



Hybrid Philanthropy for SDGs: A Comparative Analysis of Funding Distribution Challenges in Remote Areas of Singapore and India

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Abstract

This research examines the distribution of philanthropic funds in the context of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in remote areas, focusing on two countries: Singapore and India. The approach used is a qualitative literature study aimed at exploring the challenges and opportunities in the distribution of philanthropic funds and understanding the factors influencing the success or failure of philanthropic initiatives in achieving development goals. The main findings indicate that despite significant philanthropic funding efforts in both countries, there is a substantial gap between the initiatives' objectives and local needs. In India, misalignment between philanthropic policies and socioeconomic conditions, along with infrastructure limitations, often hinders program effectiveness. Meanwhile, in Singapore, although government policy support and digital technology can accelerate resource mobilization, difficulties remain in reaching underrepresented remote areas. The study also highlights the importance of cross-sector collaboration and transparency in fund distribution processes to ensure greater impact on SDG achievement. The scientific contribution of this study introduces the concept of hybrid philanthropy as a potential new model for managing funds for sustainable development purposes. Furthermore, it underscores the need for further research on the roles of government and social institutions in creating a more inclusive and adaptive philanthropic ecosystem responsive to local conditions.

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Introduction

Philanthropic funding for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) plays a very important role in supporting the achievement of these global goals, especially considering the limitations of available public funding (Noviarita et al., 2024; Yasmin & Haniffa, 2017; Yu & Kuo, 2021). In this context, the philanthropic sector can make a significant contribution to financing projects that support the attainment of the SDGs (Hue et al., 2022; Martinez & Bunnell, 2024). Countries with different social, political, and economic backgrounds, such as



Singapore and India, adopt differing approaches to utilizing philanthropy for sustainable development goals (Daromes & Gunawan, 2020; Godfrey, 2016; Heist et al., 2022; Purwatiningsih & Yahya, 2019). Singapore, as a developed nation with a high level of prosperity, has a well-organized philanthropic sector that tends to focus on environmental sustainability and poverty alleviation. Conversely, India, a developing country facing major challenges related to social inequality and poverty, relies on philanthropy to support sectors such as education, health, and poverty reduction (Kumar, 2018, 2022; Spreen & Kamat, 2018; Srivastava, 2016). Studying how these two countries integrate philanthropic funding into their SDG achievement strategies can provide important insights into the differences in how funding is applied in different countries.

However, despite numerous studies discussing the contribution of philanthropic funding to the SDGs, there remains a lack of comparative analysis examining philanthropy's role in both developed and developing countries simultaneously. Most research tends to focus on philanthropy in either a developed or a developing country context separately. For example, studies by Johnson (2020) emphasize the philanthropic sector's contribution to environmental sustainability in Singapore, whereas Patel (2021) reveals the significant challenges India faces in allocating philanthropic funds for education and poverty alleviation. In this context, there is a significant gap in the literature that combines comparison between two countries with vastly different social, economic, and political conditions. This gap provides room for deeper analysis on how countries with different characteristics can best utilize philanthropy to support SDG achievement effectively.

This study aims to fill the gap in existing literature by comparing how philanthropic funding is used to achieve the SDGs in Singapore and India. This analysis is important because the social, political, and economic contexts of each country can influence how philanthropic funding is implemented. Therefore, the research will address several key questions: How does the philanthropic sector in Singapore support SDGs focused on environmental sustainability and poverty alleviation? What challenges does India face in directing philanthropic funding toward education and poverty reduction? Additionally, how do government policies and social structures affect the effectiveness of philanthropic funding in these two countries? By answering these questions, the study is expected to provide deeper insights into the dynamics of philanthropic funding in countries with very different backgrounds and how this can be applied to improve SDG achievement more efficiently and effectively.

