Giving at Shrines in Pakistan

An Untapped Resource for Social Development
Philanthropy for Sustainable Development

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An Untapped Resource for Social Development

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The potential of using philanthropic contributions for social investments to improve the quality of life of the poor and less privileged is increasingly recognized as an effective means to boost development. Hence, Philanthropy in recent decades has emerged as an important component of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agenda that requires building partnerships between the government and civil society organizations and encouraging greater participation of the citizen sector to promote effectiveness of private philanthropy where needed.

The citizen sector of our country has never shied away from its responsibility of reaching out to many in times of need. People have come forth and contributed immensely in disasters and natural calamities such as the 2005 earthquake and 2010 floods. Nevertheless, Government’s role has also transformed to facilitating civil society and the private sector through fiscal, institutional and legal support, and the non-profit civil society organizations have also contributed towards social welfare, safeguarding equitable rights, and access to social service provision.

The Pakistan Centre for Philanthropy (PCP) established in 2001 aims at enhancing understanding of the phenomenon of individual and corporate philanthropy and promoting its effectiveness for social development in Pakistan. Governed by its Board of Directors comprising of eminent citizens, representatives of civil society organizations, and the corporate sector, PCP believes that a prerequisite for making the enabling environment functional is mutual understanding among stakeholders. While the government is expected to create a conducive and supportive environment for the growth and development of civil society organizations (CSOs), the wide spectrum of civil society also needs to be better informed about the impulses that generate philanthropy.
PCP, in pursuance of its mission to enhance the volume and effectiveness of philanthropy for social development and to raise broad societal understanding of its potential to contribute to enduring solutions to Pakistan's socio-economic problems, has initiated this monograph series of booklets under the theme of ‘Philanthropy for Sustainable Development’ for wider dissemination of issues surrounding philanthropy in Pakistan. This would lead to creating a pool of knowledge about philanthropy for development, sharing information among stakeholders, and advancing research and communication for informed policy making.

This current paper on: ‘Giving at Shrines in Pakistan’ is the first of the monograph series aimed at highlighting new dimensions of philanthropy and relating it to policy and programme actions for fostering social development in the country. The findings of the report reveal the patterns and motivations of individual giving at shrines as a huge potential resource which remains untapped for promoting social welfare functions. Given the widespread practice of shrine visitation among all sub-groups of population and the donations made in different forms, the monograph contains findings that continue to be of interest to all relevant stakeholders and will stimulate further research on philanthropic giving at shrines and policy dialogue for its effective utilization for social welfare initiatives.

Zaffar A. Khan,
Chairman, Board of Directors
Pakistan Centre for Philanthropy (PCP)
Introduction

This monograph series has been initiated as a follow up of a number of monographs published by the PCP in the year 2002, each focusing on a particular dimension of philanthropy and its link with social development. The revival of this series in the year 2016 by PCP – after a gap of 14 years – aims not only to continue with the process but also to keep abreast all its stakeholders and general audience of the rapidly emerging developments in the discourse on philanthropy. Recognizing the fact that philanthropy may help in alleviating the widespread poverty in today’s world and can play an important role in achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), it is an opportune time to explore theological and institutional precedents and practices of philanthropy and bring forth relevant knowledge and policy recommendations to enhance its impact on social development.

The present monograph, the first in the series of 2016, focuses on the practices of giving at shrines in Pakistan, specifically the patterns and motivations behind it. This monograph is based on data collected for national study on individual indigenous philanthropy through a representative household survey carried out by PCP in all the four provinces of Pakistan. Findings of this study not only reveal people’s impulse to visit shrines for specific reasons and make donations to seek spiritual satisfaction, but also identify a need for an institutional mechanism to facilitate co-operation between government and the citizen sector to make effective use of the philanthropic contributions for social investment.

As propagated repeatedly that in the face of the ever increasing demand for social service provision with limited and dwindling public resources, the state of Pakistan has allowed and encouraged non-profit organizations (NPOs) and for-profit corporate sector to come forward and render a helping hand in solving the numerous social and economic challenges faced by the people. The process has led the government to play the role of facilitator rather than the sole provider of public goods and services, thereby creating space where all the three sectors, e.g., the government, the civil society and the business community need to combine their resources and relevant expertise for overall societal development.
The monographs in this series explore in depth the potential of philanthropy as a means of promoting social investments in the country and discuss in detail how the three sectors – Government, citizen and business – can thrive through effective partnerships to realize the potential of local resources thereby promoting self-reliance in the country. Though individual efforts may be good at bringing about immediate positive results while curing for the symptoms of the issues but, in fact, it is partnership amongst the three segments of the society through which long term and sustainable development can be achieved for the society.

