Chapter VI

CONCLUSION

While examining Gujarati diaspora as a part of the great Indian diaspora, it is significant here to note that Gujaratis had established commercial networks with foreign countries from the ancient times. They are now spread across major parts of the world. They serve and contribute to the socio-economic, cultural and political life of the host countries. The overseas Gujarati community is famous for its spirit of entrepreneurship and business acumen. Gujaratis enjoy a very high status in the world of business and commerce. The Gujarati diaspora has maintained emotional and cultural linkages with their homeland since time immemorial. Most of the migrants of North Gujarat are from castes like Patel, Jain, Prajapati, Chaudhary and Muslims. This shows that almost all castes have migrated from North Gujarat. This shows their high ambition, spirit of adventure, quest for higher education and better career, which automatically lead to economic growth among these cast. The people who migrated some years ago have settled in the respective host countries. Today they are businessmen, traders, doctors, engineers, etc and contribute to the economy of the host land as well as enrich their homeland. The reason of migration for most of them is economic but in some cases it is social. If we analyze the reasons for migration from North Gujarat region, the most prominent is the desire to get a better education from the west and better economic prospect. They have deep attachment to their own land as they have established many educational institutes, religious building, etc. But still there is need for more NRGs investment in the region.
While migration is entangled in a whole range of social, political and economic factors, the focus of this study is not on why people migrate but rather on the effects and meanings that migration has on their home land. The reason behind the emotional attachment and the feeling to give back to their places of origin might arise from a feeling of displacement as they are ‘other’ considered in their countries and at same time they also become ‘other’ in their home land, but the feeling of belonging to homeland is always there in their mind. They try to earn fame by giving to their homeland. Besides this giving or ‘dan’ has special importance in Indian culture. Till date much of the literature on migration has focused on the migrant and the cultural crisis in the host land. This tendency of thinking only in perspective of host land neglect migrants’ ties to their homeland nurtured not only through idea of the ‘the giving back’ but also through concrete links with the homeland. Few studies have grappled with the transformative possibilities of migrant’s practices in terms of collective remittances flowing into places of origin.

Collective remittances are assessment to material transfers sent by diaspora groups such as migrant associations, religious groups to their home communities. Unlike household or individual remittances, collective remittances are typically intended for community infrastructure, other local development initiatives, or the construction or improvement of religious structures. Collective remittances can best be described as diaspora charity or philanthropy. Though collective remittances are almost negligible in volume relative to overall migrant remittances, they may be critical to the recipient community and the society as a whole. Regrettably there has been a general absence of reliable and systematic data relating to the contribution of the Diaspora towards their homeland in collective terms. This is eloquent testimony to the generous impulses that abound in the Diaspora. The task therefore is to simply document the contributions made by committed NRGs in terms of material and non-material benefits extended by them towards the development of their region of origin. Remittances have meaning and implications beyond their financial value and are
associated with powerful emotions of debt and gratitude; expectation and obligation; pride, shame and aspiration.

Diaspora philanthropy as a form of collective remittance is a relatively new term with many variations, include homeland philanthropy, migrant philanthropy, and transnational giving. It has several fundamental elements. They include: (1) charitable giving from individuals or groups who reside outside their homeland, who (2) maintain a sense of identity with their home country, (3) give to causes or organizations in that country, and (4) give for public benefit. “Collective remittances” have recently drawn attention not because of their amounts alone, but rather, because of the socio-political, historical and economic dimensions entailed in group interactions across borders which characterize the “bundle” associated with these remittances. It is for the collective good that they donate. In addition to involving collective fundraising, they imply collective enjoyment and not private gain. The outputs from collective remittances are seemingly more objectified, visible, durable, consumable by a wider net of people, and imbued with symbolism.

