Chapter 6

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS
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Analysis and interpretation of the primary data collected by means of a questionnaire based survey has been done in the foregoing chapter. Statistical tools and appropriate tests have been applied for data processing and the emerging outcomes are logically interpreted to draw realistic conclusions. The current chapter summarizes the findings and presents the conclusion coming to fore from the analysis and interpretation of facts and figures, survey and interviews, personal observation and detailed discussion of the subject matter carried out throughout the course of this study. Suggestions which the findings make imperative have also been made for the development of tourism sector in Bihar. Finally, the direction for future research is also highlighted for the posterity of scholars.

Religion has been one of the motivating factors for travel in the past and continues to be the same in present as well. Pilgrimage places are one of the important attractions for tourism across the world. The pilgrimage sites on account of its historical, architectural and natural features attract the people with diverse motives ranging from very pious to curiosity and recreation. India being the land of many faiths, pilgrimage was integral part of cultural tradition in the past and continues to be the same in the present day. Majority of top ranking tourist destinations in India happens to be pilgrimage centers. In India millions of tourists, both foreign as well as domestic, visit numerous pilgrimage centers each year. India is blessed with plenty of well-known religious destinations wherein Bihar stands to hold its own significant position. Bihar is the third most populous and the 12th largest State in India, having multitude of historical sites and well-known pilgrimage sites of local, national and international repute. A large number of places in the Indian state of Bihar have considerable importance in the history of Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism and Sufism. Bihar is also dotted with numerous sites associated with the Hindu mythology and the legend of Ram and Sita. In this backdrop, this study makes an attempt to understand the dynamics of pilgrimage tourism in Bihar from three main perspectives. First, the study highlights the salient features of pilgrimage tourism in the state. Second, it examines the management of pilgrimage tourism in the state. Third and last, it explores the demographic and travel related characteristics of visitors; evaluate their perception on the services and facilities available at two pilgrimage destinations, and their overall satisfaction with the visit or stay at Bodhgaya and Nalanda. Bodhgaya
and Nalanda are two major pilgrimage-cum-tourist destinations located in the Indian state of Bihar. Frankly speaking, these two pilgrimage destinations are the essence of tourism industry in Bihar. Bodhgaya is the international Buddhist pilgrimage center and the lone world heritage site in the Indian state of Bihar. Nalanda is known for its ancient university and numerous multi-religious pilgrimage sites.

This study begins with articulating the concept of tourism, pilgrimage tourism, and also focuses on scenario of pilgrimage tourism in India. The second chapter explores the work so far done on various aspects of pilgrimage tourism through a comprehensive literature review and traces out the research gap which this study attempts to bridge. It also explains the research design, sets up objectives and hypothesis as well as the plan of work. This study provides relevant information as well as anecdote and legends about various pilgrimage sites of Bihar in the third chapter. The study further sheds light on the management of pilgrimage tourism in Bihar. The role of various stakeholders involved in the management of pilgrimage tourism has been discussed in this study in chapter four. To understand the management of pilgrimage sites the researcher has visited many important pilgrimage sites and interacted with the members of religious trusts and officials of Tourism Department in Bihar. The information elicited from the members of religious trusts, officials of tourism department and researcher’s observation helped in understanding the management of different pilgrimage sites in Bihar.

In addition to highlighting pilgrimage tourism attraction of Bihar and its management, the questionnaire based survey was conducted with the sample of 400 visitors; 200 from Bodhgaya and 200 from Nalanda, with the purpose of understanding the visitors’ demographic and travel characteristics, their perception about the key attributes of the two pilgrimage destinations such as transportation, accommodation, food and catering, shopping, information and guidance, public convenience, cleanliness and hygiene, parking facility, safety and security and behavior of the local people, prices of the services at the destinations, their overall satisfaction level resulting from visit or stay at the destinations, their intentions to revisit and willingness to recommend the pilgrimage destinations to others. Finally, the suggestions of the respondents were sought to improve the services and facilities at the destinations. Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS version 19.0) was used to analyze the data collected through questionnaire survey. The statistical tools most suited to the analysis of the data have been applied such as mean, reliability test,
One Way Analysis of Variance, and Independent Samples t-test. The analysis and interpretation of the questionnaire survey has been presented in chapter five of this study.

6.1 Findings

The findings of the questionnaire survey are presented in two sections. In the first section, findings based on descriptive statistics are given. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the distribution pattern of the responses on each variable in the questionnaire. Findings based on the hypothesis testing are presented in the second section.

6.1.1 Findings based on descriptive statistics

Demographic Characteristics

Majority of respondents at Bodhgaya and Nalanda were domestic tourists. 70.5% of the respondents at Bodhgaya and 74.5% of the respondents at Nalanda were male. The dominant age group of the respondents at Bodhgaya and Nalanda was 18 to 40 years. Only 7% of the respondents at both pilgrimage destinations represented the age group of above 60 years. Majority of respondents at Bodhgaya and Nalanda were graduate, master and above. In terms of employment status, majority of respondents were either employed or self-employed. In terms of monthly income, 45% of respondents at Bodhgaya and 38.5% of respondents in Nalanda fall in the category of nil/not stated, which includes students, house wives, unemployed, monk and non respondent to this question of income. Excluding this category of nil/not stated most of the respondents visiting Bodhgaya and Nalanda were in the income group of more than Rs. 40 thousand per month. Majority of respondents at Bodhgaya and Nalanda were followers of Hinduism and Buddhism.

