

TOURISM IN BIHAR – A STUDY OF BODH GAYA

Shyamdeo Kumar

RESEARCH SCHOLAR (FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT)
SINGHANIA UNIVERSITY, PACHERI BARI, JHUNJHUNU (RAJASTHAN)

ABSTRACT

Tourism is very much important for economic development of a state. Bihar is not the exception one. It has become an undeniable fact for modern life. Its positive effects are creation of employment avenues, generation of income, enhancement in tax revenues, promotion of cultural relation and mutual understanding. The state of Bihar is blessed with immense bio-diversity, rich cultural and historical heritage, religious places of worship and ethnic aspects to attract tourists. Keeping all these facts into consideration, an attempt has been made to study tourism in Bihar – a study of Bodh Gaya.

Keywords: Economic Development, MSMEs, Employment Generation

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is very much important for economic development of Bihar. It has become an undeniable fact for modern life. Its positive effects are creation of employment, generation of income, enhancement of tax revenue, promotion of cultural relation and mutual understanding.¹The state of Bihar is blessed with immense bio-diversity, rich cultural and historical heritage, religious places of worship and ethnic aspect to attract tourists. Hence, Bihar has good potential for development of tourism.

BODH GAYA

Bodh Gaya is one of the most important historical and religious places in Bihar. It has been attracting a large number of domestic and foreign tourists every year from all the corner of the world. Lakhs of pilgrims visit Bodh Gaya every year where Lord Buddha got enlightenment. It is the centre of attraction for the followers of Buddhism. These tourists render direct and indirect role in developing the local economy. Considering the importance of tourism for a place like Bodh Gaya, an attempt has been made to study the tourism in Bihar taking as a case study of Bodh Gaya.

Bodh Gaya is one of the most important and popular pilgrim sites of Buddhists. It is located in Bihar at coordinates 24.695102°N and 84.991275°E.² It is one of the four important pilgrimage sites related to Gautam Buddha's life. The other important sites are Kushinagar, Lumbini and Sarnath. Historically, it was known as Uruvela, Sambodhi, Vajrasana or Mahabodhi. The name of Bodh Gaya was not in use until the 18th century CE. The main monastery of Bodh Gaya was called as Bodhimanda-Vihara which is now popularly referred as Mahabodhi Temple. It has now become a UNESCO World Heritage Site in the year 2002.³It is the place where Gautam Buddha got enlightenment. It is built entirely in brick still standing from the late Gupta period. There are various temples and monasteries around the Mahabodhi Temple which have been built by people of Bhutan, China, Japan, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri

Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand, Tibet and Vietnam. These temples give a glimpse of architectural style of these countries. The important places in Bodh Gaya are Bodhi Tree, Mahabodhi Complex, Mahabodhi Stupa, Taiwanese Temple, Thai Monastery, Tergar Monastery, 80-foot Buddha Statue, Barabar Caves, Japanese Temple and many others.⁴

TOURISM IN BODH GAYA – A CASE STUDY

In this section, an attempt has been made to study the relevant issues of tourism in Bodh Gaya as a case study. The section of this study includes the relevant questions from 200 respondents from the tourist. A questionnaire has been prepared to know the information. In this part; relevant questions like age, sex, religion, education, potentially of tourism, satisfaction of tourist from local arrangements, expenditure made by tourist, employment generation, development of Bihar, development of MSMEs, problems faced by tourists and suggestions from them have been taken into consideration.

