

**Migration from Kerala to the Arabian Gulf Countries
and Its Impact on Cultural Life of the State:
A Case Study of Malabar (1977 – 2003)**

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DECLARATION

25th July, 2005.

I declare that the dissertation entitled "Migration from Kerala to the Arabian Gulf Countries and Its Impact on Cultural Life of the State: A Case Study Of Malabar (1977-2003)" submitted by me is in the partial fulfillment of the requirements of the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy of this University. This dissertation has not been submitted for any other degree of this University or of any other University and is my own work.

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Dedicated to
Wayanad Muslim Orphanage

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INTRODUCTION

Migration means a movement of an individual or a group of individuals from one place, region, or country to another on various grounds. People may migrate allured by a financial stature more advantageous and sound, or because of some adverse condition or combination of situations in the home environment¹, such as, political strain, religious tortures, and social factors, demographic and geographic reasons. The ambition to find out a better place of living also adds to the inflow of migration. It enables the migrants to accomplish a better future and also gratify their aspirations. It is an ongoing process and is not expected to end in the immediate future. Migration movements take place due to social, cultural, economic, political and physical situations.

Human migration is one of the most challenging issues facing the world today.² Migration is the third component of population change, the other two being mortality and fertility.³ The study by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) reveals that, no country in the world remains unaffected by international migration flows. They are all countries of origin, transit or destination for migrants, or all these simultaneously. In the outset of the 21st century, one out of every 35 people worldwide is identified as an international migrant. The total number of international migrants is estimated at, approximately, 175 million persons (2.9% of the world population).⁴ Over the last three decades the number of international migrants has doubled.

¹ Encarta Reference Library July, 2003.

² Motwani, K Jagat, "Dynamics of international migration from India: its economic and social implications" "Economic and Social Commission for Asia And The Pacific, Meeting on Migration and Development", Bangkok: 27-29 August 2003, p. 1.

³ Asha A. Bhende, et all, *Principles of population studies*, Delhi: Himalaya publishing House, 1999, p, 301.

⁴ International Organization for Migration. (IOM), 'Facts and Figures on International Migration' Geneva: Migration Policy Issues, No, 2, March 2003, p, 1.

Migration of population across the boundaries is not a new social phenomenon. It is historically rooted. Migration has had significant impacts not only on the social status of the migrants and their family, but also on the economic conditions of the region. Cross border migration is one of the conspicuous developments in the Third World during the past few decades. It has been noted that across the nations migration has become one of the increasingly growing social phenomena and India is not an exception to this.

The large-scale migration movements of the modern times suggest that India contributes significantly to this international phenomena and it was much prevalent especially after the Second World War.⁵ Over the years, the Indian government has enacted certain laws to regulate the deployment of Indian nationals seeking foreign employment. "The main objective of state intervention is to ensure that nationals obtain legally valid employment abroad under acceptable conditions."⁶ The Government of India has, always, been encouraging migration as the process brings some relief to the issues pertaining to unemployment and population growth.

International migration from India consists of two separate waves. People who possess professional and technical qualifications migrate mostly to the industrialized and developed countries. More often, they dominate the European countries and the United States. On the other hand, the less skilled and unskilled manpower generally migrates to the developing countries. More specifically, this particular division of the people seeks its fortune in the Middle Eastern

⁵ Nair P.R G, *Asian Migration to the Arab World: Kerala (India)* Thiruvananthapuram: Centre for Development Studies, Kerala, 1992, p, 19.

⁶ Ravi Srivastava, et all, *'An overview of migration in India, its impacts and key issues'* Paper presented at the Regional Conference on Migration, Development and Pro-Poor Policy Choices in Asia on 22-24 June 2003 in Dhaka, Bangladesh. pp, 1-2.

countries. Studies regarding the migration movement indicate that migration to industrialized countries grew steadily between 1950 and 2000. Nearly 1.25 million Indians immigrated to the US, Canada, UK and Australia during this period.⁷ Conversely, the less skilled and semi skilled persons are flowing towards the Arabian Gulf region, comprising countries such as United Arab Emirates (UAE), Saudi Arabia, Oman, Kuwait, Qatar, and Bahrain, which form the Gulf Corporation Council (GCC). It is estimated that some 3 million Indian migrants live in Gulf countries presently.⁸

The flow of migration towards the Arabian Gulf Countries has been accelerated in the recent decades. The process of migration did not originate all on a sudden instead; it dates back to several decades and has undergone significant changes. Trade relations between India and the countries of the Gulf existed during the Indus Valley civilization itself. The historical evidence of Indian settlement in the Gulf region dates back to the 16th Century AD. But the early settlers from India, mainly merchant communities, dwindled after the Second World War and more decisively after the independence of the various Gulf countries, which not only denied citizenship to non-natives but also implemented strict trade licensing system in favour of their citizens. Hence, the large scale migration from India to the oil rich countries of the Gulf is considered as a phenomenon of the recent times.

It is estimated that migration to the Arabian Gulf Countries has been accelerated after the oil boom in Gulf in the 1970s. When the Gulf region began to convert its oil prosperity to infrastructural development and construction activities, the demand for unskilled labour also increased tremendously. The Gulf countries have been the main recipients of migrants from all over the world due to shortage of

⁷ Ibid, p, 1

⁸ Ibid.

manpower for historical, political and economic reasons. People of various nationalities went to work in these countries. The composition of this foreign population has also changed with time. The beginning of 'oil era' marked the flow of migrant labourers from the neighbouring poor Arab countries. The largest groups among them were Yemenis, and Egyptians followed by people from the other Arab countries. Initially, the preference was given to the Arab workers. However, it changed gradually and they began to absorb South and Southeast Asian workers. As the development in the Gulf changed from construction to maintenance phase, the demand for more technical labourers, especially those with good command of English language increased and it favoured the flow of both the Philippines and Indians to the Gulf region. As the local population grew in prosperity in Gulf, the demand for services which has supported a continued flow of more unskilled labourers, as house servants, domestic drivers etc, gained prominence. This marked a considerable increase in the migration movements towards the Gulf region.

It is obvious that, the economic boom within the Gulf countries gave a considerable boost to the international migration. As a result, labourers from India began to migrate in large numbers. Migration to the Arabian Gulf countries has, now, exceeded migration to all other destinations. Some analysis indicates that 95 percent of labour outflows from India reach the following six destinations Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman and Qatar in the Middle East. The available data on labour outflow reveals that Gulf countries have become an important destination for Indians.⁹ Kerala has been sending large number of migrants to Gulf countries than any other state in India.

⁹ Motwani, K Jagat, n. 2, p, 3.

Labour outflows from India by destination 1988-2002

<u>Year</u>	<u>Bahrain</u>	<u>Kuwait</u>	<u>Oman</u>	<u>Saudi</u>			<u>Total</u>
				<u>Arabia</u>	<u>U A E</u>	<u>Others</u>	
1988	8219	9653	18696	85289	34029	9348	165234
1989	8520	5679	16574	49710	28189	11786	120458
1990	6782	1077	34267	79473	11962	6300	139861
1991	8630	7044	22333	130928	15446	7121	191502
1992	16458	19782	40900	265180	60493	13971	416784
1993	15622	26981	29056	269639	77066	19974	438338
1994	13806	24324	25142	265875	75762	20476	425385
1995	11235	16439	22338	256782	79674	28866	415334
1996	16647	14580	30113	214068	112644	26162	414214
1997	17944	13170	29994	214420	110945	29951	416424
1998	16997	22462	20774	105239	134740	54952	355164
1999	14905	19149	16101	27160	79269	42968	199552
2000	15909	31082	25155	59722	55099	56215	243182
2001	16382	39751	30985	78048	53673	59825	278664
2002	20807	4859	41209	99453	95034	106301	367663

Source: Motwani, K Jagat, Dynamics of international migration from India: its economic and social implications* (Item 8(e) of the provisional agenda) Economic and Social Commission for Asia And The Pacific, Ad Hoc Expert Group Meeting on Migration and Development, Bangkok ,27-29 August 2003.

Discussions relating to the international migration from India would be incomplete without an emphasis on Kerala's role in the process. Kerala has been participating very energetically in the international migration process. Over the years Kerala has experienced massive international migration of its population to the major destinations like, the United States and Europe, Africa, and Singapore in the recent past. But presently the majority of the migrants are flowing towards the oil producing countries of the Middle East. The Arabian Gulf region has

become the 'Promised land' for a large number of people from Kerala, ever since it became an attractive immigrating region.

Migration of Keralites to the Gulf had started at a nominal scale for job opportunities before the dawn of independence, and now, the largest concentration of Keralites anywhere outside India is to be found in the Gulf countries. Kerala, the state in Southern part of India, sends the largest number of migrants to the Arabian Gulf countries, for the last three decades. Therefore, migration from Kerala to the Arabian Gulf countries deserves greater attention.

Kerala's relation to the Arabs is historically rooted. Kerala had trade relations with various countries of the Middle East from ancient past dating back to the pre-Christian era. Merchants from Arab land used to make frequent visits to Kerala ports like Quilon and Calicut to engage in trade relations with Kerala. It was also believed that the Arab sailors opened colonies and trading centres in Kerala. Kerala also had land and maritime trade, and matrimonial relationship with the Arabs from the very time of the Prophet. Merchants from Kerala also engaged in trade with the Arab land like Oman and Bahrain.

According to the study conducted by the Centre for Development Studies, 1.36 million Keralites were working abroad and among them 95 percent live in the Middle East (Zachariah, Mathew and Rajan, 2003). Kannan and Hari (2002) estimated that the Gulf migration accounted for 0.03 million in 1973 and this figure reached a peak in 1998 with 1.32 million. Comparing the migration to Gulf from Kerala, it shows that Kerala contributed 36 percent of total Indian migrants to the Gulf region. In other words, the present number of migrants entering the Arabian soil seeking better living conditions shows that one out of every three living in Gulf region is a Keralite. 'The Middle

East still continues to be the most sought out destination attracting Keralites who seek job to settle abroad.¹⁰

Migration from Kerala to other States in India and to abroad is common and its impact is felt at all levels of social life in the State. Almost all families in Kerala are affected by migration to the Gulf region in one way or the other. Migration has affected every facet of life in Kerala, especially economic, social, demographic, political and even religious.¹¹ As far as migrants are concerned, they are getting comfortable wages even with the low level of education, which was beyond their expectation in the mother country. Taking all these opportunities they could improve the quality of education of their dependants. The advancement in modern technology also initiates a shift in the daily life of the migrants and the society. The novel pattern of culture nurtured attitudinal changes among the migrants. It can be viewed that the migration has had an impact on almost all spheres of life in Kerala.

Malabar, the Northern part of Kerala (Comprised of six districts), is highly dominant over other areas of the region regarding migration to the Gulf. About seventy-five percent or above of the total migrant workers from Kerala in the Gulf countries are from Malabar. Migration to the Arabian Gulf has played an important role in bringing new culture and life style in Kerala, especially in Malabar. Culture is an integrated model of human knowledge, belief and behaviour. It constitutes a body of language, ideas, traditions, ceremonies and other related fields like education, economy, society, and approach to modern technology and even religious affairs. Every human society has its own particular culture. Variations and changes

¹⁰ Milli Gazette, (Indian Muslim's First English News Paper) '*Gulf Favourite Destinations of Keralites*' Delhi: Published in the 1-15 Aug 2004.

¹¹ Motwani K Jagat, n. 9, p, 11.

take place within and among cultures because of their interaction with each other. Comparing the workers from all over the world, migrants from Kerala learned and experienced different cultures, which naturally seeped into them and transmitted to their families.

The study focuses among other things:

- the socio-cultural perspective of migration from Kerala;
- the current trends in migration to the Arabian Gulf countries from Kerala;
- the socio-economic determinants of migration to the Arabian Gulf Countries;
- the cultural impacts of migration to the Arabian Gulf on Kerala generally;
- The socio-cultural impact of migration to the Arabian Gulf on Malabar.

Apart from introduction and conclusion, the study has been organized into three core chapters. Part one of the study, i.e. the introduction, draws out an overview of the entire study. Various aspects of migration such as definitions, classifications, diverse factors, social history, Diaspora formation and hybrid culture among the migrants of Malabar are discussed in detail in the first chapter. Migration from Kerala to the Gulf Countries are analyzed with tracing the push and pull factors, areas of employment, the source of information and finance, socio-economic and educational backgrounds of migrants, community, age, marital status, destinations and primarily, the economic impact of Gulf migration on Malabar in particular, are the contents of the second chapter.

The third chapter consists of the entire changes and the impacts of migration in the lifestyle of the society. It includes the economic,

religious and social impacts [consisting of women, education, housing, and consumerism]. The negative impacts of the Gulf migration are also worth mentioning. In the concluding part efforts have been made to summarize the study, with some important observations.

The migration from Kerala, especially from Malabar to the Arabian Gulf countries is mainly a Muslim dominated process. Therefore, this particular study focuses more on the entire change caused by migration to the society in general and the community in particular. The proposed study utilizes an analytical and historical method. This endeavour will mostly focus on the available secondary materials like periodicals, journals, magazines and books written on various aspects of this subject. It also includes materials available on the Internet and various newspapers in English and in Malayalam.

Migration is both inevitable and irresistible. The process of migration to the Arabian Gulf Countries has had its influence on the living standards of people in every nook and corner in Malabar contributing significantly to the socio cultural uplift of the area. Migration has been in a fast track. Number of migrants to Arabian Gulf Countries has been increasing every year. It is in this background that a study on the influence and impacts of migration to the Arabian Gulf Countries on the cultural life of Malabar gains momentum. The proposed study is directed towards the aforementioned goal.

Chapter I

Migration from Kerala: An Overview

Studying Migration

Migration has become an increasingly important feature in a globalizing world in which not only more people are on the move, but also the frequency and the different modes, channels and directions of mobility have expanded and extend into every corner of the world. This trend is not only set to continue but to increase¹. Migration is a most important demographic procedure that has been an essential and significant characteristic of human history. Migration has been an important means by which human civilization has spread out, enriching cultures, disseminating ideas and generating social, political and economic changes at the places of origin and of destination.² It simply means movement of natives individually or personally, in search of a better living condition which they couldn't find out from their home land in various reasons be fond of political strain, religious tortures, social factors, demographic portions and geographic reasons also indeed to find out their fortune in a different place. These ranges of circumstances on the migration movement diverge considerably on the particular time and place.

Apart from all these, the foremost cause in the modern days' rapid increase in migration is economic factors. In order to accomplish a better future and to satisfy the aspirations, most of the people are compelled to move out. It is difficult to precisely define the term 'migration'. According to Joseph 'any movement of person from their normal place of residence to other places either with the same country or to countries outside with a view to taking permanent or long period residence falls within the definition of migration'³. The United Nations Multilingual Demographic Dictionary defines it as a "form of spatial

¹ Johan Wets, *Migration and Development: Myths and Facts*, Geneva: International Organization for Migration (IOM), EPC Issue Paper No.11, 27.1.2004 , p, 1.

² T.V. Sekher, *Migration and Social Change*, New Delhi: Rawat Publication, 1997 .p, 13.

³ K.V Joseph, *Migration and Economic Development of Kerala*, Delhi: Mittal Publications, 1986, p, 7.

mobility between one geographical unit and another involving a permanent change of residence".⁴

Studying the various aspects of migration is constantly interesting and challenging. It is an ongoing process without a specific end. This is a special topic which attracts renowned attention and serious research from the various disciplines of the social sciences. Each discipline has its own views, opinions and methodology in dealing the various aspects of migration.

Classification of Migrations

While discussing the human migration, there are some unique classifications. There are different types of migrations like temporary, seasonal, or permanent from their place of origin. We can classify this migration in different ways.