Travel Characteristics

Majority of the respondents at Bodhgaya and Nalanda were visiting these pilgrimage destinations for the first time. Duration of stay ranges from day visitor to a week and more. Majority of the visitors at both the destinations usually stay for less than a week. Only 24% of respondents at Bodhgaya and 20% at Nalanda stayed for seven days and more. 16.5% of respondents at Bodhgaya and 18.5% at Nalanda were day visitors. Majority of respondents at Bodhgaya visited for religious purpose, whereas in Nalanda, the purpose of visit for majority of respondents was cultural. Majority of respondents at Bodhgaya and Nalanda were with family, followed by
friends. Majority of the respondents at Bodhgaya and Nalanda stayed at Hotels, followed by monastery at Bodhgaya and Dharamshala in Nalanda. The trip of majority of the respondents at Bodhgaya and Nalanda was self-arranged, followed by travel agency. In terms of expenditure of respondents incurred at Bodhgaya and Nalanda during their stay/visit, the expenditure of majority of the respondents at Bodhgaya and Nalanda was up to Rs. 20 thousand. As regard to source of information about pilgrimage places, friend and relatives were the major source of information at Bodhgaya(44%) and Nalanda(35%) followed by religious literature (23.5% & 21% respectively). The travel agency has been found the more important source of information in Nalanda(20.5%) in comparison to Bodhgaya(13%). The other sources of information include history books, travel guides, Bihar Tourism Department and respondents own curiosity as expressed by some respondents.

Tourists Perception on the destination attributes and their overall satisfaction

Transportation service was found satisfactory for majority of the tourists at Bodhgaya(56%) and Nalanda(71%). Accommodation Service was satisfactory for majority of the tourists at Bodhgaya and Nalanda (59.5 % and 56% respectively). 39.5% of the tourists at both the destinations were neutral in their opinion regarding Catering and Food Service. Shopping facility was found average for majority of tourists at Bodhgaya(53%), whereas 42% tourists rated it average in Nalanda. Information and Guidance was found satisfactory for majority of the tourists at Bodhgaya and Nalanda, but it was comparatively more satisfactory in Nalanda than that of Bodhgaya. 39.5 % tourists at Bodhgaya and 37 % tourists in Nalanda found Public Convenience satisfactory. In terms of cleanliness and hygiene, destination performance was very poor. Only 33.5% of the tourists at both the destinations were of the opinion that cleanliness was good or very good. Parking Facility was found average for majority of the tourists at Bodhgaya(58%) and Nalanda(43.5%). Safety and Security was found satisfactory for majority of the tourists at Bodhgaya and Nalanda. A good number of tourists were neutral in their opinion at Bodhgaya(36%) and Nalanda(43.5%). Majority of the tourists found the behavior of the local people satisfactory at Bodhgaya and Nalanda. Only 10% of the tourists at Bodhgaya and 8.5% of the tourists in Nalanda found it poor or very poor. The analysis of mean of individual attribute shows that accommodation service at Bodhgaya is the most satisfactory attribute followed by behavior of the local people and catering and food services, whereas Transportation service is the most satisfactory attribute in Nalanda.
followed by accommodation service and behavior of the local people. Cleanliness and hygiene is least satisfactory attribute at both the destinations i.e Bodhgaya and Nalanda. Majority of tourists at Bodhgaya and Nalanda found the price of services was moderate and reasonable. Only 9% of tourists at Bodhgaya and 6.5% of tourists in Nalanda found the price of services very high.

89.5% of the tourists at Bodhgaya and 86% of the tourists in Nalanda indicated that they were satisfied including highly satisfied with their visit to Bodhgaya and Nalanda respectively. 5.5% of the tourists at Bodhgaya and 3% of the tourists in Nalanda were dissatisfied and highly dissatisfied. The mean scores on overall satisfaction of tourists at Bodhgaya and Nalanda indicates the satisfactory experience at the destinations. 71.5% of tourists at Bodh-Gaya and 77.5% of tourists in Nalanda were having intention to revisit to the pilgrimage destination. 89% of tourists at Bodh-Gaya and 84.5% of tourists in Nalanda expressed their opinion that they would recommend the pilgrimage destinations to others like friends, relatives.

6.1.2 Findings of Hypotheses Testing

The result of independent sample t-test indicates that there were significant differences in the perception of foreign and domestic tourists at Bodhgaya on six destination attributes out of ten attributes. Foreign tourists were less satisfied with these attributes as compared to domestic tourists. These destination attributes are: transportation services, accommodation services, shopping facilities, public conveniences, Cleanliness and hygiene and parking facilities. Public conveniences, Cleanliness and hygiene and parking facilities were very poorly rated by the foreign tourists at Bodhgaya.

The result of independent sample t-test indicates that there were significant differences in the perception of foreign and domestic tourists in Nalanda on seven destination attributes out of ten attributes. Foreign tourists were less satisfied with these attributes as compared to domestic tourists. These destination attributes are: transportation services, information and guidance, public convenience, Cleanliness and hygiene, parking facility, safety and security and behavior of the local people. Public conveniences, Cleanliness and hygiene and parking facilities were also rated very poorly by the foreign tourists in Nalanda.