Philanthropic funding in Singapore and India offers an interesting illustration of how social, economic, and political differences between the two countries influence the implementation and effectiveness of philanthropic

funding for the SDGs. Singapore, with its rapid economic progress, has better infrastructure to facilitate more organized and efficient philanthropic funding. The country leverages cooperation between the public, private, and community sectors to finance projects supporting environmental sustainability and poverty alleviation, in line with the SDGs. Meanwhile, India faces greater challenges related to social inequality and limited access to philanthropic funds, especially in remote areas. Therefore, India relies more on contributions from large corporations through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) to fund projects related to education, health, and poverty alleviation. These differences indicate that the success of philanthropic funding for the SDGs heavily depends on infrastructure readiness, government policies, and cross-sector collaboration that can adapt to each country's local needs. Hence, different approaches must be applied according to country context to maximize the impact of philanthropic funding on achieving the SDGs.

Research Methodology

This study employs a qualitative research approach to ensure the depth, accuracy, and transparency of the data and subsequent findings. A qualitative methodology is chosen for its emphasis on understanding the subjective meanings and complex dimensions of social phenomena (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). It facilitates an emic perspective, allowing the research to capture and interpret the issue from the participants' own viewpoints and lived experiences. The material focus of this research is the distribution of philanthropic funding for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in remote areas, with Singapore and India serving as the primary research contexts. The research design is both exploratory and explanatory. An exploratory design is appropriate for investigating a complex, practice-based phenomenon that is not yet extensively theorized, while an explanatory design aims to clarify the relationships, mechanisms, and dynamics within it (Babbie, 2020; Neuman, 2014). Participants and research subjects are key actors and stakeholders involved in the philanthropic funding ecosystem, such as donors, foundation managers, NGO practitioners, and community beneficiaries. A purposive sampling technique is used to select information-rich cases that are most relevant to the research questions (Patton, 2015). Informed consent is obtained from all participants, who actively contribute insights from their direct involvement in philanthropic practices.

The data consists of qualitative information pertaining to the practices, perceived barriers, and opportunities in philanthropic fund distribution. Primary data collection instruments include a systematic review of secondary literature. This encompasses academic publications, official policy documents, and

organizational reports from philanthropic entities, which provide critical context and foundational data (Bowen, 2009). Additional qualitative documents are incorporated to enrich the analytical framework. Data collection is conducted systematically. To enhance the validity and trustworthiness of the findings, the study employs triangulation of data sources, cross-verifying information across different documents and literature to build a coherent and credible understanding (Denzin, 2017; Patton, 2015). Data analysis follows established qualitative techniques. Triangulation is further used as an analytical strategy to corroborate findings. This is followed by qualitative data reduction, where information is condensed and organized to identify core themes and patterns, which are then presented as structured narratives and analytical findings (Miles et al., 2020). Consequently, this exploratory qualitative approach, centered on participant perspectives, is adept at accommodating the specific values and norms inherent to the social contexts of Singapore and India. It enables the research outcomes to yield a profound and contextual understanding of the dynamics governing philanthropic funding for SDGs in remote areas.

Differences in Philanthropic Funding Strategies between Singapore and India

Philanthropic funding strategies in Singapore and India show significant differences influenced by each country's socio-economic context, regulatory environment, and cultural framework. In India, the philanthropic funding landscape is characterized by various strategic approaches shaped by historical, cultural, and social factors. Chatterjee and Rai highlight that strategic philanthropy in India encourages donors to set clear goals and use evidence-based strategies while facing unique challenges in the Indian context (Chatterjee & Rai, 2017). These challenges include navigating a complex bureaucratic environment and addressing the diverse socio-economic inequalities in the country. The reliance on traditional philanthropy forms such as zakat and donations from wealthy individuals reflects a long-standing culture of charity, which remains a crucial pillar in India's funding mechanisms. Moreover, the emergence of innovative philanthropic institutions reveals a shift towards more structured approaches aligned with specific development goals (Chatterjee & Rai, 2017).

Additionally, the dynamics of urban innovation funded by philanthropy in India show that philanthropic foundations increasingly act as catalysts for government innovation, mobilizing resources, ideas, and networks in ways that reshape public sector strategies (Puttick, 2023). This contrasts with Singapore's philanthropy situation, where funding strategies are often determined by a more

structured government framework and an emphasis on measurable impact. The Singapore government actively partners with philanthropic entities, promoting a 'venture philanthropy' model that combines social benefits with business practices, alongside strengthening accountability mechanisms and performance monitoring (Puttick, 2023).

