

# Economic Implication of Liquor Prohibition in Bhojpur District of Bihar.

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## **Abstract:**

Prohibiting Liquor is one of the most challenging decisions for the government across the world despite its widespread acceptance as a social evil. The root cause behind this compulsive continuation is the huge excise taxes levied on these products and the pressure from the elite class of the society. But the government across the world tempted to prohibit liquor time and again with mixed responses on the protest by another half of the society and social organisation.


For the present investigation, the district of Bhojpur has been preferred because this district has been important from the point of that the consuming liquor was very commonly found phenomenon. For the economy, after the prohibition spending per household and consumption of food and non-food items rose significantly. In villages, brick houses are gradually taking the place of more rudimentary cottages since state Prohibition came into effect. Many people have acquired new assets.

Key Words: Prohibition, Protest, Continuation, Spending, Purchasing capacity, Renovation

## **Introduction**

Prohibiting liquor is one of the most challenging decisions for the government across the world despite its widespread acceptance as a social evil. The root cause behind this compulsive continuation is the huge excise taxes levied on these products and the pressure from the elite class of the society. But still the governments across the world have tempted to prohibit the liquor time and again with mix responses on the protest by another half the society and social organisation.

India too has a long history of various states experimenting with various laws on liquor, ranging from total prohibition to restricted sale of alcohol to phase closure of liquor shops. As liquor contributes sizeable revenue to the government, it has never been an easy decision for any state to impose the prohibition. Moreover, there is

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widespread smuggling and illegal sale of liquors in the states where prohibition are imposed, thus defeating the very purpose. Presently there are four states – Bihar, Gujarat, Nagaland and Mizoram and the Union Territory of Lakshadweep, where total prohibition is in place.

Bihar Chief Minister **Nitish Kumar** has imposed total prohibition on liquor on the poll promise made by him. It came to effect uniformly all over the state from **1st April, 2016**, with the provisions of heavy financial and punitive punishment. It brought huge transformation in the different forms for the society despite some illegal sale in recent past.

Along with other district of Bihar, Bhojpur witnessed the complete prohibition.

The alcohol ban in Bihar was implemented through the **Bihar Prohibition and Excise Act that came into effect on April 1, 2016**. The Act states:

*“No person shall manufacture, bottle, distribute, transport, collect, store, possess, purchase, sell or consume any intoxicant or liquor.”*

## **Data Source and methodology**

The present study is based upon the both primary and secondary data. Primary data is generated directly with the help of questionnaire and schedules and intensive field work. While secondary data is obtained from the census offices, different libraries, NGOs, governmental offices and others sources. Some individual interviews are also conducted for the qualitative assessment of the situation.

Twenty samples are collected from each of the fourteen villages from all the Blocks of the District through the Questionnaire. So, the total 280 samples are collected across the district and special care is given while obtaining the data as society is fragmented in gender, caste and class. 50% samples are collected from the female respondents and it covered all section as per their population. So the proper representation of each of the class is given due space in the present study.

## **Objective**

- I. To analyze the changes in the overall economic situation in pre-prohibition and post-prohibition era.
- II. To analyze the economic impact of prohibition on local residents.
- III. To analyze the overall impact on village economy.