The PCP, established in 2001 as an independent, non-profit organization is the sole niche to generate knowledge about various sources of philanthropic giving in Pakistan and provides support services to enhance its effectiveness for social development. Its Board of Directors remains committed to facilitating the conditions and opportunities for promoting indigenous philanthropy in Pakistan as a substantial resource for tackling endemic social problems and poverty in the country. Guided by its mandate to raise broad societal understanding of the huge potential of philanthropy in Pakistan, the Centre presents this series of monographs to inform all stakeholders including the government, to gain better understanding of its role as an enabler; the civil society, to foster greater public trust and credibility about its initiatives; and individual philanthropists, to realize their social responsibility and input in country’s development. It is hoped that these publications will stir the interest of development practitioners and other stakeholders in identifying effective strategies and enhanced resources to improve the lives of the poor, and the marginalized communities of Pakistan.
The study of Giving at Shrines is a subject of great interest for social scientists and development practitioners because of its linkages with religious and cultural practices, philanthropic giving, social welfare functions, and development initiatives. As observed, visiting shrines in many societies is an integral part of religious and community life providing strong psychological resilience and solace to many people from all walks of life.¹ People visit shrines to pay homage to the holy personage to accommodate their wishes and strengthen their faith, and give donations in cash or in kind and sometimes volunteer time as a token of respect and devotion to the visited holy place.

Generally speaking shrine is a holy place because of its associations with a divinity or a sacred person.² Shrine visitation is common in every religion including Islam. The intense loyalty and devotion of everyday visitors position shrines as important intermediaries between, not just God and man, but also between the state and its subjects.³ Apart from religious significance, these shrines also serve social welfare functions and are important source of political and social power. With the passage of time, many graves, khanqahs/mazars, yards and mosques have evolved and changed into a socio-religious institutions where masses and followers regularly visit to perform certain rituals to attain internal satisfaction and solace to their everyday tensions.⁴

Hence, the essence of shrines lies in the beliefs and obedience of its visitors to seek fulfilment of their wishes through divinity. In Islam, most shrines are the grave sites of prophets or saints, personalities deemed to have a special connection with God. Shrine visitation is motivated by a variety of beliefs; the holy personage is thought to be a bridge between God and the visitor, therefore it is perceived that praying for something at the shrine is more likely to be accepted.

In Pakistan, where Islamic faith and practices are deeply embedded in everyday life of individuals, social welfare and philanthropic giving are essentially integral to many faith-based organisations. Said that it is of interest to study the practice and patterns of giving at shrines and see what can be done to enhance its impact on social welfare and development initiatives. Shrines, together with other institutions such as mosques and madrasahs, usually get a share in voluntary act of giving by Muslims such as *Sadqa, Kharat,* and *Waqf.* Given the fact that there are numerous shrines scattered all over the country and that they are visited by thousands of people it is not without reason to believe that these small offerings at shrines accumulate into a potential resource which can be better channelized to bring about optimum results.

**Shrines in Pakistan**

Shrines hold great importance in Pakistan’s society as people show great reverence to them. Shrines are spread across the country where people make offerings of cash, kind, and volunteer their time for cleaning the place and doing other tasks. The donations collected in shrines not only cover the administrative expenses of the shrine, but are also utilized to provide various other services. To manage and implement social welfare functions of shrines more effectively, the government of Pakistan nationalized all shrines in 1960 and created the Department of Religious Affairs and Auqaf which operates at provincial level. This department is responsible to collect donations of all kinds and also to manage the administration and security of the registered shrines. However, majority of shrines still remain private property, handed down to successive generations of the family of the holy personage, heirs of whom are called ‘*gadee nasheens*’.