In Singapore, philanthropic funding strategies are further reinforced by a well-developed regulatory framework that promotes corporate giving, especially through tax incentives and matching grant schemes, creating a supportive environment for high-net-worth individuals and companies to engage in philanthropy. This structured legislative support has indeed resulted in higher levels of giving and civic engagement (Puttick, 2023). Furthermore, the role of corporate philanthropy in Singapore is marked by strategic alignment with national interests, including education and healthcare, leading to philanthropic contributions often channeled into government-supported initiatives (Puttick, 2023). Conversely, philanthropy in India primarily remains rooted in grassroots movements and community-level impact, which, while addressing urgent local needs, may lack the institutional backing and scalability often seen in Singaporean philanthropic strategies (Chatterjee & Rai, 2017; Srivastava, 2015).

The impact of cultural traditions on giving is markedly different between the two countries. In India, philanthropy is seen as a moral obligation deeply rooted in social values and religious sentiments, driving individuals to contribute to various causes, especially social justice and poverty alleviation (Satispi & Samudra, 2022). By contrast, Singapore's culture has been shaped by a pragmatic approach to philanthropy, integrating social entrepreneurship models and evaluation that prioritize transparency and effectiveness (Weber, 2023). Regarding gender-focused philanthropic initiatives, both countries face challenges but employ different strategies. India exhibits a fragmented but developing pattern of funding directed toward gender equality and women's empowerment, historically driven by local customs and social expectations ("How philanthropic foundations support gender equality and women's empowerment," 2024). Philanthropic foundations in India have launched various programs targeting these issues but often struggle with inconsistent funding and a social context still grappling with gender inequality ("How philanthropic foundations support gender equality and women's empowerment," 2024). In contrast, Singapore's structured philanthropic environment encourages joint initiatives between public stakeholders and philanthropic organizations, resulting in more cohesive strategies to effectively address gender gaps ("How philanthropic foundations support gender equality and women's empowerment," 2024).

The evaluation methodologies used by philanthropic organizations also vary significantly. While Indian foundations may rely more on subjective assessments based on community needs and narratives, Singaporean foundations prioritize systematic evaluation frameworks emphasizing data-driven results and metrics to measure success (Williamson & Kingston, 2021). Consequently, the philanthropic funding landscape in Singapore is marked by efficiency, with foundations often employing rigorous performance evaluations to ensure funded projects align with strategic goals set by government partners or the foundations themselves (Williamson & Kingston, 2021). In addressing public health challenges, the two countries show different levels of philanthropic engagement, particularly evident during crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Indian philanthropy was observed to quickly innovate strategies to adapt to emerging needs despite facing challenges (Satispi & Samudra, 2022). Conversely, Singaporean philanthropic organizations were better prepared to deploy resources swiftly due to existing frameworks that encourage public-private partnerships (Sastrawan et al., 2023). The rapid adaptation of philanthropic response in Singapore reflects readiness supported by a culture of systematic governance and planning, a direction increasingly adopted by philanthropic organizations in India (Chatterjee & Rai, 2017; Satispi & Samudra, 2022).

The influence of foreign philanthropic actors further complicates the landscape, especially in India, where international foundations provide resources but sometimes face challenges related to compliance with local regulations and cultural integration (Mithani, 2017). Understanding this dynamic highlights the need for national policies that accommodate and facilitate foreign philanthropic involvement while enhancing local capacity (Mithani, 2017). On the corporate philanthropy side, Singaporean organizations tend to adopt cause-related marketing and consumer philanthropy as effective channels for engaging with society (Saunders & Borland, 2013). This aspect distinctly contrasts with Indian entities, where corporate social responsibility often emphasizes direct impact through foundations addressing broader social issues without the marketing components seen in Singaporean practice (Saunders & Borland, 2013).

Comparing the two countries, it is clear that although both demonstrate varying levels of engagement with philanthropy in tackling societal challenges, Singapore tends to facilitate a more structured and methodological approach embedded in a supportive regulatory framework, resulting in significant progress in strategic philanthropic outcomes (Weber, 2023). Conversely, India stands at a unique crossroads between traditional charitable values and strategic innovation reflecting socio-economic complexities (Srivastava, 2015). This comprehensive understanding of the differences in philanthropic funding strategies between Singapore and India is crucial for policymakers, philanthropic

organizations, and stakeholders to effectively navigate and enhance their philanthropic landscapes.

