# Migration and Diversity

November 2023 Volume: 2, No: 3, pp. 343 – 365 ISSN: 2753-6904 (Print) ISSN: 2753-6912 (Online) journals.tplondon.com/md



Received: 2 February 2023 Accepted: 19 June 2023 DOI: https://doi.org/10.33182/md.v2i3.2982

# Motives and areas of diaspora philanthropic donation; A study on diaspora community from Kerala, India

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#### Abstract

#### Background

The purpose of this study was to examine to investigate the motivations behind philanthropic actions among diaspora respondents and gain insights into the areas where the diaspora community channels their donation.

#### Methods

The study employed a quantitative research method, collecting primary data from 291 return migrants and migrants on vacation in Malappuram district, Kerala. A semi-structured interview schedule was used to gather quantitative data. Descriptive statistics were utilized to analyze the percentage distribution of philanthropic motives and areas of donation. Cross-tabulations were conducted to explore the relationship between motives for donation and the areas of philanthropic donation based on respondents' background characteristics.

#### Result

The study revealed that spiritual and religious motivation, cultural and community affiliation, ethical response, and seriousness of the problem were the major motives inspiring philanthropic activities. Religious and cultural affiliation were higher among older age groups, individuals with lower educational attainment, and those employed in unskilled sectors. Healthcare and medical services, house construction and rehabilitation, education, poverty alleviation, and social welfare activities were the primary areas where the diaspora allocated their resources. Bivariate analysis showed that donors in the below-45 age group had a significantly higher percentage of donations towards education, while those in the above-45 group significantly allocated a higher proportion than their counterparts to religious and social welfare initiatives.

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#### Conclusion

This study identified diverse motives for philanthropy, with religious and cultural affiliation being prominent. Donations were primarily directed towards healthcare, housing, education, poverty alleviation, and social welfare. The significance of the health sector as a recipient of philanthropic support was evident. These findings emphasize the importance of developing a policy framework that recognizes and supports the different motives and areas of philanthropic giving.

**Keywords:** Diaspora philanthropy; Kerala; Gulf migration; Motives and areas of philanthropy

#### Introduction

Diaspora philanthropy is the altruistic mentality of the diaspora community and the concern in human welfare that promotes charitable giving to the country of origin. The Index of Global Philanthropy and Remittance 2016 reports that the rise of total remittances to origin countries has increased and is now anticipated to be over \$64 billion (Adelman et al., 2016).

Diaspora and philanthropy are two different words. Werbner (2002) 'Diaspora', simply refers to migrants' communities overseas who still keep relationship with the homeland, not necessarily as 'dispersed political subjects'. Johnson (2007) widen the definition and included diaspora those who settle in another country temporarily, expecting to return home, and sometimes travel easily and frequently between their home country and country of residence. The philanthropy word means 'love of humanity', a term singularly associated with giving altruistically or acts of charity to others outside of one's family (Espinosa, 2016). Furthermore, it is an effort to promote human welfare, usually manifested by giving money, support and help needy person, society and other social institutions as well as the generosity towards the socially useful purpose (Payton and Moody, 2008; Newland et al., 2010). Philanthropy now mostly replaced the word charity, and even both share similar meaning: However, philanthropy is considered as more systematic and continuous than charity (Johnson, 2007). While understanding diaspora philanthropy and its definitions: Lethlean (2001) defines it as: both individual and organized giving to causes or organizations in an original homeland by a population outside of its homeland either permanently or short term residencies.

The globalized world, the transnational giving and exchange of ideas and skills simplified and accessible. Individuals were better able to converse with one another thanks to globalization and technological advancement, which also made it easier for people to migrate easily from one place to another. The involvement of diaspora communities in philanthropy has been largely facilitated by advancements in technology and globalization. This has enabled diaspora communities to more easily and effectively engage in philanthropy, which has been considered a 'new mantra' for development. Despite being neglected in the past, the intervention of transnational communities and migrant communities in their origin countries has played a significant role in improving public services and infrastructure (Pritchett, 2003; Haan, 2006; Bakewell, 2008; Miller, 2012).

There are many communities of migrants engaged in the philanthropic mission to their country of origin before 20th century but today's philanthropic mission varies with systematic



transnational giving and the relationship between diaspora philanthropy and socio-economic development is increasing and becoming more relevant (Young and Shih, 2004). As a consequence, the area of diaspora giving has become much more diversified in its giving channels and methods. Over the last three decades, diaspora philanthropy from the host nation to the place of origin has gradually expanded in proportion to the charitable contributions made by the global community to impoverished areas (Adelman et al., 2016). The growth of diaspora philanthropy during the last three decades across the globe has enhanced the creation of new intermediaries to facilitate giving back to countries of origin (Johnson, 2007). Advancement of information technology has changed the traditional methods and forms of international giving and the new innovations have been increased possibilities of the involvement of diasporas in their home country as well as, the technology helped to sustain existing relationship and create a new partnership based on common geography or interest and ideology (Pritchett, 2003). With the advent of the online platform and the support of highly skilled professionals and collaboration with government, donors can easy to decide and donate their funds towards developmental initiatives. (Newland and Tanaka, 2010). Furthermore, for the completion of diaspora philanthropy has several fundamental elements, it includes (1) philanthropy giving from a migrant who resides outside of the home country, (2) who has emotional relation or maintain the sense of identity with the homeland, (3) donate to causes or organization in that country and (4) give for public benefit. (Johnson, 2007; Lethlean, 2003; Nielsen, 2004).

# Motives and areas of philanthropy

The socio-cultural, ideological and political background of the migrants and their living, employment, and financial status in the destination country influence the possibilities of philanthropy (Clemens et al., 2008; McKenzie and Rapoport, 2010; Rapoport and Docquier, 2006; Bekkers and Wiepking, 2011). Sometimes, motives to donate for home country may compensate their community for taking caring their dependents or donors hope to get benefit from services of charity for their dependents such as a donation for educational institutions (Lucas and Stark,1985; Aparicio and Meseguer, 2011). Furthermore, many other factors influence and encourage the philanthropic giving such as social arrangement, gender tradition, altruism, family network, geography, religion, community identity, social status, role of diasporas in national development, growth in the size and importance of philanthropy and other parameters like regional and linguistic belongings (Geithner et al., 2004).