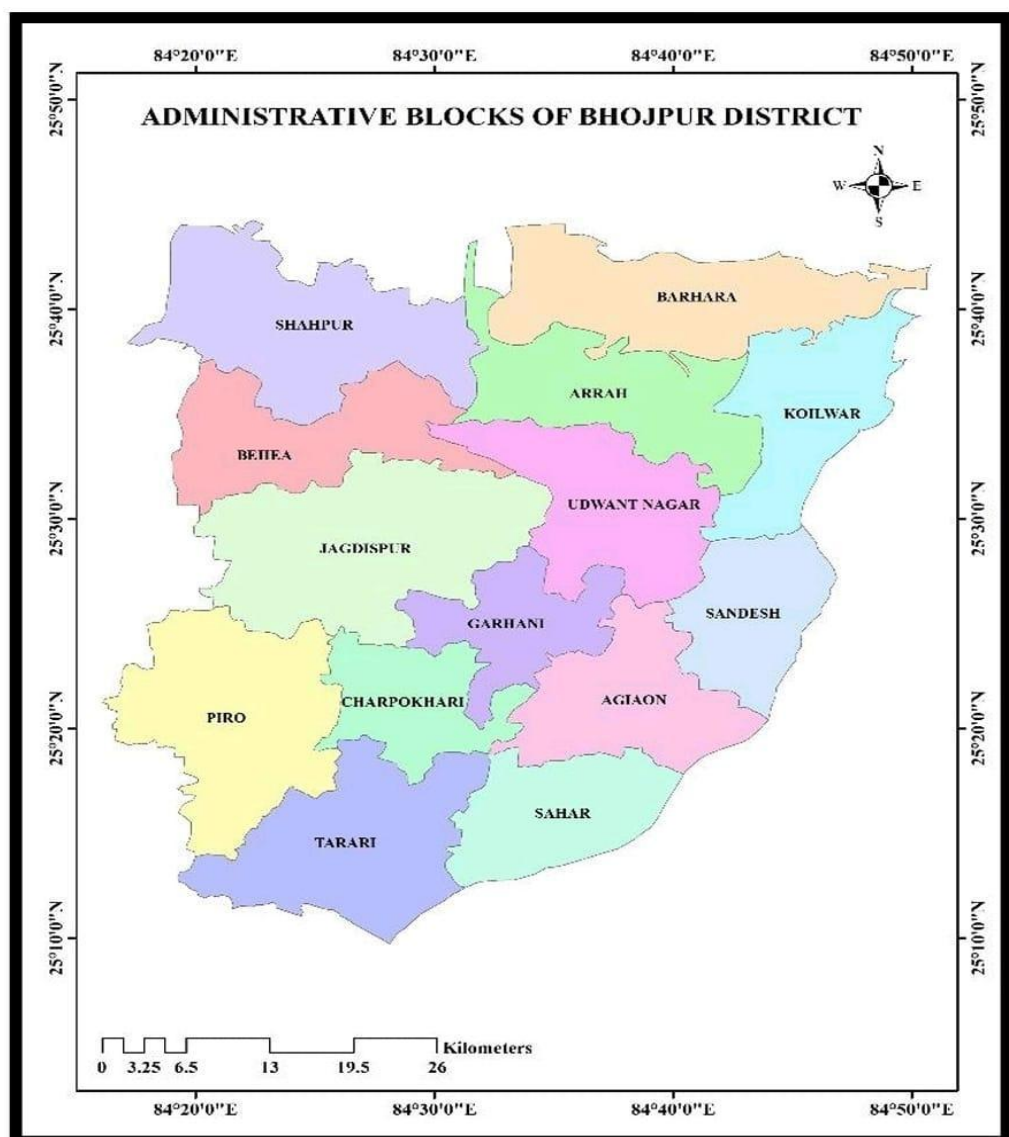
## **Study Area**

Bhojpur one of key district, has played a very important role in the socio-economic and political history of Bihar especially during medieval period. Very few information is available about the early history of Bhojpur. **Raja Bhoj**, a Rajput king of Malwa ruled over the greater portion of the district and the term '**Bhojpur**' now applicable to the area is derived from him. It was a pargana in the sarkar Shahabad in medieval

period. However, the whole northern part the erstwhile district of Shahabad is commonly known as Bhojpur and its inhabitants as Bhojpuris.

Present Bhojpur district with its Headquarter at Ara, is one of the thirty-eight districts of Bihar state in Northern India. It came into existence in 1972 after the bifurcation of Shahabad district with the Rohtas. In 1992, Buxar became a separate district and rest of Bhojpur district has now three sub-divisions namely Ara Sadar, Jagdishpur and Piro which is further divided into 14 Blocks.

## 1.9 Area of the Study:



Bhojpur district a part of Patna division, occupies an area of 2395 square kilometres. Majority of the land in the district is fertile land of Indo-Gangetic plain. Agriculture is the backbone of the economy, with majority of population engaged in agriculture.

The geographical extent of the district is 25°10' to 25°40' North and 83°45' to 84°45' East. According to 2011 census, the total population of the district is 27,28,407.

### **SAMPLE VILLAGES, THEIR AREA AND TOTAL NO OF HOUSEHOLD**

SL.N o	SAMPLE VILLAGE	C. D. BLOCK	AREA IN HECTARE	NO. OF HOUSEHOLD
1	Jhaua	Shahpur	882	1631
2	Behara	Arrah	234	338
3	Chatar	Barhara	247	387
4	Narbirpur	Koilwar	73	805
5	Sandesh	Sandesh	479	1037
6	Bhelain	Udwant Nagar	263	547
7	Kaleyanpur	Behea	269	922
8	Siyaruwa	Jagdishpur	358	488
9	Barauli	Piro	176	233
10	Madariha	Charpokhari	151	294
11	Bahari	Garhani	236	257
12	Lasarhi	Agiaon	216	349
13	Badka Gaon	Tarari	399	856
14	Athpa	Sahar	155	183

### **Major findings:**

When major parts of the family income was spent on alcohol, or when husbands would also snatch money earned by women. This would affect the entire family including the children and their education. Poverty, illiteracy and domestic violence were some of the major results of alcohol. Savings and spending on household goods has recorded a general increase especially among the poor families.

