

Tourist Happiness Level after Participating in Yoga Activities in Ubud

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe the level of happiness of tourists after participating in yoga activities in Ubud, Bali, which is known as a spiritual and health-based tourist destination. The method used is quantitative descriptive, involving 100 respondents aged 18-30 years who were selected using purposive sampling techniques. The data collection instrument used the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ), which has a high level of reliability. The results showed that the level of happiness of tourists was in the high category, with an average of 105.36, a median of 106.5, and a mode of 108. The standard deviation of 7.39 indicates a small variation, while the range of happiness values ranged from 84 to 125. The Shapiro-Wilk normality test produced a p-value of 0.307, so the data distribution can be considered normal. Most respondents were female (65%) with an average age of 24.82 years. These findings reinforce the view that yoga contributes significantly to increasing happiness, emotional balance, and reducing stress in tourists. Yoga activities in Ubud not only promote physical health but also support overall mental well-being. Based on the research results, it is recommended that tourism operators expand yoga programs with variations that suit the needs of tourists, improve comfortable supporting facilities, and promote the benefits of yoga more widely to attract more visitors. Further research can explore the long-term impact of yoga and identify additional factors that influence happiness levels.

Keywords: Ubud, Happiness, Tourism, Yoga

INTRODUCTION

The island of Bali is one of Indonesia's leading tourist destinations, globally recognized for its distinctive combination of natural beauty and rich cultural heritage (Wesnawa, 2022). The deep-rooted Hindu traditions and cultural tourism practices have made Bali a unique and meaningful center for spiritual tourism, offering experiences that go beyond recreation to encompass self-discovery, inner balance, and the pursuit of happiness through religious and spiritual practices.

Bali itself has been promoted as a center for wellness tourism, combining natural approaches with scientific knowledge, while still embracing its local wisdom and cultural heritage. In relation to this, one of the most popular wellness destinations in Bali is Ubud. Ubud offers a unique blend of serene natural beauty and well-developed infrastructure that supports wellness tourism, including world-class yoga centers and various forms of alternative healing experiences.

Following the post-Covid-19 recovery phase, Bali's tourism sector has shown a significant resurgence. According to data from the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS, 2024), the average number of international tourist arrivals to Bali in 2023 exceeded 9,000 visitors per day, reflecting a nearly 120% increase from the previous year. This growth illustrates that Bali remains one of the most desirable global destinations, particularly in the wellness and spiritual tourism segment. The Global Wellness Institute (2023) reported that wellness and spiritual tourism grew at a global rate of 12.8% annually, with Bali ranked among the top five destinations in Asia for yoga and meditation practices.

Previous studies have shown that spiritual activities such as *Tirta Yatra*, *Ratha Yatra*, *Yoga*, *Harinama*, and *Japa* are integral to the spiritual tourism experience practiced by communities such as

The International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) (Devi et al., 2020). These activities are believed to provide profound spiritual experiences and enhance psychological well-being. Among them, yoga is the most popular practice among spiritual tourists, particularly in Ubud, which has long been recognized as Bali's center for retreats and healing (Setiawan & Manurung, 2023).

Conceptually, yoga derives from the Sanskrit term “*yuj*”, meaning *to yoke* or *to unite*, referring to the union between human consciousness and a higher, divine, and transcendent awareness (Satri Adnyani, 2019). Empirical evidence has shown that yoga brings multiple physiological and psychological benefits, such as improving concentration, emotional stability, and positive mood through increased brain oxygenation and activation of the parasympathetic nervous system (Sivaramakrishnan et al., 2022; Tang & Liu, 2023). Moreover, a study by Putra and Suryani (2024) in Ubud revealed that 78% of regular yoga participants reported higher levels of happiness and inner calm after attending yoga sessions for at least four consecutive weeks.

Field data obtained from a survey conducted among 120 tourists visiting Ubud between January and November 2024 revealed that 83 respondents (69.2%) visited Ubud to experience both natural and spiritual tourism, particularly through participating in yoga activities. Furthermore, the survey showed that 20 respondents (16.7%) stated that yoga provided them with a sense of inner calm, while 13 respondents (10.8%) found yoga highly engaging because it enhanced their mindfulness and sensitivity toward themselves and their surroundings through silence and introspection. Additionally, 20 participants (16.7%) reported that yoga helped them better understand and manage their emotions, both positive and negative. Interestingly, 30 respondents (25%) mentioned that they had participated in yoga multiple times in Ubud because it effectively helped them recover from fatigue, sleep disturbances, and other psychological difficulties, complementing professional and medical treatments.

From both previous research and preliminary field findings, it can be inferred that yoga plays a significant role in shaping the emotional and psychological well-being of tourists engaging in spiritual tourism in Ubud. However, limited empirical studies have quantitatively examined the level of happiness experienced by tourists after participating in yoga activities in this region. Therefore, this study aims to measure and analyze the level of happiness among tourists following yoga activities in Ubud, Bali, and to explore the psychological factors that may influence this experience.

METHODS

This study employed a quantitative descriptive design. The primary objective of this research was to examine and describe the level of happiness among tourists after participating in yoga activities in Ubud, Bali. A total of 100 participants were involved in this study. Participants were selected using a purposive sampling technique, with inclusion criteria comprising individuals aged 18 to 30 years, who were domestic tourists and had participated in yoga sessions in Ubud.