As per the Religious Affairs and Auqaf department of the federal government, there are more than 150 registered shrines in the country with the majority

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Number of Shrines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sindh</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KPK</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baluchistan</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
located in Sindh and Punjab. But the list given on the department’s website records only 99 shrines (Table 1). However, both the above mentioned numbers seem to be highly underestimated as shrines of every kind and size can be seen at every corner of the country. Numerous shrines remain out of the purview of the Auqaf Department as they operate independently and are managed by the legal heirs of the saints buried there.

Information on the nature and types of shrines in Pakistan and what kind of welfare functions are performed by them is also not available. Such an exercise demands a considerable amount of cost, both in terms of money and time. The Ministry of Auqaf is the authority at government level to manage the shrines but not all the shrines accept this authority, hence they operate on their own. As such, research on giving at shrines has mostly been of qualitative nature with case studies of selected shrines to examine specific behavioural and spiritual aspects of shrine visits.

It is observed that major shrines in Pakistan are visited by thousands of people each day. One of the largest shrines in the country is of Hazrat Ali Hajweri, also known as Data Ganj Bukhsh in the city of Lahore where visitors come in large numbers to seek spiritual satisfaction as well as to get social welfare benefits. Evidence shows that this well-known shrine located in the capital city of the Punjab province has several social welfare functions including provision of free food (Langar), health facilities and shelter to needy people along with provision of religious education, spiritual enlightenment, solace and support sought by the visitors. Due to the large droves of people visiting this shrine, some CSOs also maintain a connection with the management, e.g., a non-governmental organization (NGO) which rescues run-away children who frequently come to shrines for free food and shelter.5

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Research evidence on philanthropic giving at shrines is limited in Pakistan, especially in terms of quantitative analysis of the quantum, patterns and motivations of giving. Most studies undertaken on the subject are qualitative in nature based on case studies conducted through in-depth interviews or observations. Some studies conceptualize shrines as socio-religious-cultural places where spiritual persons (Sufi Saints) are buried. According to Kottak (2002), the religions of many cultures focus on sacred sites and shrines. People perform rituals at these holy places which convey information about the participants and their traditions. Repeated through generations, the specific rituals at shrines carry enduring messages, values, and sentiments into action. Some people perform those rituals at special places at certain points in time to heal women suffering with mental illness. It is believed that through direct contact with the supernatural, people receive shamanistic powers through dreams, hallucination. They acquire such powers through isolation when the great spirit, the mystery or whatever it is named, is exposed to them. They get certain special gifts such as healing or divination when they return to their communities.

The term shrine is a place regarded as holy because of its association with a divinity or a sacred person. Throughout the Islamic world, shrines of holy saints serve as localized, communally run entities to which other religious institutions such as mosques are often attached. Practices closely attached with these shrines are rituals connected with healing, the production of talismans, and other supernatural phenomena. Examples of these shrines can be found in Pakistan, India, Iran, Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq, Morocco, etc. These places become great religious centres where people pay pilgrimage all year round; they express their difficulties and misfortunes to the saints and pray for relief. Some may experience trance-like states during that time, which provide them a sense of relief and relaxation.

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9 OED, 2005
In Pakistan, shrines are commonly associated with Sufis. Sufism which was developed in the 12th century from a small movement of ascetics emphasized spirituality over the legal, and closeness to, rather than remoteness from Allah.¹¹ Sufism and shrines are closely associated and their relationship is quite well established in history.¹² According to Platteau (2011) Sufi shrines in Pakistan are common places of religious rituals which followers consider to be righteous by virtue of being pious.¹³ Most of the Pakistanis view Sufi saints as embodiment of Islamic virtue and consider them true Faqirs (impoverished ones) characterized by a life of piety, self-sacrifice and public service.¹⁴ Since time immemorial, the tradition of visiting sacred places to attain religious merit, washing off the sins and accomplishment of desires has been a common practice across the world.¹⁵ Visiting of sacred spots, places, and buildings has traditionally been regarded as noble and often equated with purification of body and mind, and achievement of merits.¹⁶ Most of the shrines in Pakistan are managed by Auqaf Department under the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Over the period of last couple of decades, the government has gradually increased its role in managing shrines through deputing paid staff there while it also collects different forms of giving by the visitors.