The Role of Government in Facilitating Philanthropic Funding for the SDGs

Philanthropic funding plays a crucial role in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) across various national contexts, particularly in India and Singapore. Both governments have facilitated philanthropic interventions through policy frameworks, governance structures, and collaborative arrangements with non-governmental organizations and the private sector. This analysis explores how the governance frameworks in Singapore and India actively promote and leverage philanthropic support for the SDGs, thereby enhancing the impact and reach of such financial contributions. In Singapore, the government demonstrates a proactive commitment to harness philanthropic funding across multiple development sectors, including education, health, and environmental sustainability. Singapore's approach to philanthropy is multifaceted, encouraging donations through tax incentives that create a conducive environment for philanthropic action. For example, financial policies aimed at boosting contributions for sustainable projects, particularly those aligned with the SDGs, are supported by the government's tax framework, which allows tax deductions on philanthropic contributions (Khalid et al., 2020). This not only motivates wealthy individuals and corporations to donate but also broadens the financial base for social initiatives.

Moreover, Singapore's integrated governance structure facilitates collaboration between the public and private sectors, enabling coherent strategies to maximize philanthropic investment in the SDGs (Abhayawansa et al., 2021). The government often acts as a connector for partnerships, bringing together diverse stakeholders to leverage their collective resources and expertise in addressing pressing social issues, thereby magnifying the effectiveness of philanthropic funding (Sarkar et al., 2023). Thus, the Singaporean government acts as both leader and coordinator in guiding philanthropic contributions toward the SDGs, supporting initiatives that encompass health, education, and environmental sustainability. In contrast, the Indian government plays a vital role in facilitating philanthropic funding amid broad social and economic challenges. Despite significant progress in development metrics, India still faces complex socio-economic inequalities that impede SDG achievement. The government recognizes that collaboration with philanthropic entities is essential to addressing these issues through targeted interventions, especially in education and health (Gupta et al., 2024). Accountability and governance frameworks discussed in the literature illustrate how the Indian government relies on stakeholders in the philanthropy sector to ensure that commitments to the SDGs

are not merely made but also realized via effective monitoring and accountability mechanisms (Cordery et al., 2022).

In developing the role of philanthropy within India's socio-economic landscape, the government encourages private sector engagement through various initiatives, including tax benefits for charitable donations and public recognition for philanthropic contributions (Morasa et al., 2022). Emphasizing private financial utilization is highly relevant in the SDG context, which requires robust financial investment and innovative solutions for effective implementation. Philanthropic funding is viewed as a critical resource to drive transformational projects and scale successful interventions that align with national priorities and SDG targets (Gupta et al., 2024). Furthermore, the nexus between governance and philanthropy in India enables a more granular approach to advancing local sustainable development action. Local governments, supported by philanthropic funding, are increasingly acknowledged for their potential to initiate and implement sustainable development projects at the grassroots level, addressing unique community needs and fostering local ownership of the SDGs (Guha & Chakrabarti, 2019). However, challenges such as insufficient capacity among local governments and fragmented regulatory frameworks may undermine these efforts, necessitating proactive engagement from state and philanthropic actors (Guha & Chakrabarti, 2019).

Reflecting on the roles of both governments, it is clear that Singapore embodies a model where farsightedness and strategic planning facilitate seamless philanthropic engagement, yielding effective impacts on the SDGs. Conversely, India's pathway depicts a more complex scenario marked by socio-economic barriers, where the state plays a pivotal role in driving collaboration among diverse stakeholders to build a more sustainable future. As both countries advance along their respective paths toward SDG achievement, the interaction between government and philanthropy will be crucial in shaping development trajectories and delivering desired outcomes. Additionally, discourse on the importance of integrating philanthropic efforts into formal governance structures in both countries reveals potential for higher levels of accountability and impact (Cordery et al., 2022). Philanthropic foundations can catalyze change not only by providing financial resources but also through innovative ideas, knowledge, and networking opportunities that create significant shifts in governance and development policies (Puttick, 2023). Collaborative frameworks emerging from such relationships also foster ecosystems of joint learning and resource sharing, further enhancing the overall effectiveness of philanthropic contributions toward sustainable outcomes.