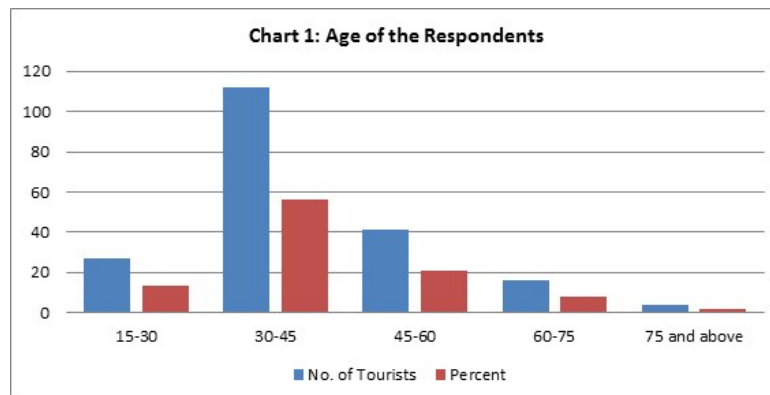
Age of Respondents

Age is the most important factor for the tourism. Table 1 shows the position of age of respondents travelling Bodh Gaya. Table shows that about 70 per cent of the respondents are below 45 years of age while the percentage of share of tourist in 45 to 60 years of age is 20 percent and 60 years and above, it is only 10 percent. So the majority of the tourists belong to below 60 years of age.

Table 1: Age of the Respondents

Age	No. of Tourists	Percent
15-30	27	13.5
30-45	112	56.0
45-60	41	20.5
60-75	16	8.0
75 and above	4	2.0
Total	200	100.0

Source: Field Investigation



Respondents reported that they face a lot of problems while they accompany with family members of this age group. Health problem, old age problem, no desire to go new places, etc are the major causes of low percentage of this group.

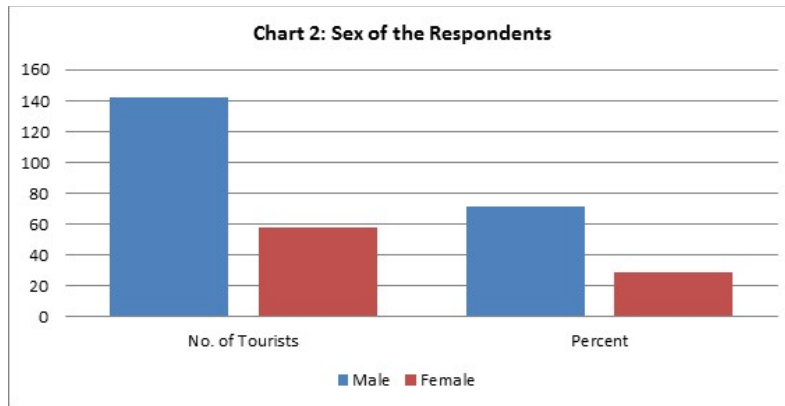
Sex of the Respondent

The study further reveals the position of the sex of respondent tourists. Table 2 shows that 71 percent of the total respondents belong to male group while only 29 percent of them are women. The percentage of women is below half of the percentage of male tourists.

Table 2: Sex of the Respondents

Sex	No. of Tourists	Percent
Male	142	71.0
Female	58	29.0
Total	200	100.0

Source: Field Investigation



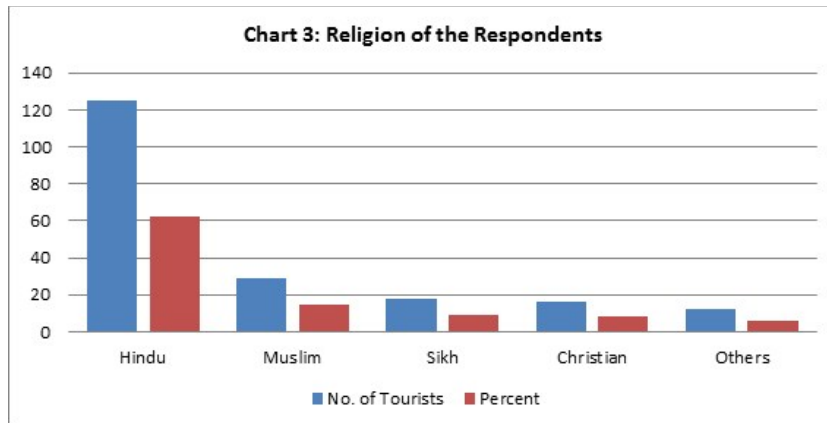
Religion of Respondents

An attempt has also been made to find the religion of the tourist visiting Bodh Gaya . Table 3 shows the position of a religion of the respondents.