At Bodhgaya, no significant difference was found in the overall satisfaction of the tourists in terms of nationality, gender, education level, income and religion. However, significant difference was found in the overall satisfaction of tourists in
terms of age groups and employment status. The tourists in the age group of 18-30 are least satisfied with the visit or stay at Bodhgaya, whereas the tourists in the age group of above 50 years are most satisfied. The employed tourists were most satisfied whereas the self-employed tourists were least satisfied at Bodhgaya.

In Nalanda, no significant difference was found in the overall satisfaction of the tourists in terms of nationality, gender, education level, employment status, and income. However, the significant difference has been found in the overall satisfaction level of the respondents in terms of age groups and religions. The tourists in the age group of 18-30 are more satisfied with the visit or stay in Nalanda whereas the tourists in the age group of 31-50 years are least satisfied in comparison to the tourists in the other age groups. The tourists with belief in the category of ‘others’ are more satisfied with the visit or stay in Nalanda whereas the tourists professing Buddhism religion are least satisfied in comparison to the tourists professing other religion. The category of ‘others’ include Christians, atheist etc. With regard to overall satisfaction of the tourists at Bodhgaya and Nalanda, the tourists at Bodhgaya were more satisfied than those at Nalanda. However, the result of independent samples t-test revealed no significant difference on overall satisfaction level of tourists at Bodhgaya and Nalanda.

6.2 Conclusion

Indian state of Bihar is distinguished to have multi-religious pilgrimage destinations of national as well as international appeal. The pilgrimage attractions of Bihar are not confined to any single religion rather it has the sites associated with the legends and historical development of Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, Hinduism, and Sufism. For Buddhist, Bihar is the land of Buddha' enlightenment and his religious activities, for Jains, Bihar is the land of birth and death of Mahavir and other Jain Tirthankars and religious personalities, for Sikhs, it is the birth place of Guru Gobind Singh, for Muslims, there are Sufi centers which led to the spread of Islam in that part of the country, for Hinduism, there are many spots consecrated by Rama and Sita and other places associated with the legends. Thus, cultural landscape of Bihar is characterized by the presence of monuments and pilgrimage centers of Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist, Jains, and Sikhs. The recent inclusion of Mahabodhi Temple Complex (Bodhgaya) in the list of world heritage sites has brought it up on the global map of the world as a cultural tourist attraction. This distinctive characteristic of Bihar
holds great potential for pilgrimage tourism and attracts the people of all religious faith across the country and beyond the country. Buddhist Pilgrimage Centers has international dimension for Indian tourism industry on account of insignificant Buddhist population in the country. Sikh pilgrimage center has also international appeal because of Sikh Diaspora spreading across the different parts of the world. Jain pilgrimage centers of Bihar attract the community from different parts of the country.

The pilgrimage centers of Bihar also act as the tourist attractions like elsewhere in the world and attract both pilgrims and tourists by virtue of their archeological, historical and religious importance. The multi-religious Pilgrimage sites are the unique selling proposition of tourism industry in Bihar. The pilgrimage sites of Bihar have an inherent catching appeal not only for the religious people but also for the people interested in history, culture, archeology and architecture. Bodhgaya and Nalanda are such a place where the visitors of different nationalities and different religions are seen. People from different parts of India and world visit the places of religious significance in Bihar. The number of tourist arrivals, both domestic and foreign, in Bihar has witnessed tremendous growth over the years in the first and second decade of the twenty first century. The foreign tourist arrival at Bodhgaya in the year 2012 was more than 2.5 lakh whereas the domestic tourist arrival was more than nine lakh. In the same year about 37 lakh domestic tourists and more than 3.5 lakh foreign tourists visited Raigir in Nalanda. In the year 2012, the number of foreign tourists visit in the state was more than that of Kerala and Goa. The volume of tourist arrival at destination is considered one of the indicators of tourism development and the survival of tourism destination depends upon the regular and steady inflow of tourists. The growth of tourism in Bihar has started showing up its spin-off effect on the destination economy. Tourism is the major source of income for the people at various pilgrimage destinations in Bihar. The analysis of the questionnaire responses revealed that the tourists visiting Bodhgaya and Nalanda belong to different demographic background. Their motivation is also varied. They visit not only for religious purpose but also for cultural, VFR, and multiple purposes. Majority of tourists were visiting the destinations with their family.

Management of pilgrimage sites in Bihar has improved up to certain extent but much is to be done for assuring quality experience to the visitors and the local community. The central and state governments are committed for the development and promotion of pilgrimage tourism of the state as it is evident in their policy
measures and allocation of funds for the same. The state-government on its part has been extending considerable financial support by making provisions of substantial funds in the state budget for the maintenance and development of the pilgrimage sites. But the ground situation at the various pilgrimage sites is not satisfactory. Although, Department of Tourism (GOB) has outlined the strategy in “Bihar Tourism Policy-2009” for holistic development of the tourism sector in the state, the same is yet to be translated into action. This has come to fore that many pilgrimage sites have been allocated a good sum of money for their development but the sites themselves don’t find name on the websites of the tourism department. The Tourist Information Centers run by Department of Tourism (GOB) at various pilgrimage centers were ill-equipped and understaffed. The Archeological Survey of India has enlisted numerous sites of historical and religious importance in Bihar but the same has failed to draw the attention of tourism authority. The major archeological sites in the state for eg. Ruins of Nalnada, Sujata Garh and Manershari, under the jurisdiction of ASI were also found in dire need of maintenance and beautification.