Some research studies have identified many reasons as motives for people to visit shrines. Farida et.al, believe that people come to shrines in order to heal their sickness. They say that religion and tradition play an important role in the identity and life of many Muslims, whereas rituals like prayer, going to Mosque, study the holy Qu’ran and carrying out religious practices provide structure and meaning to life. Mental illness is usually believed to be a result of disequilibrium between the emotional, spiritual and social spheres of one’s life. People who come to shrines think that their

plight in the form of illness is caused by a weakening bond between the higher being (Allah) and them. This weak connection makes them vulnerable to evil spirits and magic spells. The attendees seek protection from the great saint or request them to mediate between the Supreme Being (Allah) and them so the broken or weakened connection could be reinforced, and enable them to get rid of the misfortunes. People from the lowest level of socio-economic strata quite often cite these reasons to visit shrines. They find not only a shelter but also can survive on the food given as alms by the visitors. Other motives as cited by researchers include seeking respite by the distressed, locus of control, dealing with acutely disturbed behaviour—containment and restraint, etc.17

The evolution of shrines and its role in moulding social, political and economic life of individuals have been studied from different angles. For example, Malik and Mirza18 investigated the role of shrines in promoting literacy, especially when there is a confluence of land inequality, concentration of shrines and political power. They had a conviction that religious power, measured in terms of concentration of shrines only matters for literacy when these shrines own more land and exercise greater political power manifested through direct electoral participation.

Despite the huge potential of shrines for securing significant amounts in religious endowments and philanthropy and meeting basic needs of many poor people in the country, no systematic study has been undertaken to assess the volume and patterns of giving in quantitative term – a gap this research paper is going to address. The national level survey on individual indigenous philanthropy in Pakistan undertaken by PCP in 2014 provided an opportunity to study the patterns of giving at shrines, the factors that influence the individuals’ giving behaviour, the motivations behind their visits to shrines and the type of giving in the form of cash, in-kind, and in-time across provinces in Pakistan.

17 Farida M. Pirani , (I)Rena Papadopoulos , John Foster & Gerard Leavey (2008) “I will accept whatever is meant for us. I wait for that—day and night”: The search for healing at a Muslim shrine in Pakistan, Mental Health, Religion & Culture, 11:4, 375-386
Objective of the Study

This study aims to examine the patterns and motivations of giving behaviour of shrines visitors, in what form donations are made in all four provinces of Pakistan, i.e., Punjab, KPK, Sindh and Baluchistan, and suggests ways to tap this philanthropic resource effectively for social welfare and development initiatives.

Data and Method of Analysis

Data on giving at shrines was collected as part of the household survey for a nationwide study on individual indigenous philanthropy in Pakistan (IIPP). The survey was undertaken by PCP in 2014 covering 6,825 households in the three provinces and 3,000 households in Sindh in the year 2013. The data thus collected provided an opportunity to study the patterns of offerings by shrine visitors in relation to their background characteristics, both at individual and household level. Using a structured questionnaire, information on giving at shrines was collected from a respondent of age 18 years and above in each household covering both urban and rural areas of all provinces (Table 2).

The methods used to analyze these data include techniques such as cross tabulation, percentage distribution, ratios, bi-variate analysis, etc. The results are presented in tables, graphs and charts in a way that makes it easily understandable for common readers.

Limitations

Surveys never come without some shortcomings, same is true with this paper. In fact, the survey for IIPP was conducted in two phases. Initially the survey was conducted in Sindh province during February – May, 2013. In the second phase, survey was carried out
in the remaining three provinces, e.g., Punjab, KPK and Baluchistan during February – June, 2014.

Questions with regard to the information on giving at shrines were added only in the second phase of the process. Hence, not much information on giving at shrines in Sindh province is given in this report. Combining data of the two studies for the purpose of this study we present whatever information is available in both cases. But, unavoidably, the major focus on the patterns of and motivations for giving at shrines mainly remains on three provinces where data was collected.

Individual Characteristics

Table 3 shows distribution of the sample by a few demographic characteristics of the respondents. The numbers in the table indicate that an overwhelming majority of the respondents were males in Sindh (97 percent) while in Punjab female were in majority and constituted three-fifth of total respondents. The dominating number of male respondents in the Sindh province could be the result of the fact that female enumerators were not included in the field survey teams, so mainly male members from households might have responded. The overall dominance of male respondents as given in the same table may be attributed to the fact that majority of the respondents (three-fifth) in all the four provinces resided in rural areas where women are either hesitant to speak to strangers or unable to answer the lengthy questionnaire. Hence, enumerators may have preferred male members of the family to answer the questions.

