

AMOGHVARTA

ISSN : 2583-3189



A Covid-19 Study and its Impact on the Tourism Industry in Bihar

ORIGINAL ARTICLE



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Abstract

The most deadly “Corona virus” has destroyed civilisation around the globe. Many of the folks have lost both their lives and their jobs. Bihar has firsthand knowledge of people moving in search of work. The covid epidemic has disrupted all aspects of society, including economics and physical health. Because of their choice, Bihar’s trade and tourism industries were severely impacted by the unexpected lockdown. This catastrophic “Covid-19” pandemic has destroyed all commercial endeavours and entire industries. Financial crisis is a threat to the tourism industry as well. In January 2021, international visitor arrivals fell by 87%, according to a report on tourism around the world. In India, Bihar holds the 30th and 8th positions in terms of local and foreign tourists, respectively. With the aid of secondary sources, this study has attempted to determine the impact of the Covid pandemic on the Bihar tourism industry.

Key Words

Covid-19, Tourism Industry, e- wallets.

Introduction

The first incidence of the dangerous virus Covid-19 was reported in China’s Wuhan city, where it was recently identified as a coronavirus. The virus spreads primarily by nasal discharge or spittle droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. The World Health Organisation (WHO) declared this epidemic a worldwide disease on March 11th, 2020. Following that, many nations, including India, closed their socio-economic and cultural institutions with the exception of those related to essential services. The Covid-19 epidemic has become a significant problem for the entire planet. In India, the Covid-19 outbreak began in January 2020. Many experts and researchers felt that a lockdown should be imposed in India at the beginning of the First Wave. Given the ambiguity, it was decided to seize it. The Covid-19’s consequences and their impact on people’s livelihoods must now be understood. The Covid-19 virus is changing very quickly and harming the lungs and immune system of the human body, according to certain specialists and researchers, making the Second Wave of Covid-19, which began at the beginning of May month in 2021, more devastating than the first. Afterwards In an effort to stop the spread of Covid-19, the Indian Government imposed a twenty-one day nationwide lockdown on March 24.

India's Second Wave of the Corona Pandemic is significantly worse than anticipated, affecting about four According to Government statistics, a thousand individuals perished every day, and as of May 28, 2021, there were approximately 23 lakh, 43 thousand, and 132 active cases. When the second wave was moving, the inadequate infrastructure is also demonstrated by the complete collapse of the nation's financial and healthcare systems. Any country must prioritise the development and maintenance of extensive public health infrastructure. Following the Second Wave of Corona, experts are analysing the severity of the Third Wave of Covid pandemic, which is more likely to affect young children at a significant scale. In light of this, management must pay attention to this circumstance. The only way to stop this pandemic is with vaccinations.

A 38-year-old man who tested positive for Covid-19 and was the first patient was the first case of Covid-19 to be recorded in the Indian state of Bihar on March 22, 2020, in Munger. To Qatar, he had already travelled. In total, 62,031 cases have been confirmed by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare as of August 4th, 2020, including 20,922 active cases, 349 fatalities, and 40,760 recoveries. 38 districts in the state have been affected by the virus, with Patna district having the most cases. As of March 25, 2020, the state is in lockdown. As migrant workers and numerous residents of Bihar who had been imprisoned in other parts of the country returned to the state, the state started noticing a slight decrease in the number of Covid-19 cases. Global health issues and financial concerns are being caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. As a result of international travel restrictions, including the closing of many borders to contain the illness, the tourism industry is among the worst-affected sectors of the economy.

According to the most recent United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) World Tourism Barometer, international tourist arrivals (overnight visitors) declined by 72% in January–December 2020 compared to the same period in 2019 and have since continued to fall. This decline has been hampered by the Covid-19 pandemic's still-in-effect severe travel restrictions, slow virus containment, and low traveller confidence. In comparison to the same period last year, there were 900 million international tourist arrivals in the first ten months of this year, leading in a \$935 billion loss in foreign tourism export. revenues, more than ten times the loss brought on by the global economic crisis in 2009. Arrivals in Asia and the Pacific decreased by 82 percent during the months of January and December 2020. In the Middle East, there was a 73% decline, while in Africa, there was a 69% decline throughout this 10-month period. Both in the Americas and Europe, the number of foreign visitors decreased by 68 percent. The predicted decline in tourism will cost approximately one billion tourists and 1.1 trillion dollars in lost revenue in 2020. This decline in international travel might cause a global financial loss of more than 2 trillion dollars in 2019.

Review of Literature

According to **G.S. Batia and AS Chawla's (2003)** study, "The Economic Importance of Tourism in the National Economy," With regard to its contribution to job creation, tourism can be valued. It might be considered a key driver in reactivating the nation's underutilised resources. The richness of our country is not what we export in this commerce; rather, what we offer is a vision that will draw more and more people to our country and its attractions. It also examines the most recent developments in Indian tourism advertising. According to the report, in recent years, focus has shifted from product destinations to potential tourist destinations.