Philanthropy can also occur when migrants return to live in or visit their communities of origin, when non-migrants visit the migrant family members, through interchanges of videos, cassettes and telephone calls and social sites. Some remittances have a stronger effect because they travel with other remittances. Remittances travelling through multiple pathways also wield a more significant effect. The force of transmission effects remittance’s impact. If many remittances are emitted consistently during a short time, their impact is greater than transfers emerging on a more periodic basis. Like other movements and displacements of people, the Indian diaspora and particularly the Gujarati diaspora grew out of many causes and crossing. People from North Gujarat migrated to various developed countries for better economic prospects. Migration of people from North Gujarat to various countries is a continuous process. Generally, they migrate for social, economic or educational purpose. Examining the migration from these districts, it is clear that they have migrated in four ways either as labour, or through chain migration, or as professionals and
students. Due to the NRG remittances and their financial contribution to the
villages in these districts, there is a drastic change in the living standard of the
people. Most of the villages are well-facilitated and developing. Analyzing the
database of the migration from these districts, it is significant to mention that
mostly Patels have migrated from the districts excepting Banaskantha. They
were earlier engaged in farming and agricultural activities. Being a close-knit
community, they support other members financially to migrate and settle down
in the host land. Moreover, they also support financially their relatives to get
education, establish business and start industry in the home country. They are a
very enterprising group and tend to find jobs abroad. After getting experience,
they start a small business with the help of relatives and friends at home. That is
why many of them are successful businessmen in their respective host countries.
Gujaratis nowadays migrate to developed countries like the UK or the USA. Most Muslim Gujaratis migrate to the gulf countries. For the developing areas
like north Gujarat the contribution of diasporic people has always been of great
significance. Diasporic people from north Gujarat are playing a vital role in the
development of their villages and towns. Though they are settled in their host
countries, they are emotionally attached to their villages. The feeling of longing
for the motherland can never fade away from their hearts. There is a strong
emotional bond between the people of native villages and the NRGs. It helps to
concretize their social network at home and in the host countries. To keep their
linkages alive with their native place, they contribute immensely to the
development of the place. Many NRGs have contributed for construction of
schools, hospitals and temples in their respective villages.

With a view to attracting investment of the Gujarati diaspora in various
development projects of the state, the Government of Gujarat has also set up the
Non-Resident Gujarati Foundation. Its proclaimed objective is, to further the
common interests, concerns and historical ties that bind the people of Gujarat to
NRGs (Non-Resident Gujaratis or people of Gujarati origin living outside
Gujarat, in other States within India as well as places outside the country) with a
firm belief that the contact and friendship established through programs of the
foundation can go a long way towards generating mutual benefits for the people of Gujarat as well as NRGs.

It is noteworthy that many NRGs have contributed immensely and donated a lot of money for the development of their native land. They make massive contribution in various fields including religious, socio-cultural, healthcare, educational, infrastructural and industrial sectors. They have enriched their villages and towns in a variety of ways. The financial help in the form of remittance received by their families has proved to be an important aspect in the development of the economy of the village. They also serve the motherland by their huge financial donations to the development projects of the villages. Applying their knowledge and skills which they acquire in their host countries, they always wish to bring required changes in their villages. Their expertise, investments and contribution are helpful in improving basic facilities of the rural areas. The expertise and financial support of NRGs and the cooperation of the native and the government are the key factors for the development of the state.

Following are some of the reasons for their contribution:

1. The Overseas Gujaratis are emotionally attached to their motherland. There is a strong bond between the NRGs and their villages. After getting prosperity in the host country, most of them wish to pay back to the motherland.

2. Secondly, the NRGs settled abroad have to face the cultural differences. They struggle to assimilate in the culture and society of the host country. They recognize themselves and act as a collective community in the host country. They try to develop elaborate strategies for building up associative identities in their host countries. When they visit their native villages, they try to strengthen their bond with their community and the villagers. They take the opportunity of strengthening their cultural and religious bond by making donations to the temple or any other religious
activity. It also helps in the maintenance of their cultural and religious identity and revitalizing their cultural and religious beliefs.

3. It is important to note that the Overseas Gujaratis have always maintained frequent long distance family linkages with their villages in India. Marriages, engagements, kinship networks, frequent visits, selling or buying properties, remittances and religious affiliations keep them well-linked to their native villages in Gujarat. The NRGs are respected and honoured by the villagers. Moreover, the first generation of the NRGs wishes that their children should marry a person from Gujarati/Indian origin. They therefore, try to enhance their prestige and fame by funding several projects of development in their village or the area around.

The contribution of NRGs played an important role in the growth and development of the religious sector of North Gujarat. To support the construction and maintenance of temples in their ancestral villages, the NRGs make huge financial donations. Analyzing the donations of the NRGs in temples of this area, it is important to note that most of them have donated individually. Some of them also donated in the form of Gupta Dan like in Aghar and Kanodar village. Some NRGs support their religious sects like Swaminarayan and Gayatri sects in all the districts of North Gujarat, Krishna Pranami and Pranthji temples in Sabarkantha district and Ramkabir sect in Mehsana district financially for religious activities. It helps strengthening their emotional and religious bond with their native village through donations and charity and earning prestige in their community. Their contribution to the home country also helps in the maintenance of their cultural and religious identity and revitalizing their cultural and religious beliefs. Therefore, the donations in the religious field largely help them to maintain their Indianness. Connecting with their motherland provide them a feeling of self-satisfaction.