Table 3: Religion of the Respondents

Religion	No. of Tourists	Percent
Hindu	125	62.5
Muslim	29	14.5
Sikh	18	9.0
Christian	16	8.0
Others	12	6.0
Total	200	100.0

Source: Field Investigation



It shows that majority 62.5 percent of the respondents belong to Hindu while 14.5 percent belong to Muslims. The Percentage share of Sikh, Christian and others are 9 percent, 8 percent and 6 percent respectively.

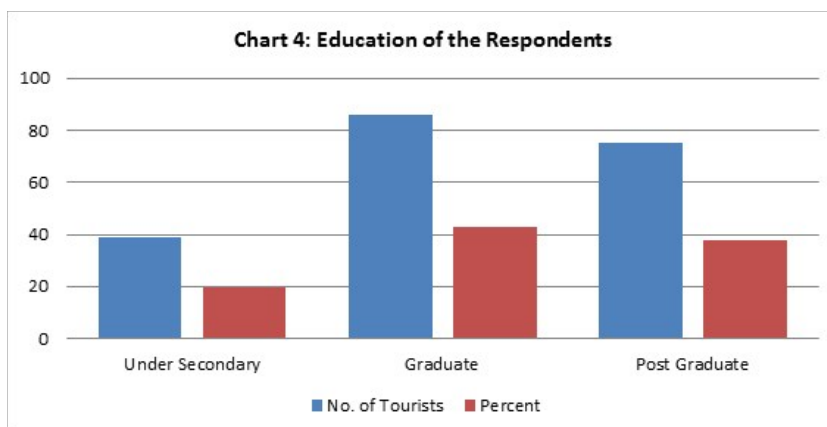
Education of Respondents

Table 4 shows the level of education of responding tourist visiting Bodh Gaya.

Table 4: Education of the Respondents

Education Level	No. of Tourists	Percent
Under Secondary	39	19.5
Graduate	86	43.0
Post Graduate	75	37.5
Total	200	100.0

Source: Field Investigation



It is clear from the table that 43 percent of the respondents belong to graduate and 37.5 percent of the respondents are post graduates. It means the percentage of tourist of graduate and is 80.5 percent while 19.5 percent of the respondents are under graduate.

Satisfaction from Local Arrangements

Table 5 shows the satisfaction of respondents over local arrangements.

Table 5: Satisfaction from Local Arrangements

Response	No. of Tourists	Percent
Yes	127	63.5
No	49	24.5
Cannot say	24	12.0
Total	200	100.0

Source: Field Investigation

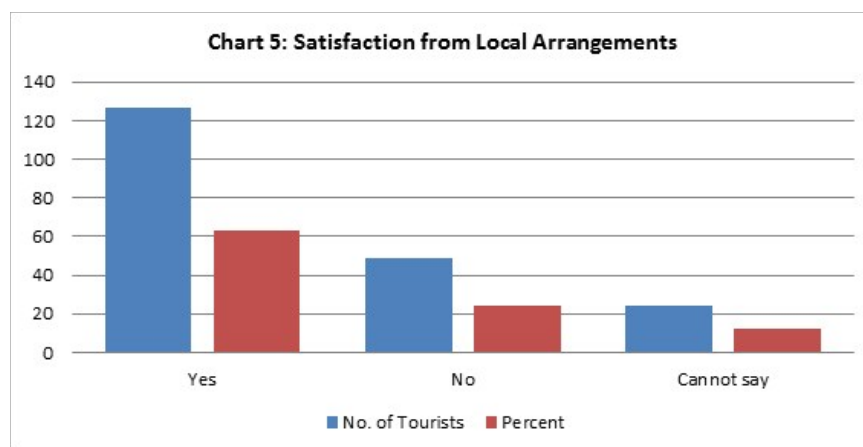


Table reveals that 63.5 percent of the total respondents are satisfied with the local arrangements made by the government and people while 24.5 percent of the respondents are not satisfied with them. 12 percent of the respondents cannot say anything about this.