About 80 percent of the respondents were above 25 years of age in all four provinces. Regarding the educational attainments of respondents, around two-fifth of respondents were illiterate in all the four provinces. Surprisingly, Punjab which is generally considered to be doing better in terms of literacy, scores the highest in terms of illiteracy (43 percent). Figures of literacy in all other provinces match quite well with figures reported by other sources19 except in the case of Sindh where overall literacy rate is reported to be around 53 percent while it is 60 percent as per Table 3. This rosy picture might has been created by the dominance of the male respondents as mentioned earlier.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Punjab</th>
<th>KPK</th>
<th>Sindh</th>
<th>Baluchistan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 or less yrs.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-40 yrs.</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 or more yrs.</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illiterate</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary-Middle</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary-HS.</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduation-Masters</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Household Characteristics

Around three-fourth of the households in the sample belonged to rural areas. Household size is found to be large in KPK and Baluchistan with 71 percent and 70 percent households having 5 – 10 family members compared to 67 percent in Punjab and 60 percent in Sindh. But surprisingly the ratio of households having more than 10 family members is highest in Sindh. Household size presented in Table 4 is congruent to the general perception that Pashtuns prefer large families; 19 percent of respondents in KPK and 16 percent in Baluchistan have families consisting of more than 10 members while this ratio is just 8 percent in Punjab.

Drastic variations can be seen in earning capacity of households in all the four provinces as given in Table 4. Three-fourth of the entire sampled households in Sindh have income of Rs. 20,000 or less while this ratio is just one-third in KPK and around one-half in Punjab and Baluchistan. Similarly, 29 percent of households in KPK earn in the highest category (more than Rs. 50,000) as compared to 2 percent in Sindh.
Table 4: Percentage distribution of sampled households’ characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Punjab</th>
<th>KPK</th>
<th>Sindh</th>
<th>Bal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residence type</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household members</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 – 4</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 – 10</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household income (Rs.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to 20,000</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20,001 to 50,000</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 50,000</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings

Data collected through survey for this study shed light mainly on the giving patterns of shrine visitors, types and frequency, and motivations behind their giving.

Giving at shrines in different provinces

As mentioned under the objectives of this paper, one important goal of this study is to understand the pattern of giving at shrines by visitors. A wide variation is found in the giving patterns at shrines across the four provinces. Looking into the prevalence of the practice of giving at shrines, the highest giving rate was reported in Sindh, 78 percent, and the lowest in KPK, just 17 percent. Almost half of the sample households in the Punjab and one-third of households in Baluchistan reported giving at shrines.

Types of Giving

Figure 2 presents different types of giving at shrines across the four provinces. Cash giving is the most prevalent practice throughout the country. Punjab has cash giving as high as 90 percent while the lowest cash giving rate is in KPK which is 64 percent. Sindh and Baluchistan's cash giving ratio is 76 percent and 81 percent respectively.

In-kind giving practice is almost the same in three provinces, i.e., Punjab, KPK and Baluchistan except in Sindh where it is quite high (17 percent). Giving as time volunteered in KPK is the highest which is three times higher than the second highest rate (8 percent) in Baluchistan.
Table 5 illustrates the denominations of the amount of cash and kind donated at shrines by the visitors in three provinces during the last one year.

As seen from Table 5 giving at shrines is practiced in trivial amounts. Half of the respondents in KPK who reported giving at shrines said that they gave up to Rs. 100 while 38 percent in Punjab and 35 percent in Baluchistan reported giving in this range.

Likewise percentage of households who reported giving in the range of Rs. 101 – Rs.1000 is 41 percent in KPK as compared to 53 percent and 51 percent in Punjab and Baluchistan respectively. In the highest category of giving, i.e., more than Rs. 1001, respondents in Baluchistan contribute in greater proportion, 14 percent as compared to 9 percent in KPK and Punjab.