To maintain their identity in the host country is a crucial question for the members of Gujarati Diaspora. That is why they have built up many temples and established associations and organizations in the host countries. They also
support the religious sects and institutions in the home country. One such example is ‘Gayatri Pragnapith’ in Balisana. NRGs donated immensely for the construction of this temple. They donated Rs. 12, 12,025 for the construction of the same. The main donor is Mr. Ramanlal Laxmichand Patel. He made a huge donation of Rs. 4, 50, 000. In Zulasan and Jasalpur villages of Kadi Taluka NRGs made huge financial support for the reconstruction of Dola Matji temple and Meldi Mataji temple. In other villages of the talukas, the NRGs donated for building or the renovation of temples. Examining their contribution, it is important to note that most of them donated for construction and renovation of the temples of their ancestral god or goddess. Whenever they visit their native village, they donate for the religious activities performed at the temple. The Dan and Gupta Dan by them are helpful in the maintenance of these temples. Contributing for religious and cultural causes is among the top five purposes, which attract donations from NRGs from the district. The other major head under which NRGs donations have been received is for construction and maintenance of schools and colleges but still there is need of more donation for healthcare, industrial and infrastructural development in North Gujarat. NRGs being away from the home land always have the feeling to do something for their homeland. Donations for religious causes sustain their ethos. Recent developments in North Gujarat prove that the NRGs can play a vitally important role for the development of socio-cultural and healthcare sectors. Their involvement in these fields is necessary to bring about the required changes in them. There are many examples of donation in this sector including old people’s home, community marriages, establishing Annakshetra, constructing libraries, supporting gram panchayats and hospitals. As has been mentioned earlier, Mahendrabhai Patel, an NRG settled in USA donated money for the celebration of some cultural functions like ‘garaba’ in the host country. The traditional celebration of “Garba” and other such rituals help them to teach their culture to their children who are born and brought up in an alien culture quite different from the Gujarati/Indian culture and value system. Thus, “Navratri” is an
important festival for the NRGs to meet and celebrate their Gujarati identity in the host country.

Examining the NRG contribution in the socio-cultural development of North Gujarat, it is important to note here that many of them donated money for the construction of the Vadis. Many NRGs donated whole-heartedly for organizing community marriages. They not only sponsor the marriages but also present gifts to the newly married couples. Since organizing a function of marriage is costly, the poor people from the community are relieved from the heavy expenses to be incurred on marriages. Vadis in Balisana, Upkhal, Akhaj, Valam, Sampad and Jantral are the best examples of NRGs support for the development of their respective ancestral villages.

Some of them also donated for the construction and enrichment of the village libraries. Donating for such kind of activities give them a sense of fulfillment and also the feeling that they are not away from their culture and tradition though they are far away settled in distant lands. Mr. Jagdishbhai Purohit donated 5lac for the construction of library in his village Zulasan. Libraries are commonly found in all most all the villages of Patan and Mehsana districts. NRGs from both the district donate magnanimously for the construction and maintenance of these libraries. There is a need for more NRGs donations in Sabarkantha and Banaskantha district. NRGs from the North Gujarat also donated huge heartedly in Healthcare sector. Still there is a need for more NRGs investment in this sector. Lions hospital in Mehsana, Kalaben Health Club in Unjha, Smt. Hiraben Amathalal Shah Genraral Hospital in Satlasna, Vasant Prabha Hospital in Vadnagar, Shri G.P. Patel and S.J Patel General Hospital in Bhandu, Atmavallabh Hospital in Idar, Janta Hospital in Patan, Sarvajankik Hospital in Sander, Shree Kanjibhai Bechardas Patel General Hospital and Smt. Santokben Kanjibhai Patel Prasutigruh in Chansma are the best examples of healthcare institute developed with the donation of NRGs.

Since knowledge economy is very important for developing countries like India, the contribution of NRGs in the educational field is vitally important for the
growth of the knowledge sector. In the case of North Gujarat, the easy access to education has accelerated the pace of the development process. Many self-financed institutions have been established for higher education which provides the students ample opportunities and career choices. The NRGs from the district have contributed immensely to the development of educational sector. The contributions of NRGs have made a great impact in education. Many primary, secondary and higher secondary schools in North Gujarat received a huge amount of donations from the NRGs. Still there is a need to establish in the area world-class institutions in the field of science and technology. The NRGs who have expertise and experience of serving in the developed countries can play a vital role in the development in the field. Moreover, the Government of Gujarat can further attract the foreign investment to establish and develop technical, medical and I.T education. Like Bangalore, North Gujarat can also be developed into an IT hub.