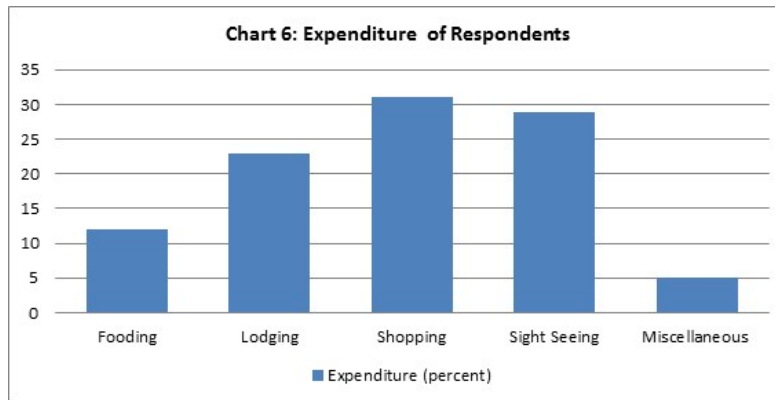
Expenditure of Respondents

Table 6 gives a picture of expenditure made by respondents in percentage.

Table 6: Expenditure made by Respondents (Percent)

Items	Expenditure (percent)
Fooding	12.0
Lodging	23.0
Shopping	31.0
Sight Seeing	29.0
Miscellaneous	5.0
Total	100.0

Source: Field Investigation



The items of highest expenditure made by them is shopping 31 percent, followed by site seeing 29 percent, lodging 23 percent, fooding 12 percent and miscellaneous items 5 percent. It is clear that respondents have spent very less amount on fooding which is cheaper.

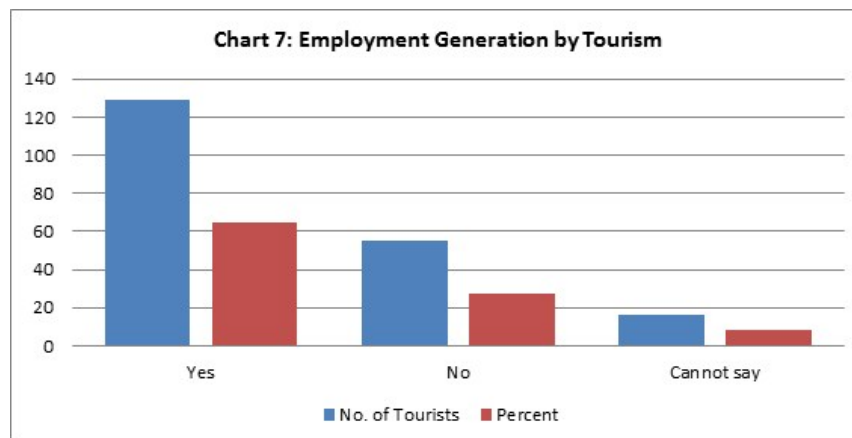
Employment Generation due to Tourism

Table 7 reveals that 64.5 percent of the respondents believe that tourism has generated employment while 27.4 percent of the respondents do not support the motion. It also reveals that 16 percent of the respondents are not in position to say anything.