Migration can be broadly divided into two types; internal and international. If the process takes place within the boundaries of the migrant's own nation, it will be called an intra-national or internal migration. If the migrant crosses the national boundary of the migrant's nation, it is international migration.

In the case of internal migration, it too played some vital roles to fulfill and boost the requirements of the migrants and it also does a lot to making growth of areas they lived in. It may possibly be divided mainly into rural and urban category. There are number of divisions in internal migration; as rural to rural, rural to urban, urban to rural, and urban to urban. In most cases of rural-urban migration, the migrants are encircled in some common specifics. They return back to their home towns after their retirements from the official profession. The important characteristic of these two migrations is that most of the

⁴ *Population Studies*. New York: No 50 United Nations, 1973, p, 256

migrants will be skilled. Rural to rural migration has been a reality in the developing countries. The marriage migration is placed in high position in rural to rural migration system.

Rural to rural migration is the seasonal migration of agricultural labors from agriculturally backward area. Migration of people from the eastern UP and Bihar to Punjab is an example. After the end of the agricultural season they returned to their home place and will be back next season. This kind of migration is known as circular migration.⁵ In this particular type of migration both the migrants and the receivers obtain profit in their own ways. On part of migrants they could reduce the unemployment. Apart from this, they get financial acquirements to educate their children and lead a normal livelihood. On the other hand, the receiving community gets the workers for cheap wages and they can increase the power of land and perpetuate.

Migration again can classify into long term and short term categories on the basis of the duration of the migratory period. Also migration can be classified on the basis of motivation, distance, and time. In such classifications, the economic and social migrations are fore grounded in the various aspects of motivation. Similarly, migrations can be short and long migrations in terms of the distance they travel and the time they take. The geographical boundaries which the migrants cross may be one basis for classification of migration.⁶

Approaches to the Study of Migration

Many studies have been made in recent years for analyzing the factors that determine migration. A mixture of imaginary models has been projected to give explanation why international migration begins.

⁵ Viruthiyel Joseph Varghese, *Migration and Social structure in rural Kerala*, Thesis New Delhi: J.N.U. 1982. p, 8.

⁶ Ibid, p, 4.

According to Ravenstein's⁷ the migration between two points will inversely be related to the distance and migrants will move by stages from nearby towns to distant lands⁸. Instead of entering in to all theoretical and imaginary concerns made by many scholars in the last part of the eighteenth century, here the focus of the study is mainly on social factors

As mentioned earlier, studies about the internal and international migration has come to reside in the various branches of the social sciences. These all branches, such as sociology, demography political science, economics, human geography, legal and policy studies, and planners public administration, social pathology, and social psychology⁹ has given much consideration to this topic with specific definitions and approaches which suite their respective disciplines. A question can be aroused: why the migration process gets great attention from scholars from different fields? It is considered as an indicator of the fundamental social changes all over the world. Migration always entails the dynamicity of deep cultural changes. The trajectory of economic development in various countries has been a specific reason that contributed much academic importance to the study. Though migration movements are emanating from particular societies' strategies to attain sustenance, socio cultural structures and discourses provide migration different forms. Some migrations have been progressively helping the migrants to enact with a new form culture and customs, which they grasp since the mingling of various types of people in their destination starts. Many scholars show deep interest in migration studies on account of its cultural impacts. While

⁷ The pioneer who provided theoretical frame work for migration study with his two papers in 1885 and 1889.

⁸ K, V. Joseph, n.3, p, 10.

⁹ Asha A. Bhende, et all, *Principles of population studies*, Delhi: Himalaya publishing House, 1999, p, 302.

pointing out cultural aspects, many of them put stress on economy, trade, industry, and population growth.

Economists are involved in the area of migration studies because of its link to the business circle. But they are mainly concerned with the improvements, and shifts pertained to the economic balance both in the migrants' community and receivers' community. Sociologists concentrate on this particular topic in view of the social problems the migrants face on the various occasions of the migration process¹⁰ both in the place of origin and destination. They also try to analyze some other factors like age, sex and the marital status of the migrants which certainly count in any sociological research. The population and policy research scholars too concentrate on this area on the grounds that migration affects the demographic features of both destination and home place. In India and many other developing countries, one of the side effects of unprecedented population growth as well as industrialization and economic development is a rapid increase in internal migratory movements¹¹.

Factors of Migration

All migrations, whether they occur on the local, national or international level, take place due to a combination of push and pull factors. Each migrant weighs these factors: whether they should leave their homeland and migrate to an entirely new region or they stay at home and address possible problems. It is a fact that there will be a motivation being located behind, for making a step ahead in initiating an extraordinary objective in life of an individual. They may get a hold of the spirit, motivations, and strength of mind from the lifestyles of migrants from their vicinity, or from their relatives who have been engaged with this process in recent times. Definitely, there will be

¹⁰ Ibid, p, 302.

¹¹ ibid.

some push and pull factors which should be discussed in the study of migration. The factors will help to understand the specific distribution of a migratory community in some regions. Apart from push and pull factors, social, economic, cultural, demographic and geographic factors have to be explained.

Push and Pull Factors

First section deals with push factor.

The push factor: - This is the pressure of population in the respective areas of the migrants. Because of this pressure of population on resources, people could not involve in economic activities even after they attain high level of educational qualifications. They fear that they will not get the out come of their skill and experiences that they gained through education. Uneducated people too face same problem. The competitions will be tough and people may verily search another option for their livelihood. Inability to earn income with limited rural resources may compel them to seek a better chance to live in. These all may act as push factors that prompt them to search better chances out through migration.

There are number of other push factors that affect migration. These factors may be religious, political or educational. Political maltreatment and national calamities in the form of flood and earthquake occasionally add momentum to the course of migration. There are problems such as confrontation, food crisis, sickness, and perhaps natural dangers that force individuals to leave their home. If the migration is necessarily driven by push factors, consider this as forced migration, and call these immigrants refugees.

Pull Factors: - There are some factors other than push factors that too encourage population movement. Often these are dominated by understanding rather than practical information of crowd. Possible pulls would be: higher incomes, better medical care, better education,

family, political stability, etc. If the migration is caused by pull factors, then it may be voluntary migration.

It is very clear that an urge for better life style, income dominates voluntary migration. Seeking better education capabilities in various countries is a main pull factor in the recent times. Seeking education away from home should be judged not only on the basis of the lack of prospects and occasion in their respective country but also on the basis of distinction and reputation it ensures the students in their academic career. Some people select the migration for better and further medical care. Having foreseen a plentiful lifestyle than they had in the rural area, some people move to the townships in search of added advantages in the daily lives like transportation, banking, shopping etc.

Geographic Factors

Undoubtedly, migration is one of the geographical topics. Migration links together all the locations of the geographical areas. Businesses are presently migrating from highly developed countries to less developed countries to take benefit of profitable, unskilled labor costs. At the same time, skilled labor from less developed countries has been pulled to advanced countries for jobs in high tech industries. Geographers too find push-pull factors as the causes for migration. This is a simple way to focus upon the most significant factors influencing migration in each situation.

As far as the agricultural migrants are concerned, climatic conditions and degree of productiveness of the soil are the main geographical factors. Many writers asserted the view that the climate is the most significant aspect underlying migration¹². Usually farmers migrate to a place which will be more suitable for cultivation. Because of the

¹² Population Studies, n.4, p, 162.

unaffordable environment, many people leave their hearth and home in search of good weather condition.

Like climate, the availability of the basic natural resources is also counted as geographical factors of migration. The lack of availability of water, the neediest thing in the universe, drives many migrations on due to high drought at times in some areas. One major example for this can be found in the northern parts of India, particularly in Madhya Pradesh and some parts of the Uttar Pradesh where people struggle a lot to get at least a bucket of water in summer season. These horrible situations continue not only in these areas but also in some other parts of the country. Many regional, national and international dailies and other news sources have given much attention to this problem.

In the rural to urban migration, the geographical factor is playing a leading role. Most of the rural areas lack better transportation facilities, high level education facilities and medical care. The children have to struggle a lot even for their early schooling because of the unavailability of transportation facilities. And the unavailability of employment opportunities and low earning rates make migration a permanent process. All these geographical factors, in one way or the other, affect the Arabian Gulf migration from Kerala.

Demographic Factor

In a demographic study of the problem, the focus will be always around population growth and population dimension in the specific regions. "The relationship between international migration and other demographic factors--population size, population growth, age structure, and internal population composition--is neither simple nor deterministic. For example; popular views hold that high fertility in areas of migrant origin, juxtaposed with low fertility in areas of destination, is a major cause of international migration. Yet such

differentials do not explain the greatest volume of migration"¹³. The population pressure of the place causally affects the migration process. "Changes in the distribution of world population take place through the medium of birth and deaths in various areas and of migration between areas. The birth and death rates and the current of migration in different parts of the world may be regarded in the long run largely as being determined by social, economic cultural and geographic factors"¹⁴. The demographic differentials, which are applicable and related to the migration process, are only one among many sources of migration. The amount of possible demographic forces for international migration from developing countries is noticeable. It has been creating the far reaching impact in the international migration fields. The trajectories of international migration indicate that the demographic pressures on migration would maintain its hold in the coming decades too.

Population pressure has given the international migration big dimensions. It clearly defines movement of resources in a locality. Europeans are always looking for better resources in every continent. In India, people from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar make their way to Punjab in pursuit of resource management in manufacturing activities¹⁵.

As we noted, accelerated increase in population manipulates significant tension in rural society. Migration generally takes place from the large sized households. This is because of the reason that the availability of land and other resources is limited in large households with small property.

¹³ Sharon Stanton Russell, *International Migration: Implications for the World Bank*, New York: HROWP 54 Population Studies No. 50 United Nations, 1973, p, 170.

¹⁴ Ibid, 170.

¹⁵ Viruthiyel Joseph Varghese, n.5, p, 40.

Social and Cultural factors:-

As migration is a social phenomenon, we can say that migration is a social movement from one place to other. Social movement has been defined in various ways. According to Wilson J, Social movement provide valuable clues articulated in cries of anguish and declaration of hope, and about the direction with future change will take¹⁶. Wilkinson Paul defines the social movement as "a deliberate, collective endeavor to promote change having at least a minimal degree of organization and founded upon the normative commitment active participations of followers or members"¹⁷. While discussing the factors of migrations, it can be seen that each and every factor has been interrelated in the migration scenario. Social and cultural factors may have more importance in these discussions on account of its deep impact on the on going phenomenon.

There are innumerable factors in the socio cultural combinations. Among social factors, the disharmony between the communal groups gains the foremost attention. The communal harmony is necessary in a place where varieties of religious groups are living together. Situations for free and fare performance of their religious obligations should be ensured in any situation. It is very difficult to cope up with situations of riot, communal conflicts and threats. People seek calm and quite areas where they can lead a peaceful life. Like communal tensions, the 'untouchability' within particular religions also contributes to migration. There are always some class differentiations within particular religions ensuring some social and economic privileges. This kind of differentiations will create some complex tensions. Naturally, lower class people wish to live in a place where there is no tension, inequality and prejudices.

¹⁶ Cariappa, Bollaama.V, '*Migration and Cultural Identity*', New Delhi: JN U Dissertation, CSSS, SSS, 1999, p, 10.

¹⁷ Ibid.

The regional conflicts are also counted as reasons for migrations. The continuing pressure of one side over the other for possessing some common targets break the amicable situations they have been enjoying till that time. People want to free themselves from the shackles of such situations.

The problems between the families and family members may compel people to move. It is a kind of forced migration. Quarrels in families happen on various reasons, mainly economic. Partitioning of family property among the members seems to be a decisive stage in this kind of movement. Certain kinds of marriages automatically open a way for migration.

Among the cultural aspects, the main factor is that of religious freedom. As far as the matter of Gulf migration from Kerala is concerned, proportion of Muslims is higher than any other communities. They are mainly from the Malabar area. There are several historical reasons behind this. One of them is the religious freedom they are expecting in gulf countries. The migrants are interestingly participating and involving in the cultural life of their place of the new destinations. The employment migration to the Gulf countries entails the pilgrimage to perform Hajj also. In the early periods, Muslims of Kerala went to Mecca and other Holy places like Medina only for religious performances. Like Muslims, the Christian community migrates particularly to the European countries where Christian culture is dominating. The important difference between these two migrations is that most of the migrants to the European countries are skilled and the migrants to gulf are unskilled or semiskilled.

An urge to get enhanced educational facility and information technology that cop up with the technical and industrial development of our times can be an important factor for migration. The migrants

relocated are not just confined to their on cultural backgrounds, but they get in to touch with groups from different cultural, caste, tribal, religious and linguistic backgrounds¹⁸. It would be exerting a great impact on their entire life styles.

Economic Factor of Migration

The foremost reason for the both international and internal migration is the economic factor. Economic enhancement will be the dream of most of the migrants all over the world. Maintain economic security is a major aim in human life. It is observable that all reasons for migration, to an extent, imply some economic push factors. Desire to overcome the economic crisis or improve the current level of financial condition will be dominating almost all migration process.

How these factors affect the migration process? It is clear that the outline of agricultural population is entirely different from the population that has already been involved in financial potential with some kinds of movements like trading, industrializing commodities and mining etc¹⁹. Regional economic disparity will also have an effect on economic activities like employment rate, growth, industrialization and development in the areas of transportation, communication, infrastructural development like road and rail net works etc. For instance, technology is an important factor that needs to be improved in modern world. There always comes the need of some financial background.

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Social History of Migration in Kerala:-

As far as the issue of migration is concerned, Kerala, one of the south western states in India, has its own tradition and history. In and out migration started from Kerala when Arabs started their trade relations

¹⁸ Ibid, p, 15.

¹⁹ Population Studies, n.12, p, 169.



with coastal Kerala. The whole trade relation was held through sea. Arabs continued their vital trade relationship with Kerala till the end of 15th century²⁰. The long stretch of Sea shore has played a decisive role in the history of Kerala. It enchanted the hearts of foreigners and made them enter in to maritime trade relations. The various kinds of spices in Kerala enchant traders from Gulf and Europe from the time immemorial.

The maritime tradition of the state can be traced to the ancient times. The date goes back to the third century B.C. when the Egyptians, the Phoenicians, the Chinese, and the Babylonians had trade relations with Kerala. In the early 17th century, the Dutch, the French, and the English, lured by the state's extensive wealth of Ivory, Teak, and Spices, entered Kerala to exploit the resources for their own welfare. Similar to Europeans, the Arabs had been interconnected with Kerala shores long before the Portuguese set foot here for building their fortune in the trade areas. It is obvious that all of the trade dealings of the foreigners had been in the northern part of Kerala, which is popularly known as Malabar.

Malabar is an ancient name for the entire Malayalam speaking region. Now it comprises of some districts in the northern parts of the state, where the majority of the Gulf migration occur. In the past three decades, people of Malabar have acquired widespread acknowledgement in all walks of life. It happened, up to a great extent, because of the large-scale migration of the people to the Arabian Gulf seeking a better living condition. It is clear that Kerala is the state in India which sends majority of the job seekers to the Arabian Gulf. No discussion can be efficacious on international migration from India, especially to the Gulf region, without a remark on Kerala.

²⁰ Ganesh K. N, *Kerala Samooha Padanangal*, (Malayalam) Historical Essays, Pattanamthitta: Prasakti book house, 2002, p, 108.

Immigration in Kerala, Kerala's Relations with Arabs:-

The trade relation between Kerala and Middle East started long before the birth of Islam. K. M. Panicker indicates the Arabs ships had come to Kerala for trading products like pepper and cardamom even before Christ ²¹. The Arab traders and travelers had arrived in India even before the Islam was established in Saudi Arabia. C. K. Kareem describes that Kerala had the extensive trade and cultural relations with the Arabs even in the periods of Mosa Species of teak were widely used for furnishing their places ²². However the spread of Islam all over the world inspired the Arabs to speed up the trade relations with various countries. Al -Masodi says (death: 956 AD)" Many Arabs settled in Indian sea shores for trade. They had their own leaders and they had the right of handling the religious and other matters". It is clear that Kerala had relation with other nations even before the Prophet Muhammad. In the period of Mosa, Kerala's trade products were considered very valuable in Middle East. Evidences show that trade relations persisted during the period of King of Solomon. After the Solomon dynasty the trade relations continued with countries like China, Greece, and Phoenicia²³. Pepper was the most treasured product in outer market. According to Hippocrates,²⁴ pepper can be used in treatment for several ailments. Arabs exported Kerala's products to Europe. For the Europeans, spices were the treasures from enchanted orient. The monsoon-flooded rain forests of Kerala, the home of several spices, became a prime destination for many explorers. Black pepper has a colorful history as it followed the trade routes to the west. Arab travelers and ancient Phoenicians are said to be the first to come to

²¹ P.K. Mohammed Kunchi, '*Muslimingalum Kerala Samskaravum*' (Malayalam), Thirur: Kerala Sahithya Academy, 1993, pp23.

²² Koduvally Abdul Qader, '*Kerala Muslimkalude Ulpathi*', (Malayalam), Thirurangadi: Sunni Publishing Centre, 1998 p, 25.

²³ Sayyid Mohammed , *History of Kerala Muslims* (Malayalam) Calicut: Al- Huda Book Stall, 1988 p,17

²⁴ Doctor and philosopher, lived in BC.

Kerala for the spice trade. The Arabs gained control over the profitable trade by 600 B.C. They transported pepper, cinnamon, and oils from the East through the Persian Gulf to Arabia. Southern Arabia became the great spice emporium of the ancient world. The sailors of Ptolemaic Egypt carefully avoided long voyage to the Arab controlled coastal regions of India. However, during the reign of King Ptolemy VII, around 116 B.C. a Greek sailor managed to reach India's southwest coast, marking the beginning of thriving Egyptian and Roman spice trade. Romans, during the rapid growth of their Empire, initiated a direct route from Red Sea ports to the ancient port of Muziris in central Kerala. The consumption of pepper grew amazingly in days of the Roman Empire, and pepper became the most typical spice in medieval Europe. The Roman trade began to weaken during the 3rd century A.D. Arabs and Ethiopian middlemen began to take control of the trade. After the fall of the Roman Empire, Arab held the control over spice trade for a long time. Arab traders strategically maintained the true sources of the spices they transported from Kerala. Each and every year the Arab ships came to Kerala shore to buy the precious goods. Greeks began to buy ginger, pepper and clove from Kerala in sixth century AD. Even though Kerala's trade with the Middle East existed since Phoenicians, no one had a very close trade relation with Kerala as the Arabs had²⁵. The credit goes to Arabs for introducing Kerala's spice products to Europe²⁶.

Till the arrival of Portuguese in the 15th century, the Arabs kept their monopoly over spice trade. They took spices like pepper, ginger, cardamom, herbs, sandal etc. from Kerala. After the arrival of the Portuguese, trade relations between Kerala and Arabs witnessed a steady decline.

²⁵Millor R E, 'Mappila Muslim of Kerala, A Study in Islamic Trends' Madras: Orient Logman, 1976 p, 3

²⁶ Mohammed Kunchi, n.21, p, 25

The hospitality of the king Zamorin of Calicut encouraged the Arabs. Kozhikode grew in to a great trading center. Through this trade, the Kingdom of Zamorin also attained great prosperity. The port officer of the Zamorin was a Muslim. The maritime trade with the Arabs also helped in maintaining the religious harmony of Malabar.

Most of the spices grow in the land of Kerala because of the moderate atmosphere and pleasant nature. The black pepper was not cultivated anywhere in India, except Kerala. The Arabs carried the products in their big ships to southern Arabia. They sold it to the settlers along the sea shore of the Mediterranean and red sea. They used to sell the products to people in Paris, Ethiopia and certain parts of India. They made enormous profits out of this trade. However, they did not have any particular currency of their own. They were using the currency of Paris and Rome.

Thus it is clear that the Arab had close commercial relation with West Indian ports, and the spices of Kerala must have attracted them to the Kerala ports. Colonies of Arabs must have existed in the port towns for purpose of trade. Therefore it stands to reason to suppose that soon after the rise of Islam in Arabia; it reached the Kerala coast along with the Arab merchants. It is also reasonable to believe that in the first flush of enthusiasm they tried to spread the new faith in all the lands they traded with.

The Arabs were using several Indian-made materials even in time of the Prophet. Prophet and his companions had used the medicines like ginger and Kafoor cultivated in India. Indian-made swords were very popular in that period. Arab poet Kaab-ibn- Zuhair (كعب ابن زهير), in his very famous poem named Baanath Suad, praised the Prophet (بانث سعاد) and his Indian sword. He says; ان الرسول لسيف يستضاء به مهند من سيوف الله

²⁷مسلول. Wooden ships were manufactured in Malabar. Arab were ready to buy them at any cost. The Keralites were expert in making beautiful dresses. The great traveler Ibnu- Bathuta (ابن بطوطه) had mentioned many of the Kerala cities that had firm trade relationship with the Arabs. He considered Calicut as one of the big commercial centers in Malabar, Kollam as the most beautiful city and Mangalore as the place that received many traders from Paris and Yemen.

Europeans succeeded the Arabs in the trade relations. Among the Europeans, the Portuguese were the first to make a trade relation with Kerala. Arabs' trade relations with the land is unique and in many ways contrary to spirit of European hegemony. Apart from trade, the Arabs maintained good contacts with the people. They entered in to matrimonial relationships with the women of the land. Portuguese's dominance altered the prevalent conditions of harmony. Apart from the trade, their main aim was to destroy the supremacy of the Arabs and preserve all trade contracts in their grip.

Portuguese in Kerala

All of the Europeans right from Portuguese preferred Malabar Coast for trade. As we mentioned earlier, before the advent of Europeans the Arabs had exercised a clear monopoly over the trade contracts with Kerala. "At the time the Portuguese arrived at Kozhikode, maritime trade over the Arabian Sea was a monopoly of the Muslims - the Arabs, the Egyptians or the Misris, the Turks or the Rumis, the Iranis, the Sindhis, the Gujaratis and the Konkan Muslims. For the last many generations they were the brokers at the Kozhikode port. A large part of the Samutiris' revenue came as customs levies from Kozhikode. As fate would have it, the Portuguese, who were already locked in a bitter

□ قصيدة باتة سعاد لكعب ابن زهير, رقم السطر 52

commercial and religious struggle with the Muslims in the Mediterranean and on the African coast.²⁸

In 1498, Portuguese landed in Kerala under the leadership of Vasco da Gama. It inaugurated a new era in the history of Kerala. It is obvious that their main aim was to begin a new trade itinerary with India and intensify trade with the Orient. Obviously, "the immediate object of the Portuguese was the expansion of trade"²⁹. They stayed here in Kerala for some months and returned without making any trade contracts. Their intention was to grab the monopoly of spice trade. They wanted to put an end to the indirect relations they had in the spice trade. Although they received a warm welcome from the King of Calicut, he didn't give a green signal for trade. So they couldn't sell out the goods they had brought from Portuguese. It made them depressed and they went back home. However, they returned with a specific target: to devastate the Muslims and their trade contracts with Arabs³⁰.

During their second visit, the Portuguese deliberately interfered in the internal affairs of the land. They precariously attacked Muslims on various grounds. They made every effort to convert them to Christianity. The forcible conversions were brutal to the extent that they assaulted those who were not ready to follow their instructions. They forced the Arabs to take a decision on leaving the shore. Finally, in the second phase of the 16th century, Arab had to leave.³¹

The rule of Portuguese declined as they could not resist the Dutch naval force. Besides, Portuguese lacked a well organized government

²⁸ P.J.Chериан (ed), *Perspective on Kerala History*, the Second Millennium, Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Gazette Department, 199

²⁹Sreedara Menon A, '*A Survey of Kerala History*', Chenna: S.Viswanathan Printers and Publishers PVT, LTD.2003, p, 217.

³⁰ C. Hamza, '*Thuhfathul Mujahideen*' (translated) Kozhikode, Al- Huda Book Stall, 2003)p, 62.

³¹M. Gangadharan, '*Mappila Padhanangal*' (Malayalam) Kozhikode: Vachanam Books, 2004, p, 61.

machinery to support their rule. "The failure of Portuguese to establish an enduring dominion in India with Kerala as the base was inevitable. The Portuguese could retain their hold on the local powers only so long as other European powers like the Dutch and the English were absent from the scene"³². Above all, their misrule alienated local people from them. However, the relationship with Portugal had some impacts on the political, economic and social terrain of Kerala's history.

The Dutch and British in Kerala:-

In the 17th century, Malabar became the battle field of the Europeans. After the Portuguese domination, the Dutch make an effort to take the supremacy in this particular area. The Dutch strengthened their foot in Kerala by strategically capturing all the nook and corner of the region, which were under the Portuguese control once. The Dutch were the first protestant nation of Europe to establish trade relations with Kerala challenging Portuguese trade domination³³. The Dutch intentionally made secret pacts with the local rulers to overpower their enemy once and for all. Their first priority was to enhance their trade. Gradually, they captured the Cannanore fort from the Portuguese in 1663, which marked the ascend of Dutch hegemony³⁴.

Having fascinated by the spice trade, the Dutch East India Company had begun efforts to dominate the trade relations in the middle of the 17th century. After overcoming the Portuguese strongholds, the Dutch became the superpower of the region till the last phase of the 18th century. Even though trade was their sole concern, they concentrated much on territorial disputes and conflicts across the coastal region. They established factories in different strategic spots of Kerala and

³². Sreedara Menon, n.30, p, 231.

³³ Ibid, p, 255

³⁴. Kurup K.K.N., '*Arakkal Rajavamsham*' (Malayalam) Kozhikode: Poonkavanam Publications, 1995, p, 24

these factories were working as trade centers for pepper trade and as sales outlets for Dutch freight from Indonesia and elsewhere.

The British attained supremacy in the region after fall of the Dutch. There are many factors which contributed to the fall of the Dutch. Foremost of them was the emergence of Travancore as authoritative military state under the leadership of Marthanda Varma. The emergence of minor chief as their agents was the other cause contributed to the decline of the Dutch rule. They couldn't consolidate their trade relations as done by the Portuguese. Moreover, the rise of the British and the French in the region mounted pressure on them to leave the coast.

After the fall of the Dutch, the British struggled for their supremacy over the different parts of Malabar right from the beginning of the 18th century till the last phase of the same century. When British came in to power in 1792, Malabar was divided in to some areas and territories³⁵. Like the Portuguese and the Dutch, the principle motive behind the British was to do business in Kerala. They hadn't much merchandise apart from the textiles possessions to give instead of the spices they bought from Kerala. In every sense, they inaugurated an era of fierce competition for supremacy. Gradually, they strengthened their trade pattern, when they started buying the belongings for cheap rates and selling it on a huge margin in their home land. Earlier, the British were concentrating on the field of international trade. Following the specific shift in trade policies, they had to line up the local rulers with them and fight with those who refuse to cop up with their aspirations. The series of wars that they had inaugurated in the last phase of the 18th century marks their aspirations and the local resistances³⁶. It is clear

³⁵ T.V. Krishnan, (Translated) *Logan's Malabar Manual*, Kozhikode: Mathrubhumi Printing and Publishing Company Limited, 2000, p, 523.

³⁶ Ganesh K. N, n.20, p, 117.

that all trade relations that Kerala had made with foreigners except the Arab had inflicted many problems on the natives in one way or other. Unlike the Europeans, the Arabs were in good terms with the natives. They even settle down here on the grounds of the matrimonial relationship.

The Migration from Kerala:-

Second World War witnessed the acceleration of International migration. Indeed, India has also a sound role in the international migration scenario, even though the destinations of migrations have been changed depending upon the particular time and situations. "Differences in the pattern are reflected in the in the directions of the flows as well as in the ethnic, occupational and skill compositions of the different streams"³⁷. As far as India is concerned, the issue of International migration is not a new one. Over the last hundred years, multiple factors have been influencing mass departure to the other countries in the world. Now, a large number of Indians are living in different parts of Europe and America.

In the recent past, we witnessed another wave of migration from other Asian countries and India to the Middle Eastern countries. In fact "Since the Second World War, labour migration to Middle East had been taking place from India on a very small scale. But after the oil boom, this migration stream started swelling in size" (Jain, 1993)³⁸. Their main destinations are the oil producing countries like U A E, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Kuwait, Qatar and Bahrain. The peoples from most of the Asian countries started to migrate to these countries after they were allowed to participate in the labour. At present, these

³⁷ Nair P.R.G, '*Asian Migration to the Arab World: Migration from Kerala, (India)*', Thiruvananthapuram: Centre for development Studies, 1986 p, 1.

³⁸ Duan Chengrong ,et all, '*Emigration From Kerala, Characteristics of Migrants and their Contribution to Household Economy*', New Delhi:IASSI Quarterly, Vol. 16, Nos, 3&4 , 1997, p, 226.

countries in Middle East are the largest migrants receiving provinces in the world. In some particular countries in the Middle East, the migrants outnumber or equal the number of local inhabitants.

While discussing the International migration from India, Kerala's role will be emphasized. Kerala has been playing a very important role in the international migration process. The British recruited labour from different parts of India to be employed in British plantations in Singapore, Malaya, Ceylon, Mauritius, South Africa, and in West Indies. Kerala too involved in this early migration process³⁹.

Keralites migrated to the United Kingdom, Europe, and African countries, Singapore, Malaysia and United State of America in the recent past. Especially towards the gulf region, Kerala's involvement creates serious concern. The Government of India has always been encouraging the migration process because it gives some relief in the case of unemployment and population growth. There are some historical reasons that enhance the Kerala migration to the Arabian Gulf. The oil boom in the 1970s and significant increase in the international oil prices resulted in a large scale migration from Kerala to the Arabian Gulf.

Apart from the trade relations with the Arabs in the ancient past, there are some other elements to be mentioned. Religious and cultural conditions of the destinations have been given preferences. Muslims and Christians formed a greater part of international migration from Kerala. For instance, it is fact that the Muslims dominate Gulf migration from Kerala⁴⁰. The Muslims have been interrelated solidly

³⁹ Nair P.R. G, *'Emigration Dynamics in Developing Countries, Dynamics of Emigration from Kerala: Factors, Trends, Pattern and Policies'*, Thiruvananthapuram: CDS, p, 264.

⁴⁰ Nair P.R. G, *'Influence, Impact and Implications of Migrations to the Middle East from Kerala'*, ASIAN REGIONAL PROGRAMME ON INTERNATIONAL LABOUR MIGRATION, United Nation Development Programme, Thiruvananthapuram: Centre for Development Studies, 1998, p, 5.

with the Arabs on account of the cultural and religious background. In the ancient time, people went to Arabia only for religious studies and performing Hajj.

Many of the Keralites migrate to Europe and United States. Most of them are belonging Christianity or any other religion. We could hardly find Muslims in these areas. The main reason behind this trend is that it is easy to adjust with the cultural and religious situations of destinations. It is very clear that Kerala has been sending migrants to various parts of the world and most parts of the migrants going to the Middle East countries

Diaspora Formation and Hybrid Culture among the Migrants of Malabar:-

Like migration, there is no a monolithic definition of Diaspora. The Diasporas are being constructed in view of the migration process. It brings out notable changes in the lifestyle of the migrants in particular and in the households in general, since migration implies major changes in the human life. The dispersion of people, often far from their homelands, has been taking place for centuries. Every where, migrants have to experience various life styles including language, culture and politics⁴¹.

“The term of Diaspora is defined from the Greek ‘dia’ means through and ‘speiro’ means to scatter. Diaspora may be defined as the migration of a population or a section of it along with their ways of life to the place of destination”⁴². The classical definition of Diaspora as given by Razmik Panossian is the “Forced dispersion of a clearly identified group of people from their homeland with a distinct

41 Gloria Toticagüena. ‘A General Introduction to the Development of the Basque Diaspora’, Reno: Center for Basque Studies University of Nevada, 2001, p, 11.

42 R. Gopa Kumar, ‘Indian Diaspora and Giving Pattern of Indian Americans in USA’, New Delhi: Charities Aid Foundation India, 2003, p, 4.

collective minority and a myth of return. The group maintains its collective identity by establishing and controlling boundaries around it while maintaining communication with other similar communities with the homeland"⁴³. Gabriel Sheffer defined Diaspora as "ethnic minority groups of migrant origin residing and acting in host countries, but maintaining strong social, economic, political and emotional ties with their countries of origin –their homeland"⁴⁴. Diaspora is the term often used today to explain characteristics of any population, whose cultural roots were not in a land where they currently reside⁴⁵. Diaspora is a particular kind of awareness, which have been emerging among the migrating communities.

About 100 million people live outside their native lands at present. These separations and displacement from one population to other seem to be common phenomena across the world. Much attention has been paid to the special impacts of the expatriates on cultures of destination, particularly the impact of migrants from poor countries on the economies of rich countries⁴⁶. This displacement from their land of origin will affect their culture, morals, language, customs, life experiences, and other socially learned behaviors. It is a matter of serious concern. Even if someone leaves a culture, the culture will keep a direct or indirect control on him. The contacts of the Migrants with friends and relatives, who remain in their homeland, contribute to nostalgic feeling for the roots.

Indian Diaspora constitutes a very important Diasporic community all over the world, especially in the European, American and Middle East countries. "There are among the estimated 25 million Indians who

⁴³ Ibid, p, 7.

⁴⁴ Ibid, p, 7.

⁴⁵ Stwon Vertuce, '*Hindu Diaspora- Comparative Pattern*', London: Routledge, 2000, p, 141.

⁴⁶ Martin Kilduff. et all, *The Diaspora Effect: The Influence of Exiles on Their Cultures of Origin*, New York: Management Review , Vol. 2, No. 1, 1999, p, 1.

constitute a worldwide diaspora. They are now being wooed by the motherland as India emerges as a new economic powerhouse”⁴⁷. Irrespective of the cultural milieu in which they are embedded, they maintain some kind of link with the Indian culture by keeping the arranged marriage system, performing the rituals of different religions like Hinduism, Sikhism, and Islam in the United States and the other overseas communities and trying to place Indian foods⁴⁸. Because all are bonded to India to whom they look for cultural and religious aspirations. They all are 100% Indians even if they have been staying abroad for a long period.

The Diasporic communities of Kerala in the Middle East have been gaining much attention. Indo-Gulf relation dates back to several centuries. “Although Indo- Gulf trade relations existed even during the Indus Valley civilization”⁴⁹. The Indian merchants and their partners established trade relations with these countries. In these trade relations, Kerala’s role is well known.

Migrants from third world countries like Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka etc have been working in the Arabian Gulf. Indians are, willingly or unwillingly, giving and sharing something mutually with these communities. It ensures some changes in their cultural approaches and life styles. The cultural change that has been occurring to the migrants of Arabian Gulf reflects in their family members and other house holders even in the native villages. It reflects in all the

⁴⁷ M. Jagathesan, *the Diaspora’s angst, India woos its people worldwide, but they have mixed feelings*, NewDelhi:The Hindu, Wednesday, May 18, 2005 p, 22.

⁴⁸ R. Gopa Kumar, n.45, p, 14.

⁴⁹ Dr. Prakash C. Jain, *‘Culture and Economy in an “ incipient ” Diaspora: Indian in the Persian Gulf Region’*, India International Centre, April, 2000, p, 1 (International Conference on Culture and Economy in the Indian Diaspora)

The Indus Valley civilization was urban and it covered more area than the civilizations in the Nile, the Tigris Euphrates valley or in the Yellow River valley. From the West to East, the Indus valley civilization covered a distance of over 1,500km, and from north to south it covered over 1,100 km.

aspects of their life including food, dress, vehicles, ornaments, economic conditions, education, behavioural attitude etc.

This kind of culture that has been formed as a result of deliberate mingling with the strange peoples of the different parts of the world is called hybrid culture. "Celebrating hybridity as a dynamic cultural phenomenon, it forms change, develop, and combine"⁵⁰. Hybrid culture entails various changes in the migrants' life and attitude. In the third chapter, we focus on how hybrid culture affects migrants and their family.

⁵⁰ Ravindra K Jain, *Indian diaspora, globalization and multiculturalism: A cultural analysis*, New Delhi: Contributions to Indian Sociology (n.s) 32, 2, (1998) p, 353

Chapter II

Gulf Migration and the Economic Impact

Migration from Kerala to the Arabian Gulf Countries

The oil boom of the 1970s brought about a new chapter in the history of migration from the state of Kerala. "Since the oil price increases of 1973-74 and 1979, there has been an enormous growth in the demand for foreign labour in the oil exporting states of the Arab Gulf. The scale of labour movement in the Gulf was intimately linked to the escalation in oil revenues and to the unprecedented rate of investment in the domestic industry and infrastructure of the oil states which those revenues permitted"¹. Large number of migrant workers from the state began to migrate to the Gulf countries. It is the oil producing countries of Arabian Gulf which attracted a number of Arab and non-Arab migrant workers of different categories since the oil boom. The economic inflation within the Gulf countries gave international migration a considerable boost². People started coming from different parts of the world to Gulf for better living. This process is known as Gulf migration. International migration towards Arabian Gulf countries hit the highest point in the last few decades.

These Gulf domains, moreover, attracted workers from India. Kerala is the state in India, which sends the largest migrants in to the Arabian Gulf countries for the last three decades. Therefore, migration from Kerala to the Arabian Gulf countries deserves great attention. Kerala's relation to the Arabs is historically rooted. Kerala had trade relation with various countries of the Middle East from ancient past dating back to the pre-Christian era. Merchants from Arabia used to have frequent visits to the Kerala ports like Quilon, Calicut and engaged in trade with the state. The Arab sailors had, believably, opened colonies

¹ J.S Birks, et all, *Migrant Workers in the Arab Gulf: The Impact of Declining Oil Revenue*, New York: International Migration Review Volume 20, No, 4, 1986 p, 799.

² Filippo Osella & Caroline Osella, (University of Sussex & SOAS) "Migration, Money and Masculinity in Kerala" Oxford: Royal Anthropological Institute, (NS) 6 2000 p, 117.

and trading centres in Kerala. Kerala also had land and maritime trade, and marital relationship with the Arabs from the very time of the Prophet. Merchants from Kerala also engaged in trade with the Arab land like Oman, Bahrain et cetera. These trade routs were pivotal as it paved way for the channels of early migration to the Persian Gulf regions.

Kerala has been experimenting massive migration of its population to the oil producing countries of the Middle East. The Arabian Gulf region has become the 'Promised Land' for a large number of people from Kerala ever since it became an attractive region for immigration. Migration of Keralites to the Gulf region had started, in a nominal scale, in search of job prosperities. It has been increased gradually to form the Gulf Countries a region of largest concentration of Keralites any where out side India.

The general trends in migration to the Gulf countries from Kerala had some variations in the past. The migration flows have swelled year by yea³. According to the study conducted by the Centre for Development Studies, 1.36million Keralities were working abroad and among them 95 per cent lived in the Middle East (Zachariah, Mathew and Rajan, 2003). The Economic Review published by the Government of Kerala, State Planning Board gives the number of emigrants at about 1.6 million in 1997 (Government of Kerala, 1998). Yet another source gives an estimate of 1.4 million for 1996 (Prakash, 1998). Based on the survey data and using the backward projection up to 1973, Kannan and Hari (2002) estimated that the Gulf migration accounted for 0.03 millions in 1973; this figure reached a peak in 1998 with 1.32 million. Some studies

³ Mowli Chanra, V, ' *Bridging the Gulf : India's Manpower Migration to West Asia*' New Delhi: Sterling , 1992, p, 9.

show that Middle East migration from Kerala has increased significantly. In 1992, it shot up from 2000 to 100,000 people. In other words, one out of every three immigrants living in Gulf is a Keralite⁴.

Estimated stock of Kerala and Indian migrants,1973-2000 (Millions)

Year	Kerala Emigrants in all countries (in million)	Kerala Emigrants in Gulf (in million)	Indian emigrants in Gulf (in million)	Percentage of Kerala to India
1973	0.03	0.03	0.2	17.26
1974	0.04	0.04	0.23	16.93
1975	0.05	0.04	0.31	14.5
1976	0.05	0.05	0.35	14.52
1977	0.06	0.06	0.4	14.55
1978	0.07	0.07	4.46	14.57
1979	0.08	0.08	0.52	14.59
1980	0.08	0.08	0.6	13.22
1981	0.1	0.1	0.6	16.31
1982	0.16	0.15	0.74	20.5
1983	0.19	0.18	0.92	19.96
1984	0.2	0.2	0.93	21.57
1985	0.26	0.24	0.93	26.02
1986	0.28	0.28	0.95	29.25
1987	0.31	0.31	0.96	31.85
1988	0.4	0.38	1.1	34.82
1989	0.42	0.4	1.26	31.88
1990	0.53	0.51	1.45	35.23
1990	0.57	0.54	1.66	32.58
1992	0.66	0.65	1.86	34.74
1993	0.78	0.74	2.08	35.72

⁴ Motwani, K Jagat, (Item 8(e) of the provisional agenda) *Economic and Social Commission for Asia And The Pacific, Ad Hoc Expert Group Meeting on Migration and Development, Bangkok: 27-29 August 2003*, p, 12.

1994	0.88	0.86	2.34	36.83
1995	0.99	0.96	2.62	36.78
1996	1.13	1.1	2.94	37.38
1997	1.28	1.24	3.29	37.58
1998	1.36	1.32	3.69	35.75
1999	1.25	1.21	3.37	35.89
2000	1.14	1.1	3.09	35.75

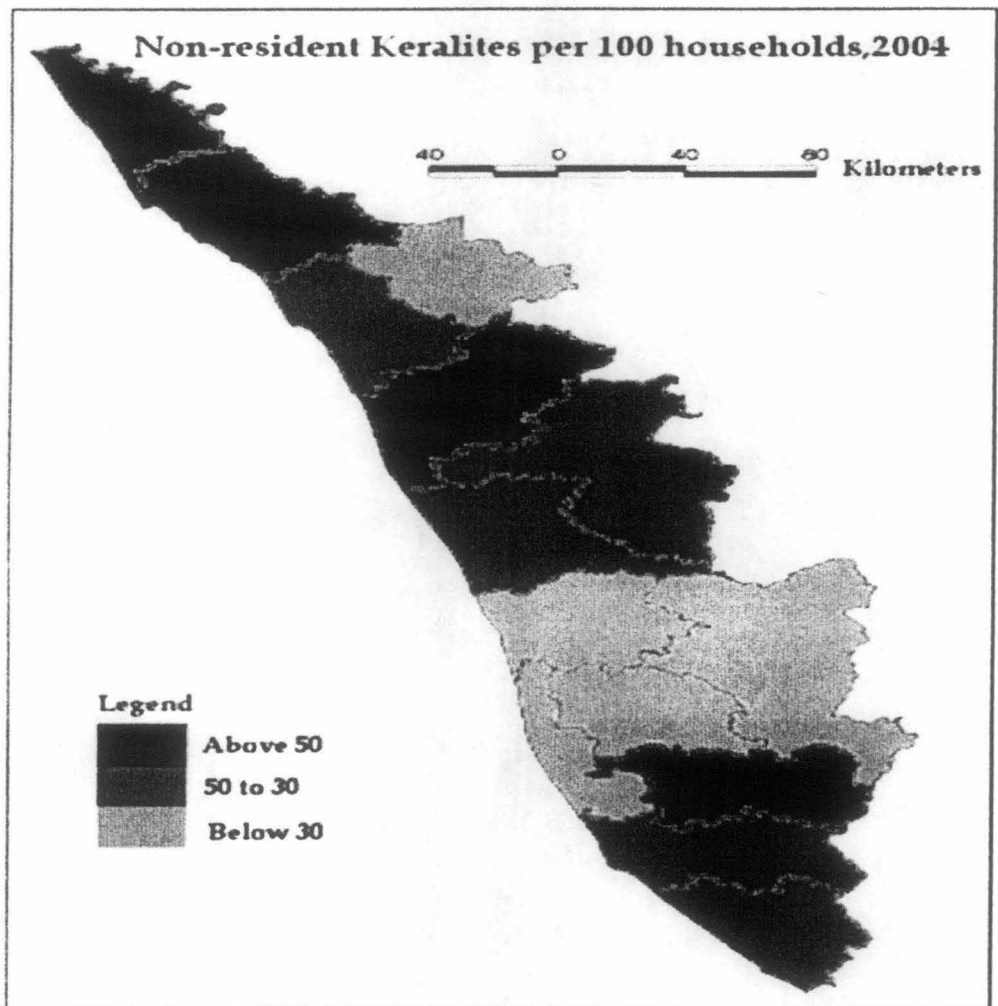
Source: Motwani, K Jagat, Dynamics of international migration from India: its economic and social implications (Item 8(e) of the provisional agenda) Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, Ad Hoc Expert Group Meeting on Migration and Development 27-29 August 2003, Bangkok

A good number of factors contributed to generate the Gulf region a 'promised land' for emigrant workers. The oil boom started burgeoning in the Gulf region leaving an impact on all most every field. The oil rich countries were sought to implement considerable industrialization programme aimed at developing a wider range of skill and interest with the economy acquiring a new form. In order to build up such a programme, it was indispensable, for these countries, to muster large number of skilled, semi-skilled and even unskilled workers to carry out with the works particularly at the initial stage. They bound to impart divergent welfare programmes for the services of a large number of educated people like doctors, nurses, teachers etc. It is conspicuous that the amount of the national inhabitants of the oil producing Arabian Gulf countries was very small in number. As an aftermath of this, their participation in the labour and in acquiring skill needed for the labour was also low. Therefore, they were unable to work sturdy with the well-equipped machines and technology that required for making their nation a modern land. In view of the great assets, low population, and lack of labour skill, the Gulf countries were left with no option but to encourage migration.

Governments in the Gulf countries significantly required migrant labour to transform their states to the form of modern welfare Nations. The states in this region are economically capable to make available a range of services such as: free education from the primary school to the university level, free health care, water, and qualitative housing for minimal charges in the public sector on the lines of the services provided by the developed countries. The Gulf not only requires a labour force to build schools, hospitals, and houses, but teachers, doctors, nurses, technical personnel, accountants and managers to maintain these facilities in absence of qualified and experienced local personnel for these positions. For that the Gulf governments had little choice but appoint outsiders. Migrant labour was largely needed to meet with the massive demands of the industrial, social welfare, trade and construction fields. The local educational system was not effective enough to produce the skilled labour, required by the industries, indigenously. The Gulf countries have been developing along with the high establishments of industries, but the local population remained unaffected by the flourishing outcomes of modern industrial revolution. These also caused to attract expatriates from other countries. The oil rich Arab countries were aspiring to get the migrant workers from the non-oil producing Arab countries; for instance, Saudi Arabia was depending mainly on workers from the poor Arab countries. Later on, they were compelled to change their strategy as Arab nations hesitated to provide their rich counterparts with manual labour for cheaper wages.

In the recent times, Gulf countries have been recruiting large number of non-Arab labourers. The non-Arab migrants outnumbered the Arab migrants in Gulf countries. On the other hand, countries like India and

Pakistan were ready to supply workers for cheap wages, as workers from these countries were ready to take assignments on these terms. The nearness of Indian sub-continent to the Gulf region, the trade and maritime connections with the Arabs, the knowledge of English language and massive unemployment in the country led Indian workers migrate to Arabian Gulf countries. The Government of India has been taking positive steps to boost the confidence of those who want to migrate to the oil rich Gulf countries.



Source: K.C. Zachariah, S, Irudaya Rajan, 'Gulf Revisited, Economic Consequences of Emigration from Kerala, Emigration and Unemployment, Working paper 363, Thiruvananthapuram: Centre for Development studies, September 2004.

Factors Facilitating Gulf Migration

It is obvious that there should be some push and pull factors behind both internal and international migrations as these play a key role in determining the expansion of migration⁵. Very often the causes of migration are discussed in terms of push and pull factors⁶. Kerala, one of the small states, in India is sending large number of migrants to the Arabian Gulf countries. The decision of an individual or a group of people to leave their homeland is influenced by numerous reasons. These could be factors that are either push or pull or both. Nevertheless, push factors predominantly economic hardships, are bound to be responsible for international migration in Kerala.

The most important reason that leads to migration is lack of job opportunities in Kerala. But paradoxically the educational infrastructure in the state continued to be, relatively, well developed-a factor that aggravated the problem of unemployment. The increasing number of educated unemployed necessitated a large scale migration to the Gulf countries.

Another factor that leads to the migration is fulfilment of their family obligations. Family expenditure and responsibilities like house construction, marrying the female members off, education of children etc, form major causes of financial burden that push people to find jobs outside India. These factors become increasingly significant in a community where people are quite erudite about the importance of education. It is understandable that the huge amount of economic stability is essential for professional or technical education and also for

⁵ R.L Naraimhan, 'Source of Data on Migration and Recent Trend,' The Indian Journal of Labour Economics. Vol, 41, No4, 1998, p, 633.

⁶ Judith M. Brown et all, 'Migration – The Asian Experience', European Journal of Migration, 8, 1, 1994p, 1-39

the renovation of their houses. The increased standard of life also demanded more financial input. These factors *en masse* appear to be the bed-rock of the large boom of migration.

It is clear that securing a job is the main purpose of the migrants, irrespective of whether they are well educated, educated or uneducated. However, among those with little or no education, the foremost purpose of earning is to discharge family responsibilities. Some wish to improve the level of their living conditions. 'In short, unemployment was the major push factor for the educated. As a person moves along the educational ladder, his aspiration for a better life also increases. For illiterates and low -educated, poverty at home was the major driving force for migration. While his income remained low, his obligations and liabilities grew over years regardless of his economic situation. No, wonder, more than the desire to get a job, the prime objective for most of them was the discharge of responsibilities and liabilities'.⁷ The push and pull factors would be much stronger for the married people whereas elders, the unmarried and the younger members are tend to stick on to a job anywhere.

Areas of Employment in the Gulf

Migration to the Gulf has commenced long time back as mentioned earlier. Major attraction of migration to Arabian Gulf countries from the rest of the world is the immense scope of job opportunities in the region.⁸ This trend gradually increased since the introduction of the substantial construction programmes and other endeavours for

⁷ Nair, P.R.G, 'Asian Migration to the Arab World; Migration from Kerala' Thiruvananthapuram: Centre for Development Studies, Kerala 1992, p, 27.

⁸ Nasra M. Shah, (Ministry of Public Health, Kuwait) 'Foreign Workers in Kuwait: Implications for the Kuwaiti Labour Force', New York: International Migration Review 20, No, 4, 1986, p, 815.

expanding industrial economy by making use of the oil resources. People from all walks of life and from different countries contribute to the industrial boom in the region. India has, undeniably, been one of the countries, which transferred the lion's part of migrants for different fields of jobs. The areas where the expatriate workers engaged in are construction, institutions-both in public and private sector, business, trade, and domestic services. However, the exact quantity of workers under each category has not been recognized. During the mid-seventies, when the Arab migration was in the outset, it was stated that, one third of the migrants worked in the construction sector whereas; the rest remained in service, trade, and agriculture sectors. Migrants from India, it is believed, were employed in all these sectors.⁹

Construction is the sector, where most of the Indian semi-skilled and unskilled workforce is engaged. Skilled workers are often employed in different business under Government departments. It is to be noted that the bulk of the doctors and nurses working in the Gulf region, even now, are from India and the chunk of nursing and paramedical professionals hail from Kerala.

Traditionally, merchants were the customary migrants from India. Now they are engaged in a variety of activities in trade, within the Gulf countries. They possess small shops, departmental stores and restaurants in the major cities in the Arabian Gulf particularly in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The role of these traders and their institutions in employment generation are significant, though these are low skilled labours such as cooking, cleansing, housekeeping, gardening and house services. Mostly the unskilled workers are holding these professions. However, migrants are getting their own

⁹ Nair, P R G, n.7, p, 76.

professions according to the educational qualifications they have, as we mentioned earlier. In general, employees in the Gulf region are engaged in occupations requiring less professional skill and qualifications than it is required in other parts of the world. However, it is also worth mentioning that some of the skilled persons are yet to acquire the kinds of occupations, which they deserve in commensuration with their education and skills.

The Source of Information and financing

Kerala migrants hardly get any information about the job opportunities in Arab countries from the official and institutional channels. This information reaches the migrants all the way through relatives, friends or neighbours who work in the region. This to be noticed that most of the migrants from Kerala go aboard for jobs not through regular recruiters of employers or their agents, or authorized recruiting agencies, but with the help of friends and relatives. Some of the highly qualified and skilled people or those with professional and technical qualification are able to get jobs by making direct application.

Migrants have to pay out expenses for variety of things for their travel, such as passport fees, payment of visa, medical check up, and ticket fare. Some of the migrants may not pay for their visas because they normally obtain these from their relatives and close friends. However, most of them, to buy their visas, are spending huge amount of money at the recruiting agencies and other sources which these agencies manage to acquire from Arab employers. However, migration from Kerala to the Arabian Gulf countries remains largely to be an uncontrolled and unregulated process.¹⁰ Due to the mad and blind

¹⁰ Nair P R G, *'Introduction: Asian Migration to the Arab World, Migration from Kerala, India'*, Thiruvananthapuram: Centre for Development Studies, Kerala, 1992, p, 31.

hurry for visas and the lack of effective regulation of the recruitment procedure, fake and false agencies and individuals involved in visa dealings dominate the recruitment scene. It is reported that the number of persons who fall prey to these agencies and individuals is quite high. It wipes out their dream to get a career in the 'Promised Land', which they have been intentionally looking for.

Finding the expenses for meeting the costs of migration is seen to have been a tough task for most of the migrants' family. The sources of financing the expenses of migration are numerous. The major sources comprise of the savings of the migrant's household, including the personal savings of the migrant, loans, sale or mortgage of landed property and jewellery¹¹. Very few people have their own savings and some depend on the parents' investments to be used upon. Given the usurious rates prevalent in the unorganised credit market, migrants receive substantial help from their friends and relatives, by means of loans at very low, if not zero, interest rates

Source of Financing of Emigrants

<u>Source of Financing</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Personal Savings	28.6
Parents Savings	20.1
Borrowing	59.5
Loans, money lenders	14.7
Loans from Banks	5.2
Sale mortgage land	10.1
Sale pledge financial assets	4.5

¹¹ E.T, Mathew, et all, 'Socio-Economic Characteristics of Emigrants and Emigrants' Households: A Case study of Two Villages in Kerala' Mumbai: Economic and Political Weekly, July 15, 1978, p, 1148.

Sale pledge ornaments	36.2
Government assistance	1.2
Others	5.4

Source: K. C. Zachariah, P. R. Gopinathan Nair, And S. Irudaya Rajan: Return Emigrants in Kerala: Rehabilitation Problems and Potential Development, Working Paper No. 319, October 2001:

Nature of migration to the Gulf, Social and Economic Background:-

The number of persons from Kerala in search of job outside India has been increasing rapidly in recent years. Kerala sends the largest number of labourers, approximately about half of the total from India to the Gulf regions. The trade connection between Kerala and the Middle East, problems of unemployment etc. have caused large scale migration from Kerala.

Migration has many social and economic implications in the State. These are reflected on the family lives in Kerala in one way or other. The choice for migration is determined by the socio-economic conditions at home. The density of population is very high in Kerala so is the unemployment rate which is one of the highest in India. The educational level of the population is also highest in Kerala compared to other states of India. All what facilitates migration is the demand for employment abroad.

For understanding the socio-economic characteristic of the migrants' population, we need to find the pressure and force underlying in the factors such as economic and educational backgrounds of the migrants, cost involved and destination of the migrants. Such information is very important for understanding the implications of migration. Considering the economic status of migrants, a unanimous opinion is

difficult to arrive at. The majority remain in the poor economic status; they were in before the migration. Large number of the migrants belongs to the socially and economically weaker sections¹². A number of people gain some enhancement in their income. There are also some persons who consider that the migration has broken their economic status. It is clear that largely the status of migrants have been positive.

Percentage Distribution of Migrants according to own views of change in Economic Status.

Categories of Status	Prior to Migration	After Migration
High	3.2	8.6
Upper Middle	32.5	43.5
Lower Middle	41.2	35.7
Low	23.1	12.2
Total	100.0	100.0

Source:- Nair P.R. G, 'Asian Migration to the Arab World; Migration from Kerala' (Thiruvananthapuram, Centre for Development Studies, Kerala 1992), p, 63

Migration causes significant changes in their social life. The migrants themselves consider that they have made good social networking comprised of friends and relatives at home and in destinations. Retaining their good attitude towards the people in the localities, there are many exuberant and desirable changes among the migrants. Their aspiration levels about the employment and social condition of their children also have gone up. Their children, including girls, are given

¹² Nambiar A.C.K, 'The Socio Economic Conditions of Gulf Migrants' New Delhi; Commonwealth Publishers, 1995, p, 120.

freedom to find out their career, and even to choose their marriage partner. The most perceptible change that has occurred is their perspective towards work. They are able to value and respect work. Many of the migrant workers, even, have returned to the same job they had been doing before their migration.

Levels of Education and Skill

Education is one of the essential and fundamental factors, which can generate a rapid change in the attitude and approach in the minds of people. An important component of human capital is educational attainment and in this, Kerala leads all other Indian states. Education is an important factor influencing the level of unemployment in Kerala, as most of the unemployed are educated. Migration is generally discriminating persons with higher education, as the rate of migration being higher among persons with higher education level. Yet, in the past, migrants from Kerala to the Gulf were not well educated, especially when compared with their counterparts from other parts of the world. Migrants are employed in various areas like, construction, government services and domestic work depending upon their educational qualifications. Some of the occupations in trade or service required zero or a moderate level of general education.

Education levels in emigrants from Kerala (1998)

Educational Status	MIGRANTS WITHIN INDIA				INTERNATIONAL MIGRANTS			
	Male	Female	Female as % of total	Total	Male	Female	Female as % of total	Total
Illiterate	0.9	0	0	0.9	0.7	0.7	7.1	0.7
Literate without schooling	0.8	0.4	16.7	0.7	1.0	0.7	5.3	0.9

Primary (incomplete)	1.2	0.9	16.7	1.1	3.3	5.4	11.4	3.5
Primary	7.2	4.3	14.5	6.7	11.4	3.4	2.3	11.2
Lower secondary	34.2	17.8	12.7	32.1	45.2	23.5	4	44.3
Secondary	44.8	55.8	26.2	47.6	29.4	38.3	9.5	30.2
Degree	11.3	21.0	34.5	14.6	9.0	28.2	20.0	12.8
Total	100	100	22.1	100	100	100	7.4	100

Source: Survey: Gender Dimensions of Migrants in Kerala (Zachariah et al) As quoted as, Joyojeet Pal, Sergiu Nedevschi, Rabin K. Patra Eric A. Brewer, 'A Multi-Disciplinary Approach to Shared Access Village Computing Initiatives: The Case of Akshaya project Malappuram, Kerala.

Large amount of migrants are from the rural areas of the country and a huge number of them uneducated. Most of them are drawn from the poor or lower middle class families. Due to these reasons, migration has been a plausible option for the uneducated youths from the rural areas for social mobility. Nearly half the number of the migrants falls under the category of people possessing educational qualifications below the secondary school level. Some of them could be uneducated or literates without any formal education. The overwhelming majority of migrants is engaged in low profile jobs such as construction works, farming, sales manship etc.

During 1999-2004, the educational level of the migrants showed remarkable improvement. A notable feature of this improvement was the increase in the proportion of migrants with a university degree from 10.5percent in 1999 to 19.4 percent in 2004. Such increases are observed, not only in terms of proportions, but also in terms of absolute numbers. During 1999-2004, while the number of migrants increased by 35 percent, the number of migrants with a degree increased by 1.44 percent, from 1.36 lakh in 1999 to 3.33 lakh in 2004. Similar increases were noticed also among the migrants educated at

secondary level, but their increase in numbers was not very much different from that of the total migrants. Improvement in the educational level of the migrants could have been an important factor in the increase in the volume of remittances during 1999-2004'¹³.

In the recent times migrants are aware of the significance of education in the present circumstance. The migrants are tend to use their remittance mainly for getting professional and technical education for their children despite the fact that professional and technical training is not a pre requisite for migration.

The migrants are getting reasonable wages even with the low level of education, something that they cannot expect from the mother country. In the early periods most of the migrants did not have the minimum levels of education even though they could cop up with the educated: a psychological reason in giving education for the offspring. Modern technology assumed greater position in the daily life of the migrants and in the society as well.

In majority of the cases, the migrant did not hold any such education. These reasons accounted for the spread of education in the recent years. Occupational training had played a more important role than technical and professional education, it is seen that more than one out of every five migrant possessed some vocational training at the time of their first migration. The experience in the vocation is far more important than the aforementioned qualifications. 'The proportion of migrants who had work experience came to more than one-third of total number of migrants. Most of the migrants were thus person who had either

¹³ K.C. Zachariah, et all, '*Gulf Revisited, Economic Consequences of Emigration from Kerala. Emigration and Unemployment*' Thiruvananthapuram: Centre for Development Studies, Kerala, 2004, P, 18-19.

technical or professional education or vocational training or work experience'¹⁴

Migrants are, no doubt, better educated than others in many cases. "While 50 percent of the migrants, 36 percent of the returned migrants and 45 percent of the Non-Resident Keralites above the age 15 years have secondary or higher levels of education, whereas the corresponding proportion in the general population is only 32 percent"¹⁵. Such increases are overlooked, not only in terms of scope, but in terms of absolute numbers. Development and perfection in the educational level of the emigrants could have been an important aspect in increasing the volume of remittances from the destination of the migrants. It is a fact that every enhancement of educational skills has a positive impact on the employability of the migrants, and consequently, their earning capability.

A remarkable feature of this improvement was the increase in the proportion of migrants with a university degree, from 10.5 percent in 1999 to 19.4 percent in 2004. During 1999-2004, while the number of migrants increased by 35 percent, the number of migrants with a university degree increased by 144 percent, from 1.36 lakh in 1999 to 3.33 lakh in 2004. Similar increases were also noticed among the migrants educated up to the secondary level, yet, the increase in numbers was not very much different from that of the total migrants during 1999-2004'¹⁶. Both technical and professional level of education of the external migrants is less than that of the internal migrants from Kerala.

¹⁴ Nair ,P R G, n. 9, p,16

¹⁵ Ibid, p, 19.

¹⁶ Ibid, p, 20.

Destinations of the Migrants

Migration to the Arabian Gulf Countries has been accelerated in the recent times. However, it dates back to several decades and has undergone many changes. The oil rich Gulf countries have been the main recipients of migrants from all over the world due to the shortage of work force for historical, political and economic sectors. People of various nationalities traditionally went to work in these countries. The composition of this foreign population has also changed with time. In the beginning of the oil era, majority of migrant labourers were from the neighbouring poor Arab countries. The largest among them were Yemenis, and Egyptians followed by people from the other Arab countries. Arab workers were preferred in the initial stage. However, the preference changed gradually because they were not ready to work for low wages, and, consequently, the employers began to absorb South and Southeast Asian workers.

Kerala has been experiencing massive migration of its population to the oil producing countries of the Middle East. Migration of Keralites to the Gulf had started, at least on a nominal scale, for job opportunities before the period of independence. Now, the largest concentration of Keralites, any where out side India, is in the Gulf countries. Generally the preferred destinations are the GCC¹⁷ (Gulf

¹⁷ The Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] was established in an agreement concluded on 25 May 1981 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia between: Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and UAE. These countries declared that the GCC is established in view of the special relations between them, their similar political systems based on Islamic beliefs, joint destiny and common objectives. The GCC is a regional common market with a defense planning council as well. The geographic proximity of these countries and their general adoption of free trade economic policies are factors that encouraged them to establish the GCC. To confront their security challenges collectively. The immediate objective was to protect them from the threat posed by the Iran-Iraq War and Iranian-inspired activist Islamism.

Corporation Council) countries like Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates (UAE), Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and Bahrain. The Gulf region has been a leading destination for the emigrants from Kerala. The emigrants from Kerala have stretched their wings over a larger number of countries during last three decades including countries in Europe, America and South-East Asia. Within the Gulf region, the principal destinations were the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia, which together accounted for more than two-thirds of all emigrants in the Gulf. Arab countries of the Middle East were the destination of 95 per cent of the emigrants with Saudi Arabia alone accounting for nearly 40 per cent of the total. Outside the Arab world, the principal destination of Kerala emigrants was the United States of America.

Within the Gulf region itself, meaningful adaptations have taken place. Saudi Arabia has lost some of its attraction and the United Arab Emirates has emerged, as the favourite and chosen destination of the migrants. The share of the UAE in the total number of migrants, in the region, has increased tremendously. The UAE provides a conducive atmosphere for migration than any other country in the region. It is notable that, in the UAE, the expatriate workers together constitute an equal proportion of the number of the citizens of the country. On the contrary, the share of Saudi Arabia, which was a favourite destination for the migrants from India, has declined over time. Other major countries, which now attract migrants from Kerala, are Bahrain and Oman. The relationship between these countries and India are historically deep rooted. Indian merchants had established and engaged in import and export trade with these countries. Kuwait is yet another major destination for migrants from Kerala. The number of

Indian migrants had increased in the 1980s largely because of the pulling out of the Egyptian workers from the country. Saudi Arabia and Qatar are indeed the shelters of the migrants from Kerala. In addition, Saudi is one of the leading states, which receives number of migrants from India especially from Kerala. Until 1975, majority of the expatriates in Saudi Arabia were from Arab countries. Since then they changed their policy in view of some technical reasons like the lack of Arabs who were ready to work for low wages, and gradually it turned out favouring the non-Arab migrants. Asians are preferred, for political reasons, for different categories of occupations. These major countries have emerged as the destinations of a large number of expatriates from Kerala. The preference of the oil states, thus, changed and they began to be more open towards Asian workers. They are less expensive to employ, easier to retrench and are considered to be more efficient, obedient and manageable. Asian workers were also highly preferred as they do not bring their families, whereas Arab migrants usually bring their families along with them-something unwelcome as far as the GCC authorities are concerned. However, at present, significant changes took place and the GCC countries let the expatriates to carry their family along by certain norms. Comparatively very few migrants are keeping their family with them depending upon their financial conditions.

Locations of International Migrants in the Gulf region from Kerala (1998)

	Percentage	Migrants '000
Saudi Arabia	38.1	519
United Arab Emirates	29.7	405
Oman	10.4	142
Bahrain	5.7	77

Kuwait	5.1	69
Qatar	4.7	64
USA	2.2	30
Others	4.1	57
Total	100	1,363

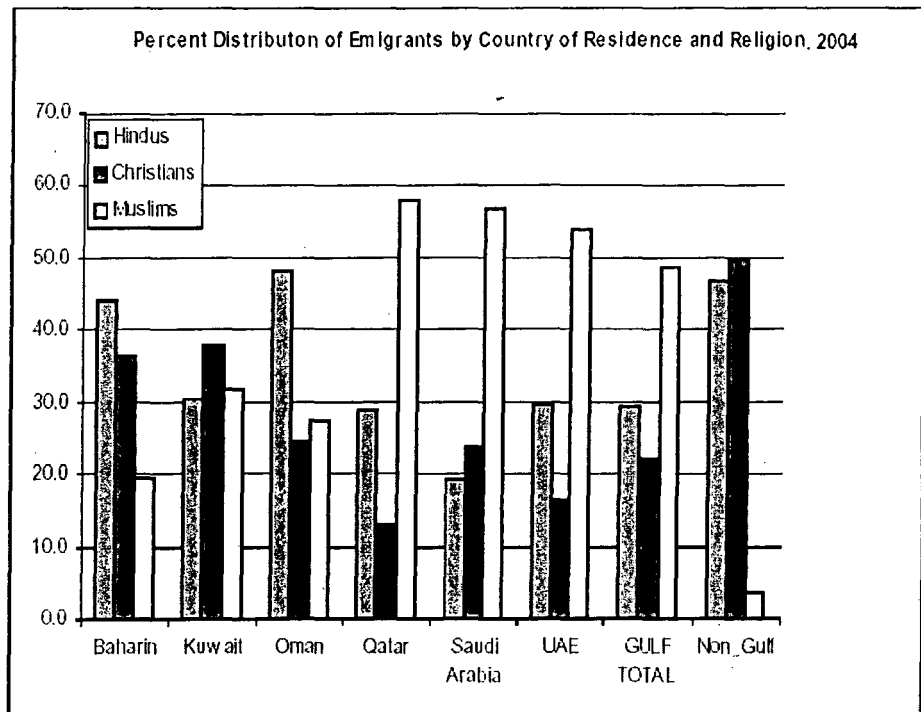
Source: Department of Health Services Report on Migration, Kerala, As quoted as, Joyojeet Pal, Sergiu Nedevschi^a, Rabin K. Patra Eric A. Brewer, 'A Multi-Disciplinary Approach to Shared Access Village Computing Initiatives: The Case of Akshaya project Malappuram, Kerala.

As we mentioned earlier, the Arab workers welcomed the massive eviction of workers from the GCC States, during the Gulf war. The resultant emptiness in the labour market, created more employment opportunities for the Asian workers. The demand for foreign workers in the GCC countries depends up on several factors. The nationalisation of labour market, to some extent, lessened the demand for foreign workers in high profile jobs. Nevertheless, the unavailability of qualified domestic workers, reluctance of the nationals to take low profile jobs and the competition from other groups of foreign workers reinforced the demand of foreign employment in the region.

Communities and Migration Pattern from Kerala

As far as migration from Kerala is concerned, community factor is an important element. The major religious groups in Kerala are Hindus, Muslims and Christians, among them Muslim migration to the Gulf countries is substantially high. Though Muslims account for only one fifth of the total population of the state, they form as high as 78 per cent of the migrants, where as Hindus and Christians account for only about 12 and 10 percent respectively.

^a Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, University of California, Berkeley



Source: K.C. Zachariah, S, Irudaya Rajan, Working paper 363, Centre for Development studies, Thiruvananthapuram, September 2004. p17,

Muslims have an advantage over others in migration to the Arab countries for quite a lot of reasons- historical, cultural, and economic apart from the religious one. The illiterate, less educated and unskilled often migrate to Arab countries from the Muslim community and their number is significantly higher than those from other communities. It is also a fact that the increasing aspirations for Arab jobs restrain Muslim youth from continuing their education. This, in way constraints the development capabilities

Muslims are the dominant emigrant group in all the northern districts of Kerala, among these, Malappuram, one of the most Muslim populated districts goes ahead with the position of the migrants. Kozhikode and Kannur are other districts from where higher levels of migration take place.

Kerala caste, religion, and gender profiles of migrants (1998)

	International emigrants (Percentage)				Local out-migrants			
	Male	Female	Total	Proportion of females	Male	Female	Total	Proportion of
SC/ST ¹⁸	1.4	2.1	1.5	12.9	4.9	4.5	4.8	22.6
Ezhawas ¹⁹	7.5	9.7	7.7	11.7	21.2	18.1	20.4	21.4
Nairs ²⁰	14.0	8.2	13.4	5.7	24.2	14.3	21.8	15.9
Syrian Chrst.	10.6	21.2	12.1	20.8	17.1	32.8	20.9	38.0
Roman Catholic	7.4	19.0	8.4	20.9	8.9	17.7	11.0	38.8
Muslim	52.0	25.1	49.5	4.7	15.6	1.5	12.2	3.0
Others (mainly Hindu)	7.1	8.7	7.3	11.1	8.2	10.9	8.8	29.9
Total	100	100	100	9.3	100	100	100	24.2

Source: Joyojeet Pal, Sergiu Nedeveschi^a, Rabin K. Patra Eric A. Brewer, 'A Multi-Disciplinary Approach to Shared Access Village Computing Initiatives: The Case of Akshaya project Malappuram, Kerala.

Sex, Age and Marital Status

It is a fact that the migration from India to the Gulf countries is a male phenomenon.²¹ The simple reason for this is the shortage of suitable job opportunities and environment for women in the Gulf countries. In India, males outnumber females in international migration. This trend is more or less similar in Kerala too. The sex, age and marital status are the principal factors need to be discussed in connection with the migration from Kerala. "Migrants from Kerala always comprised more

¹⁸ Scheduled Castes and Tribes

¹⁹ Dalit - historically oppressed castes.

²⁰ Upper caste Hindus

^a Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, University of California, Berkeley

²¹ Population Studies No. 50, New York: United Nations, 1973, p248.

males than females and migration has been a factor contributing to the unique sex ratio (favouring females) in the state, in clear contrast to other states of India."²² Nursing, teaching and domestic services are some of the few vocations, which are open to women; furthermore, Indian society still does not favour independent female migration abroad. The studies conducted in Kerala villages in the 1970s found that not more than two per cent of total numbers of the migrants to the Gulf countries were women. The amount of fair sex ratio among the Indian population in the Gulf countries is also very less as the majority of Indian migrant workers does not take their families with them. This trend, to a certain extent, could be explained by the fact that only those workers with a substantial amount of salary are all set to take their families along with them. Other factors that hinder the migrants to bring their family to the country where they are working are the higher cost of living and the socio cultural differences.

If we examine the age composition of the migrants, it is seen that most of the migrants are young at the time of their first migration. According to a study conducted by Commerce Research Bureau (1978) in Kerala, it was found that 79 per cent of the migrants workers were 35 years of age or below. Another study found that 84 percent of migrants were under 35 years of age and that about 50 per cent of the workers are unmarried. Some studies pointed out that the wide superficial show of the migration phenomenon from Kerala, according to them, the migrants were young persons, mostly males, and most of them hailed

²² K. C. Zachariah et al, *'Socio-economic and Demographic Consequences of Migration in Kerala'* Working, Thiruvananthapuram: Centre for Development Studies, Kerala, May 2000, p, 7.

from rural areas without good educational qualification or technical expertise.

Age Distribution of Migrants at the Time of First Migration	
Age group	Proportion of migrants(Percent)
Less than 20 years	9.2
20-25 years	31.7
25-35 years	37.5
35-45 years	17.4
45-60 years	4.2
Total	100.0

Source:-P. R Gopinathan Nair, 'Asian Migration to the Arab World: Kerala (India) (Thiruvananthapuram, Centre for Development Studies, Kerala.1992, p, 13

Migration from Kerala is essentially a male business. Among the different communities in the state, the leading percentage of female migrants is Christians. The Christian community contributed almost half of the female emigrants. Hindus have a relatively low representation of females. Muslims have the lowest proportion. Muslims contributed nearly 50 per cent of the emigrants, but their contribution of the female emigrants was less than 25 per cent. About one fifth of the emigrants from the Christian Community are females. On the other hand, less than 5 per cent of the Muslim emigrants are females. The proportion of females among emigrants of the Nair community was not much different from that of Muslims.

Data reveals that half of the of migrants are married persons at the time of their first migration, and most them are in the age group of 30 to 45 years. As per some study, it is found that, majority of the migrants

younger than 25 years were unmarried²³. At the time of their first migration, unmarried migrants are in the forefront and their proportion is higher as well.

Economic Impact of the Gulf Migration

The impact of emigration on a country's economic growth depends on "the size of migration in relation to its population, characteristics of emigrants, and its involvements in development projects in the source country."²⁴ The most remarkable and impressive impact of the migration to Gulf countries from Kerala is the impact on the economic development of the state. Remittance from the Gulf has played a major role in restructuring the Kerala society, at an unprecedented scale.²⁵ The migration and the progress of income flow as remittances caused an extraordinary changes in Kerala's economy since mid 1970s. Remittance is the main benefit of external migration, providing scarce foreign exchange and scope for higher levels of savings and investments. Remittances over the past 30 years have financed much of India's balance of trade deficit and have thus reduced the current account of deficit. Remittances have had a considerable impact on the Kerala's economy. It constitutes 21% of state income in the 1990s. This flow "appears to have increased wealth: although the average per capita consumption in Kerala was below the national average until

²³ P. R. Gopinathan Nair, (Gunatilleke, Godfrey edit), *Migration of Asian Workers to the Arab World*, Tokyo: The United Nations University Press, 1986, p, 74.

²⁴ M.C. Madhavan, *Indian Emigrants: Numbers, Characteristics, and Economic Impact*, New York: Population and Development Review, 11, (3), 1985, p, 468.

²⁵ K.C. Zachariah, et al, *Gulf Revisited, Economic Consequences of Emigration from Kerala, Emigration and Unemployment'*, Thiruvananthapuram: Centre for Development Studies September 2004, p,50.

1978–79, by 1999–2000 consumer expenditure in Kerala exceeded the national average by around 41%.”²⁶

Malabar, the northern part of Kerala, has witnessed major economic changes because of the Gulf migration since the 1970s. The proposed study attempts to analyze the impact of Gulf migration, especially on the cultural life of the Malabar region. It is a fact that migration to the Gulf countries is not a standardized process throughout Kerala. As the major part of migration to Gulf countries is occurring in north Kerala, the Gulf migration from southern Kerala concentrates mainly around two districts: Trivandrum and Pathanamthitta. On the other hand, the northern districts of Kerala, like, Malappuram, Trichur, Calicut, Cannanore and Kasargod, have high intensity of migration to the Gulf countries. As a result, the impact of the phenomena is visible greater in northern parts of the state than in southern districts. Prior to the labour migration to Gulf region, most of the villages in north Kerala were economically backward. In addition, majority of the people were hardly educated. Fishing and agriculture were the major occupation in the region. The situation changed considerably with the increase in migration to the Gulf countries. It has also favourably influenced hundreds of families and their inhabitants. “The opening of the Arab countries in the early 1970s came as a god send to the economically worst off and the chronically unemployed sectors of the population of Kerala.”²⁷

²⁶ Ravi Srivastava, et all, *'An overview of migration in India, its impacts and key issues'* Paper presented at the Regional Conference on Migration, Development and Pro-Poor Policy Choices in Asia, Dhaka, Bangladesh: on 22–24 June 2003, pp, 1-2.

Kerala's per capita income was lower than the other states in India prior, to the large amount of migration to the West Asian countries especially towards the Gulf region. The situation gradually changed with the increased pace in the migration process. "The analysis of the state-level performance in terms of gross domestic product under economic reforms (1980-1998) indicates that the state of Kerala belongs to the group of seven states with accelerated growth in the 90s."²⁸

The migration process also had tremendous impact on the regional economy, especially on labour markets, consumption, savings, investment, poverty, income distribution etc. On the whole, the "Gulf migration helped the migrants households to attain higher levels of income, consumption and acquisitions of assets, resulted in the overall reduction of poverty in Kerala."²⁹

The economic impact of migration to the Gulf countries reduces the level of poverty from the society in general and rural areas in particular. "Migration reduces the uncertainty of the family income, provides investment funds, and contributes to livelihood for those with small plots."³⁰ Apart from the poverty reduction it also progressively improved other major economic activities. The relation between emigration and economic activity is very close. Directly or indirectly, emigration from Kerala affected economic activities, and the levels of employment and unemployment in the state. In turn, the economic

²⁸ K.Pushpangadan, 'Remittances, Consumption and Economic Growth in Kerala: 1980-2000', Tiruvananthapuram, Centre for Development Studies, March 2003, p, 7

²⁹ B. A Prakash, 'Gulf Migration and its Economic Impact, the Kerala Experience', Mumbai: Economic and Political Weekly, December, 12, 1998, p, 3209.

³⁰ Arjan De Haan, et all, Labour Mobility and Rural Society 'Introduction: Migrant Workers and their Role in the Rural Change' London: The Journal of Development Studies, (Special issue) 38(5) 2002 p, 5.

activity in the state does have some relations with the magnitude of emigration and its trends and characteristics.³¹

Most migrants used to make remittances in regular instalments. The amounts, earned, were kept in banks mostly in one's own account or the names of parents, spouses, or other members of the households. After completing the routine expenses, they used the balance amounts for other profitable expense like, better education of their inhabitants and marriage of their daughters, buying land, building houses, acquisition of assets, repayment of loans, construction works, repair or renovations of buildings or houses, medical treatments and investment in the business.³² One of the major impacts caused by Gulf migration is the formation of towns. With the movement of remittance towards construction industries in both rural and urban areas, the post 1970s recorded a boom in the process of urbanization. It also resulted in the development of towns in rural Kerala.

Migrants' also invests their money in banks of the host country or in the bank situated their own villages. Starting business of their own, in the home country, is another major activity found in the return migrants. Majority of the return migrants in the Malabar area are engaged in business like restaurants, grocery or textiles with the remittance they earned from the Gulf region. There has been also been a proliferation in the number of vehicles, like cars and taxies, most modern home appliances like refrigerators, televisions and other infrastructural facilities. "While the agricultural and industrial sectors stagnated in the migration period, the tertiary sector, especially

³¹ K.C. Zachariah, n. 25, p, 23.

³² Nair P.R.G, '*Asian Migration to the Arab World: Migration from Kerala (India)*' Thiruvananthapuram: Centre for Development Studies, 1986, p, 51.

transport (number of motor vehicles), trade, hotels and restaurants, banking and real estates, showed a rapid growth rate.”³³ As an influence of the Gulf countries, the need for improved education facilities also gains prominence and it further initiates a shift in the traditional approach to education. It is a general statement that the remittances in Kerala are used to invest in order to improve the social status of families.³⁴

The remittances from expatriates in the Middle East provided some economic relief, though it does not provide an alternative to the problems related to economic crisis. However, considerable increase in the development of poverty diminished, and the economic achievements are an immense addition as far as the economic conditions of their prior migratory periods is concerned. These achievements changed their face of living to a larger extent. For instance, the face of Malappuram, the district that sends maximum number of expatriates to the Middle East from Malabar and Kerala and also one of the largest Muslim majority area in India as well, changed entirely since last two or three decades. Concrete buildings began to replace the small huts in the region. In each and every corner of the district constructions of huge mosques that could represent the economic richness of the region began to start.³⁵ The same changes could be spotted in all nooks and corners of the other districts in Malabar area.

³³ Perma A Kurian, *The Middle Eastern Migration from Kerala, Kaleidoscopic Ethnicity* New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2004, p, 70.

³⁴ Myron Weiner, *International Migration and Development: Indians in the Persian Gulf*, New York: Population and Development Review, 8, No, 1, (March 1982) p, 6.

³⁵ Kodi Abdurrahman, *The Socio- economic impact of migration to the Gulf on Kerala Muslims, A brief case study of Malabar Muslims*, Delhi: Muslim India, 22:11-12 , November- December 2004, p, 1266.

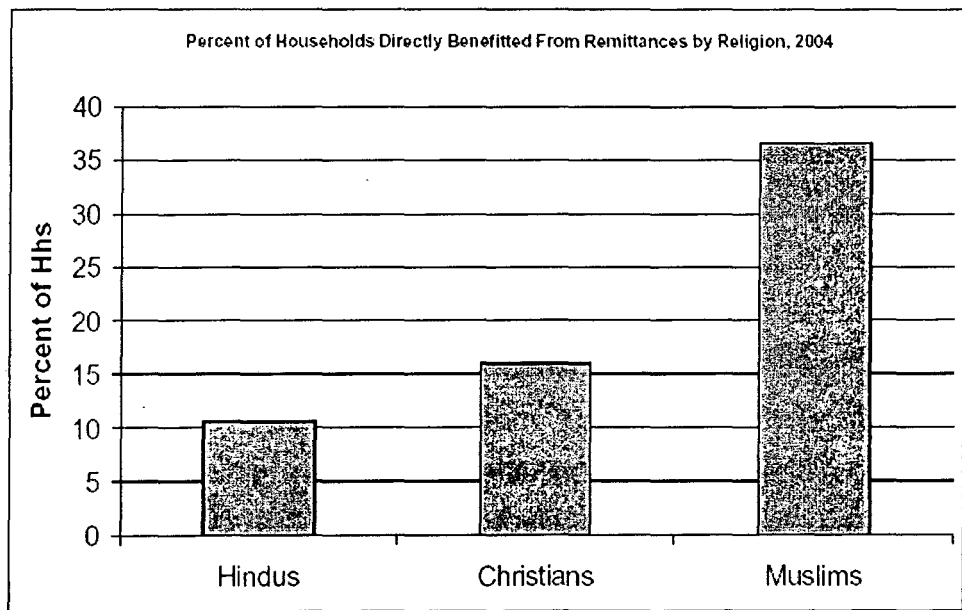
Making as much money is one of the central intents for the mainstream of the migrants, it moreover attracts migrants towards the Gulf region in both skilled and unskilled workers, in spite the fact that all migrants cannot be paid as much money they desire. If they earn enough, they may not have the propensity to remit money. Even though people working in Gulf sending money back their home remains as important.³⁶ The duration of the expatriates outside their motherland shows an essential part in bettering the welfare of the households. People consider that staying long period in the Gulf will help to make more earnings. So many migrants from the Malabar area are staying for eight and ten years with the view to benefit from the economic impacts, so as to fulfil their dreams.

The Muslims were the prominent among the beneficiaries of Gulf remittances more than other religions in Kerala and this was not an exception to the Malabar region as well. Studies conducted by the Centre for Development Studies indicate that, Muslims received 47 percent of the total remittances in Kerala. The study further reveals that the largest part of the remittance is coming towards the region of Malabar, especially districts like Malappuram, Kozhikode, Kannur and Kasargodu. In comparison with the other northern districts Wayanad district of Malabar lies far behind that of the others.

“Among the total remittance of Rs 7,977 crore, Rs 2,365 crore was received by the Hindu households, Rs 2,021 crore by the Christian households and Rs 3,590 crore received by the Muslim households. The average remittances per emigrant were estimated to be Rs 43,220.

³⁶ Duan Chengrong et al, *Emigration From Kerala, Characteristics of Migrants and their Contribution to Household Economy*, New Delhi: IASSI Quarterly, Vol. 16, Nos, 3&4, 1997, p, 244.

There was not much variation in this respect across communities. On the other hand, average remittances per household vary considerably by religion. The Muslim households have an average remittance of Rs 24,000 (Muslim households have larger number of emigrants per household) while Hindu households have an average of only Rs 6,134 per household”³⁷.



Source: K.C. Zachariah, S. Irudaya Rajan, *Gulf Revisited, Economic Consequences of Emigration from Kerala, Emigration and Unemployment*, Working paper 363, Centre for Development studies, Thiruvananthapuram, September 2004. p, 39.

The correlation between migration and economic activity is very interrelated. Directly or indirectly, emigration from Kerala affects in large amount the economic activity and the level of employment and unemployment in the state since last three decades. In turn, the economic activity in the state does have some impact on the magnitude of emigration and its trends and characteristics.

³⁷ K.C. Zachariah, n. 31, p, 39.

“Before emigration, about one-third of the emigrants had been employed as casual labourers. The rest among them i.e. 9 percent had been working in the private sector and 7 percent had been self-employed. Among the return emigrants, the proportion of labourers increased a little to 36 percent. But the most significant change was in the case of those employed in the private sector, the share of which was 36 percent among return emigrants but had been only 9 percent among the emigrants, prior to emigration. Emigration is associated with a shift from the “job seeker” status to the status of the “employed” in private sector, and semi government sectors. More than a-third of the emigrants had been unemployed prior to their emigration; as expected, emigration by itself had a salutary effect on the unemployment situation in Kerala.³⁸

In brief, the Gulf migration process has had a significant influence on the achievements of the economic condition in Kerala. The higher growth rates and expansion of economy worked out mainly to the combined end product of migration to the Gulf. In one way or other its effects could be viewed in all aspects of the socio-economic and cultural life of Kerala in general and in Malabar region in particular. It includes every aspect of the life like education, medical treatment, banking, building or renovation of house or construction new houses. Undoubtedly it is a fact that, more than half of the migrant workers were able to improve the standard of their living because of the widespread economic improvement, than they had prior to their migration to the Gulf region. This particular improvement was their main goal and it could affect all aspects of their life. The same is the

³⁸ Ibid, pp, 28 & 29.

effect of Gulf migration in the economic condition of state and on the social and cultural conditions as well.

Foreign remittances to Kerala economy, 1972-2000

Year	Remittances in billions	Exchange rate Rs/ US\$ actual	Remittances US\$ in billions	Remittances as % of GDP
1972-73	0.07	7.67	0.01	0.57
1973-74	0.09	7.79	0.01	0.58
1974-75	0.19	7.94	0.02	1.06
1975-76	0.37	8.68	0.04	2.06
1976-77	0.92	8.97	0.1	4.51
1977-78	1.36	8.58	0.16	6.41
1978-79	1.29	8.22	0.16	5.52
1979-80	1.8	8.09	0.22	6.88
1980-81	2.29	7.9	0.37	9.11
1981-82	3.37	8.97	0.38	9.44
1982-83	4.32	9.66	0.45	10.2
1983-84	5.68	11.34	0.5	11.29
1984-85	7.8	11.89	0.66	13.8
1985-86	5.22	12.23	0.43	8.94
1986-87	8.61	12.77	0.67	12.64
1987-88	8.91	12.96	0.69	11.77
1988-89	8.24	14.48	0.57	9.8
1989-90	11.56	16.64	0.69	11.62
1990-91	8.73	17.94	0.49	7.77
1991-92	24.28	24.47	0.99	16.8
1992-93	30.25	30.65	0.99	18.19
1993-94	38.82	31.36	1.28	17.22
1994-95	60.84	31.39	1.94	22.34
1995-96	70.67	33.44	2.11	21.19
1996-97	95.21	35.49	2.68	24.5
1997-98	107.61	37.16	2.9	23.58
1998-99	108.17	42.07	3.57	19.95
1999-00	136.52	43.33	3.15	22.63

Source: as quoted as Motwani, K Jagat.in 'Dynamics of international migration from India: Its economic and social implications* (Item 8(e) of the provisional agenda) Economic and Social commission for Asia and the Pacific, Ad Hoc Expert Group Meeting on Migration and Development, Bangkok: 27-29 August 2003,

Positive and negative effects of remittances: summary

<u>Negative</u>	<u>Positive</u>
Less investment and capital accumulation	Dependent on definition: Education, nourishment, housing, health care, etc. can also be seen as an investment in the future: Important welfare effect.
Little effect on productive employment	Indirect effect on productive employment through e.g. construction activities, retail trade.
Inflation Static growth (dependent on foreign countries)	Multiplier-effect. Secondary effects of remittances lead to growth
Dependency	Only a limited risk of dependency
Disruption of development Monetary disruption	Contribution to Development Accelerator of locale economy through a.o. regional concentration and contribution of migrant associations.
Rural exodus	Multiplier-effect especially in rural area's where the local economy is supported.
Reinforcement of inequalities	Redistribution effect: mobilization of social capital

Source: Professor Dr. Johan Wets: Migration and Development: Myths and Facts International Organization for Migration (IOM), Organization for Migration (IOM), European Policy Centre, Geneva: EPC Issue Paper No.1127.1.2004.

In brief, in this chapter, we enquire about the various aspects of the migration from Kerala to the Arabian Gulf countries specifying their socio economic conditions, the push and pull factors facilitation migration particularly to the Gulf countries, education level and the community factors of the migrants, destinations, age and marital status

etc. The economic influences and impacts of migration in the various facets of the society as a whole are being vividly explained here. These formulations trace the compulsions on migrants. The study incorporates the socio-cultural impacts of the migration on the society and the way it benefited from it. Migration, as a process, is put to a detailed examination leading to an individual as well as a social phenomenon.

Chapter III

The Socio Cultural Impacts of Gulf Migration

Impact of Gulf Migration on Cultural Life of Malabar

International migration is the process which helps to spread out the human civilization with enriching cultures, circulating ideas and proliferating social, political and economic changes at the place of origin and destinations.¹ The key and foremost endeavor of migration is to improve the standards of living and to better the economic and social positions. Migration movements therefore, influence daily life and in turn bring changes on all spheres of the life of the individual, his family and the society. It is in this regard, the economic, social and cultural impacts concerning migration gains considerable significance.

“International migration has had considerable impact on demographic structures, expenditure patterns, social structures and poverty levels. Impacts also include reducing population growth; enhancing the dependency burden within households; increasing consumption expenditures and reducing poverty levels. External migration flows are regulated by the government.”² The discussions regarding the impact of migration become worthwhile when it examines both forms of its impacts: the positive and the negative impacts.

Culture influences significantly on migrants and the societies they represent. “Culture is defined as the sum of characteristics of a society, including the language, religion, politics, art, food custom and related element that shape and distinguish it from other societies.”³ Every man is born and brought up in a cultural environment. Culture, includes all that man has acquired in his individual and social life. The impact of culture includes the way of life of the members of the society or groups, their dress, their marriage, customs and family life, the pattern

¹ T.V Sekher, *Migration and Social Chang*, New Delhi: Rawat Publication, 1997, p, 13.

