



Received: 03.07.2023; Revised: 26.08.2023, Accepted: 23.09.2023, Published Online: 30.10.2023

## HUMANITARIAN ACTIVISM, PHILANTHROPIC PRACTICES IN PUNJAB, PAKISTAN

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### Abstract

Providing of services for the welfare of human beings are not the easy tasks for the humanitarian activists, the volunteer's feelings and passions force the philanthropists to come forward to play their role to achieve their ends. The commitment, determination and struggle of the public welfare activists instigate how to overcome the hardships by practicing the welfareism in the community. To materialize the philanthropic spirit and to invest the time and money for minimizing the displeasures, disparities and human sufferings is the challenge for public welfare activists and humanists. In spite of facing pains, the active socio-cultural engineers, philanthropists and volunteers spend their energies for the public welfare as well as for the social development by leaving aside the degree of humanistic passions, feelings and emotions of philanthropists and by ignoring all sorts of hurdles on the way of philanthropic practices.

**Key word:** Philanthropy, Welfarism, Humanism, Poverty

### Introduction

The philanthropy is considered the social and cultural responsibility by the philanthropic activists who put their efforts and spend their energies only for the public welfare by utilizing their volunteer and welfare activities to addressed the human social problems more than the government institutions as

Lin says: “All believe that non profits are more effective than the government in addressing the social and human problems”(LIN,1980 :152) The runners of the charitable organizations and individual philanthropists have to face the challenge to search out the needy people because donors demand to conduct a qualitative research to explore the deserving people living in the society, while the volunteers and public welfare activists also do not intend to spoil their true and sincere efforts on the less deserving people and faced numerous challenges in searching out the deserving and needy people from the community.

### **According to Wines;**

*“Sociology stands for pure science, while philanthropy stands for applied science” (Wines, 1898:49). The philanthropic actors, volunteers and social welfare activists have applied methods of charitable intervention in the community due to having specific community based work experience, therefore, they have not only pragmatic approach but also have abstract knowledge of the community and its social problems as well, while the Philanthropists use their abstract knowledge for the welfare of human beings. The notion was described by Wines; “Pure science seeks to know the truth for its own sake, regardless of the gain or loss involved in the abstract knowledge. The application of science was for their avowed motives and purposes to covert abstract knowledge into human profit”*

(ibid, 1898).

The vision of the philanthropy has faculties to decrease the human sufferings and pains particularly faced by the vulnerable strata of the society, while the purpose of the philanthropists and volunteers is to apply their knowledge for the benefit of human kind.

By nature, human beings have unified purpose to lead their whole life in a peaceful, prosperous and comfortable condition and to achieve the particular end, man always remained busy searching for the specific socio-cultural avenues. Generally, the human beings have to put their full efforts to get rid of those hindrances which make them unable to approach their desired goals, the hindrances include the eternal challenges from the vulnerable and the poor people of the society and poverty is the chief threat for the societal prosperity. As Jordan portrayed the poverty:

*“The Tudors and the most particular Elizabeth hated and feared poverty and vagabondages because they unsettled the whole society”*

(Jordan, 1961:145).

The philanthropic passions, feelings and emotions give birth to voluntarism, welfarism and philanthropism in the human kind. Such intrinsic spirits encourage in determining the goals, purposes and obligations of life. Having humanistic emotion is a universal phenomenon but the degree of passion varies from individual to individual regarding social issues faced by the poor class of the society. Each society has various strata as higher, middle and lower income groups respectively. The

miseries of the small income segment of the population enforce the wealthy individuals to play a vital role reducing the human sufferings by paying either their direct services or to finance the charities and trusts working for the down trodden people in the specific area. Generally, for the sustainability of the socio-economic status but particularly to fulfill the humanistic ambitions, the upper class has to invest some part of their income for the social development of lower class of the society.