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20 Sindh province in not included in the analysis as the question was not asked in the survey
Table 5 also illustrates the value of in-kind giving at shrines by households. In KPK, majority of households (86 percent) made trivial in-kind donations that valued up to Rs. 100, while in Punjab and Baluchistan the percentage is 64 percent and 47 percent respectively. In the category of in-kind donations valued between Rs. 101 to Rs. 1000, percentage of households in Punjab and Baluchistan is almost the same while it is quite low in KPK. In the highest category of in-kind giving valuing more than Rs. 1001, 22 percent of households in Baluchistan contribute followed by Punjab and KPK with 8 percent and 5 percent respectively.

**Time Volunteered at Shrines**

With regard to the time volunteered, almost equal ratio (88 percent and 84 percent) of households in Punjab and KPK give up to 10 hours of their time at shrines, while this ratio is a bit low (62 percent) in Baluchistan. In the second category, up to 24 hours of time, 4 percent households in Punjab and 10 percent in KPK volunteer their time while the highest ratio is in Baluchistan (19 percent). Again it is in Baluchistan where the highest percentage of households (19 percent) volunteer the maximum hours, 72 hours, followed by Punjab (8 percent) and KPK (6 percent).

**Figure 3: Time volunteered at shrines by provinces**

![Bar chart showing time volunteered at shrines by provinces](image)

**Why people select a particular Shrine for giving?**

The question to be asked about why respondents preferred a particular shrine for their visitation and donation was more than
relevant in the case of this paper. As depicted in Figure 4 given below, in Punjab and Baluchistan majority of the respondents (60 percent and 48 percent respectively) reported that it is due to their personal beliefs that they prefer to visit and give at a particular shrine. On the contrary, in KPK respondents give more weightage to following the family rituals and traditions than other factors as 44 percent of them said that they visit and donate at a shrine because their parents and ancestors did so. Interesting to note is the fact that people are less bothered about the distance travelled to get to a shrine while deciding on which particular shrine to visit. Distance affects decisions of just 16 percent respondents in KPK while choosing a shrine to visit. This rate is 14 percent in Punjab and 6 percent in Baluchistan.

**Figure 4: Percentage distribution of the reasons behind the selection of a particular shrine to visit**

![Percentage distribution of reasons](image)

**Motivation behind Giving at Shrines**

In response to the question about the motivation behind giving at shrines, majority of the people (61 percent and 56 percent respectively) in Punjab and Baluchistan reported that they donate at shrines due to the fear of God or as a religious obligation. But, in KPK, affordability is the main factor (36 percent) that drives people to give at shrines. Vast variations in the opinions of the respondents in three provinces is reflective of the fact that people from different ethnicities, religious sects or may be from cultural backgrounds show their reverence to shrines not out of a single unanimous reason.
Socio-demographic characteristics and their effect on giving at shrines

There are many things that possibly affect the general giving behaviour of people. Place of residence, people living in rural areas for example, are usually less educated, earn low income, and this may have positive or negative effect on their giving behaviour. On the contrary, there are people who argue that because of being less educated, rural residents are more prone to superstitions and they frequently visit shrines, hence more giving. Questions on individual and household characteristics were asked during the survey for indigenous philanthropy which can be used to establish whether the above mentioned general perceptions hold true based on scientific analysis. As the question about giving at shrines was asked about the total household giving there is no issue in relating household characteristics with giving at shrines. Though there are few household characteristics, but only two of them are such that may have their effect on giving at shrines. Education, though an individual characteristic, may also be included in the analysis based on the assumption that having highly educated respondent from a family means higher chances are there that the overall family is relatively well educated.

a. Income and giving at shrines

General perception is that households with high income would give more at shrines than those with low income. Two hypotheses are constructed to find the evidence from data collected in three provinces.
H₀: There is no relationship between household income and giving at shrines.
H₁: Household income and giving at shrines are positively correlated.

As expected there is a positive 27 percent significant correlation between income and giving at shrines. In other words it may be said that around 27 percent of giving is affected by the level of income of the household. This result supports alternate hypothesis (H₁) which says that the more the income the higher is donation at shrines. The null hypothesis which says that there is no link between giving at shrines and household income is thus rejected.

b. Education and giving at shrines
Educational attainment, just like income, is an important factor that weighs on one’s day-to-day decisions in his/her socio-economic settings. Without being based on any scientific evidence but, however, two different perceptions exist there with regard to the relation of education with giving at shrines. First, it is argued that being less educated means people have less opportunities of earnings, hence they cannot avail modern amenities of life such as medical treatments in case of illness. Visiting shrines and asking for solace is the only option they can get access to. They frequently visit shrines and also make donations.