Singapore and India present different yet complementary frameworks demonstrating how governments can effectively facilitate philanthropic funding for the SDGs. Through strategic policies, active stakeholder engagement, and innovative governance structures, both countries emphasize the importance of collaboration in overcoming barriers faced in sustainable development. As philanthropic funding continues to be a key enabler in financing the SDGs, it is imperative for governments to nurture these relationships, ensuring that the full potential of philanthropy is realized amidst pressing global challenges.

The Involvement of the Private Sector in Philanthropic Funding in Singapore and India

The involvement of the private sector in philanthropic funding plays a crucial role in shaping healthcare services and addressing social challenges in various regions, especially in Singapore and India. The unique interaction between government strategies and private sector initiatives creates a dynamic environment where philanthropic contributions can drive significant improvements in public health and social welfare. This response outlines the framework, impacts, and challenges associated with private sector philanthropy in these two countries, supported by peer-reviewed literature and case studies.

In Singapore, the government actively seeks collaboration with the private sector, particularly in health and economic development. The COVID-19 pandemic was a turning point for cross-sector partnerships, leading to enhanced cooperation between private healthcare entities and government bodies. The Singapore government has partnered with private stakeholders to leverage their expertise in research and development, playing a significant role in managing the pandemic's impact (Kim et al., 2022). This approach aligns with findings that private sector involvement can strengthen health systems by participating in essential services such as case management and health promotion across diverse contexts (Qutieshat, 2024). Moreover, evidence indicates that private sector participation can significantly improve health indicators, reflecting successes observed in higher-income countries (Salawu et al., 2023). Conversely, in India, the private sector serves as a key player in the healthcare landscape, particularly in densely populated states like Uttar Pradesh. Research suggests that government strategic engagement with private healthcare providers during the COVID-19 crisis was vital in enhancing service delivery and overcoming barriers that previously hindered collaboration (Meghani et al., 2022). Challenges such as negative perceptions and complex reporting mechanisms continue to impede effective public-private partnerships in the health sector (Rakesh et al., 2024). However, exploring private sector involvement can trigger substantial improvements in health outcomes, especially considering this sector's

considerable contribution to healthcare accessibility and resource allocation (Meghani et al., 2022).

An important aspect of private sector involvement in philanthropy is its alignment with Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). The notion that businesses have a responsibility to contribute positively to community welfare aligns with various philanthropic initiatives undertaken by companies in Singapore and India (Okeke et al., 2022). For instance, organizations may utilize discretionary funds to support or develop social enterprises, collectively creating social value (John, 2021). In Singapore, the state corporatism model promotes such corporate involvement, generating cohesive public-private synergies that benefit marketing of health services and international medical tourism (Chee, 2010).

A critical evaluation of public-private partnership (PPP) roles reveals various engagement models influencing the effectiveness of healthcare service delivery. In low- to middle-income countries, including India, PPP has emerged as a strategic framework for integrating private sector resources into public health initiatives (Whyle & Olivier, 2016). Similarly, extensive private stakeholder participation in philanthropic activities reflects their importance as partners in sustainable development, as evidenced by relationships between business activity and development aid (López-Duarte & Suárez, 2021). Companies are not only involved in philanthropy but also participate in innovative financing mechanisms, such as health insurance and community-based funding models, to further support community interests (Ejughemre, 2014).

Despite these benefits, several barriers limit the effectiveness of private sector involvement across both national contexts. For example, miscommunication and lack of clear understanding regarding roles and responsibilities can hinder trust and collaboration (Rakesh et al., 2024). Structural challenges, including bureaucracy and complex regulatory environments in India, often create friction between public and private entities, hampering participation and diminishing the impact of philanthropic contributions (Phalkey et al., 2017). Strategic approaches outlining clear cooperation frameworks are essential to enhancing involvement—this is particularly critical during health crises, where swift action can save lives (Meghani et al., 2022). As this analysis delves deeper, it is evident that successful case studies from Singapore and India provide models for productive public-private collaboration. For example, both countries demonstrate potential for channeling private investments into the public sector to improve public health and social welfare issues (Meghani et al., 2022). Singapore's multi-stakeholder approach, allowing continuous dialogue between private firms, government bodies, and civil society, presents a template

India could consider, especially given their resource-constrained health systems (Kim et al., 2022).