The study further revealed that religious trusts play an important role in providing the accommodation facilities and other related facilities to the visitors at almost all the pilgrimage centers in Bihar. The religious trusts just seem to be satisfied in offering the accommodation services to the visitors of their respective faiths. They seem to be less concerned with the renovation and maintenance of the respective pilgrimage sites as witnessed during the course of the site survey by the researcher. The pilgrimage spots except few in Bihar are crying for basic tourist facilities, renovation and maintenance. Cleanliness and hygiene has emerged a major area of concern which is deplorable in almost all the major and minor pilgrimage sites in Bihar. The religious trusts except few are run on traditional pattern. They have not benefited from the use of information and technology. They lack adequate literature on the pilgrimage sites of their respective religion and on the working of the trusts/committees.

‘Cleanliness and hygiene’ is the second major concern of Indian Tourism Ministry after safety and security. The same has also emerged major concern for pilgrimage tourism in Bihar. The poor quality of the environment surrounding the pilgrimage destinations in the state as outlined in the Bihar tourism policy-2009 emerged as one of the threats in positive image building of the Bihar tourism. Cleanliness and hygiene was not good at Bodhgaya, Nalanda and other important
Chapter 6: Conclusion and Suggestions

pilgrimage centers in Bihar visited by the researcher during the course of field work. Only 33.5% respondents at both the destinations rated cleanliness and hygiene good or very good. The finding also confirms to the remark of Laos’ Culture and Tourism Minister, who reported to his Indian counterpart K.Chiranjeevi that surrounding of Mahabodhi Temple Complex(Bodhgaya) needed cleaning and also put his suggestion that the authorities must not allow open defecation in the area(The Economic Times, 15-21 September, 2013, p-7). One of the respondents from the USA was embarrassed to see the abject poverty around the destination as he reacted in response of one of the questions of the researcher “how do you find the place?” answer: nice but too much poverty! Several respondents pointed out the rampant beggars menace in Bodhgaya. Sujatagarh (Bodhgaya), one of the Buddhist pilgrimage sites was found in deplorable condition. There was absence of cleanliness around the premises of Sujata garh. Some people were found asking monetary help from the foreign nationals for the purpose of philanthropic work. Scores of children and weaker persons were found at the spot expecting monetary help from the visitors. Obviously, this stark state of deprivation result in tourist disgust and hatred as no one wants to entertain the poverty. The poor surrounding of the destination may result in short stay and negative word of mouth and ultimately the loss of economic benefits to the destination economy.

There are many pilgrimage sites in Bihar wherein the substantial amount of money is invested under the scheme of central and state government for maintenance and creating tourist facilities but these sites did not find mention on the website. As for example Revelganj in Chapra, Bhaluni Dham Temple in Rohtas, Ular Sun Temple in Patna, these places are missing on the website whereas the central government has made allocation for the development of these pilgrimage sites. Fairs and festivals are organized at different pilgrimage sites like Malmas Mela and Rajgir Mahotsav at Rajgir, Kalchakra Mela at Bodhgaya, Pitrapaksha at Gaya, Vaishali Mahotsav at Vaishali, Sonepur Mela etc. These fairs and festivals have religious themes and present the unique features of the culture of Bihar. These unique tourist products of religious interests are not properly highlighted on the websites of the Tourism Department.

There was a lack of basic facilities like food kiosks, drinking water, toilet facilities and seating arrangement at various pilgrimage spots visited by the researcher. There are numerous Sufi pilgrimage centers in Bihar. Some of them like Phulwari Sharif, Mittan Ghat(Patna City), Bihar Sharif and Maner Sharif which
attract hundreds of visitors daily and a very large crowd on specific occasion. There is a lack of tourist facilities and amenities at these Sufi centers. As a result, they fail to hold visitors for longer time and obviously the loss of economic benefits for the locals. There is a lack of literature on Sufi pilgrimage centers of Bihar.

It can be said that the management shortcoming are making the pilgrimage sites suffer to a greater extent. Undoubtedly, due to consistent effort of the government considerable improvement has taken place at the pilgrimage sites and much is still awaited on this front. This is not the end of journey rather it is just a beginning in the arena of global and competitive tourism industry.

6.3 Suggestions

The study revealed that the present status of pilgrimage tourism in Bihar requires improvement on the part of management in order to offer quality experience to the visitors. The pilgrimage sites of Bihar have enough potential to attract visitors from different parts of the country and across the world provided that appropriate marketing strategies are adopted, adequate services and facilities are assured at the destinations. Suggestions are given with regard to the different issues emerging from the survey based on the questionnaire, researcher’s observation, discussions and interview with the people and personnel at the different pilgrimage spots in Bihar.

➢ The results of the study revealed that Foreign tourists as compared to domestic tourists were less satisfied with transportation services, accommodation services, shopping facilities, public conveniences, Cleanliness and hygiene, parking facility at Bodhgaya and again the foreign tourists were less satisfied with transportation services, information and guidance, public convenience, Cleanliness and hygiene, parking facility, safety and security and behavior of the local people in Nalanda. ‘Cleanliness and hygiene’ was the least satisfactory attribute for both foreign and domestic tourists at Bodhgaya and Nalanda. Thus, the existing situation calls for action on the part of tourism management. The strong interventions are required from the concerned authorities to maintain and enhance the performance of services and facilities at these pilgrimage destinations.