According to **Honey and Gilpin's (2009)** The tourism industry has a significant impact on economic development since the growth of a tourist destination draws commerce, paper, "Tourism in the Developing World". This essay also explains how difficult it is for us to generate income from tourism. The Covid-19 pandemic is the greatest threat any country has ever faced, as internal and international travel has greatly decreased.

According to **Rajeev Singh Chandel, Shruti Kanga, and Suraj Kumar Singh (2020)**, who declare this in their research publication "Impact of Covid-19 on tourism sector: a case study of Rajasthan, India."

impacted by up to 45% in 2020, which is the equivalent of losing four months' worth of travel. The sector that generates the most money is tourism, but because of the pandemic, it has a low level.

Objectives of the Study

- To understand how the Covid-19 Pandemic has affected Bihar's tourism industry.
- To make suggestions for solutions to issues and obstacles.

Methodology

The data used in this study originates from secondary sources. The information was gathered from a variety of online sources, including websites, Wikipedia, the Bihar State Tourism Development Corporation (BSTDC), research papers, journals, articles, newspapers, and the annual report of the Bihar Tourism Department.

Tourist Places in Bihar

Both intellectual and Bodh Gaya, Nawada, Nalanda University, Rajgir, Pawapuri, Patna, Vaishali, Sasaram, West Champaran, Darbhanga, Begusarai, Bhagalpur, Kaimur, Rahtas and many other sites are popular tourist destinations in Bihar. In addition to this, Bihar is home to numerous more religious tourism destinations that have served as pilgrimage destinations for travellers from throughout India and the globe. Examples of world heritage are Bodh Gaya and Nalanda University. With a three thousand year long history, Bihar is one of the oldest inhabited regions in the world. Numerous ancient monuments dotted throughout Bihar serve as evidence of the state's rich culture and heritage. Numerous tourist attractions can be found in Bihar, which attracts lots of visitors from around the globe. One of the longest bridges in the world, the Mahatma Gandhi Setu in Patna, and Golghar, a famous landmark worldwide, are both located there.

- Buddhist Circuit, where the Buddha supposedly attained enlightenment under the sacred Bodhi tree, has long been a popular destination for those who come to worship. The charming Mahabodhi temple, which UNESCO had listed as a World Heritage Site. Bihar is also home to the Kesaria Stupa, which is the tallest of the Buddhist stupas that have been discovered.
- There are numerous mosques, dargas, and graves along the Sufi Circuit that have evolved into Sufi pilgrimage sites. Two notable symbols that ought to be on every tourist's itinerary are the magnificent Sher Shah Suri and Maner Sharif tombs.
- Circuit Sikh the ninth Guru, Guru Tegh Bahadur, was the father of Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth Guru of the Sikh religion, who was born in Patna on December 22, 1666. At the site of his birth, Patna is home to the magnificent Takht Sri Harmandir Ji Gurudwara. He founded the Sikh fighting group known as the Khalsa in 1699, which is among his noteworthy contributions to Sikhism. Some of Guru Gobind's life events are remembered in other gurudwaras. These gurudwaras are not only important Sikh pilgrimage sites, but also fantastic places for tourists to explore.
- Anyone who learns about Nalanda University's history as the birthplace of the first residential international university of the world during a time when the majority of other nations were still in their early stages of development is inspired. Even now, the remnants of that illustrious past continue to enthrall the present.
- Tigers are one of the world's threatened species, and the Valmiki Wildlife Reserve is their safe haven. The area features a tremendously rolling scenery made up of abrupt rises and deep ridges with lush green forest all around. It is located at the cradle of Himalayan outmost ranges, the Shivalik range. Reserve for Tigers in Valmiki Nagar.
- Only 25 kilometres from Bhabua is the superb little secret natural wonder known as Karkat Gadh Waterfall, which is situated on the lovely Kaimur Mount on the border between Bihar and Up. Visitors travel from all around the state and nearby areas to this popular Bihar vacation spot to see the breathtaking beauty of Mother Nature pouring magnificently.

Impact of Covid-19 Pandemic on Tourism Industry of Bihar

Millions of people in Bihar have had their lives disrupted by Covid-19, and many have died as a result.

their means of subsistence, employment, and income-generating prospects, which has resulted in a major humanitarian catastrophe. The Covid-19 pandemic has had an influence on the world, posing a threat to global health, socio-economic and financial crisis. The travel and tourism industries are among the most severely impacted, with worldwide demand plummeting as a result of travel restrictions around the world, including the closing of several borders to contain the illness. The United World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) estimates that the tourism sector contributed approximately 9% of the global GDP overall, but Covid-19's negative effects have altered the entire landscape of the sector. Additionally, international tourist arrivals (overnight visitors) decreased by 72% from January to December 2020 compared to the same period in 2019.