Table 7: Employment Generation by Tourism

Response	No. of Tourists	Percent
Yes	129	64.5
No	55	27.5
Cannot say	16	8.0
Total	200	100.0

Source: Field Investigation



Development of MSMEs

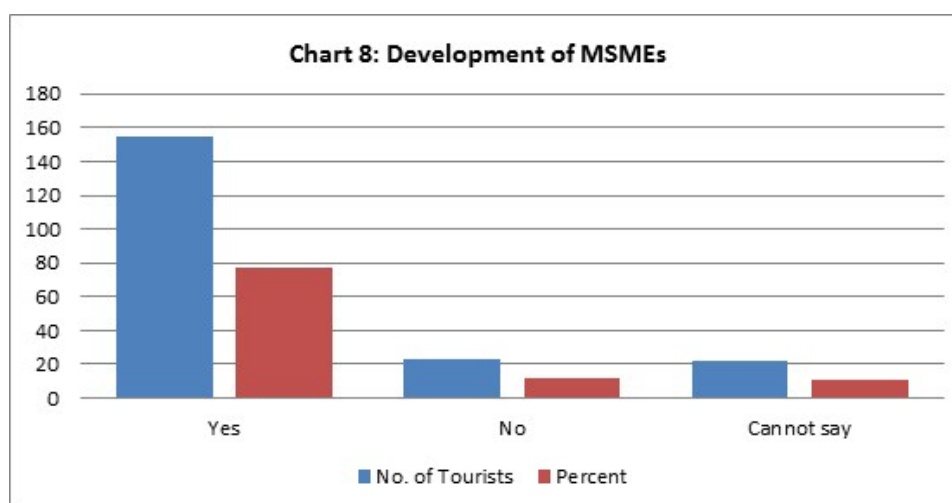
Table 8 shows opinion of respondents regarding development of MSMEs through tourism. It

reveals that 78.5 percent of the respondents are of the opinion that tourism helps in development of MSMEs and other small scale industries in Bodh Gaya.

Table 8: Development of MSMEs in Bodh Gaya through Tourism

Response	No. of Tourists	Percent
Yes	157	78.5
No	25	12.5
Cannot say	18	9.0
Total	200	100.0

Source: Field Investigation



They have observed this opinion on the ground that many small businesses have been set up in Bodh Gaya due to tourism. Table also reveals that 12.5 percent of the respondents do not agree with the opinion while 9 percent are unable to say something.

Problems Faced by the Respondents

The researcher has also tried to find out the nature of the problems faced by the respondents.

Table 9: Problems Faced by Respondents

Nature of Problem	No. of Tourists	Percent
Law and Order	47	23.5
Infrastructure	96	48.0
Cleanliness, Hygiene and Sanitation	46	23.0
Harassment/ Ill Treatment by Locals	11	5.5
Total	200	100.0

Source: Field Investigation

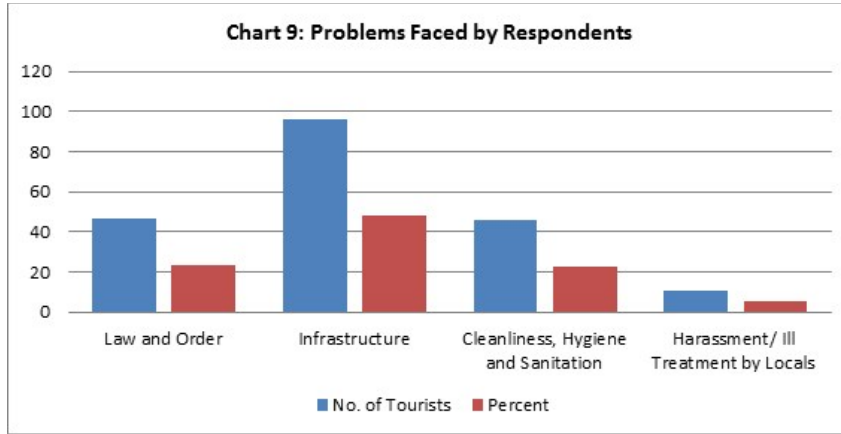


Table 9 shows that 48 percent of them have marked the basic infrastructure as the top problem, followed by law and order (23.5 percent), cleanliness hygiene and sanitation (23 percent) and harassment and ill treatment by the locals (5.5 percent).