➢ The results of the study revealed that the tourists in the age group of 18-30 are least satisfied with the visit or stay at Bodhgaya, whereas the tourists in the age group of above 50 years are most satisfied. There was significant difference in
overall satisfaction of tourists at Bodhgaya who were employed and self-employed. The tourists in the age group of 18-30 years and the tourists with belief in the category of ‘others’ are more satisfied with the visit or stay in Nalanda whereas the tourists in the age group of 31-50 years and the tourists professing Buddhism religion are least satisfied with the visit or stay in Nalanda. Therefore, the tourism authorities should further investigate on this cause of differences and accordingly provision of services and facilities should be made and specific marketing strategies should be devised keeping in consideration the differences in the profile of the tourists visiting Bodhgaya and Nalanda.

➢ Transportation need of the visitors at Bodhgaya are met by cycle-rikshaws and auto-rikshaws, whereas in Nalanda cycle-rikshaws and horse-driven tangas cater the need. The performance of transportation services in Nalanda is more satisfactory as compared to that of Bodhgaya on account of availability of good number of horse-driven tangas on regulated tariff at Rajgir and ruins of university in Nalanda. The researcher suggests the provision of environment friendly auto-rikshaws at Bodhgaya just as they are available to tourists at Agra near Taj Mahal.

➢ There is a need for provision of more good quality budget accommodations at Bodhgaya and Nalanda. The number of foreign and domestic tourists at these pilgrimage destinations has gone up significantly and thereby necessitating more quantitative and qualitative increase in accommodation facilities. In preceding years the foreign tourist inflows in the state though has surpassed the numbers of foreign tourists visits in Goa and Kerala but the number of hotel rooms are very less in Bihar in comparison to those in other developed states of India. This warrants immediate attention of the concerned authorities for creating the additional accommodation facilities at these destinations. It goes without saying that these two pilgrimage destinations are the nerve centers of tourism industry in Bihar. The tourism department should prepare a plan to cater to the requirements of the large influx of tourists at these destinations with the involvement of locals and religious trusts. During peak season locals should be encouraged to let their rooms to tourists. This scheme will benefit both locals and tourists in terms of income and convenience respectively.

➢ Food and catering outlets at Bodhgaya and Nalanda are largely in unorganized fashion and missing the sense of professionalism. Simply, they are generally
like Dhabas performing in their own stereotypical manner. At present, Bihar Tourism Department runs cafeteria at different places which are certainly not adequate as per the demands. The Department should encourage the locals to develop entrepreneurship by offering incentives and should also offer training to existing one through capacity building measures for offering services in professional manner. Further, the department should also explore the options of attracting the branded multi-national eating outlets at Bodhgaya and Nalanda.

As regard to shopping facilities majority of respondents at both the pilgrimage destinations found it average. This does not augur well for the economic health of any destinations and indicates the failure in offering to the tourists the specialty products of the destinations. The researcher suggests the opening of marketing complex branded as “Paryatan Bazar” at Bodhgaya and at Rajgir in Nalanda. Paryatan in Hindi means Tourism and Bazar in Urdu means market. The Paryatan Bazaar should be developed in such a way that, in addition to articles of general uses, it showcases the unique local products of the state like Khadi garments, Silk garments of Bhagalpur, local handicrafts, Madhubani and Patna paintings, religious articles, and so on. The souvenir is an integral component of tourism industry and helps in improving the local economy. The visitors most often purchase the souvenir of the destination and take back with them as a momento of their trip. There should be food court in the Paryatan Bazaar offering the delicacies of the State like Litti-Chokha, Sudha-items, Khaza of Silao, Tilkut of Gaya, Laddu of Maner, Lai of Badh, along with the fast foods and others. The Paryatan Bazar should be well-furnished and decorated with all the basic tourist facilities. The Paryatan Bazaar will act as an attraction for the pilgrimage center and hold the tourists for longer duration. As a result, it will offer employment opportunities to hundreds of people and also help in strengthening the local economy and ultimately benefit both locals and tourists in terms of income and experience respectively.

The Bihar Tourism Department with the collaboration of local bodies, religious trusts and other stakeholders should establish an effective mechanism for maintaining cleanliness at the pilgrimage centers. Although Indian Ministry of Tourism has initiated a campaign viz. “Campaign Clean India” to address the cleanliness and hygiene concerns of tourist destinations including pilgrimage centers in India. Till now it has not been implemented in Bihar.
Inside the temple premise at Bodhgaya there should be sign boards depicting the history and significance of particular spots/objects. This will give authentic information to the visitors because the same spot was found to be narrated differently by different tour guides. That practice must be checked and every visitor must be provided right, relevant information about particular spot.

There are many pilgrimage sites in the vicinity of Mahabodhi Temple Complex but they seem to be isolated from each other in the absence of proper information and guidance. The sign boards displaying distance and direction should be placed at different places. Sign boards at different places in and around the pilgrimage site motivate and facilitate the movement of visitors, and thus help in avoiding unnecessary queries from tourists. Sign boards should be written in at least in two languages i.e. Hindi and English and must be legible and attractive. Sign boards should be appropriately placed at different locations and should be informative as well as attractive. There is a need for the development and beautification of the roads leading to Root Institute of Wisdom and the International Meditation Center at Bodhgaya.