The second point of view is that with incremental level of educational attainment people are usually able to increase their earning. Hence, a well-educated visitor is expected to be more willing to give in terms of cash or kind at shrines.

The trend is quite clear from the numbers given in Table 6, it is a negative relation between education and giving at shrines. The more people are getting higher level of education their propensity to give at shrines is declining. For example, 40 percent of the illiterate respondents, 41 percent of those having Primary to Middle level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational attainment</th>
<th>Giving at shrines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illiterate</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary –Middle</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary –Higher secondary</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduation-Masters</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
education reported that they donated at shrines compared to the 24 percent of those with Graduation or Masters degrees.

c. Urban-rural divide and giving at shrines
The second household characteristic which is expected to have a bearing on giving behaviour of shrine visitors is their residential status (urban/rural). As said earlier urban residents are comparatively well educated and well paid, so they are expected to consult doctors and other means at times of distress or illness instead of going to shrines. In table 7 respondents in terms of their giving and non-giving behaviour are juxtaposed against rural urban divide to see the variations, if there are any, in terms of total and percentage numbers. Table together with figure 6 explain the giving behaviour amongst rural and urban population. As expected, giving ratio among people living in rural areas is higher than those living in urban centres. This behaviour is explained by three main reasons. As mentioned earlier rural populace is generally less educated, hence they mostly seek refuge in shrines at times of distress and illness. Secondly, there is a lack of opportunities and facilities in rural areas. For example, at times of illness, either there are no proper health facilities or those are out of reach of the poor leaving them with no other option but to go to shrines and Pirs and ask for relief. And, thirdly, shrines are usually situated in rural areas and they have traditionally remained centres for religious as well as social activities since their establishment. The inhabitants have long seen their parents visiting those shrines and giving donations, hence the young generations just follow the rituals practiced by their ancestors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Residential Status</th>
<th>Did you / your household give any donations to Shrines during last 12 months?</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Yes 60 No .002</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Yes 66 No .008</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7: Percentage Distribution of givers and non-givers as per Rural/Urban divide

Figure 6: Percentage distribution of givers as per residential area
Conclusion and Way Forward

Based on a sample of around 10,000 households, the findings of the study reveal that giving at shrines is a universal norm in Pakistan, but it is practised more commonly in two of the provinces, i.e., Punjab and Sindh, where 49 percent and 78 percent of the sampled population respectively is found to be giving at shrines in one form or the other. This pattern seems logical when we relate the giving trends to the concentration of shrines in these two provinces. According to data obtained from Auqaf and Religious Affairs department, out of all the registered shrines, Punjab and Sindh have 42 and 41, respectively while there are just 9 in KPK and 7 in Baluchistan.

The results also show that about two-third of the respondents who report giving at shrines belong to rural areas. This could be related to the fact that people in rural areas are mostly uneducated and are more inclined to be driven by superstitions and religious beliefs as is evident from the finding that about 41 percent of those who reported giving at shrines had received only primary education. Also, poor people living under difficult socio-economic conditions tend to seek spiritual and emotional support from shrine visitation, given the limited financial resources available to them for meeting their needs.

The results also make it evident that people donate in three different forms, i.e., cash, in-kind, and in-time. Of these, cash giving is more prevalent while in-kind and in-time giving is quite negligible, except in KPK where time volunteering is comparatively high as compared to other provinces. The high share of in-time giving in KPK need to be explored further to understand the underlying reasons.

About the magnitude of giving at shrines, the findings reveal that 14 percent of respondents in Balochistan and 9 percent each in Punjab and KPK reported giving of more than Rs.1000 during the year of the survey. For in-cash giving between Rs. 101-1000, about 53 percent and 51 percent belonged to Punjab and Balochistan, respectively, whereas 41 percent resided in KPK. For relatively smaller donations of up to Rs.100, majority resided in KPK while less than 40 percent are in Punjab and Balochistan. As shrine visitors usually come
from poor and lower middle class, they can afford to give in small amounts, whereas people from middle and upper-middle class living mostly in urban centres are less inclined to give at shrines. However, there is need to assess the cumulative amount of total donations given at shrines to assess this potential resource to improve social welfare functions in the country.