Unlike traditional philanthropy which is based on class belongings of philanthropists or contributors and less important for national identities, but now the diaspora philanthropy is mainly conditioned by national identity between givers and receivers (Espinosa, 2016). Schiller and Fouron (1999) explained other incentives that encourage sustained diaspora giving, most notably the rise in transnationalism, which is maintained or establish economic, religious, political relationships in the state from which migrant moved even he became part of his new state. Aysa (2007) explained why people continue to send remittances to their communities and other communities in their country of origin may include the migrant's desire to be socially recognized in their community of origin and/or destination, and their intention to return or retire in their home country. Osili (2004) and Dustmann and Mestres (2010) find that temporary migrants are more likely to remit and donate than permanent migrants. Delpierre and Verheyden (2010) developed a theory of migrants' decisions to remit and save under uncertainty regarding their future location. Usually, migrants group are formed based

their localities, ethnicities, professions, belongings and affinities, such as hometown association, alumni association, religious groups, linguistic identities, professional associations and gender group (Opiniano, 2005). Humanitarian aid after a natural calamity, funding project for educational and health institutions and scholarship for privileged and backward communities' student for their education are some most common routines followed by diaspora philanthropists (Newland and Patrick, 2004). UN expert meeting on Migration and development in 2005 commented about collective remittances that "organized international migrants can be a new strategic partner to promote regional and local development" (Aysa, 2007).

# Theoretical views on motives of charitable giving

Economic exchange theories take into account the benefits donors obtain from making donations while providing a theoretical justification for charitable giving. Just like customers look for rewards from their purchases, rational contributors will look for benefits from their donations. These advantages in the case of donation could be monetary (like tax avoidance) or non-monetary (guilt avoidance, recognition), and on this basis categorized benefits of donation into private and public benefits for donors (Konrath and Handy, 2018). However, motivations fueled by private and public benefits may not always be separate and occasionally may overlap. In other words, people can donate for a variety of reasons and can be motivated by both personal and social benefits at the same time. According to Handy et al. (2000), public perception of volunteering-is part of charity-is strongly related to the costs and benefits the individual receives from volunteering, and that this result holds true across different cultures.

The desire to enhance recipients' overall wellbeing can serve as a driving force behind philanthropic efforts. However, apparent "charitable" behaviour can also be driven by a desire to win the approval of others or to gain social respect. But, by only taking into account charitable giving that is driven by altruism which is the desire to improve well-being (Becker,1974). However, Andreoni (1990) associated impurity with altruism, describing it as people giving for a "warm glow," the giver's self-satisfaction and delight when giving to others without considering the outcome and others' contribution to the common good. Frey and Meier's (2004) field experiment study validates the social nature of philanthropy, validating theoretical approaches "conditional cooperation." People's donations increase, on average, if people know that others are donating, and people contribute based on criteria, preference and reciprocity.

Bekkers and Wiepking (2011) distilled eight mechanisms—which are the primary motivators of philanthropic donation behavior—from more than 500 academic papers. They are as follows: (1) need awareness; (2) solicitation; (3) costs and benefits; (4) altruism; (5) reputation; (6) psychological advantages; (7) values; and (8) efficacy. These include charitable welfare for the public benefit (altruism), increasing one's reputation (social recognition), gaining personal delight from the act of donating, reducing feelings of guilt that one is better off than others (impure altruist), (Konrath and Handy, 2018). People who donate and help others report being happier and prosocial spending and giving also lead to greater satisfaction when it is associated with relatedness, competence, and autonomy (Dunn et al., 2014).



## Diaspora philanthropy in Kerala context

The pattern and volume of semi-skilled and unskilled labor migration from India, particularly from the southern state Kerala, surged swiftly after the Gulf nations witnessed a "oil boom," in 1970s and Kerala occupied a leading position among the other Indian states in terms of sending workers to the Gulf countries. The influx of Keralite to the oil-producing Gulf countries has resulted in significant inflows of remittances to Kerala, which has helped to steadily improve the social and economic standard of underdeveloped communities and regions (Zachariah and Rajan, 2004). According to Kerala migration survey 2018, 2.1 million populations from Kerala working abroad and 90 percent of them of temporary migrants living in the Gulf Cooperation Countries (GCC), (Rajan and Zachariah, 2019)

Migration has reduced poverty, unemployment and helped to improve the living standard of Kerala population. Migration and remittances have been studied from various perspective (Zachariah et al., 1999; Prakash, 1998; Shekhar, 1997). But, it is well known from various literatures that diaspora philanthropy has important role in development. (Beauchemin and Schoumaker, 2009; Newland and Patrick, 2004; Aysa, 2007; Opiniano, 2005; Greene, 2002; Orozco, 2003; Johnson, 2007). Migrants community intervention was very crucial in many occasions in Kerala such as fund for the construction of Calicut international airport, land space and cash for the building for a Medical college in Malappuram, relief funds and assistance for victims of severe floods and houses for homeless people in Kerala (Milli chronicle, 2019; Gulf news, 2018a; Emirates 24, 2013; Aazhimukham-plus, 2020). Apart from that, there are many private educational and health institutions, and other social and community infrastructures in Kerala, fully or partially funded by migrants (Afsal and Reshmi, 2023). These kinds of direct investment and involvement of the diaspora in the state, helped Kerala government to run their many projects and policies very smoothly, mainly in educational, health and social infrastructures. Recently the government formed a board called Lokha Kerala Sabha to promote systematic and structural involvements of diaspora community in Kerala developmental areas (Lokha Kerala Sabha, 2022).