There is a need of organized parking facility at Bodhgaya as the tourist vehicles and autorickshaws carrying tourists as well as locals were found parked along the road sides causing chaos and inconvenience to the visitors. The vehicles must not be allowed to the end point near the entrance of Mahabodhi Temple Complex. There should be resting chairs, food kiosks and shoe collection center near the great statue of Buddha at Bodhgaya. Public toilets should always be kept neat and clean and their location should also properly be indicated.

The menace of hawkers and begging at Bodhgaya should be curbed immediately. At least they should not be allowed at the entrance of Mahabodhi Temple Complex. It requires immediate protection from these unwanted elements which are vitiating the overall image of the destination. There should be deployment of guard to curb all these activities. The road leading to Sujatagarh should also be properly maintained and signage indicating the distance and direction should also be adequately placed.

There is need of beautification in the ruins of Nalanda University. The rear portion of the complex is not well maintained and there is also need of boundary wall. There should be more resting chairs inside the premises so that visitors may take a pause and better understand the meaning of the ancient heritage.
There is also lack of proper signage indicating the particular spots in the premises of Nalanda University ruins. The provision of proper sign boards may offer more information regarding the particular spots like hostel, Stupa and other images of lord Buddha inscribed on the wall of small temple inside the premises. Although the authorized and trained guides were available at ruins of Nalanda University, they were not professionally well dressed up. They were well educated and well fluent in English and other language but they lack dressing sense. There is a need of proper dressing code so as to look like tourism professional. Few guards deployed in the university premises at Nalanda were found ignorant of their duty and found in the act of demanding monetary favour from the foreign nationals. Therefore the proper training should be imparted along with offering due salary and they should be warned of disciplinary action in case they are found in malpractices.

➤ There is need to develop basic facilities near Surya temple in Nalanda. The street leading to Surya temple is not maintained and there were also no signage indicating the location of the temple. There should be drinking water facility, resting chair and other basic facilities.

➤ There should be separate arrangement for bathing male and female at Brahma Kund(Rajgir). To regulate the crowd at peak season, entry fee should be charged and number should be allotted. This would help in controlling the unwanted presence of the other individuals and make the bathing comfortable and enjoyable. The researcher also felt the need of rooms for changing the clothes for male and female. The Kunds opposite to Brahma Kund should be protected from the misuse of the locals. The locals should not be allowed to wash their clothes at any Kund at Raigir. There are many Kunds just opposite to Brahama Kund having same physical properties but they don't attract the visitors and are used by locals only. Although they have been renovated and decorated but failed to become an attraction. The concerned authority should find out the ways to make them popular and attractive.

➤ Parking facility at Rajgir near Kund area and Vishwa Shanty Stupa was not good. The vehicles were found parked along the road side and tangawalas were found on the road wooing the visitors and thus, unwittingly causing inconvenience to the visitors. The space for vehicle parking and tanga parking should be demarcated and strictly followed wherein only the visitors could catch
or de-board their vehicles and tangas. This would offer time and space to the
visitors to walk and enjoy the serenity of Rajgir.

➢ The feasibility of setting up another ropeway facility to Vaibhargir hill should
be explored as it attracts large number of Jain and Buddhist pilgrims. On this
hill there are many Jain temples and further down Saptaparni cave i.e. the site of
first Buddhist council, is located. The site was found in very desolate condition
and without any sign board. The site should be developed and maintained. The
site is also missing in the itinerary of Mahaparinirvan Express, the Buddhist
circuit special train of IRCTC. The provision of ropeway facility will cater to
the needs of Buddhist and Jain pilgrims along with other visitors because this
will also offer the panoramic view of Rajgir.

➢ There should be food kiosks, resting chairs and public toilets on and along the
way to Vaibhargiri hill. Information boards should be placed indicating the total
number of stairs left to be climbed to reach on the top. This will provide thrill as
well as a sense of achievement to the visitors who were found putting queries to
the visitors on their downward journey that how much now he/she is required to
be on the top. The sign boards placed by Jain trusts on the different places along
the stairs were not legible and were only in Hindi. The sign boards should be in
English as well as in Hindi and they should be attractive and informative also.
There is a need of renovation of Digambar Jain temple on the Vaibhargiri hill.

➢ Tourist facilities such as supply of drinking water, toilet facilities, resting chairs,
sign boards should be provided at Bimbisara Jail, Maniyar Math, Sonbhanadar
Caves in Rajgir(Nalanda). Venuvana is an important pilgrimage spot most
frequently cited in Buddhist literature. The Venuvana is not well maintained.
This should be developed as a theme park on the pattern of Buddhist Smiriti Park
in Patna. Women and children were found selling water bottles, biscuits and
other eatables at the different pilgrimage spots at Rajgir in a very unsystematic
way. They should be offered financial help to organize their business in more
professional manner and with a sense of proud not with deprivation.

➢ Although the law and order situation has improved significantly in Bihar it
needs to be maintained. Given the global volatility, effective and efficient
security mechanism must be in place to avert any untoward incidents. The bomb
blast which happened at Bodhgaya in the month of July 2013 might have some
impact on the image of the destination, but all the precautions must be taken so
as not to repeat any such type of occurrence at any pilgrimage site in Bihar. The media should not sensitize if something goes wrong and inconveniences are caused to the visitors. There should be proper security barrier with hand metal detector at important pilgrimage centers in Bihar. There should be watchtowers to observe any dubious activities of any suspicious person in and around the temple complex at Bodhgaya.