Suggestions from the Respondents

An attempt has also been made to find out the suggestions from the respondents in betterment of tourism in Bodh Gaya.

Table 10: Suggestions from Respondents

Nature of Problem	No. of Tourists	Percent
Law and Order	43	21.5
Infrastructure	103	51.5
Cleanliness, Hygiene and Sanitation	50	25.0
Harassment/ Ill Treatment by Locals	4	2.0
Total	200	100.0

Source: Field Investigation

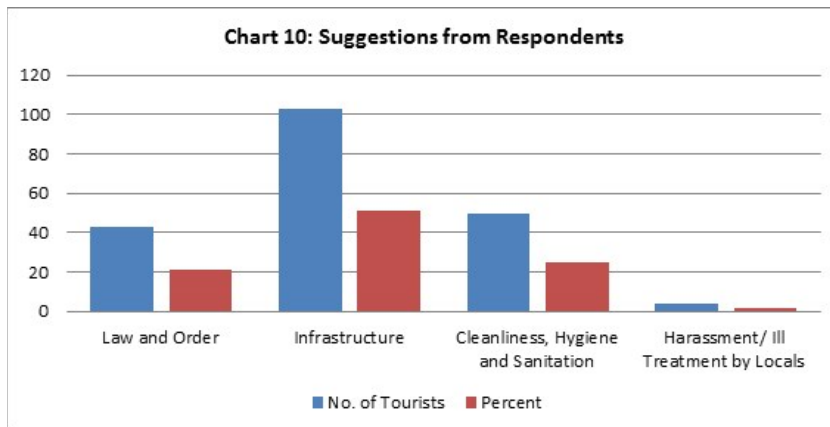


Table 10 shows the list of suggestions from the respondents according to their preference full stop the table source that 51.5 percent of the respondents want to improvement

in infrastructure while 25 percent of the total respondents want improvement in cleanliness hygiene and sanitation because they are very much afraid about their health situation and more and 20 percent of them want to check harassment and ill treatment by the locals.

CONCLUSION

On the basis of the above study, following conclusion has been made:

1. Majority 69.5 percent of the respondents belong to below 60 years of age. Only 20 percent of the respondents are above 60 years of age (Table 1).
2. The study further shows that only 29 percent of the respondents are female while rest of the respondents (71 percent) is men (Table 2).
3. So far as the religion of the respondents, 62.5 percent of the respondents are Hindu, coming to Bodh Gaya for religious point of view. While the percentage share of Muslim, Sikh, Christian and others are 14.5 percent, 9 percent, 8 percent and 6 percent respectively (Table 3).
4. The study also reveals that 80.5 percent of the respondents are above graduation level and they have interest in tourism while 39 percent of the respondents are under secondary level (Table 4).
5. An attempt has been made to find out the satisfaction of tourists over the local arrangements. The study reveals that 63.5 percent of the respondents are satisfied with local arrangements at Bodh Gaya and 24.5 percent do not agree with this opinion. While 12 percent can say nothing (Table 5).
6. Among the various major items of expenditure of respondents, it is apparent from the study that shopping is the prime expenditure (31 percent), followed by site seeing (29 percent) and lodging (23 percent) while the least expenditure item is food (12 percent) (Table 6).
7. An attempt has also been made to find out the impact of tourism on employment generation. The study shows that 64.5 percent of the respondents feel employment generation due to tourism while 27.5 percent do not think so. However, 8 percent of the respondents could not reply (Table 7).
8. The researcher also tried to know the impact of tourism on MSMEs. The study reveals that 78.5 percent of the respondents feel that MSMEs can be developed through tourism while 12.5 percent of the respondents are against the opinion (Table 8).
9. There are various problems in Bodh Gaya the tourists face. The major problem faced by the respondents is infrastructure as 48 percent of the respondents admit so. It is followed by law and order (23.5 percent) and cleanliness, hygiene and sanitation (23 percent) (Table 9).
10. An attempt has also been made to find out some valuable suggestions from tourist respondents to improve tourism in Bodh Gaya. It has been observed from the study that more than 50 percent of the respondents (51.5 percent) suggests to improve infrastructure; cleanliness, hygiene and sanitation (25 percent) and law and order (21 percent) (Table 10).