Given the substantial remittances and charitable contributions received from the diaspora community, particularly in states like Kerala, and their significant role in the state's development, this study underscores the importance of diaspora philanthropy. Consequently, this research aims to investigate the motivations behind philanthropic actions among respondents and gain insights into the specific areas where the diaspora community channels their resources. Understanding the diverse motives and purposes driving individuals and to engage in philanthropy, as well as identifying the specific areas in which they choose to allocate their resources is crucial in order to effectively harness these resources and maximize their impact. By delving into these aspects, this study seeks to address the need for a deeper understanding of diaspora philanthropy and its implications for the development of the state.

# Methodology

The present study is based on primary data collected from Malappuram district of Kerala, and quantitative method has been used for data collection. Quantitative data were collected from 291 return migrants and migrants on vacation using a semi-structured interview schedule.

## Study area

The present study was carried out in Malappuram district of Kerala, as a sizable proportion of migration, return migration and remittances in Kerala are from Malappuram district. According to Kerala Migration Survey (2018) conducted by Center for Development Studies (CDS), Malappuram district is sending the highest percent of international migrants since 1998. Kerala Migration Survey 2018 shows that 19 percent of total emigrants from Kerala and 23 percent of total return migrants in Kerala were from Malappuram district. Out of 100 households, about 74 households having at least one migrant or return migrant in Malappuram (Non-Resident Keralite) (Rajan and Zachariah, 2019). Therefore, it was decided to carry out the study in Malappuram district.

# Samples selection

A list of 107 philanthropic organizations has collected from websites of NGO Darpan<sup>3</sup>, NORKA Roots<sup>4</sup>, and from activist and volunteer involved in philanthropic activities. From this list, a few organizations have been selected based on criteria; 1) active in education, health, social welfare, rehabilitation and community development, 2) funded and supported by expatriates and migrants. Hence, we selected 35 organizations for the study purpose. It was then proposed to take 10 samples of diaspora donors from each 35 organizations. However, nine organizations did not respond, ultimately 26 organizations were selected for the study. From these 26 organizations, donors were selected based on criteria such as i) donors with at least one year of international migration experience; ii) the donor must be a Keralite(*Malayali*) which means belongs to Kerala state of India; and iii) donor's availability for interview during the field study. Thus, an average of 11-12 samples of diaspora donors were selected from each organization, and eventually the data was collected from 291 diaspora donors for the present study.

# Respondents of the study

In study, diaspora term used for both return migrant and migrants on vacation, and following definitions were used;

A return migrant is defined as "a person who has worked outside India for at least one year and returned home at the time of survey".

A migrant on vacation is defined as "a person currently working outside India for at least a year but visited home for vacation or annual leave at the time of survey."

Hence, the respondent of the study migrant on vacation or return migrant from Malappuram district worked abroad for minimum one year and donated their resource to any philanthropic organizations

# Quantitative Method

Semi-structured interview schedule was used for the collection of information from the selected 291 respondents. A set of questions were asked on socio-economic and cultural

<sup>4</sup> https://norkaroots.org/documents



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<sup>3</sup> https://ngodarpan.gov.in/index.php/search/

characteristics of diaspora, motives and reason the philanthropy, their area and pattern of charitable giving,

## Statistical approach

The present study employed descriptive analyses to examine the percentage distribution of philanthropic motives and areas of donation. Cross-tabulations, were conducted to investigate the relationship between motives for donation and the areas of philanthropic donation, taking into account respondents' background characteristics. Bivariate analysis was carried out to explore the association between motives and areas of philanthropy. Chi-square tests were used to assess the significance of associations among variables, and the corresponding p-values were reported. Additionally, Pearson's correlation was utilized to measure the strength and direction of the association between philanthropic motives. The statistical analyses were performed using Stata software, specifically version 15.1 (Kent State, 2023).

#### Ethical consideration

The ethical issues are very important to while collecting primary data. Before carrying out the primary survey for the present study, ethical approval was taken from the Students Research Ethics Committee (SREC) of the International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS), Mumbai. An informed consent was taken from all the respondents prior to the interview and the respondents were informed about the purpose of the study. Before conducting the interviews, the respondents were explained about the purpose of the study, confidentiality of information and informed consents were taken to carry out the data collection. The confidentiality of all the respondents was maintained throughout the study. The respondents were also given the freedom to discontinue the interview at any time they want or skip any question they were not comfortable to answer. The name of the respondents was concealed for maintaining anonymity of the respondents.

#### Result

## Socio economic, demographic, and cultural status of respondent

An overview of the respondents' profiles, including age, marital status, religion, level of education, and employment status, is given in Table 1. The majority of them (58.8%) were aged over 40, married (94.9%), and Muslims (96%). Of those, 36.3% have a degree or above, 33.6% have completed their higher secondary education, and 29.4% have completed their secondary or primary education. In terms of respondents' work status, 91 percent were employed, while 6.9 percent were in retirement. According to the respondents' migration status, the majority (50.8%) were returning migrants, and 49.1% were migrant on vacation. Regarding countries last worked, 99 percent of respondents worked in the Gulf countries, with 65% of the migrants worked in Saudi Arabia during their last migration, followed by the UAE (20.6%), Qatar (9.6%), Oman (2.4%), and Kuwait (1.4%).

Table 1. Socio economic and demographic status of respondent

Age group <sup>1</sup>	Percentage	Number
21-29	10.6	31
30-34	17.1	50
35-39	13.0	38
40-44	14.0	41
45-49	9.6	28
50-54	10.0	29
55-59	9.2	27
Above 60	16.0	47
Marital status		
Unmarried	4.7	13
Currently married	94.9	262
Religion		
Hindu	4.0	11
Muslim	96.0	279
Educational Status		
Primary	6.6	19
Secondary	22.8	66
Higher Secondary	33.6	97
Degree and above	36.3	105
Employment status		
Employed	91.7	266
Job seeking	1.4	4
Retired	6.9	20
Migration status		
Return migrant	50.8	148
Migrant on vacation	49.1	143
Country Worked		
UAE	20.6	60
Saudi Arabia	65.0	189
Qatar	9.6	28
Kuwait	1.4	4
Oman	2.4	7
Bahrain	0.7	2
Other <sup>2</sup>	0.3	1
Total	100	291

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Mean 44.3

# Pattern of diaspora philanthropy

The duration of philanthropic activities, level of involvement, and frequency of donations made by the respondent since immigration are shown in the Table 2. More than one third (35.5%) of respondents have been involved in philanthropy for more than fifteen years. Of the respondents, 20.6% have been involved in charitable activities for at least one to five years, 22.3% for six to ten years, and 21.9% for up to fifteen years. In the study, participants were asked to rate their level of involvement in charitable work. The majority of them believe that, their philanthropic activity involvement is moderate (45.7%), and 38.3% reported being actively involved in charitable work, while, 15.8% believe that their involvement in charitable work is limited to a few number of occasions. Additionally, when respondents were asked



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Note other; Maldives

how frequently they gave. The majority of them said whenever needed (54.7%), followed by randomly (33.6%) and monthly (10%).

Table 2. Philanthropic history of respondent

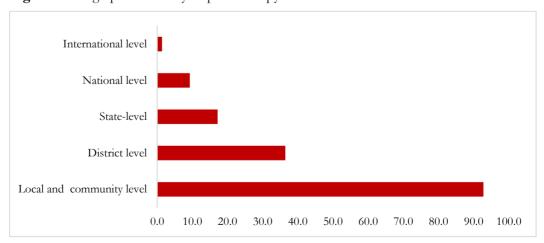
Duration of philanthropic activities <sup>1</sup>	Percent	Number
1-5 years	20.6	60
6-10 years	22.3	65
11-15 years	21.9	64
16-20 years	13.7	40
21-25 years	9.8	27
More than 25 years	12.0	35
Total	100	291
Level of engagement in philanthropy		
Active	38.3	109
Moderately	45.7	130
In very few Occasions	15.8	45
Total	100.0	2842
How often you donating		
Monthly	10.0	29
Annually	1.7	5
Randomly	33.6	97
As per requirement/demand	54.7	158
Total	100	2893

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Mean 14.2

## Geographical locality of philanthropic activities

Donors were questioned about where they allocated their philanthropic funds and participated in charitable activities by location, as shown in the following figure 1, among the donors 92.8 percent of them donated their money to philanthropic activities at the local level. 36.4 percent of respondents were involved in district-level activities, 17.2 percent in state-level activities, 9.3 percent in national-level initiatives, and 1.4 percent in international level activities.

Figure 1. Geographical locality of philanthropy



<sup>2</sup> and 3 changes from actual samples due to nonresponse respondent

## Motive of philanthropy

The motives and reasons for charitable activities are multifaceted and multiple, and can be motivated for the philanthropic activities with different impulse factors (Konrath and Handy, 2018). The diaspora's charitable efforts are influenced and motivated by a wide range of motives, including compassion, moral obligation, and religious inspiration for assisting those with limited resources and poor. Figure 2 shows the multiple and multifaceted motives for philanthropy; it is clear from the figure that spiritual and religious motivation (73.2%), cultural and community affiliation (45.3%), ethical response (44.3%), as per the seriousness of the problem (34.4%) as the major motives for inspiring philanthropic activities. In addition, one-fourth of them were self-motivated to do philanthropy, and 20.5 percent were encouraged by political motive.

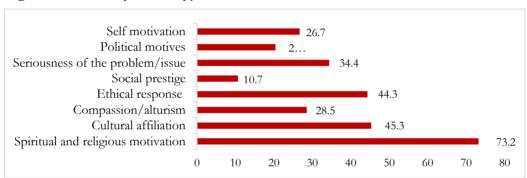
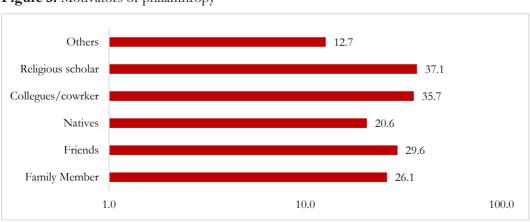


Figure 2. Motive of philanthropy

Figure 3 shows the source of the participants' inspiration for charitable work and philanthropy, with 37.1 percent of respondents citing religious scholars as their source, followed by coworkers and friends (35.7%), friends (29.6%), family members (26.1%), and natives and neighbors (20.6%). others (12.7%), such as charitable organization officials and community leaders. For the further understanding the role of religion and belief as motives for the philanthropy, the interviewees were asked about their religion and belief as factor in promoting charity and philanthropy, 98.4 percent of the replied that their religion and belief has important role promoting philanthropy.



**Figure 3.** Motivators of philanthropy

Table 3 provides correlation coefficients that measure the strength and direction of relationships between various motives for philanthropy. The coefficients range from -1.000 to 1.000, with 1.000 indicating a perfect positive correlation, -1.000 indicating a perfect negative correlation, and 0 indicating no correlation.

The analysis reveals that spiritual and religious motives were positively and significantly correlated with cultural affiliation, compassion/altruism, ethical response, and political motives. Furthermore, cultural affiliation demonstrated positive and significant correlations with compassion/altruism, ethical response, social prestige, and political motives. Compassion/altruism, on the other hand, exhibited positive correlations with ethical response, social prestige, as per seriousness, and political motives. Similarly, ethical response is positively correlated with social prestige, as per seriousness, and political motives displayed positive correlations with each other. Lastly, self-motivation demonstrated positive and significant correlations with cultural affiliation, compassion/altruism, ethical response, social prestige, and as per seriousness. This finding indicate interconnections between different motives for philanthropy, highlighting that individuals motivated by one of these factors are also likely to be motivated by the other motive factors.

**Table 3.** Inter-correlation of motives

Motives	(1) Spiritual and religious	(2) Cultural affiliation	(3) Compassion/ altruism	(4) Ethical response	(5) Social prestige	(6) As per seriousness	(7) Political motives	(8) Self- motivation
(1) Spiritual and religious	1.000							
(2) Cultural affiliation	0.233*	1.000						
(3) Compassion/ altruism	0.219*	0.359*	1.000					
(4) Ethical response	0.178*	0.363*	0.325*	1.000				
(5) Social prestige	0.013	0.103*	0.177*	0.230*	1.000			
(6) As per seriousness	0.040	0.067	0.280*	0.272*	0.172*	1.000		
(7) Political motives	0.162*	0.224*	0.111*	0.161*	0.209*	0.239*	1.000	
(8) Self-motivation	-0.017	0.161*	0.196*	0.266*	0.263*	0.115*	0.097*	1.000

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

# Motive of philanthropy by background characteristics

The table 4 presented on background characteristics of respondents and their associations with philanthropic motives. A significant association was found between age groups and philanthropic motives, including spiritual and religious, cultural affiliation, ethical response, self-motivation, and political motives. Older age groups (above 60) exhibited significantly higher percentages across all motives compared to those below 60 years of age, except for ethical response and self-motivation, where these motives were significantly more correlated with the age group below 45 than with the others. Educational status also demonstrated a strong association with philanthropic motives. Individuals with higher educational attainment

showed lower percentages in spiritual and religious motives (48.2%) but higher percentages in self-motivation (41.7%) compared to those with primary education, who exhibited the highest percentages in spiritual and religious motives (94.7%) and lower percentages in selfmotivation (10.5%). When considering the country where individuals worked, variations in philanthropic motives became evident. Respondents who worked in Saudi Arabia showed a significant and higher percentage in spiritual and religious motives (82.5%) and political motives (27.5%) compared to respondents who worked in other countries. On the other hand, those who worked in the United Arab Emirates and Qatar were significantly associated with the motive factors of compassion and self-motivation. Occupation also played a role in philanthropic motives. Unskilled workers exhibited significantly higher percentages in spiritual and religious motives and cultural affiliation motives, while skilled workers were significantly associated with motives such as ethical response, as per seriousness of the problem, compassion, and self-motivation. Lastly, migration status revealed that, return migrants showed significantly higher percentages in spiritual and religious motives and political motives compared to migrants on vacation. Conversely, migrants on vacation exhibited a significant association with self-motivation compared to return migrants. These findings highlighted the importance of considering different factors when examining individuals' motivations for engaging in philanthropic activities.

**Table 4.** Motive of philanthropy by background characteristics

Characteristics	Spiritual and religious motive	Cultural affiliation	Ethical response	As per seriousness of the problems	Compassion	Self-motivation	Political Motive	
Age group	***	**	*			***	**	Total
21-29	51.6	32.3	38.7	29.0	29.0	45.2	0.0	31
30-44	62.8	41.1	48.1	33.3	28.7	39.5	19.4	129
45-59	88.1	47.6	39.3	39.3	26.2	10.7	20.2	84
Above 60	91.5	61.7	46.8	31.9	31.9	8.5	36.2	47
Educational Status	***		***			***	**	
Primary	94.7	63.2	68.4	52.6	36.8	10.5	36.8	19
Secondary	92.5	43.3	25.4	37.3	23.9	9.0	31.3	67
Higher Secondary	84.5	38.1	47.4	33.0	28.9	25.8	20.6	97
Degree and above	48.2	50.0	49.1	30.6	29.6	41.7	10.2	108
Country worked	***			*	*	***	***	
UAE	48.3	38.3	45.0	26.7	28.3	51.7	3.3	60
Saudi Arabia	82.5	49.7	43.9	39.7	28.6	17.5	27.5	189
Qatar	64.3	39.3	39.3	25.0	35.7	35.7	7.1	28
Other	78.6	28.6	57.1	14.3	14.3	28.6	21.4	14
Occupation	***	*	*	*	***	***		
Unskilled	87.2	46.6	39.2	29.7	19.6	17.6	18.2	148
Skilled	59.4	44.1	49.7	39.2	37.8	36.4	22.4	143
Migration status	***					**	***	
Return Migrants	82.4	48.7	44.6	35.1	30.4	21.0	28.4	148
Migrant on vacation	64.3	42.0	44.1	33.6	26.6	32.9	17.0	143
	73.2	45.3	44.3	34.3	28.5	26.7	20.4	Q1 T0)
Total	(N=208)	(N=132)	(N=129)	(N=100)	(N=80)	(N=78)	20.4	(N=59)

<sup>\*\*\*</sup> p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1



## Area of philanthropic resource donated

The table 5 presented percentage distribution of resources spent in different areas of philanthropy. The findings indicate that a significant portion of resources was allocated to various areas. Health sector received the highest percentage of resources, with 68.0% of respondents contributing to initiatives related to healthcare and medical services. House construction, rehabilitation, and community development closely followed, with 67.4% of respondents allocating resources to these endeavors. Education ranked third, with 64.6% of respondents directing their philanthropic efforts towards this area. Poverty alleviation was another significant focus, with 63.6% of respondents targeting programs and projects aimed at reducing poverty. Social welfare and relief activities were supported by 58.4% of respondents, indicating a commitment to improving the overall well-being of individuals and communities. Among the more specific areas, cultural/arts initiatives accounted for 23.4% of resources spent, while human rights received 16.8%. Religious causes accounted for 14.1% of resources allocated, and the environment received 8.9%. Overall, the table highlights a diverse range of philanthropic efforts, with a strong emphasis on health, education, poverty alleviation, house construction, rehabilitation, and community development, and Social welfare and relief activities.