As far as the industrial and infrastructural development of this of North Gujarat is concerned, there is need to attract more NRG investment in the districts. In villages namely Balisana, Manund, Sander, Ruvavi, Valam, Bhandu, Akhaj, Karjisan, Upkhal, Netramni NRGs donated immensely for the infrastructure development of their villages. There are NRGs like Mr. Sahilbhai Ishrarhmd Patel who went abroad not only for earning money but also for getting experience. He returned after three years and invested his earnings and expertise in hotel business which helped a lot in generating employment in the area. Another donor Mr. Nikunj Patel also established his business of power solar in Ahmedabad after great success in Australia.

Examining the above-mentioned examples, it is clear that there is a need to accelerate the process of NRG investments for the development of the industrial and infrastructural sector of the region. Since the population of the district is largely engaged in agricultural activities, the industries using agricultural products can be established in this area. There is ample scope for the establishment of small scale industries of cotton, cattle food, veterinary medicines and milk products. It is also significant here to note that there are
many historical and religious places in North Gujarat. Since many foreigners visit various historical sites in North Gujarat, there is vast scope for the development of tourism industry in the area by identifying sites of historical and tourist significance.

The Researcher has found that NRGs of the Mehsana and Patan districts have played an important role in the development of their areas. They have contributed a lot in the development of their respective community and villages. It must be noted that the Patel community from Mehsana and Patan residing abroad have donated in all the sectors for the upliftment of the society of this district. There are many villages like Balisana, Manund, Ruvavi, Aghar, Vadu, Akhaj, Karjisan, Bhandu, Umta, Ransipur, Sarsav etc. in Mehsana and Patan districts, which have shown remarkable educational, social, cultural, and religious development. It has been possible due to the enormous efforts of the local people and the NRGs who have donated liberally in all the sectors and cherish their attachment to their motherland but still there is need of more NRGs investment in the Industrial sector.

The Government of Gujarat is making sincere efforts to woo the Overseas Gujaratis for their contribution to the development of the state. With a vision of accelerating pace of industrialization in the state of Gujarat, the government gives substantial help to the entrepreneurs in developing proper industrial infrastructure. The state has framed various policies to attract investments from the NRIs and multinational companies. This would help the state in improving the technological standards in the industry through technology transfer, enhancing exports, introduction of latest manufacturing practices, development of infrastructure and generation of employment opportunities. At the same time, the government also appreciates the problems and concerns of the NRIs when they invest in the state. Basically, they expect the state to provide them additional incentives and work culture. For the purpose, the government is exploring various options that would meet the gap between the self-actualization needs of NRIs and the development requirements of the state.
The need of the day is to attract more investments from the Overseas Gujaratis in the various projects of industrial and infrastructural projects of the district. The Sarpanchs, Mukhis, Talatis, Gramsevaks, and other prominent members of the village can play an important role in the same. Firstly, they can attract the NRG investments and donations at the local level. Secondly, they can have benefit from the expertise of the NRGs who are serving in developed countries. Their interaction with the NRGs can bring a drastic change at the rural level. More employment opportunities can be generated through the small scale industries established with the help of NRGs at their ancestral villages. It will reduce poverty and stop the process of migration to the city and expansion of slum areas. It is significant here to note that though the Gujarati Diaspora has contributed immensely for the development of four districts of North Gujarat there is still a lot more to done. Analyzing the contribution of the NRGs and highlighting the areas which require the attention of the Government, some suggestions and recommendations for the development of North Gujarat are mentioned below:

- On the part of the Government of Gujarat, there is an urgent need to attract the NRG investment for the development of Industrial sector of North Gujarat.
- The main occupation of the people of these districts is farming and they are engaged in agricultural activities. So, there is a need to establish some industries in the field of food technology, bio-technology and dairy products etc. which can easily utilize the raw material from the districts. It will also increase employment opportunities for the local people. The government should facilitate NRGs investments in these areas.
- The diamond industry is another area which requires NRG investment. It is well known that the Jains of Palanpur are the most successful businessmen in diamond industry of Antwerp. There are immense opportunities for the development of diamond industry in these districts. Firstly, their investment in the local industries will boost the business all over the world. Secondly, they can also facilitate export of their products
in the world market. The local diamond units can flourish with the support of NRGs and generate more employment opportunities.