Due to the poverty, society remains unstable and less prosperous; therefore, different humanitarian departments are developed for the welfare of the marginalized groups of the people and for the prosperity of the society. Such departments take responsibility to search volunteers, philanthropists and welfare activists who have to seek out the different channels having potential to mobilize and motivate the wealthy people to give some funds for the charitable organizations. The author Jordan told that: *“how welfare giving can reduce the human pains*. He further said: *“There can be no doubt that in course of sixteenth century there may be observed an increasing sensitivity to human suffering which animated charitable giving and which made men more directly concerned with its alleviation”* (ibid, 1961:145)

The charitable organizations encourage the people to decrease the pains and sufferings by reducing the hardships of the lower class of the society to decrease the threats of poverty. The social welfare and humanitarian activists are struggling for building the institutions to overcome the prevailing social problems of the society as Garrison argues:

*“It can trustfully be said that the wise contribution of philanthropists have not only improved the quality of education but have greatly accelerated the progress in the professionalization and organization of teaching in a democratic system of education of America”*

(Garrison, 1939:107)

The institutional development helps the philanthropists to make the socially more beneficial for the people having less potential to earn their livelihood, while Institutionalized channels provide proper avenues through which philanthropic activists can penetrate into the spirit and emotions of the individuals of the society.

## **Methodology**

The social research has its own methods and approaches to explore the social phenomenon of a society, because the society is the laboratory for the social research as there are countless and complex issues seeking feasible and sustainable solutions. Each issue demands a particular method to explore it, hence in the social sciences, comparatively; sociological discipline has more unique, specific and qualitative research techniques to disclose the social problems. Sociological research is not only identifying the particular social phenomena but suggests their community based solution. Before undertaking the formal research, the researcher visited the locale of study to examine the cultural environment to choose the methodologies to be used during the research study to have qualitative and quantitative data. Finally, after visiting the community, the following tools and techniques were

chosen to be used during the research work to obtain quantities and qualitative data according to the topic of the research

According to the research criteria adopted by the renowned anthropologists for the usefulness of their research studies undertaken in a remote human settlement, the same ideas and methodologies were adopted by the researcher for ascertaining a confident and reliable data.

By utilizing the method of purposive sampling in a complex community a sample size was determined because it was not possible to interact all the population of thickly populated locality, further a common person was not aware of the philanthropic practices, consequently, a selective sample size consisting of philanthropic workers and its beneficiaries was required to meet the requirements of the study as commented by Bernard:

*“...You are better off with the sample than with the whole population.”*

(Bernard 1994:73)

*“Study based on a representative sample, however, is often better than one based on the whole population that is sample data many have greater internal validity than data from the whole population.”*

(Bernard 1994: 72)

Accordingly, with utmost efforts, a sample size of 49 local persons inclusive of 21 philanthropists and 28 beneficiaries was finalized who have capability and knowledge about the conception and its working mechanism. The technique proved to be a unique mode of information and paved the path of success for the research study.

In addition, 3 volunteers and 9 knowledgeable persons were also identified who could provide valuable information about the working of the phenomena in the community. The research scope was further expanded to some of the donors who were struggling for the eradication of poverty and uplifting the socio-economic conditions of the poor masses to find out the problems they faced in their fight back. As a result of researcher's efforts, the following philanthropic organizations working in the area were identified that were the additional source of information.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The philanthropy is a passion, feeling and spirit to help the poor people encouraged by the unjust experiences of miserable life that people faced in the society, who were in the acute poverty and unable to provide one time meal to their families, their lives were even at risk. Though the philanthropy

practices are not easy for everyone who has extra finances but some of the volunteers consider it the God gifted blessing to work for the humanity and called it natural spirit.

Historically speaking, in 1875, Thomas Wentworth reported that the term philanthropy use for the first time in an English writing “The Guide to Tongue”, published in 1628. The word was simply philanthropies, Humanitie and love of man. (Curti, 1958:420), while the word welfare was taken from wel fare, primarily understood for a journey or arrival but later on it was also used as “supply of food”.( Williams. 1976: 281). The word has historically been associated with happiness and prosperity emerged in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. (Williams 1976). Welfare can be related to the individual and to the collective and involves material as well as immaterial needs. Moreover, it is often connected to the various interpretation of social justice (George & Page 1995). In sociological theory, the welfare means well-being (Walker, 1997: 212).

By consulting the relevant literature on philanthropy and its benefits to the human beings helped the researcher in the development of theoretical framework, statement of the problem and interview guide to get the relevant information and to explore the viewpoint of the people about its functioning, mechanism and usefulness to the poor masses. The critical analysis made by the researcher by studying the whole phenomenon through different tools and techniques. The analysis will provide new avenues about this social issue prevailing and increasing with the passage of time in the society for the reading and research community.

### **Role of Religion in Philanthropy**

In the earlier days of human history, the evidences of volunteerism, welfareism and philanthropy are found in the impulses of the human behavior. The charitable behavior was much confined to churches, mosques and temples because of the prevalence of irrational behavior of the community and due to limited relationship among the human beings, but with the passage of time, human beings extended their relations world wide by interacting with the new communities of the world. With the expansion of human relations world wide, the phenomenon of philanthropy expanded too throughout the global community as explained by Aileen D.Ross:

*Before the twentieth century, philanthropy in Canada was a haphazard affair, and except for the few individual donors who occasionally gave large sums of money for the cause of religion, health, or education, "giving" was mainly confined to the poor and indigent”*

( Ross, 1952:474)

The humanitarian mission has multiple moralities as economic and religious morality or sacred and human morality, while called by others as compassion of others. Thus, the mortality varies

from society to society and has different motives within the same institutions according to their interpretation about the morality as pointed by Ross:

*“The idea of charity forms its multiple moralities: charity becomes a sacred morality of religion, an all but sacred morality of democratic community, an economic morality of capitalism, a human morality of compassion for others.*

(ibid, 1992:440)

The role of religion to create philanthropic spirit can never be ignored; the history tells us that volunteer efforts were for the sake of God’s pleasure. The philanthropists had to motivate the people to the secular cause indirectly but their direct contribution was for the will of Churches, as Curtin stated:

*“Religion in its American form contributed to philanthropic habits and institution to direct gifts to church organization and, indirectly motivating contribution to secular cause and institution”*

(Curtin 1957: 353)

In the ancient time, most of the philanthropists were the religious preachers who undertaken the entire volunteer activities. They also influenced the Churches, as mosques have been professionalized by the local mullahs today. On the name of religious preaching, they take funds and services from the local people of the community. Their exploitative behavior of the local religious scholars toward common masses had been continued since early human history. The social historians of the philanthropy explain the religious funding in this way, “half of all was giving to religious institutions; these donations include a substantial amount given through churches and synagogue for social welfare purposes” (Pilfer, 1987: 120)

The most important idea regarding the philanthropy is to give some thing for the welfare of the society, but it was the part of philanthropy to work as volunteer for the sake of people’s interest. According to Pilfer the phenomenon cannot be confined only to the giving as stated by him:

*“Philanthropy cannot be confined simply to the act of giving. It also includes an extricable element of doing, doing by individuals when they volunteer their services and doing by organizations and institutions supported by gifts from foundations, corporations and the general public”*

( ibid, 1987: 121)

There are many synonymous terms used for the phenomenon having the same definitions but are different in their spirit, the terms ‘Philanthropy’ and ‘volunteerism’ are such terms having same objectives but used for different settings to understand their spirit. Philanthropy is used as pure

altruistic tem but the volunteerism has separate characteristics as it is used to motivate the human being towards self-reliance and struggle for survival. According to Pilfer:

*“In the case of philanthropy, motivation behind it is altruism or the concerns for the welfare of others. While private voluntary association for publicly beneficial purposes, having elements of altruism but usually it is the product of other motivations and human characteristics as well individualism, self-reliance, distrust of government or simply impatience with public authority and eagerness to get on with the job.*

( ibid, 1987: 122)

### **Philanthropy on Health**

According to a famous myth ‘health is wealth’, a society cannot prosperous without the good conditions of health of the people, otherwise the factor will a burden on its meager resources because healthy population can play a vital role to keep the society more peaceful and prosperous, and for the purpose, more chartable work is required, while for the volunteer’s work, the health is the main factor as an human capital that can further produce more powerful volunteers as Bekkers said:

*“Health is an aspect of human capital and healthy people are more productive volunteers”*

(Bekkers, 2006: 350)

The Rockefeller foundation is one of the most important charitable organizations working for the well-being of the human beings. The most focused issue of the organization is public health and analyzed the solution of health issues in a scientific and technical matter in the socio-economic perspective. According to Rockefeller’s official correspondence:

*“The analysis of public health issues required from a scientific and technical rather than a socio-economic and political perspective”*

(Abel, 1995:314).

The women philanthropists were always trying to uplift the living standards of the women and focused their energies for the gender empowerment. Most of the women philanthropists and social workers made efforts for the women independent in earning their living. For this purposes, they develop some centers where the girls are called to learn few skills for making them perfect for domestic services as suggested by Tananbaum:

*“Chartable work provided middle class women with a public function fitting their gender. Social workers and reformers tried to provide girls with the skill necessary for financial*

*independence, but they also trained them for future roles as wives, mothers, or if necessary domestic servants”*

(Tananbaum, 1997:947)

It has been said that the philanthropic activities are breaking the solidarity of the society due to lack of reciprocal relationship among the benevolent and beneficiaries. According to the qualitative researchers, reciprocal relations demand the unity in the community to maintain a balance of socio-economic status. According to Kidd:

*“The charity relationship, by contrast, is fundamentally unequal. The inequalities between donor and recipient are likely to be more or less permanent, so the potential for reciprocity is slight.”*

(Kidd, 1996: 186)

### **Philanthropy and Community Development**

The charitable efforts for uplifting the community have specific vision, the social workers have to work on the community development plans keeping in view the suitability of the developmental process. For the sustainability of the developmental projects, the philanthropists have to create progressive behavior among the community, to make the community to depend on its own resources according to the philosophy of the charity. This exercise should be undertaken with the help of charitable work in the community as commented by Andrew:

*“In bestowing charity, the main consideration should be to help those who will help themselves”*

( Andrew, 1890: 14)

The volunteer work is traditionally considered a non profit and non business activity, but the modern trends are much different from the conventional attributes towards philanthropy, most of the



philanthropists have invested a lot of money in the markets for the benefit of the humanity to seek out the profit, Sacks is of the view:

*“The philanthropy is conceived as a non-business, i.e., non-profit, and non-governmental person or group. Of course, it normally invests its funds to secure income in the business market, and it may finance some portion of its activity by a charge for the benefits it confers.*

(Sacks, 1960: 519)

### **Philanthropy as Pragmatic Approach**

The subject of philanthropy can be easily handled by applying the social sciences, while other sciences can hardly be applied to under take such a sensitive and behavioral approach. The philanthropists are known as multifunctional and multidimensional professionals because they are fertile having abstract knowledge and skills and also the experience of practical implications of the theoretical knowledge. They know well how to use the sociological theory for the benefit of human kind. Howard differentiates sociology and philanthropy in the following lines:

*“Sociology stands for pure science, while philanthropy stands for applied science. Pure science seeks to know the truth for its own sake, regardless of the gain or loss involved in the abstract knowledge. The applications of science have for their avowed motives and purpose to desire to covert abstract knowledge into human profit”*

(Wines, 1898:49)

The participation of the philanthropist in their professional job has analogy with the anthropologists who have to use participant observation for gathering data for research purposes. In the practical field, anthropologists and philanthropists can identify the challenges of the society realistically due to adopting participatory approaches. The volunteered activity of the philanthropists and using qualitative research techniques of the anthropologists determine how they can picture and portray the social reality for the viewers and readers as well. According to Howard philanthropists are the best facts collectors.

*“Within the range of his personal experience and vision, the philanthropist is an accurate observer, a patient collector of facts .he is the best coadjutor of the trained scientific investigator because he is at the same time an original experimenter and his experiments are in the region which separates the normal and abnormal”.*

( ibid, 1898:54)

The estimation, speculations and generalization take away the human being from the truth; reading of literature regarding social issues can produce ambiguities, as well as complications in minds of the individuals. Such kind of implicit perceptions enforce the bookish people into more complications and tracing of the actual problems becomes difficult, only personal experience can make the individuals to

be able to find out the truth and it is also helpful to remove the misunderstandings prevailing in the society, therefore, the philanthropists are the personal experimenter of any social phenomenon that is why they are called facts collectors. According to Howard:

*“There truth is eagerly sought, charity rejoices in the truth, while error and misstatement are corrected by the personal experience”.*

(ibid, 1898:51)

The reliable and qualitative research demands to get first hand data which can be collected through taking sincere pains and hardships during exploring the social phenomena. Although collecting primary data is the tough task but it determines the purity and quality of the social research. The qualitative research contains multidimensional social phenomena and it suggests the solutions of the social problems according to its directions, while the complications can be identified through gathering first hand information from the community. According to Wines:

*“The philanthropists have a much fuller and more accurate conception of degeneracy than the student or professor who is a recluse among his books and can only speak at second hand of that which the philanthropist knows at first hand. If the social scientist is not himself also practical philanthropists, he must be absolutely dependent upon philanthropy for a large part of the information which he build into the framework of his science.”*

(Wines bid, 1898:55)

The society is the laboratory of social sciences, while the social scientists have to make experiments by indulging in that laboratory. The researcher has to interact with the other people of the community, the social interactions provides different views from the community members about a particular social issue. Each cursory glance at the social phenomenon enforces the researcher to get new directions to solve them. Wines differentiate the laboratories of social sciences and natural sciences:

*“Now there is no sociological laboratory other than the actual life of the world, and in that laboratory the philanthropist lives and moves and has his being.*

( ibid, 1898:54)

The question arises that what is the difference between sociology and philanthropy? Both are the social sciences and social problem solver but the sociologists are the systematic readers of the social problems having distance from the problems but the philanthropists are well aware of the social problem having close links with the social problems. The social scientists should learn applications of

their knowledge from the philanthropists and philanthropists should get some theoretical base to authenticate their application from the social scientists as stated by Wines:

*“I would infuse into our sociologists a little more philanthropy and a little more social science into our philanthropists”.*

(ibid, 1898:57)

The spirit of philanthropy can be visualized in the social sciences through fund raisers and donors who are the social scientists indulged in a different field in their practical life. Invisible motives of the philanthropic foundations and the social sciences have the same philosophy in their objectives as stated by Karl:

*“The application of the organizational work is to address the human social phenomenon and the modern philosophy of the foundations is to recruit the experts of the social sciences to project the social issues. The modern American Foundations and American social sciences thus grew from similar philosophical roots.*

(Karl, 1985:14)

The cohesive social policy demands to make it more applicable for the benefit of the human kind, for the purpose, social policy makers should have operational ideas to implement their policies. Practicality the social phenomenon provides an opportunity to evaluate the social scientists themselves on the bases of their experience on that implementing policy. According to Wines

*“As the federal government moved into greater funding of social science research, foundations began to turn their interests towards more obviously practical issue of social policy.”*

(ibid, 1985:17)

### **Conclusion**

The external philanthropic national and international organizations working for the welfare of Dhok Hassu community, but were based outside the community, among them eight were International functioning as donors, while two were national donors working with collaboration of the local organizations. Non profit philanthropic international organizations were dependent on the local or national organizations to identify the local issues. The national organizations were working to bridge the gaps between the beneficiaries and benevolent. The external organizations adopt different tools and techniques for the development of the community and were engaged in different short term projects and programs to overcome the social issues. Each society has unique social issues of its own and each issue has a particular historical background but other factors cannot be ignored having much role in the emergence of the issues. The Dhoke Hasu was one of the backward areas of Rawalpindi where many philanthropists have focused the development of the area. The researcher has explored volunteer service providers working to alleviate the human sufferings of the community. The

charitable and welfare actors have intervened into various sorts of philanthropic services.

In view of the above elaborations, the social development specialists have to adopt particular methods to tackle the social problems of Dhoke Hassu which is the mixture of different cultures because migrant families imported various social issues with them, thus the intervention for the philanthropists was much difficult in early days but with the passage of time, researches made easier for the volunteers to overcome the social issues of Dhoke Hasu. Various forms of the philanthropic and volunteer services are provided by the humanitarians in the community.

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