The reason for selecting participants aged between 18 and 30 years is that individuals within this age range are generally considered capable of traveling independently. Moreover, this age group represents the productive stage of life, during which people tend to engage in various demanding activities that may lead to negative residual effects, such as fatigue, stress, exhaustion, and other negative emotions. In addition, individuals aged 18 to 30 are typically in good physical condition, making them well-suited to participate in different types of physical activities, including yoga.

The data collection instrument used to measure the tourists' level of happiness after participating in yoga activities was the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ). Responses were rated using a Likert Scale. The OHQ, originally developed in English, consists of 29 items, including 17 favorable and 12 unfavorable statements. The scale has demonstrated a high level of reliability, with a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.91. A reliability test conducted on 100 participants in this study produced a coefficient value of 0.874, indicating that the instrument was reliable and valid for measuring the happiness variable (Devi et al., 2020). The collected data were analyzed using frequency analysis with the assistance of JASP software.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1. Happiness Level

	Low	Moderate	High
Valid	2	75	23
Missing	0	0	0
Mean	86.00	106.5	127.9
Std. Deviation	0.000	7.393	9.737
Minimum	86.00	88.00	117.0
Maximum	86.00	116.0	148.0

The results from this research indicate that respondents exhibit a moderate or satisfactory level of happiness, suggesting that they tend to experience a balanced proportion of positive and negative emotions in daily life. The predominance of the moderate happiness category implies that the participants still have potential for improvement in subjective well-being, possibly through practices that foster self-awareness, relaxation, and emotional regulation, such as yoga, which is the central activity of this research.

Yoga enhances happiness because it integrates the body, mind, and emotions. Physiologically, it reduces stress by lowering cortisol and increasing calming neurotransmitters like GABA, which promotes relaxation (Streeter et al., 2018). Psychologically, yoga cultivates mindfulness helping individuals stay present, regulate emotions, and accept themselves without judgment. Research by Gaiswinkler & Unterrainer (2021) also shows that regular yoga practice increases well-being and reduces anxiety and depression. In essence, yoga supports happiness by promoting relaxation, emotional balance, self-awareness, and a sense of inner peace and connection.

Table 2. Cross-Tabulation Between Happiness Level and Age Groups

Age groups	Happiness level catagories			Total
	Low	Moderate	High	
Young Adults	1	44	18	63
Late Adolescents	1	29	4	34
Early Adolescents	0	2	1	3
Total	2	75	23	100

The data indicate that happiness levels vary across age groups, showing a developmental pattern consistent with psychological theories of emotional maturation. Young adults (ages 20–40) demonstrate higher levels of happiness, with the majority reporting moderate to high well-being. This pattern reflects greater emotional regulation and life satisfaction, typically associated with adulthood, when individuals have developed more stable self-concepts and coping mechanisms. Late adolescents (ages 17–19) predominantly report moderate happiness, suggesting an ongoing process of identity exploration and emotional adjustment. Meanwhile, early adolescents (ages 13–16) show the lowest representation and slightly lower happiness, which aligns with the transitional instability of early developmental stages.

From a psychological perspective, this trend supports the notion that subjective well-being increases with age as individuals gain autonomy, establish social roles, and integrate emotional experiences more effectively (Diener et al., 2018; Orben et al., 2022). According to Erikson's psychosocial theory, young adults are typically in the stage of *intimacy vs. isolation*, where successful relationship formation enhances life satisfaction and happiness (Erikson, 1968). In contrast, adolescents—particularly early adolescents—are in the *identity vs. role confusion* stage, characterized by emotional fluctuation and self-exploration, which may explain lower happiness levels. These findings are also in line with recent empirical studies showing that emotional regulation and subjective well-being improve with age, largely due to neurological and psychosocial maturation (Blanchflower, 2021; Charles & Luong, 2022).

Tabel 3. Cross-tabulation between happiness level and gender

Gender	Happiness level catagories			Total
	Low	Moderate	High	
Male	1	23	11	35
Female	1	52	12	65
Total	2	75	23	100

Consistent with previous research (Zheng et al., 2022; Stevenson & Wolfers, 2019), the data reveal that female participants tend to exhibit higher levels of happiness and subjective well-being compared to males, although they are also more sensitive to emotional stress. In this dataset, women predominantly occupy the moderate happiness category. This finding can be interpreted through the lens of *Social Role Theory* (Eagly, 2019), which suggests that gender differences in well-being are shaped by social and cultural expectations. Women are often encouraged to express empathy, maintain emotional openness, and prioritize interpersonal harmony—factors that serve as protective mechanisms for their psychological well-being.

Moreover, while women appear to experience relatively higher subjective well-being, balancing social roles, occupational demands, and personal responsibilities remains a significant challenge. Empirical studies emphasize that social support and a positive emotional environment function as moderating factors that enhance well-being (Lyubomirsky & Layous, 2022).

From all the findings, it can be concluded that participation in yoga-based wellness tourism activities contributes positively to the psychological well-being and overall happiness of tourists visiting Ubud. These activities not only provide relaxation and stress reduction but also enhance self-awareness, emotional balance, and a sense of inner peace, which are essential components of sustained happiness.

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