic features for spiritual tourism. Most important of them are that Indian tourists are not looking for luxury but arduous journeys to meet the divine goal or simple life & the technology, which makes travelling easier.

The government should represent India as a destination of yoga and spirituality. Various policies should be made to encourage the tourists from the various parts of the globe. Maharashtra has outstanding tourism products and has potential to become a major spiritual tourism destination. The city has a greater value for domestic tourist because of its spiritual sites. There has been a phenomenal increase in spiritual travellers in the recent years owing to generic changes in the people's attitude towards spirituality. No study has been carried out regarding the marketing and logistics aspects of spiritual tourism. Infrastructure has been reported as one of the important aspects in spiritual tourism marketing. There are many tourism products like fairs and festivals, handicrafts, proper transportation, accommodation that boost tourism of an area, but these are taking a back seat in Maharashtra as of now. It should be made an important and integral part of spiritual tourism. Indian tourists visit Maharashtra to get a satisfaction with divine spirituality and self-discovery. The temple, the river and the tranquil environment and hygiene at the hotel rooms of Maharashtra are highly appreciated by all Indian tourists.

This case study based investigations has revealed facts about the specific spiritual activity of Maharashtra. It can be done by presenting Maharashtra as a place of spirituality, meditation and yoga. Places like Maharashtra which had already been known as the yoga capital of the world, still have a lot of potential to attract the tourists, especially the foreign tourists who are visiting to India for learning yoga and discovering their spiritual side.

## Suggestion

### And

## Recommendation

- Sustainable Development is the prime global concern encompassing economic, social and environmental aspects.
- The attainment of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in developing countries is pivotal to the cause.
- Leisure, including tourism, has a deep connection with the SDGs' agenda.



- Tourism influences not only the well-being and quality of life of people, but also has a significant socio-economic and environmental impact.
- It is one of the fastest growing industries.
- Religious and spiritual tourism is a niche segment in the tourism industry.
- It has been prevalent around the world since ancient times.
- It plays a significant role in developing countries, such as India, which has a rich, multi-cultural and religious heritage.
- Religious tourism must be promoted in a manner that assists in sustainable development.
- The states have a significant share of the religious and spiritual tourism in India.
- A qualitative and descriptive study using primary and secondary sources discusses the impact of this niche segment on the sustainability aspects in these states.
- In addition, suggestions to promote religious tourism while maintaining socio-economic and ecological balance in such difficult terrains are presented.

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## Annexure

### **Questionnaire**

**“to study about the spiritual tourism a tool for social cultural and sustainable development in Maharashtra”**

**Name: -** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email address** \_\_\_\_\_

1. are you aware of spiritual tourism?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

2. Have you visited any spiritual place in Maharashtra?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

3. most famous spiritual tourism in Maharashtra?

- ☐ Ashtavinayak
- ☐ Shirdi
- ☐ Shani Shingnapur
- ☐ Any caves

4. which spiritual place you have visited in Maharashtra?

- ☐ All
- ☐ Other

5. What are the different elements attract to spiritual tourism products?

- ☐ Weather
- ☐ Temple
- ☐ Crowd
- ☐ Wildlife natural structure

6.how many days do you like to stay in a spiritual tourism?

- ☐ 1-3 days
- ☐ Whole week/week
- ☐ 10-15 days

7.What kind of services do you need when you travel to spiritual place?

- ☐ Accommodation
- ☐ Food
- ☐ Cab services

8.How was your experience about spiritual place?

- ☐ Peaceful
- ☐ Same like other place

9.Do you think spiritual place help to promotes Maharashtra tourism?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

10.Are you looking for any spiritual tourism for future vacations?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe