



SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF GULF MIGRANTS AND THEIR FAMILIES WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO AREEKODE GRAMA PANCHAYAT

1Muhammed Yaseen T

1Assistant Professor

1Calicut University

INTRODUCTION

In the present progressively interconnected world, international migration has become a reality that contacts essentially all sides of the globe. Advanced transportation facilities has made it simpler, less expensive and quicker for individuals to move looking for occupations, opportunity, training and personal satisfaction. Simultaneously struggle, neediness, imbalance and an absence of economical vocations urge individuals to leave their homes to look for a good future for themselves and their families abroad.

When assisted by proper policy measures, migration can add to comprehensive and inclusive development and advancement in both home and host nations. In 2016, migrants from developing nations sent home an expected US \$413 billion in remittances. Remittances become an important income for the family that improves the standard of living of families by spending money in family education, health facilities, sanitation, housing and other important infrastructure. Countries of destination benefit largely from migration as migrants often mitigate the gap in labour force, create business, and pay taxes and contributions to social security. Some migrants are among the most powerful individuals from the host society adding to the advancement of science and innovation and improving their host community by giving social diversity.

Despite the significant benefits of migration, some migrants remain among the most vulnerable members of society. Migrants are often the first to lose their jobs in the event of an economic downturn. Some work for less pay, for longer hours, and in worse conditions than native-born workers. While migration is often an

empowering experience, some migrants endure human rights violations, abuse and discrimination. Migrants, particularly women and children, may fall victim to human trafficking and the heinous forms of exploitation that it entails.

Migration

Since the ancient times, people have been moving. Few group move to get a job or economic opportunities, to join family, or to get education. Others move to get away from struggle, exploitation, psychological oppression, or infringement of human rights. Still others move in light of the antagonistic impacts of environmental change, catastrophic events, or other environmental problems.

Today, more individuals than any time live in a country other than the one in which they were conceived and born. In 2019, the number of migrants globally reached constitutes 272 million, 51 million more than in 2010. Total international migrants comprise 3.5 percent of the world populace. It was 2.8 per cent in 2000 and 2.3 per cent in 1980 showing the fact that migrants in the total population in the world has also increased.

While numerous people relocate out of choice, numerous others move due to legitimate need. The number of worldwide forcefully displaced people reached 70 million for the first time in the history of UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) at the end of 2018. This number comprises very nearly 26 million refugees, 3.5 million haven searchers, and more than 41 million internationally displaced people.

Migration simply means that “a movement from one area to another area for the betterment of their life or standard of living. Generally, people take migration as a solution for their problems in achieving basic needs. Approximately 31 percent of the international migrants worldwide reside in Asia, 30 percent in Europe, 26 percent in the Americas, 10 percent in Africa and 3 percent in Oceania.

Gulf Migration

Gulf migration is the process of movement of people from their home country to gulf countries like Saudi Arabia, UAE (United Arab Emirates), Bahrain, Oman, Qatar etc. The gulf migration has helped the migrant families to attain higher income levels and consumption. Many people depend upon migration to enhance employment opportunities, improve life style and to alleviate poverty. Migrant people may achieve a stable life in future. The economies in different countries are different, so it provides verities of employment opportunities with higher earnings and generally it is more than that of what they earn in their countries.

Trends of Migration in India

India is a major country of origin and transit, as well as a popular destination, for workers across international borders. As per official figures, there are over 30 million Indians overseas, with over 9 million of the Indian Diaspora concentrated in the GCC region (now known as the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf). Over 90% of Indian migrant workers, most of whom are low and semi-skilled workers work in the Gulf region and South-East Asia.

India is one of the top recipients of remittances in the world. In 2019, in current USD, the top five remittance recipient countries were India (83.1 billion), China (68.4 billion), Mexico (38.5 billion), the Philippines (35.2 billion), and the Arab Republic of Egypt (26.8 billion)

Recent attempts to disaggregate data on labour migration by gender on a global and regional scale have shed some light on the magnitude of women's migration for work. According to data from the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) 2015, the Indian migrants stock in GCC countries increased from just under 2 million in 1990 to 8.2 million in 2015, with growth prominent among both male and female migrants in all countries. Women comprise just less than one-fourth (23.9 per cent) of the total Indian migrant stock in 2015. The male-female proportion in the total Indian migrant stock has remained more or less the same during the past two decades, with the exception of Qatar where the number of women migrants has increased yet their proportion is much lower when compared to their male counterparts. However, administrative data shows declining numbers of women departing with emigration clearance for work to Gulf countries.

Migration in Kerala

In recent years, migration from Kerala to other countries has become so widespread that it has an important bearing on the economy and society, and therefore on the development of the state. Since the formation of Kerala, out-migration has been a way of life for the educated youth in Kerala. The volume of migrants has been consistently rising since the 1970s. In recent years, external migration seems to have overtaken internal migration. The effects of migration have become all pervasive in its influence of the economic and social behavior of the people of the state.

The latest estimate of the quantum of the international migration from Kerala stands at 2.4 million in 2013, rising from a figure of 1.4 million in 1998. About 1 million emigrants were added to the existing stock, during a period of 15 years as per the Kerala Migration Surveys conducted by the Centre for Development Studies (CDS).

Most of the Kerala emigrants move to the six countries in the Gulf region such as United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain, Oman and Kuwait. Nine out of ten emigrants from Kerala can be found in the

Gulf. Though women emigrants are reported to be low accounting for 14 per cent of all emigrants, they move beyond Gulf, particularly to the western nations through the route of skilled migration.

Gulf remittance is considered as the back bone of Kerala economy. Economic activities of Kerala are mainly funded by remittance from foreign countries. The migrant workers of Kerala contribute to two-third of State Domestic Product directly and indirectly. Income from migrants is one of the leading factors of economic progress of Kerala. Some economists argue that the major factor behind Kerala Model of Development is gulf remittance.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- ❖ To analyses the socio- economic status of sample migrants and their families in Areekode Panchayath
- ❖ To understand the standard of living of the migrants and their families.
- ❖ To know the educational attainment of the family members of migrants.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Migration involves a change of residence from the place from their origin to the place of destination permanently or semi permanently. Kerala economy experienced many changes through the migration and foreign remittances. This study is conducted to find out the effect of emigration from Kerala to the gulf countries on the economy of Kerala. This study has found positive aspects of emigration on Kerala economy. Migrated people are looking for better conditions for themselves by leaving their own countries.

Migration helps to avoid problem of unemployment, poor standard of living. Migrated people have the capacity to improve their social status and quality of life in home country. Even now majority of emigrants from India to the gulf countries are from Kerala as the effect of migration and foreign remittance in Kerala there is a significant reduction in the incidents of poverty and unemployment.

DATA AND METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The present study mainly used primary data and where ever necessary, secondary data also have been used in order to supplement the former. It is based on the primary data collected from the selected families in Areekode Grama Panchayat. The source and method in which the data were collected is through prepared structured questionnaire, containing the critical questions related to socio economic conditions and basic standard of living. Information also was gathered from the respondents on the various other aspects of health and educational details.

The total sample size used for the study is 50 households across Areekode Grama Panchayat. The study adopted convenient sampling, while efforts were also made to have equal representation of all regions in the Panchayat, so that the study will be meaningful. The schedules of questionnaire were developed for the

collection of primary data which consists of the details relating to housing, land holding, drinking water, electricity or lighting, land holding, educational and health indicators.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Isaac, et.al, (1992) examined the impact of remittances and net capital flows on the balance of trade of Kerala. The study was based on the secondary information collected from various sources. The study found that the inflow of remittances have helped to a certain extent to reduce the deficit. Moreover, the study reported that benefits of inflow remittances were not confined to migrant households alone and the benefits have reached to their kith and kin. The Study found an increase in consumption expenditure in Kerala as an impact of migration as Kerala's per capita consumer expenditure was lower than the national average till the early seventies whereas it rose significantly above the national average after seventies. The study also inferred that migration brought a definite increase in the physical and financial savings in the region although lack of investment in productive sectors landed the economy into stagnation.

Nair and Pillai (1994) examined the impact of external transfers on the regional economy of Kerala during the period 1975-76 to 1988-89 on the basis of RBI data. They also examined the impact of remittances on different sectors of the economy and also on the factor and product markets. The study found that the inflow of foreign remittances enabled the state to sustain a high level of consumption. The study reported that consumption expenditure as a proportion of total expenditure decreases while the proportion of investment as a proportion of total expenditure increases with the duration of stay abroad. The study also found that consumption expenditure outweighs all other expenditures in the short run while investment takes precedence over consumption in the long run.

Anand (2002) studied the plight of Muslim women in Chungathara Panchayath in Malappuram District. The study found unique features among Muslim women in this area such as low educational attainment, high level of ignorance, cases of early marriage and motherhood; lack of social mobility etc. However, she found progress in the field of education in this area and concluded that this is due to the influence of Gulf migration.

Harilal and Joseph (2003) examined the impact of migration and remittances on the regional economy of Kerala using the Dutch Disease model of Carden and Neary in 1982. By using the 'resource movement and the spending effect', the study identified the service sector as the booming sector of the economy owing to the flow of remittances. They also observed that the productive sectors of the economy suffered a lot as the share of agricultural sector to the Net State Domestic Product has declined in the economy. The study also found that emigration has resulted in higher levels of consumption and the weak production base of the state made Kerala an outlet for the neighbouring states. However, they did accept the attitude that the Gulf boom

is a boon to the Kerala state. The study suggested governmental intervention in the use of the remittances to strengthen the commodity producing sectors of the regional economy.

Mallick (2008) analysed the impact of remittances on private consumption and investment and its implications on the economic growth during the period 1966-67 to 2003-2004. By applying the time series models, he used general consumption model to examine the impact of remittances on the private consumption. He found that remittances have a positive influence on private consumption, on debt, on money supply and income. The study also found that remittances have some adverse effects on private investment although it has a neutral effect on the growth rate of output which may be an important factor in generating inflation in the country. He suggested governmental measures for diverting the unproductive uses of remittances to productive uses so as to raise the rate of investment and growth of real output.

The Commerce Research Bureau (1978) analysed the impact of foreign remittances on the regional economy of Kerala. The study found that the emigrant parents spend liberally on the education of their children although there were inter- regional variations in the spending on education among the migrants' households. According to the study, in 1975, the highest per student expenditure was in the already educationally developed region of Chengannoor and the lowest was in the educationally backward regions of Chavakkad and Tirur. However, the study observed that such inter-regional differences in the educational spending among migrant's households will narrow down with the passage of time.

Mathew and Nair (1978) evaluated the socio-economic characteristics of emigrants and their family and they found a positive correlation between emigration and development of educational infrastructure in the migration centres. Emigration led to the emergence and growth of technical and vocational training institutions in various trades like construction related courses, motor and machine operations, welding, tailoring etc.

Misiriya (1990) examined the impact of emigration on education and found that emigration was a leveler and promoter of education among the educationally backward Muslims of Kerala. The study observed that the propagation of English medium schools in the private sector in Kerala was definitely an outcome of emigration. The emigrant parents preferred expensive elitist schools and special tuition for their children. The study also found a high dropout rates at school and college level among the children of the non migrant households. In addition, the study found a direct relationship between year of emigration and the educational attainments of the members of the family.

Salim (1999) evaluated the impact of migration on the educational development of Malabar region and the study revealed that migration has significantly improved the economic status of the people that led to an educational renaissance in the region. Moreover, his study reported that migration has enhanced mobility of women in the region. According to him migrants receive social remittances in the form of newer ideas,

beliefs, attitudes and broader cultural understanding that led to a significant transformation in the orthodoxy and rigidity in the outlook of the Muslim community.

Sabira (2006) assessed the impact of emigration on social mobility of the Muslim women and observed an upward mobility in the educational front by Muslim women in Malappuram. A higher educational mobility was found among the women of emigrant households more than the women of non-emigrant households which she attributes to emigration. In migrant households, women were significantly mobile between generations irrespective of their parents' educational status while in non-migrant households; parental education was an important factor in the educational mobility of daughters. She also reported that with a significant change in the attitude of Muslim community towards modern education, the social rigidity and the religious orthodoxy existing in the community has been playing a harmful role in promoting the mobility of women.

Socio Economic Status of Migrants and Their Families

Details of Migration

Gulf migration and Kerala economy are interconnected in many ways. Malappuram district is one of the places of origin of many gulf migrants in Kerala. Table 2 exposes the details of migration. It mainly includes details of the duration of migration and the country to which they have migrated.

Table 2: Duration and Destination of Migration

Sl. No	Details		
1	Duration of migration (years)	No of migrants	Percentage
	a) 1-5	14	28
	b) 5-10	15	30
	c) 10-15	12	24
	d) above 15	9	18
	Total	50	100
2	Destination of migration	No of migrants	Percentage
	a) UAE	16	32
	b) KSA	27	54
	c) Kuwait	2	4
	d) Qatar	5	10
	e) Other	0	0
	Total	50	100

Source: primary data collected

The table.2 indicates that 30 percent of the migrants are working in gulf countries for last 5 to 10 years. Migrants who work in gulf countries for more than 15 years are only 18 percent. More than 50 percent of the workers migrated to gulf within last 10 years.

The table also shows that majority of the sample migrants migrated to KSA (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia) and it is 54 percent of the sample migrants. The second largest migration destination as per the data collected is UAE (United Arab Emirates) with 32 percent. Those who are migrated to Kuwait and Qatar are comparatively less.

Employment Type of Migrants

Generally majority of the workers migrated from Kerala to gulf countries are unskilled or semi skilled workers engaged in construction, production and transport categories. The other major area in which Kerala migrants were employed includes sales, service and clerical activities. Table 3 shows the employment type of sample migrants.

Table 3: Employment Type

Details		
Job type	No of migrants	Percentage
a) Hospital	3	6
b) Shop keeper	11	22
c) own business	12	24
d) company job	19	38
e) Driver	4	8
f) Other	1	2
Total	50	100

Source: primary data

The table illustrates that the percentage of migrants engaged in private company jobs is 38 and those who are doing own business is 24 percent. The remaining 38 percent are engaged in other jobs like shop keeper, hospital staff, driver, cleaning, sales man etc.

Educational Indicators

During the early years, the workers who migrate to gulf countries were educationally poor. They possess only primary or basic education. But now majority of the migrants are qualified tenth level or more. Table 3 exposes some of the educational indicators. It includes educational level of migrants, number of students in the migrants' family, educational attainment in the family and details of school drops in the families.

Table III.2.7 Educational Indicators

Sl. No	Details		
1	Educational level of migrant	No	Percentage
	a) primary level	4	8
	b) tenth	14	28
	c) plus two	7	14
	d) degree and above	25	50
	Total	50	100
2	No of students in family	No of families	Percentage
	a) 1-2	36	72
	b) 3-4	12	24
	c) 5-6	2	4
	d) above 6	0	0
	Total	50	100
3	Family Educational attainment	No of students	Percentage
	a) Primary level	24	27.9
	b) secondary level	18	20.9
	c) higher secondary	14	16.2
	d) Graduate & more	26	30.3
	e) Professional	4	4.7

Source: primary data

From the table, it is clear that 50 percent of the migrants have completed graduation or above. The percentage of migrants with primary education alone is only 8. Majority of sample migrants are qualified at least tenth standard.

The table also reveals that 72 percent of the migrants' families have 1 or 2 members as students. Only 4 percent of the families have 5 or 6 students in their house. Among the total students in all families, those who are studying or studied graduation and above is 30.3 percent and doing professional degree is 4.7 percent.

Families with school drop outs are 20 percent. One of the basic reasons for this result is early marriage system in Malabar region.

Standard of living

Standard of living is the degree of wealth and material comfort available to a person or a community. It is considered as one of main indicator of human development. A high standard of living indicates an improved performance of selected indicators. Table 4 shows the living standard of migrants' families.

Table 4 Standard of living

Sl. No	Details		
1	Type of house	No of migrants	Percentage
	a) Concrete	44	88
	b) tiled	6	12
	c) thatched	0	0
	Total	50	100
2	Ownership status	No of migrants	Percentage
	a) Own house	50	100
	b) Rental	0	0
	c) Other	0	0
	Total	50	100
3	Ownership of vehicle	No of migrants	Percentage
	a) Two wheeler	45	90
	b) Three wheeler	1	2
	c) Four wheeler	23	46
	d) Other	0	0

Source: primary data

From the table 4, it is clear that majority of the migrants' families are above poverty line. It also reveals that majority of them have concrete houses. Only 12 percent of the sample migrant families live in tiled houses. All the migrant workers possess own home with all basic facilities. Most of the families have their own vehicle (two wheeler/three wheeler/four wheeler) for transportation purpose.

CONCLUSION

This study is used to analyze the socio economic status of gulf migrants and their families in Areekode Grama Panchayath. Migration constitutes a major part of Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) of Kerala. Some economists also argue that the important factor behind Kerala Model of Development is remittance from gulf countries. With no doubt we can say that the overall development of Kerala people is mainly influenced by gulf remittance.

From this study it can be concluded that many of the families of selected gulf migrants are living in a good condition. Their standard of living, educational attainment, health condition, asset holding etc are in a satisfactory level.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Isaac, Thomas et. al (1992): Balance of Trade, Remittances and Capital Flows: An Analysis of Economic Development in Kerala since Independence, Working Paper No.250, Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram.
2. Nair, P.R. Gopinathan and Pillai, Mohanan, (1994): Impact of External Transfers in the Regional Economy of Kerala, Project Report, Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram.
3. Mallick, Hrushikesh (2008), "Do Remittances Impact the economy? Some Empirical Evidences from a Developing Economy", Working Paper Number. 407, Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.
4. The Commerce Research Bureau, (1978): "Emigration and Inward Remittances and Economic Growth of Kerala, Report of a Survey of Government of India, Bombay.
5. Mathew E.T and P.R. Gopinathan Nair, (1978): "Socio- Economic Characteristics of Emigrants and Emigrant Households: A case study of two Villages in Kerala", Economic and Political Weekly, Vol.13, No.28, July 15. Pp. 1141-1153.
6. Misiriya, P.V. Nafeesathul, (1990): "Impact of Emigration on Education: Case of Muslim Community in Kerala", Unpublished M.Phil. Thesis, University of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram.
7. Salim. A. Abdul, (1999): "Educational Development at Micro level: Case study of two villages in Kerala", Discussion paper No.7, KRPLLD 1999.
8. Sabira N, (2006): "Gulf migration and the educational Mobility of Muslim Women in Malappuram district", unpublished M.Phil. Thesis, Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram.
9. Anand, Jaya.S (2002), (2002): Self Help Groups in Empowering Women: Case Study of Selected SHGs and NHGs, Discussion Paper No. 38, KRPLLD.
10. <https://migrationdataportal.org/themes/remittances>
11. <https://www.un.org/en/sections/issues-depth/migration/index.html>
12. Global Migration Data Portal
13. ILO-CDS-Thematic-Paper-3
14. Kerala Migration Survey, 2018