The survey questionnaire concludes with the statement asking the respondents to offer suggestions for the improvement of the services and facilities at the destinations. The important suggestions rendered by the tourists were regarding cleanliness and hygiene, begging menace at Bodhgaya, information board explaining the important spots in temple premises (Bodhgaya), provision of temporary shelter during the rainy season at Bodhgaya and the training of local guides at Bodhgaya, pre-paid taxi service at Gaya railway station, cleanliness, tourist facilities and proper signage in Nalanda etc. The researcher also endorses the suggestions offered by the respondents. The suggestions should be considered by the tourism authority so as to offer quality and comfortable experience to the visitors.

The Sufi pilgrimage centers should be kept well maintained and neat and clean. Bari Dargah and Choti dargah at Manersharif and its adjacent pond are not properly maintained. Cleanliness should be given top priority. The landscape around the pond should be developed. The basic facilities like resting chairs, toilets, urinals and Wazukhana should be provided at Manersharif. The visitors before entering the shrine premises need to purify themselves. The Dargah premise of Phulwari Sharif was also found not maintained. There is a tank inside the premise found to be dirty. Buildings housing the tombs were also not maintained. The premises should be kept neat and clean and the landscape should be developed around the tank. The lack of appropriate parking facility at various Sufi pilgrimage centers were major concern as it creates chaos near the Sufi centers. There should be proper and adequate arrangement for parking space at major Sufi pilgrimage centers. There should be provision of tourist facilities like drinking water facility, resting chairs, toilets and Wazukhana at Bihar sharif, Phulwarisharif, Patna city and other identified Sufi pilgrimage centers. There should be food kiosks, information kiosks and restaurants at Bihar Sharif, Phulwari Sharif, Patna city and Makhndum Kund (Rajgir). There
should be shoe collection center at Bihar Sharif. The Darghas at Manersharif(Bari Dargah) and Phulwarisharif should be renovated. The nominal entry fee should be charged by ASI at the mausoleum of Makhдум Daulat Shah at Manersharif(Patna). This would help in earning the revenue and protecting the monument from locals' misuse. A calendar of Urs organized at different pilgrimage centers should be prepared in consultation with the members of the concerned Sufi centers and should be displayed on the websites of Ministry of Tourism. The visitors' arrival data should be maintained at different Sufi pilgrimage centers because in that light adequate provision for tourist facilities could be made.

Harmandir Sahib is one of the important Sikh pilgrimage centers in the world. There are many Sikh pilgrimage sites in the vicinity of Harmandir Sahib in Patna city but they are found in isolation due to lack of directional sign boards. There should be sign boards indicating the direction as well as distance from the Harmandir Sahib to these sites. The bathrooms of the dharamshala were found very dirty. They should be well maintained. There was lack of parking facility. The visitors' cars were allowed to park inside the premise which compromises with the serene atmosphere of the sacred premise. There should be provision of separate parking space and the visitors' cars should not be allowed inside. The museum inside the premise is very rich in collection and depicts the historical development of Sikh religion. In addition to this, multimedia museum should be set up which will become a big attraction and will be helpful in understanding Sikh history. There should be information boards at particular spots inside the temple such as the sacred well, the birth spot of Guru Gobind Singh. There should be food kiosk inside the premise. The approach road to Gobind Ghat just opposite to Harmandir Sahib should be developed and maintained. The landscape should be developed at Gobind Ghat. There should be tourist facilities such as public toilet, resting chairs, drinking water facility at Gobind Ghat.

All the religious trusts dealing with the visitors should maintain websites displaying their programmes, distinguished features of the sites, facilities and amenities available for visitors. This will help in facilitating the movement of the tourists and also help them to organize their travel in advance. The Jain trusts should take care of maintenance of temples at Vaibhargiri in Rajgir. These temples were in need of renovation and provision of basic facilities for Jain
Chapter 6: Conclusion and Suggestions

pilgrims other visitors. The construction of approach road to Kamaldah, landscaping, signboard and tourist facilities are required at Jain pilgrimage spot at Gulzarbagh in Patna. The researcher suggests the provision of tourist facilities at Pawapuri in Nalanda. It is an important Jain pilgrimage center which is visited by a large number of Jain and non-Jain visitors. There is a need of Cafeteria with the brand of Bihar tourism. The surrounding of Jal Mandir should be beautified.

➢ The design and content of website of the Tourism Department (www.bihartourism.gov.in) is poor and doesn’t look professional. The homepage itself is not attractive and too sluggish to navigate other windows and information available is not legible and sufficient as well. Therefore there is need to redesign the present websites and provide information on history, legends, architecture, myths, air connectivity, rail and road connectivity of the each pilgrimage site of Bihar in more detail. The fairs and festivals associated with the pilgrimage sites should be displayed in detail in the tourism department websites. The calendar of the fair and festivals should be displayed on the Ministry website so as to disseminate the information in advance to the potential visitors. The websites should be kept updated about the ongoing events. The website should contain the instructions for the tourists and inform the tourists about the weather conditions and do’s and don’ts of visiting each pilgrimage sites of Bihar. There should be effective provision of online hotel bookings, ropeway bookings, and transport services. The site should contain relevant information regarding management of pilgrimage sites, revenue from pilgrimage tourism, country or region wise tourist arrival statistics etc. This will be helpful for future researcher in conducting research on various aspects of tourism in Bihar.