Moreover, multinational corporate philanthropy involvement in promoting Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) evidences business roles in addressing global challenges. Engagement models linking corporate actions with community needs show deep intersections where companies can lead transformational initiatives alongside public actors (Zanten & Tulder, 2018). This not only highlights potential for better health service delivery but also contributes to sustainable development strategies that transcend mere profit motives (Schönherr et al., 2017). Finally, it is essential to recognize the comprehensive nature of private sector contributions to philanthropy. Companies' ability to mobilize resources, develop innovative financing models, and stimulate social entrepreneurship creates positive externalities benefiting entire communities. The role of private actors in Singapore and India's health landscapes underscores the importance of strategic partnerships in strengthening health systems, addressing social inequalities, and improving overall societal welfare. As both countries navigate the complexities of public health governance, they stand to benefit significantly from fostering deeper, more structured collaboration with private sector entities while addressing participation barriers.

Private sector involvement in philanthropic funding in Singapore and India reflects not only evolving partnership paradigms but also a shift towards collaborative models promising enhanced health outcomes and social equity. Stronger efforts to build clear communication, address systemic obstacles, and promote shared understanding could yield significant public health and sustainability gains, serving as exemplars for other regions aspiring to similar progress.

Challenges in Distributing Philanthropic Funds in Remote Areas

The distribution of philanthropic funds in remote areas, such as those found in India, presents unique challenges. These arise from socio-economic disparities, infrastructural limitations, and complexities in stakeholder engagement in these regions. Although India has rapidly growing philanthropic initiatives, the effectiveness of these efforts varies greatly, largely influenced by geographical, institutional, and specific community factors. In India, one of the main barriers to distribution of philanthropic funds in remote areas is the distance between local communities and philanthropic organizations. Studies show that many rural communities exhibit skepticism toward corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives due to perceptions of lack of transparency and inadequate engagement from both companies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (Safiullah et al., 2024). This skepticism often translates into rejection of initiatives

perceived as misaligned with local needs. Research indicates that community approval is crucial for the success of philanthropic projects, yet many initiatives fail to effectively involve community input, leading to project ineffectiveness (Safiullah et al., 2024; Reid et al., 2020). Furthermore, the inherent diversity of rural needs often requires a collaborative approach among multiple funders; however, foundations often operate in isolation, reducing the potential synergy that could enhance project effectiveness (Reid et al., 2020). This fragmentation in philanthropy exacerbates existing socio-economic inequalities by limiting resource access to the most needy communities.

In Singapore, despite a more structured philanthropic landscape supported by government policies and active social entrepreneurship, barriers still exist, especially in less affluent and remote areas. Access to digital technology plays a significant role in effectively distributing philanthropic resources. The rise of e-philanthropy during the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated how digital platforms can enhance resource mobilization and engagement (Rahmi, 2022). However, disparities in digital literacy and access between urban and more remote areas hinder these initiatives from reaching their full potential in isolated communities (Rahmi, 2022). This divide suggests that while urban populations may benefit from proliferating philanthropic support through technological means, those in rural areas remain marginalized due to inadequate infrastructure. The blend of social norms and economic modeling also impacts philanthropic distribution effectiveness in these regions. In India, traditional philanthropy is often understood within the framework of community expectations and cultural norms, but modern approaches can generate tension between contemporary CSR practices and local traditions (Udayasri, 2024). The evolving understanding of what constitutes “effective” philanthropy often conflicts with the values of small communities, where local organizations are better positioned to identify and address direct needs. This necessitates redesigning and implementing initiatives to align more closely with community aspirations rather than solely with external donor priorities (Udayasri, 2024).