In response to the question whether prohibition has improved the overall income and savings, they responded very positively. 80% of females and 60% of males supported the statement. The upper class has little impact of the decision and only 50% favoured the statement as their family income is on higher side. But the economically and socially weaker section has huge impact of the prohibition and 90% of females and 80% of males agreed the statement that the decision has improved their overall income and savings of the family.

When they are asked about their spending on education and new clothes, 85% of females and 70% of males accepted that they are spending more on education and purchasing new clothes more frequently. Again the more beneficiary is economically and socially weaker section of the society. They are now purchasing new books, dress and even sending their children to tuitions besides school. Female respondents were more vocal in accepting the facts as compared to the male counterpart.

Next question was on the spending on food items, they were quite positive in their response. 75% of females said that their male family member is now either bringing or giving money for the purchasing of food items especially nutritional one fruits, vegetables and milk products. Male respondents were little apprehensive in accepting the fact and only 60% supported the statement. Again the more beneficiary is the economically and socially weaker section of the society. The enhancement in the spending on food item has drastically improved the health conditions of their family members.

On purchase of electronic appliances and two wheelers, overall 60% of people accepted that the savings has enabled them to acquire new electronic appliances including smart phones and two wheelers.

Overall 70 % respondents said that they are now giving more time to their basic work of the family like agriculture and animal husbandry. And all these changes have resulted into the acquisition of new property and improvement of the older ones.

### **View of the Local Dignitaries:**

“In Bhojpur, my native district, Prohibition reduced alcohol consumption. As a result, death rates from cirrhosis and alcohol psychosis declined, as did arrest rates for drunkenness and hospital admissions related to alcohol abuse. The terrible effects of alcohol abuse on the health of drinkers and, very often, their families, who suffered from abuse, poverty, and neglect when a bread earner spent the earnings before reaching home also declined.

I feel that goal of total prohibition is impossible so long we do not have a National Prohibition. Bhojpur with its large peasant and labour force need prohibition greatly for general uplift of poor families.”

## **Dr. Kanhaiya Bahadur Sinha**

President, FUTAB

and Renowned Educationist.

"मद-पान से व्यक्ति का शारीरिक, मान सक, बौद्धिक, नैतिक एवं चारित्रिक पतन हो जाता है, जिससे समाज पर कुप्रभाव पड़ता है। ऐसी स्थिति में शराबबंदी आवश्यक ही नहीं, अनिवार्य है। भोजपुर जिले में भी इसका सकारात्मक प्रभाव हर क्षेत्र में दिखने लगा है। भोजपुर समेत समस्त बिहार में लागू शराबबंदी से परिवार एवं समाज में पहले की अपेक्षा अधिक शांति व खुशहाली आयी है। समाज के निम्न तबके के लोगों के आर्थिक स्थिति भी पहले की तुलना में सुदृढ़ हुई है।

बिहार सरकार के इस निर्णय को और प्रभावी बनाने के लए बड़े पैमाने पर जनजागृति के कार्यक्रमों की आवश्यकता है।"

डॉ वश्वनाथ चौधरी

पूर्व अध्यक्ष, भकुष्ठा एवं

स्नातकोत्तर प्राकृत विभाग

वीर कुंवर सिंह विश्व विद्यालय, आरा।

## **Conclusion and Suggestions:**

Keeping the present scenario of Bihar in mind and to sustain the growth and to move towards better human development from economic growth, liquor prohibition is an imperative step which resulted indirectly in saving in the household. These savings is now better invested into human and social development indicators, such as availing better education facilities, health facilities, consuming protein and vitamin rich food and also towards some other luxury expenditures. People have now more time to work in their fields to take care of their families in better way.

The present paper emphasised that Bhojpur district of Bihar, despite the huge excise revenue loss, there is remarkable improvement in the economic status of the families. High

Inequality in income cannot be reduced in few days in the district, but the small savings through the prohibition is acting as a game changer especially in case of per capita saving rate. The study argues that emphasising more on human development components like literacy can reduce the inequality.

In this scenario, the prohibition on liquor, though criticised for creating pressure on exchequer, has not only increased disposable income of households to be spend more on human development inputs, it also empowers women socially to take strong decisions. The Bihar government has complemented the liquor prohibition initiative by boosting up different women empowerment programme and launching new programmes.

The present Paper argues for more efficient implementation of the prohibition and empowerment of women which in turn shall enhance human development situation in the Bhojpur district of Bihar and shall be instrumental for sustainable growth which may be captured through increase in demand for better education and health. Mass awareness programme especially in the tolas of Dalits and weaker sections of the society. New methods of recreation has to be derived and promoted so that the attention of the youths can be diverted towards some socially and productive activities. Local political representative should be given more responsibility for the better implementation of the decision and spreading the awareness programme with the help of women group.

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