The expansion of Bihar's tourism industry has a significant impact on the state's economy, social structure, and cultural landscape. Additionally, a source of local employment creation and the acquisition of foreign currency. When compared to other Indian states, Bihar is one of the more industrially backward states. The tourist industry in Bihar has enormous potential and might help the state become developed. But there was a lockdown everywhere in the world as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic effect. The tourist activities were all shut down. In two years, the tourist sector and its supporting industries—including the lodging sector, the transportation industry, and travel & tour agencies—were severely impacted. Nearly all types of economic activity came to an end, and the people's means of income were also cut off. A newspaper and media source claims that the Bihar tourism industry has lost nearly Rs 10,000 crore in value. Currently, the state is home to more than 500 tour operators, about 2000 small and large travel agencies, and more than 5000 travellers. In addition to this, the state is home to more than 1000 small and large hotels, directly employing more than 100000 people. People involved in the tourism industry, both directly and indirectly, have been suffering from a severe economic crisis as a result of the corona pandemic. The Covid-19 outbreak has almost completely destroyed the tourism industry.

According to the Bihar State Tourism Department, the number of domestic tourists and foreign tourists who arrived in Bihar in 2015 was 2 crore 80 lakh 29 thousand 1 hundred 18 and 9 lakh 23 thousand 7 hundred 37, respectively. Two billion eighty five million sixteen thousand one hundred twenty-seven domestic travellers visited in 2016, compared to ten million ten thousand five hundred thirty-one overseas travellers. The number of domestic tourists climbed to 3 crore 24 lakh 14 thousand 63 in 2017 while the number of foreign tourists increased to 10 lakh 82 thousand 7 hundred five. 3 crore 36 in the following year (2018) The number of domestic visitors to Bihar climbed to 3 crore 39 lakh 38 until 2019, while the number of foreign visitors increased to 10 lakh 87 thousand 9 hundred seventy one. 1 crore 93 thousand one hundred forty-one foreign visitors. If you carefully examine these table numbers, it becomes clear that Bihar's tourism sector was expanding quickly and that the number of visitors there was consistently rising. But in 2020, Due to the effects of the Corona pandemic, this number has significantly decreased. Only 56 lakh 44 thousand 5 hundred 24 domestic tourists and 3 lakh 8 thousand 80 foreign tourists were present.

Table 1: Total Number of Tourists Visited in Bihar from 2001 to 2020

Year	Domestic tourists	Foreign tourists	Total no. tourists
2016	2,8516127	10,10531	2,95,26,658
2017	3,2414063	10,82705	3,34,96,768
2018	3,3621613	10,87971	3,47,09,584
2019	3,3900038	1,093141	3,5083179
2020	5644524	308080	59,52,604

[Source: Bihar Tourism department Official Website (Bihartourism.gov.in/data.html)]

Finding

As can be seen from the above table, the Covid-19 outbreak has utterly decimated the tourism business. For the past two years, there has been no tourism activity. since the pandemic The prospect of a financial crisis is present in industry. People are currently not leaving their homes to travel as a result. The tourism

sector as a whole is adversely affected by this. The overall number of visitors that entered Bihar in 2019 was 3,5083179, however the Corona pandemic caused that number to drop to 5952604 in 2020. Between 2019 and 2020, fewer domestic and international tourists visited the state. This was a significant decline from the perspective of tourists' arrival, which directly affected the lives of those directly and indirectly involved in the tourism industry, and their economic situation became very precarious.

Conclusion

The world has indeed been decimated by the Corona virus. Due to this, economic activity has ceased and the quality of life for people has drastically decreased. It is true that many individuals have abruptly lost their jobs as a result of Covid-19 and its detrimental effects on Bihar's economic situations. Along with the tourism industry in Bihar, other businesses have also suffered greatly.

Suggestions

The study's findings allow for the following recommendations to be made by observing The tourism business in Bihar is now facing challenges, hence some crucial initiatives are needed to boost the sector there include:

- To strictly abide by the Government's Covid-19 regulations when visiting a tourist destination.
- Extra sanitizer and mask distribution on tourist spots for visitors.
- Pay extra attention to everyday cleanliness in Bihar's tourism destinations.
- Another significant concern relating to tourism is visitor safety. Consequently, give the security of the tourists special consideration.
- Convenient tourism routes must also be created.
- In addition, there should be appropriate infrastructure for transportation resources such airports, railway stations, bus stops, and metro rail stations.
- In addition, there should be sufficient infrastructure for transportation hubs including airports, train stations, bus stops, and metro rail stations.
- There is a need to distinguish between different aspects of tourism in order to revitalise the sector. Additionally, it must be expanded and widely disseminated among tourists.
- The tourism sector in Bihar needs to regain its economic footing. Therefore, significant efforts must be made to promote the state's new and undeveloped tourist destinations as well as draw in domestic and international visitors.

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