**Table 5.** Area of philanthropic donation

Resource spent area	Percent	Number (N=291)
Education	64.6	188
Health	68.0	198
Poverty alleviation	63.6	185
House construction Rehabilitation, and community development	67.4	196
Social welfare and relief activities	58.4	170
Religious	14.1	41
Cultural/arts	23.4	68
Environment	8.9	26
Human right	16.8	49
Others <sup>1</sup>	2.4	7

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>Other note; Donation for orphan, for marriage of poor women, and food kit for poor family

# Area of charitable contribution spent by background characteristics

The table 6 represents the proportion of allocated resources to specific areas of philanthropy based on background characteristics of diaspora donors. When examining age groups, individuals below the age of 45 showed a higher percentage of contributions in education, health, poverty alleviation, and house construction and community development. On the other hand, individuals above the age of 45 had lower percentages in these areas but allocated a higher proportion towards religious and social welfare causes. Educational status revealed that respondents with higher education levels, such as a degree and above, allocated a larger percentage of resources towards education (75.0%) compared to those with primary education (47.4%). Additionally, those with higher secondary education and degree holders showed higher involvement in donating towards health, human rights, and cultural programs. In contrast, donors with primary and secondary education primarily donated towards social welfare, poverty alleviation, and house construction and rehabilitation causes. Analyzing the occupation category, skilled workers exhibited higher percentages in education (72.7%), poverty alleviation (68.5%), and house construction and community development (70.6%),

compared to unskilled workers. On the other hand, donors working in the unskilled sector displayed a higher proportion of donations for health and social welfare activities. Among the countries where donors worked, respondents from Qatar had the highest percentage (85.7%) allocated to poverty alleviation and health (71.4%). Saudi Arabia, on the other hand, had relatively higher percentages in education (68.3%), house construction and community development (68.3%), and social welfare activities (64.0%). The UAE showed a higher allocation of resources towards human rights activities (33.3%). Overall, the table demonstrated the different priorities and interests of diaspora donors in contributing to specific areas of philanthropy.

Table 6. Area of philanthropic donation by background characteristics

Characteristics	Education	Health	Poverty alleviation	Housing& community development	Religious	Human right	Cultural program	Social welfare	
Age group	**				***	***	**	**	Total
21-29	54.8	71.0	61.3	58.1	6.5	29.0	16.1	45.2	31
30-44	73.6	69.0	66.7	73.6	7.8	33.3	32.6	50.4	129
45-59	54.8	65.5	59.5	66.7	13.1	11.9	13.1	63.1	84
Above 60	63.8	68.1	63.8	57.5	36.2	12.8	21.3	72.3	47
Educational Status	**								
Primary	47.4	63.2	68.4	47.4	15.8	21.1	5.3	73.7	19
Secondary	55.2	62.7	61.2	73.1	13.4	19.4	22.4	62.7	67
Higher Secondary	62.9	74.2	61.9	66.0	11.3	22.7	28.9	58.8	97
Degree and above	75.0	66.7	65.7	68.5	15.7	26.9	22.2	49.1	108
Occupation category	**		*						
Unskilled	56.8	68.9	58.8	64.2	12.2	21.0	24.3	57.4	148
Skilled	72.7	67.1	68.5	70.6	15.4	25.9	22.4	56.6	143
Country worked			*					***	
UAE	61.7	66.7	66.7	61.7	8.3	33.3	21.7	40.0	60
Saudi Arabia	68.3	68.3	59.8	68.3	15.3	21.7	21.7	64.0	189
Qatar	67.9	71.4	85.7	67.9	17.9	14.3	39.3	60.7	28
0ther	78.6	64.3	57.1	78.6	7.1	21.4	21.4	28.6	14
Total	64.6 (N=188)	68.0 (198)	63.5 (N=185)	67.3 (N=196)	13.7 (N=40)	23.3 (N=68)	23.3 (N=68)	57.0 (N=166)	291

<sup>\*\*\*</sup> p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

# Relationship of motives and areas of philanthropy

The table 7 provides insights into the associations between different motives and the areas where donors allocated their resources, namely health, education, housing, poverty alleviation, and social welfare. Cultural affiliation motive demonstrated a strong association with education (82.9%), housing (77.7%), health, and poverty alleviation (74.0%), as well as social welfare (71.8%). Spiritual and religious motives also exhibited significant percentages in education (72.0%), housing (72.0%), health (71.0%), and social welfare (64.4%). Altruism and compassion were strongly linked to education (85.5%), housing (79.5%), poverty alleviation (85.5%), and social welfare (73.4%). Ethical response displayed notable associations across all



areas of philanthropy, including health (74.4%), education (76.7%), housing (72.8%), poverty alleviation (74.4%), and social welfare (69.7%). Motives related to the seriousness of the problem showed a high percentage in health (81.0%) and moderate percentages in education (73.0%), housing (75.0%), poverty alleviation (76.0%), and social welfare (67.0%). Political motives were strongly associated with housing (88.3%) and showed considerable percentages in education and social welfare (78.3%). Self-motives were significantly associated with health (76.7%), education (78.0%), and social welfare (63.0%). Overall, the table illustrated the varying degrees of association between different motives and the areas of health, education, housing, poverty alleviation, and social welfare.

Table 7. Relationship between motives of philanthropy and area of donation

Motives	Health	Education	Housing	Poverty	Social welfare	Total
Cultural affiliation	*74.0	***82.9	***77.7	***74.0	71.8	132
Spiritual/religious	*71.0	***72.0	**72.0	66.3	***64.4	208
Altruism/Compassion	71.0	***85.5	**79.5	***85.5	***73.4	80
Ethical response	**74.4	***76.7	*72.8	***74.4	***69.7	129
As per seriousness of problem	***81	**73	**75	***76	**67	100
Political motive	75	**78.3	***88.3	*73.3	***78.3	59
Self-motive	*76.7	**78.0	68.4	**73.9	63	78
Total	68 (N=198)	64.6 (N=188)	67.3 (N=196)	63.5 (N=185)	58.4 (N=170)	291

<sup>\*\*\*</sup> p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

#### Discussion

The paper revealed the spiritual and religious inspiration, cultural and community affiliation, moral and ethical response, and as per seriousness of the problem are major motives of The religious motive is probably the most common motivation for philanthropy. philanthropy. Religiousness has been found to encourage charitable acts for various reasons, including seeking rewards in the hereafter, seeking personal satisfaction, alleviating guilt, and striving for congruence (Jamal et al., 2019). In the case of this study most of respondents (96%) belongs to Muslim community and their religious texts Quran (2;271-74) clearly mention that "To give charity publicly is good, but to give to the poor privately is better for you, and will absolve you of your sins. And Allah is All-Aware of what you do" (2:271) and "Those who spend their wealth in charity day and night, secretly and openly—their reward is with their Lord, and there will be no fear for them, nor will they grieve" (2:274). It is also apparent from the study that, religious scholar' advice is inspiration for engaging in charity for these diaspora respondents. While religious beliefs play a crucial role in motivating diaspora to engage in philanthropic efforts within their homeland countries, diaspora also actively participate in a wide range of social development activities. These include making donations towards schools, hospitals, community amenities, sanitation initiatives, and poverty alleviation programs (Anand, 2004). Diaspora's deep emotional and cultural connections to their home country, as well as their community affiliations, serve as another significant motivation for their active involvement in philanthropic endeavors. The studies conducted by Sidel (2003) and Merz et al. (2007) supports this notion, that often, their donations are closely tied to culture, their ethnicity, and caste, reflecting their strong bonds and influences.

The third important motive for philanthropy is rooted in ethical and moral responses. The study conducted by Smith and McSweeney (2007) further confirms this, highlighting moral norms as a strong predictor and influencing factor in donating money and engaging in

charitable activities. Furthermore, the study by Neumayr and Handy (2019) supports the notion that philanthropy is influenced by personal values and beliefs, such as empathic concern, trust, and religiosity, as well as available resources like education and income. This ethical and moral motive may also be inherited from religious beliefs, as religious individuals often exhibit strong ethical behavior (Arli and Pekerti, 2017). The findings from these studies collectively emphasize the importance of ethical considerations and moral values in driving philanthropic behavior. These studies highlight the role of moral norms, empathic concern, trust, and religiosity as influential factors in individuals' decisions to contribute to charitable causes. The other major factors which inspired respondents to donate their resources were as per seriousness of the problem, compassion/ altruism, self-motive, political motive, and social prestige respectively. This study has also brought to light the presence of multiple motives influencing philanthropic donations, even though some may be more dominant than others. This finding aligns with finding from literatures that the motivation for philanthropy is multifaceted (Bekkers and Wiepking, 2011; Geithner et al., 2004)

The bivariate analysis of philanthropic motives based on background characteristics, demonstrated in the study that, religious and cultural affiliation were significantly higher among the older age group, donors with lower levels of educational attainment, and those employed in unskilled sectors compared to the younger and more educated individuals. This finding is consistent with the idea that religiosity tends to increase with age (Zimmer et al., 2016), and factors such as social capital, health status, and religiosity can influence the propensity of older adults to contribute their resources to charitable causes (Adloff, 2009). Engaging in charitable and philanthropic activities can have positive effects on the psychological well-being of older adults, as demonstrated in previous research (Choi & Kim, 2011). In these findings, it becomes evident that older individuals with lower educational attainment and employment in unskilled sectors may have stronger religious and cultural affiliations, potentially driving their motivation to contribute to charitable causes.

In contrast, the factor self-motivation was found significantly higher among the younger age group and individual with higher educational attainment compared to the older age group and primary level education in this study. Opoku (2013) found that self-satisfaction and altruism were important motives, particularly among younger donors, alongside religiosity. However, Sparrow et al. (2021) revealed that self-motivation for charity tends to increase with age. Furthermore, their research also highlighted that altruistic motivation tends to rise among older adults. The later findings align with the results of the current study, which found a higher presence of the altruism and compassion motive factor among individuals aged above 60 compared to the younger age group. In addition, Luecke et al. (2012) argued both economic and living status of migrants and socio-cultural profile of origin country will influence and motivate to enrich the philanthropy. Overall, these findings highlight the complex interplay of age, religiosity, educational status, and occupational sector in shaping individuals' motives for philanthropy. It is crucial to consider these factors in understanding the diverse motivations behind charitable giving.

The area of donation by the diaspora philanthropist also were multifaceted and multiple, the main area of philanthropic giving for health sector, followed by house construction and rehabilitation projects, educational activities, poverty alleviation programs, and social welfare and relief activities. By looking in to area of donation by back ground characteristics. Donors in the below-45 age group significantly allocated a higher percentage of their donations to



education. Those in above-45 age group had a significantly higher percentage of their donations allocated to religious and social welfare initiatives when compared to the younger age group. Higher education donors prioritized education, while primary/secondary education focused on social welfare, poverty alleviation, and house construction. Skilled workers emphasized education, poverty alleviation, and house construction, while unskilled workers prioritized health and social welfare. Moreover, bivariate analysis of motives and areas of philanthropic giving also shows that cultural affiliation, spiritual/religious motives, altruism/compassion, and ethical response were strongly associated with education, housing, health, poverty alleviation, and social welfare. Motives related to the seriousness of the problem had a high association with health and moderate associations with other areas. Political motives were linked to housing, education, and social welfare. Self-motives were associated with health, education, and social welfare. These findings shedding light on the priorities and motivations of the donors in health, education, housing, poverty alleviation, and social welfare initiatives.

The contributions made by expatriates in Kerala, spanning various sectors including education, healthcare, housing, community rehabilitation, social welfare, and poverty alleviation, were invaluable in assisting the most marginalized members of society and demonstrate their commitment to address the critical issues in society. Despite government programs and policies, not everyone is reached, and the actions of expats are instrumental in assisting those who are less fortunate. For instance, in the healthcare sector, the increasing prevalence of lifestyle diseases and the associated high costs of medical treatment pose significant concerns (National Health Mission Kerala, 2020; Haveri et al., 2016; Vijayakumar et al., 2009) Philanthropic organizations funded and supported by the diaspora community play a crucial role in providing relief and assistance to affected individuals, particularly given the growing burden of lifestyle diseases (Afsal and Reshmi, 2023). Another notable example of diaspora involvement in Kerala was during the Nipah virus outbreak in 2018 when a UAEbased Malayali health provider sent a chartered flight carrying medical supplies to aid in the fight against Nipah (Gulf News, 2018b). These instances highlight the significant impact and importance of diaspora-driven philanthropic activities in Kerala. When we discuss about contribution of diaspora in educational sector, Kerala holds the first position in the School Education Quality Index according to the NITI Aayog report (2019). Additionally, it boasts the highest literacy rate in India based on the Census of 2011. However, there is still a significant issue to address. In the past year, over forty thousand eligible students for higher secondary education and other courses were unable to secure admission in government and aided schools due to a lack of available seats. Remarkably, all of these excluded students were from the Malabar districts, with Malappuram district experiencing the highest shortfall of 10,132 seats (Factsheets, 2022). To bridge this educational gap in Malappuram, numerous selffinancing educational institutions, not affiliated with the government, have emerged, offering educational opportunities to students. Many of these institutions were established solely to provide free education up to the degree level, supported by donations and remittances from the diaspora (Osella and Osella, 2009; Sebastian, 2019; Prabhodhanam, 2020). Despite the government's neglect of the educational sector in Malappuram, the invaluable contributions of Gulf migrants towards educational activities remain unforgettable.

Similarly, social welfare programs and rehabilitation activities conducted by philanthropic organizations have played a crucial role in Kerala, particularly during times of crisis such as

floods and the Covid-19 pandemic. These organizations, along with migrants, have provided significant assistance. For instance, during the Covid-19 pandemic, migrant organization called KMCC spent over 100 crore rupees (\$12,193,850) on various service activities (Madhyamam, 2020). During the floods in 2018 in Kerala, philanthropic organizations were actively involved in distributing food, clothing, and repairing damaged homes, as well as constructing new houses for those who lost their homes (Gulf News, 2018a). Another example demonstrates how diaspora-funded charitable organizations address the challenges faced by people in Kerala. In the severely flood-affected area of Kavalappara in Malappuram district, diaspora philanthropists and philanthropic organizations constructed over 50 houses (Manoramaonline, 2019), while government projects remained stalled due to corruption allegations and complications related to land acquisition (Manoram News, 2020). Despite some criticisms that religiously motivated donations may lead to religious-based politics and tension (Shani 2005, Biswas, 2004 Levitt 2008; Kurien, 2006), this study emphasizes that religious and cultural affiliation are key factors driving diaspora resources towards community development activities. Numerous studies (Agarwala, 2015; Anand, 2004) in the Indian context have highlighted the involvement of diaspora-funded religious organizations in social development and philanthropy, particularly in areas such as education, healthcare, community amenities, sanitation, and poverty alleviation programs. In addition, its apparent that religious and cultural motives could not prevent from public philanthropy and well-being, instead it promotes the charity, people who say they are religious are more likely to give to charity than nonbelievers (Bekkers & Schuyt, 2008). In conclusion, the diaspora community's motive and preferred area of contribution and donation have always been focused on aiding the underprivileged, addressing pressing issues, and uplifting the educational and living conditions of disadvantaged individuals. These interventions from the diaspora play a crucial role in bridging the gap that the government is unable to fill, providing much-needed assistance and support to the poor and deprived segments of society.

# Limitation of study and future scope of research

The study has a limitation in terms of its generalizability as the data was collected from diaspora donors in a specific region, Malappuram district, predominantly comprising the Muslim community working in the Gulf Cooperation Council countries. The lack of representation from other regions and diaspora working in non-GCC countries limits the broader understanding of philanthropic motives and priorities. Future research should take into account regional variations and engage a wider diaspora population to provide a more comprehensive understanding of philanthropic behaviors. It is important to be cautious when interpreting the findings, considering the specific context in which the study was conducted.

#### Conclusion

In conclusion, the study highlighted various motives for philanthropy, including religious and cultural affiliation, ethical and moral responses, self-motivation, compassion/altruism, political motives, and social prestige. Religious motivation emerged as a common and significant factor, with religious individuals often feeling a sense of purpose and connection to their beliefs through charitable giving. The study also emphasized older age, lower educational attainment, and employment in unskilled sectors were motivated with higher religious and cultural affiliation to engage in philanthropy, while younger individuals showed higher levels of self-motivation to involve in philanthropy. The findings of the study



emphasized the multifaceted nature of philanthropic motives and the diverse areas of donation. The main areas that received donations included the health and medical sector, housing and rehabilitation projects, educational initiatives, poverty alleviation, and social welfare activities. Among these areas, the health sector stood out as a prominent recipient of philanthropic support. This reflects the recognition of the significance of addressing healthcare needs and improving access to medical services. Despite concerns of religious-based politics and extremism, the study revealed that religious and cultural motives predominantly guided philanthropy towards developmental activities, promoting social welfare and well-being. Overall, whether driven by religious or non-religious factors, diaspora donations ultimately benefitted the underprivileged and contributed to positive social change. The study highlighted the varied interests and concerns of donors, demonstrating their commitment to addressing a range of social and developmental challenges. In summary, the study illustrated different motives and the specific areas of philanthropic contributions, shedding light on the priorities and motivations of the donors in health, education, housing, poverty alleviation, and social welfare initiatives

## Policy recommendation

The study's findings suggest the need for a policy framework that acknowledges and supports the various motives and areas of donation in philanthropy. This policy should recognize the influential role of religious and cultural motives in driving philanthropic activities. Additionally, it should promote partnerships between the diaspora community, governments, and civil society to enhance coordination, resource-sharing, and the effective addressing of social and developmental challenges. By implementing these recommendations, governments and stakeholders can create an enabling environment for philanthropy, harness its diverse motivations, and maximize its positive impact on social welfare and development.

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