SUGGESTIONS

In the light of study, following suggestions may be given which will be beneficial for different stakeholders of the tourism viz. government, policy makers, city planners, economists, researchers and others. They are as follows:

1. It is vital to suggest that Bihar has to project its image as a safe and secure tourism destination by controlling law and order in the state.
2. Private sector units should be invited and also encouraged to participate in development of tourism in Bihar. These private sectors units may be given fiscal and non-fiscal incentives to improve the status of tourism in Bihar.
3. The state government should develop tourist circuits across the states through discussions with key stakeholders such as other state governments and trade partners. In this context, there must be study of tourism potentials, current and future connectivity within destinations.
4. There must be joint marketing programmes across various states. Government should make collaborative marketing efforts for promotion of branding and designing of promotional campaign.
5. The government should invite and encourage local travel trade partners through informative sessions, financial incentives and other necessary support.
6. The government should give much stress on human resource development through training institutes and skill development of the personnel. There also must be vocational training to rural youth to provide them employment through tourism.
7. The government should think over inclusive growth of the state. For this, there must be thrust on education and awareness among people about the importance of tourism. The feeling of 'Atithideo Bhava' must come among different stakeholders of tourism through tourism awareness programmes and workshops.
8. The state government should send proposals to the central government regarding development of tourism in Bihar and the central government should also consider and provide assistance to complete the proposals on time.
9. There must be good liaison between State Tourism Department and ITDC.
10. The government should make an effort for cooperation and coordination between the public sector and private sector for future growth of tourism in Bihar.
11. In recent times, Bihar has emerged as a more preferred destination for foreign tourists from pilgrimage and religion point of view. Hence, the state government should formulate plans and policies in a manner so that a stable and sustainable growth in tourism could be achieved.
12. To make tourism effective, it is necessary to involve the local community and lead to the economic development of the area.
13. In the development of tourism, the role of public sector has already been recognized in the past. Now the future growth of the tourism should come through private participation. The government should work as a catalyst for private participants through various effective incentives.

14. Role of the transport in the development of tourism must be recognized. Private operators should be encouraged with the help of loans and tax benefits.
15. Marketing of tourism and publicity should be taken in a big way through coordination of all organizations involved.
16. There must be adequate attention towards the development of other forms of tourism. Steps must be initiated for the preservation and maintenance of cultural heritage in the state. There also must be integrated development plans for heritage centres.

To sum up, Bihar tourism has vast potential for its development in the state through employment generation, foreign exchange earnings besides making a bridge between state's overall economic and social development. In this context, much more has been done and much more remains to be done. Since tourism is a multi-dimensional activity and basically, it is a service industry, it would be necessary that all the units of the central as well as the state government, private sector, voluntary organizations and other stakeholders should become active partners in the endeavour to attain sustainable growth in tourism if Bihar has to become a prominent player in the field of tourism industry.

References

1. Mishra, P.K. and H.B. Rout (2012-13), "Economic Impact of Tourism: A Case Study of Jharkhand", *IJEMT*, Vol. 3, No. 2, October-March, pp. 130-138.
2. <https://en.wikipedia.org>
3. <https://en.wikipedia.org>
4. <https://www.india.com>



This document was created with the Win2PDF "print to PDF" printer available at <http://www.win2pdf.com>

This version of Win2PDF 10 is for evaluation and non-commercial use only.

This page will not be added after purchasing Win2PDF.

<http://www.win2pdf.com/purchase/>