➢ Bihar Tourism Department should create effective ‘Plan Your Trip to Bihar’ option on the department website so that anyone desirous of visiting Bihar from any part of the country and the world as well could plan their trip to Bihar and make actual booking from the comfort of their home/office. The department should also explore the option for providing round the clock information to the tourists and multilingual information helpline should be set up. The websites of the Ministry of Tourism should report the feedback of the eminent persons visiting the different places in Bihar.
The awareness regarding the social and economic importance of tourism must be created in the society. All the places of religious interest which are also historically, culturally and architecturally important should be highlighted through various means. An aggressive awareness campaign needs to be organized at national and international levels in order to highlight the religious, architectural and cultural significance of pilgrimage sites of Bihar. The specific features of the sites should be advertised on newspapers, TV, Radio and tourism magazines. Bihar Tourism Department should publish newsletter on monthly basis. Familiarization trips of travel writers, personalities from entertainment industry and sports should be invited on specific occasions. No doubt the state tourism department allocates lakhs of rupees for publicity and promotion but the amount is not adequate given the span of tourism resources and its vast market. Therefore, the more funds should be allocated for the same.

Human resource development should be focused on priority basis. The frontline staff of the department of tourism should be offered on the job training at regular intervals. It has been found during the survey that training is inadequate if not totally missing. Tourist information centers run by Bihar Tourism Department are not modernized and adequately staffed as per the requirements of modern competitive world. There is lack of proper staffing and office ambience. Only one staff was found in many tourist information centers working in different capacities like consultant, clerk and even peon. Few tourist information centers were found closed during the survey and on enquiry it was found that the concerned staff had gone to Patna for official work. The researcher observed that the officials working in the tourist information centers were not well abreast of all the pilgrimage sites of Bihar and needed to be made more informed and aware of the pilgrimage attractions of Bihar. Therefore, the researcher suggests that they should be required to undergo preparatory tourism course work before joining and given on the job-training to make them efficient and knowledgeable of pilgrimage or tourism attractions of Bihar.

The vocational course in tourism should be introduced at higher secondary level in the state as it has already been introduced by CBSE recently at XI and XII level. This would introduce the students to the tourism potentials of the state and help in understanding the importance of tourism as a tool of socio-economic development. The skill-oriented course in hospitality should be introduced in
the state-run Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs). New courses in tourism management should be introduced at university level and tourism as a specialization should be incorporated in the management institutions in the state. All this would be helpful in catering to human resource requirement of tourism industry at the state level as well as national level.

The Department of Tourism should collaborate with IRCTC to include more Buddhist pilgrimage sites in its itinerary and other places such as Nalanda and Bodhgaya in the itineraries of Maharaja express and Bharat Darshan. The Maharaja Express is the pan-India tourist special train catering both foreign and domestic tourists whereas the Bharat Darshan is the tourist special train catering to the budget travelers. The feasibility of introducing pilgrimage tourism special train connecting different pilgrimage places in Bihar should be explored, and should be given brand name “Pilgrimage on Wheel”. The pilgrimage destinations of Bihar are devoid of any shopping mall, reputed eating outlets, theme parks and entertainment centers. Possibilities should be explored in this regard with the consultations of private sector.

Bihar Tourism Department should have an independent research and development division to assess different aspects of tourism in Bihar. The division would conduct the survey of pilgrimage destinations in Bihar on regular basis taking into considerations both the tourists and host community and other stakeholder so that need based approach could be developed for sustainable tourism. This will help in identifying the pilgrimage tourism potentials of the state and its constraints. There is a lack of information regarding current source of international and domestic market for Bihar pilgrimage tourism. The country wise data of tourist arrival is not available in Bihar. The country-wise tourist statistics would help in formulating specific marketing strategies to tap the potential of Bihar pilgrimage tourism. This would also help in exploring the necessity of direct air connectivity from major international source market and rail connectivity from major domestic markets.

Last but not the least, the Tourism Department of Bihar should form Pilgrimage Tourism Advisory Council on the pattern of National Tourism Advisory Council to advise the department on pilgrimage destination development, marketing strategies, tourism product development, human resource development and tourism research to promote and enhance the state’s reputation.
as a multi-religious pilgrimage destination as well as cultural tourism destination in the world. The proposed council should comprise state Tourism Minister as a Chairman and other nominated members. The nominated members should include representative of different religious groups, BSTDC, hotel industry, travel agency, academic experts and other concerned stakeholders.

6.4 Direction for Future Research

Since the study has been conducted with some specific objectives, it has not examined all the aspects of Bihar pilgrimage tourism. The pilgrimage tourism of Bihar requires a study in depth and on many more aspects. Hence, on the basis of the insights gained during the course of the study, the following are some of the areas suggested for future research.

➢ Marketing strategy for promoting Bihar as cultural tourism destination
➢ Socio-economic Impact of pilgrimage tourism on the destination society
➢ Human resource management in Bihar tourism industry
➢ Exploring the potential of Jain pilgrimage in Bihar.
➢ Highlighting the sites associated with Ram and Sita and Management of Hindu pilgrimage sites in Bihar.