From a governance perspective, India shows bureaucratic challenges that hinder philanthropic fund flows to remote areas. The regulatory environment overseeing NGO operations can create barriers (Safiullah et al., 2024; Kumar, 2018). In Singapore, although the government actively encourages philanthropy, regulatory complexities can complicate how organizations operate in less capable areas. The institutional landscape is crucial for building a supportive ecosystem that enables more efficient funding processes and promotes more effective local agent collaboration (Kumar, 2022; Cheah & Ho, 2019). Philanthropic efforts in remote Indian areas highlight an urgent need for localized understanding of

community issues. Rural areas face unique socio-cultural dynamics that require tailored philanthropic approaches. Local service clubs, religious organizations, and community groups play essential roles in resource mobilization and addressing needs but often lack formal recognition or support, which can impede their effectiveness (Ivany, 2020). Conversely, while Singapore's initiatives benefit from strong institutional support, they still struggle to translate philanthropic efforts into effective on-the-ground actions, particularly amid rapid urban development that marginalizes rural areas (Dodds, 2023).

Moreover, integrating innovative financing structures, such as social stock exchanges, offers opportunities to bridge resource allocation gaps in both countries (Kumar, 2022). These platforms can facilitate more transparent and engaging dialogue between funders and recipients, ultimately improving accountability and impact (Kumar, 2022). However, for these systems to work effectively, a cultural shift is needed wherein funders and local communities actively engage in dialogue about needs and aspirations, rather than merely imposing top-down perspectives. Another emerging trend is hybrid philanthropy models that combine traditional giving with investment strategies aimed at generating social impact (Sands, 2019). These models have the potential to align the interests of various stakeholders—including local communities, governments, and corporations—thus fostering more sustainable outcomes (Sands, 2019). However, realizing the full potential of hybrid models requires significant investment in capacity building and knowledge transfer to ensure local actors can effectively leverage these new structures (Conteh et al., 2020).

The thematic implications of these challenges explain the broader discourse on equity and justice in philanthropy. While urban areas benefit from strong philanthropic investments, rural areas in India risk further marginalization without targeted and locally sensitive interventions (Udayasri, 2024; Dodds, 2023). A forward-looking approach will require embracing community-centered giving models that prioritize transparency, inclusivity, and co-creation of solutions with those directly affected by philanthropic initiatives. The distribution of philanthropic funds in remote areas in India faces substantial barriers spanning cultural, infrastructural, and governance domains. To optimize the impact of philanthropic initiatives, collective efforts are needed to reposition these efforts in ways that recognize and value local knowledge and the complex dynamics shaping rural life. By promoting collaborative, inclusive, and adaptive strategies, stakeholders can ensure philanthropy serves as a legitimate tool for social development benefiting all segments of society, thus achieving equitable resource distribution across diverse geographic landscapes.

Conclusion

This study concludes that the distribution of philanthropic funds for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in remote areas, focusing on Singapore and India, reveals significant challenges related to socio-economic contexts, infrastructural limitations, and mismatches between philanthropic goals and local needs. The most crucial finding is that active involvement of local communities and transparency in the implementation of philanthropic initiatives are key factors in ensuring more effective and sustainable fund distribution. Without a more inclusive and adaptive approach to local conditions, philanthropic funds tend to fall short of creating the desired impact. The academic contribution of this research is to enrich the understanding of philanthropy's role in achieving the SDGs by highlighting how various factors—including government policies, public-private sector collaboration, and the use of digital technologies—can enhance the effectiveness of fund distribution. The study opens new avenues for philanthropic management by integrating traditional and innovative elements and introducing hybrid concepts that could serve as sustainable funding models for development. These findings lead to deeper reflections on the importance of collaboration and transparency in ensuring the achievement of sustainable development goals.

However, the study has limitations, particularly its geographical scope confined to India and Singapore. This suggests that many contextual variables remain unexplored, such as socio-economic and cultural conditions in other developing countries. Therefore, this research represents only an initial step in understanding the dynamics of philanthropic fund distribution in achieving the SDGs and calls for further exploration in a broader global context. Topics for further investigation include how countries with infrastructural constraints can use digital technology to improve philanthropic access in remote areas and how hybrid philanthropy models can be more effectively adapted to developing country contexts. Questions regarding the effectiveness of cross-sector collaboration and the government's role in creating ecosystems that support SDG sustainability also represent compelling fields for future research.

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