- The Textile industry also requires the investment of the NRGs. The Patola of Patan is famous all over the world. Mashru fabric produced in this area needs to be marketed around the world.

- The Government should concentrate on the industrial sector of this area and frame a policy which gives incentives to NRGs for investing in this region. The Gujarati Diaspora should come forward and invest in this area for its overall development.

- Aiming at economic improvement of the state through the help of NRG investment in industry and educational sector, the Government of Gujarat should identify and declare these areas as special economic zones. NRGs investment in these areas will certainly increase the employment opportunities for the people of this area.

- The NRGs should think beyond their own villages and community for the development of the region. They should think broadly and should invest for the overall development of these districts. They have to raise above their caste boundaries. They have to focus on the overall development of Gujarat.

- Since no development can be achieved without the help and coordination of the people of this area, the Government should frame policies to engage the local people in the implementation of development programs.

- In these four districts, most of the people practice animal husbandry. It is very useful to the villagers to install central Gober Gas Plant in their home village/town and surrounding villages. It will save energy and provide fertilizers. To develop this plant, the villagers can get the financial help from the government. Moreover, they can also get the expertise of the NRGs who have migrated from the villages. The Overseas Gujaratis who have rich experience and expertise can help the villagers to install latest technology in farming and animal husbandry.
• NRGs should involve themselves in the promotion and facilitation of the educational institutes of North Gujarat. They should think beyond donating some amount of money for the “Tithi Bhojan” (A meal donated for the children of the school). They should donate immensely for installing latest technologies and improving educational facilities in the existing schools.

• Gujarati Diaspora’s scientific achievements have enhanced India’s image in the world. There is a need to develop a direct and mutually-reinforcing synergy between Indian scientists abroad and at home. It will further help in the establishment of world-class institutions in the field of science and technology in which the students of Gujarat can get quality education.

• The NRGs can be of great help to make the historical and architectural sites like the Rani ki Vav, Sun Temple and Rudra Mahalaya as international sites for tourism. Their support will certainly make these sites famous in the world which will encourage tourists from all around the world.

• As far as the role of NRGs is concerned, it is recommended here that they should come forward for the development and maintenance of the cultural heritage in their native land.

• They should invest in the area to establish some well-furnished hotels with latest facilities near the historical places to attract foreigners. The Overseas Gujaratis have earned their name in motel industry in the world. Their investment, experience and expertise should be capitalized for the development of hospitality business in Gujarat.

• Moreover, they can be of great help to develop these sites as international sites for tourism.

• These attempts on the part of the NRGs will certainly boost the economy of Gujarat and make these sites famous in the world.

• Ambaji, Idar and Vijaynagar in North Gujarat region have the Aravalli mountain ranges, forests and rich tribal culture. One of the major sector which can be developed in these areas in infrastructure facilities, such as
better roads and connectivity, water supply and drainage, good restaurants and hotels along with tourist activities.

- These are the key elements required for development of eco tourism in the state. In the above context, by way of ecotourism Gujarat could capture a large share of foreign and domestic tourists. Ecotourism could be the key driver in development of tourism in Idar, and Vijaynagar. All these places are situated in the northern part of the Sabarkantha district in North Gujarat. Shamlaji is a well known pilgrimage place surrounded by its eye catching greenery, Vijaynagar is another unexplored hill station with some beautiful old monuments and Idar is a potential site for adventure sports in the mountain area. Present facilities at all these places are inadequate.

The findings on the destination, duration and occupation of migrants reveal certain interesting trends regarding their contribution to homeland:

- Most of the donations were made to the social, educational and religious sectors. The primary aim behind such donations are sustaining the name of family members, constructing vadis or community hall, building and facilitating schools or colleges and building temples.

- A significant proportion of donations were made towards cultural, infrastructural and healthcare sectors in the region.

- The channels of donations include direct donations to religious trusts, of which the migrants are usually members. Transfer through family members is another important channel of donation, where the migrant instructs his/her family members to donate locally for a social cause.

- Very few donations were made through official charitable organizations or NGOs.

- The highest amounts of philanthropic donations are made by the migrants who emigrated five to ten years ago. They are neither the older generation migrants nor very recent migrants.

- Philanthropic donations also vary with the place or destination of the migrant. Migrants residing in USA make the highest amount of donations