Among the reasons stated by the respondents to visit shrines, it is the personal belief that motivates majority of them to visit to a specific shrine. Also, a large number of respondents have reported following and continuing the practice of their ancestors to visit a particular shrine. Looking into the motivations behind giving at shrines, religion and fear of God is the biggest motivating factor as reported by majority in Balochistan and Punjab, while in KPK it is being resourceful that takes precedence to the religion factor. It is interesting to note that a substantial proportion of the respondents in KPK and Balochistan have no specific motivation except that they notice other people to do so and follow them.

Summing up, although giving at shrine is a nationwide practice, it is more prevalent among the rural and poor class as evident from the majority of the respondents who reported donating in trivial amounts, e.g., up to Rs. 100 in a year. There might be some large donations from rich individuals which have not been captured in this survey.

The data collected for this study is very limited in scope focusing mainly on examining the patterns of giving at shrines with no assessment of the total volume or quantum of donations made in a year. However, the findings of this paper suggest some avenues for further research as under:

- Though the yearly donation by each individual is in meagre amount, still the cumulative figures could reach millions of rupees. An investigation might be worthwhile to see how big this resource is to be utilized in a more efficient way.

- An investigation into the management of different types of shrines may also give good insights on how effectively the generated resources are utilised. Also, the kind of good work
rendered by these shrines may be used to create awareness among the general public and the challenges that are faced to made better of the amount donated at shrines may provide the basis for informed policy actions.

The Ministry of Auqaf and Religious Affairs is the authority at government level to manage the shrines and utilize the generated funds for social welfare benefits of people, but it has been found that many shrines operate on their own with no authentic records available. In order to assess the social welfare functions and development perspectives of giving at shrines, it is important to maintain complete record of shrine visitation and develop partnerships with civil society organizations to undertake some initiatives to make utilization of the donations at shrines more effectively for community development.
Acknowledgements

This study is the first of the monograph series of the Pakistan Centre for Philanthropy which has been revived after an interval of 14 years of its initiation in 2002. The new monograph series, primarily an in-house effort by the PCP research team, aims to publish reports on various dimensions of philanthropy in Pakistan to raise awareness and broader understanding of philanthropic giving as a means of enhancing social development initiatives in Pakistan. This first volume of the series: Giving at Shrines in Pakistan - an Untapped Resource, is basically a by-product of the national level survey on Individual Indigenous Philanthropy which incorporated few questions on household giving at shrines covering four provinces of Pakistan.

The completion of this monograph is a result of the collective efforts and support of a number of people whose contributions PCP would like to acknowledge. PCP owes its gratitude to the Chairman of the Board of Directors, Mr. Zaffar A. Khan, to the Chair of the Research Committee, Dr. Attiya Inayatullah, and all other members for their invaluable feedback and support.

Hard work and commitment of the PCP Research Team as a whole is greatly appreciated. Acknowledgements are due to, more specifically, Dr. Naushin Mahmood for her continuous supervision and professional input, Mr. Muhammad Ashraf and Mr. Muhammad Ali for organizing the field survey, doing analysis, and writing the report.

PCP hopes that these monographs, in addition to expanding knowledge about philanthropy and its policy outreach would stir and revive the debate on how to enhance the volume and effectiveness of philanthropy and create enduring partnerships between government, citizen sector, and the business community to accelerate social development initiatives in Pakistan.

Shazia Masood Amjad
Executive Director
Pakistan Centre for Philanthropy
“No one has ever become poor by giving”

---- Anne Frank ---
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Mr. Arshad Zuberi
Chief Executive and Editor, Daily Business Recorder
The Pakistan Centre for Philanthropy is mandated to promote philanthropy in Pakistan through:

- Enhancing the efforts of potential social investors;
- Encouraging civil society organizations to transparency and performance accountability;
- Building capacity of the government and working with them and other stakeholders to promote and enabling legal and fiscal framework for philanthropy; and
- Raising awareness in society about the significance of giving and volunteering.

The centre is working to enhance information and knowledge of effective philanthropic practices, provide support services and convene diverse constituencies of philanthropy to deepen understanding of the potential for effective philanthropy, in particular, for indigenous social investment.