² Ravi Srivastava, et all, ‘An overview of migration in India, its impacts and key issues’ Paper presented at the Regional Conference on Migration, Development and Pro-Poor Policy Choices in Asia Dhaka, Bangladesh: on 22–24 June 2003, pp, 1-2.

³ IATA (International Air Transport Association), ‘International Travel and Tourism Training Programme, Foundation Course’, Study Material, p, 64.

of work, religion and ceremonies. Culture varies from society to society. Society is a web of social relationship. Hence, social change results in a change in the system of social relationship. The term social change indicates the changes that take place in human interaction and interrelations. Or in other words; it can be stated as “the change in social structure, social values, institutions, property relations, economic pursuits, personal and role distribution in modern society.”⁴ Social change refers to a process approachable to several kinds of changes; changes in the man made conditions of life, attitude and behavior, and beliefs. Social change is a major factor of culture.

Migration from Kerala is the single most important factor in the development situation of Kerala in the recent years. “Kerala is becoming too much dependant on migration for employment, sustenance, housing, household amenities, institution building, and many other developmental activities. As a result, Kerala has become virtually integrated with the world economy, especially with the Gulf economy to a large extent and with the economies of the United States and the West European countries to a lesser extent.”⁵ Migration from Kerala to other states in India and to countries outside has now become so rampant. Its impact is felt in every aspect of life in the state. At present emigration has become all-pervasive in the economic and social life of the state. It has outpaced migration within India. Almost all families in Kerala are affected by migration to the Gulf region in one way or another. Migration is affecting every aspect of life; economic,

⁴ K.L Sharma, *‘Indian Society’*, National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) p, 163.

⁵K.C. Zachariah, et all, *‘Socio-Economic and Demographic Consequences of Migration in Kerala’* Thiruvananthapuram: Centre for Development Studies, May 2000, p, 4.

⁵ Nair P.R.G, *‘Influence, Impact and Implications of Migration to the Middle East from Kerala (India)’*, Thiruvananthapuram: Centre for Development Studies (CDS),1998, p,9.

social, demographic, political and even religious realms; in Kerala.⁶ It further results in reducing the level of poverty and diminishes the rate of unemployment to a large extent.

The ongoing process of migration, especially the Gulf migration, since 1970s, has had an impact on each and every facet of Kerala's economy and society. The Gulf migration indeed caused positive and negative, favourable and unfavourable impacts on the Kerala society. However, the positive impacts outnumbered the negative impacts. It has brought some major changes in the life style of the society. It undeniably covers all aspects of culture and social changes. As for all, the main intention of the migration to the Gulf countries is to better the standards of living and to stable the economic weakness.

Social Impacts of Migration from Kerala

The economic potentials are the key factor for the all the major changes, that resulted due to the migration to the Gulf States from Kerala. The economy also determines the improvements taking place in the society as a whole. The process of Gulf migration initiated a rapid growth in the economic sphere of Kerala in general and Malabar in particular. It has also led to a considerable level of change in the society. "Kerala has become part of the Gulf countries, if not geographically and politically, but very much so economically, socially, and culturally. What happens in the Gulf countries have their repercussions in Kerala; and what happens in Kerala have in turn, their repercussions in the Gulf countries."⁷ Social and cultural changes also affected majority of the migrants and their family.

⁶K.C.Zachariah, et all, 'Impact of Migration on Kerala's Economy and Society' Thiruvananthapuram: Centre for Development Studies, October 1999, p, 5.

⁷ K. C. Zachariah et all, '*Socio-economic and Demographic Consequences of Migration in Kerala*' Working, Thiruvananthapuram: Centre for Development Studies, Kerala, May 2000,p, 6.

The society has changed because of the constant interaction with various kinds of people from different nationalities working in these nations. Migrants bring a set of social and cultural tools that aid their adjustment to their new lives. Migrants interact to varying degree with the host society. They make sense of their experiences using the interpretive frames they bring with them. So the new behaviors and views that migrants adopt are also a function of how things were done at home"⁸.

The change in the social status is another major impact in the social field. The migrants to the Gulf replaced the old elite groups of the society with the formation of a new class. The position and status enjoyed traditionally by the land owning families is now challenged.⁹ The old elite groups were rich enough with the ownership of lands and agricultural practices they possessed. It is a fact that some elite Muslim and Hindu families in northern part of Malabar held the position for quite a long time. This situation changed to a considerable level in the contemporary times. At present we hardly find those elite families in the areas of Malabar. Now the concept of richness is based on the economic stability through the Gulf migration and not the ownership of land. Many poor families have become rich overnight. It is clear that the Gulf migration has contributed drastically in social equalization. It has provided an opportunity for economically unfortunate to enhance their economic position and through it revise the socio- economic hierarchy¹⁰. Such people are automatically given high position in the society. As a result, the urban-rural differences which existed during the earlier times are ebbed out in the society of Kerala.

⁸ Peggy Levitt, Wellesley College, *'Social Remittances: Migration Driven Local - Level Forms of Cultural Diffusion'* New York: International Migration Review, Vol, 32, n 14, 1998, P, 930.

⁹ T.V Sekher, n. 1 p, 139.

¹⁰ Ibid, p, 139

The socio-cultural activities due to the migration to the Gulf States also underwent fundamental changes. It can be identified as an influence of interaction and integration with the people of the different cultures and traditions. "The structural analysis of change differs from the cultural one which is in terms of particularities of custom, values and ideational phenomenon, their integration, interaction and change. Structural analysis is focused on the network of social relationship, which though culturally distinct share common and comparable attributes at a higher level of abstraction called social structure. Thus caste, kinship class occupational groups' factory and administrative structure which comprise distinctive fields of social interaction constitute structural realities; they emerge from human needs and existential conditions of man and are comparable intra culturally as well as cross-culturally."¹¹

Migration from Kerala witnessed some demographic changes in population at the place of origin and destination. Such effects are visible very clearly in the society. Studies on the population indicate that every decade since 1950 was characterized by the reduction in the rate of population growth. The growth has been steadily decreasing ever since out-migration from the state started exceeding in-migration. In 1981-1991, due to the migration, the natural increase of population turned down by one fifth from the state. The effect is more visible during 1991-2001. The birth rate in Kerala became relatively low. Had there been no migration from the state, the rate would have been even lower: the birth rate would have become lower by 0.7 per 1000 population.¹²

Another significant change in the society is the increase in number of nuclear family system, especially in the Malabar region. The rapid growth in the economic condition due to the Gulf migration facilitated

¹¹ Singh Yendra, *'Modernization of Indian tradition'* (a systemic study of social change) Jaipur: Rawat publications, 1972.p, 16 & 17.

¹² K.C. Zachariah, n. 7, p, 6 & 7.

the increase in large small families in the state. It is a fact that 'the single-member household in the state is increased by 33 percent and two-member households by 42 percent, as a result of the process of migration. The proportion of large families has undergone a corresponding decrease.'¹³ It is mainly due to the increase in economic stability and the feeling to carry on a comfortable life than earlier, and secondly owning a house is one of the bigger ambitions of the majority of migrants.

Impact on Religious and Other Social Activities

One of the major impacts of migration is the increase in migrants' attention to the religious and other charitable activities. There are various factors behind these changes. People in the Gulf States are inclined to the religious to the extent that even during their working time they go to the mosque to perform Salat (Namaz). The subsequent change in the religious and other social activities of the migrants had its influence due to their interactions with the religious Arab society. Majority of the migrants maintain it regularly in their daily life even when they are at native places. In effect, the increase in observing religious practices turned them to be more generous in aiding the needy, and they also engage themselves in aiding financially to various educational institutions like, colleges, schools and religious organizations. In addition to this, they also render help to their relatives, friends and other needy persons. Due to availability of financial aid and social support, various organizations started functioning in Gulf region. The change in attitude towards religion among migrants in turn made their households and relatives to be more concerned about religious matters. The economic prosperity and outside exposure has not led to a decline in religious faith and practices

¹³ Ibid, p, 8.

in the community, contrarily, the changes were observed in the outlook, attitudes, and life style of the people only.¹⁴

The impacts of migration are also observed among the people who have returned after completing their contracts in the Gulf States. They involved themselves in politics, religious organizations and utilize their remittances in such activities. With this the migrants get more respect and a good position in the society. Presently in Malabar, a number of political parties and other institutions are also being paid substantially by the Gulf migrants for building their respective offices and other infrastructure. As on political level, migration could not get enough attention to transform the people from one party to another.

Impacts of Gulf Migration on Women

Migration to the Arabian Gulf States has made considerably influenced the life style and involvement of women in the public life. "Migration may be fostering a significant change in the status of women. The non migrant women acquire a more independent outlook by having to manage the household including financial transactions. It found that although such women tend to become self-reliant over time. They take own increased responsibilities for running the households their on, and even the management of money and property.¹⁵ Studies about the role of women in the current migrants' households gains considerable significance, especially in the Malabar region. In the case of current migration, majority of the households are headed by the females.¹⁶ The main reason is that, the phenomena of migration basically occur in male of the family. It leads to the automatic transition of leadership of family to the females. The high proportion of the nuclear family system

¹⁴ T. V. Sekhar, n. 9, p, 141.

¹⁵Prakash C Jain, '*Gulf Migration and its Impact on India and Indo- Gulf Relations*' New Delhi: Journal of Peace studies, 12, Vol, V, Issue, 1, Jan- Feb, 1998 p, 4.

¹⁶ Duan, Chengrong et all, '*Emigration From Kerala, Characteristics of Migrants and their Contribution to Household Economy*', New Delhi: IASSI Quarterly, Vol. 16, Nos, 3&4, 1997, p, 229.

in the recent migration scenario also initiates the female member to head their family. It is clear that these circumstances observed as a significant impact on the females of the society. Furthermore, in the words of Gulati "the migration of men breaks down women's isolation increases mobility and brings them into contact with a wider network of institutions than were in their purview before."¹⁷

The role of women in the household after the migration of the males from homes is a decisive factor in the recent years. Contrary to the traditional situation, women are more actively performing their role in the mainstream of the society, especially in Malabar region. The role has acquired the dimension of a more responsible one in which she has to run the household, besides looking after her children and other works. "It gives them greater autonomy and control over the income and assets of the households. However, when the husband returns from abroad they again take over the reins of the households."¹⁸ The woman themselves fulfill the needs of the members of their family. The remittances from their husbands or relatives strengthen their responsibility in handling the same with much care and attention. Apart from loneliness, they also face the burden to manage the households, in which they had no prior experience as their husbands were with them before. "They (women in the households) got increasingly burdened with added family responsibilities with the handling of which they had little acquaintance so long as their husbands were with them. But over a period of time and with a helping hand from abroad over the ISD, most of them came out of their feeling of desolateness. Their sense of autonomy, independent status, management skills and experience in dealing with the world outside their homes- all developed the hard way-would remain with them for

¹⁷ Leela Gulati, *In the Absence of their men, the Impact of Male migration on Women* New: Delhi: Sage Publications, 1993, p. 4.

¹⁸ Duan Chengrong n 16, p, 234.

the rest of their lives for the benefit of their families and the society at large. In the long run, the transformation of these one million women would have contributed more to the development of Kerala society than all the temporary euphoria created by foreign remittances and the acquisition of modern gadgetry"¹⁹.

It is a fact that the process of migration resulted in an increase in the number of women headed households responsibilities, but an extensive evaluation regarding their participation has not been made so far. Due to lack of education and their interaction with the society handling matters like, economic usage remains to be a hard task for the majority of women in the case of Gulf Wives. However, present situation reveals that they are mature enough to develop their skills in the particular field of life. "They bring in remittances, work experience and skills, and contacts with the outside world. They have a right for help from the community when they need it."²⁰

The role of women in managing things became more effective in due course of time. It includes matters like, the transactions with banks, maintaining accounts, educating their children etc. It can be considered as an impact of the process associated with Gulf migration. "Emigration of married men who left behind the responsibility of the management of the households to women in the family, has over the years, transformed about one million "Gulf Wives" from the status of modest housewives to the status of efficient managers of household affairs, capable of dealing with the outside world, maintaining family accounts, transacting business in banks, planning and pursuing the education of children and taking care of the health and well-being of the entire family."²¹

¹⁹ K.C. Zachariah, n. 13, p, 4.

²⁰ Ibid, p, 39.

²¹ K.C. Zachariah, n. 6, p, 46.

Migration to the Gulf and its influence on the status of women gains considerable attention due to the impact in the life style of thousands of women. "Millions of married women in Kerala are living away from their husbands. The absence of husband causes several hardships for wives but at the same it brings several benefits also. For example, it could give the Gulf wives an opportunity to develop their talents, expertise, status and independence to their full potential. In that respect the initial handicaps could be turned into a blessing for the family and the society in general. In the opinion of the Gulf wives, the principal problems arising from their husbands' emigration were, in the order of importance: (a)loneliness; (b)added responsibilities; (c)adverse effect on children's education; (d)debt incurred to finance emigration; (e)increased anxiety, and (f)financial gains not up to expectation. Nearly a third of the Gulf wives, especially the older among them, complained about added responsibilities because of husbands' migration: responsibilities to take care of children's education, family finances, family health, and fulfilling family obligations in social, cultural and religious areas. Migration results in considerable increase in family finances. Management of the old and new family assets and income is a major added responsibility of the Gulf wives"²².

While discussing the impacts of migration, the enormous economic improvements and huge remittance sent by the emigrants have become vital concerns. Further analysis of the impact of the process does not give prior consideration to the transformation of the role of women in the society. But the scholars involved in recent studies on migration

²² Motwani, K Jagat, *'Dynamics of international migration from India: its economic and social implication'* (Item 8(e) of the provisional agenda) Economic and Social Commission for Asia And The Pacific, Ad Hoc Expert Group Meeting on Migration and Development, Bangkok: 27-29 August, 2003, pp, 19 & 20.

gives momentous attention on this particular issue. So the migration of the people to the Gulf States presents to have a positive impact on the women in Kerala and they work in every walk of the life. It helped them to adjust to various problems and also to have an impact on the mainstream living conditions of the society. Furthermore, due to this process, they have been participating in all major activities like political and even religious matters. It seems to be one of the seemingly significant impacts which were caused by the Gulf migration.

Impact of Migration on Education

The most essential element of human resources is the attainment of education. Each and every one in the society is eager to get high level and quality education. Education is the other field in which the migration has had its influence. "Education is an important sphere of well-being that can be affected by migration, and a livelihood outcome in its own right. With regard to migration, education may be an important determinant in accessing more positive migration streams. Through migration, individuals may be educated or skilled (i.e. it may be a motive to migrate itself). Where migration is an accumulative strategy, not simply one of survival, future generations may benefit through investment in their education—this is part of the assumption that migration exposes migrants to new opportunities and values and can lead to changes in their patterns of investment. Education can assist the development of critical consciousness, and expose individuals to different values and norms. Education can have other positive spin off effects."²³

²³ Clare Waddington, *'Lively hood Outcomes of Migration for Poor People'*, Issued by the Development Research Centre on Migration, Globalisation and Poverty, Sussex Centre for Migration Research December 2003, pp, 30- 31.

In the field of education Kerala leads other states and is the only state in Indian which acquired the status of 100 percent literacy. It is in this context that the improvement that took place in the level of education in Kerala in general and Malabar in particular with regard to migration becomes important. During the earlier periods the proportion of education in Malabar region especially in Muslims were very poor. However, there are some historical reasons behind that. The attitude towards education turned with a rampant impact favouring the attainment of education since the last three decades. It is a fact that these changes have transpired on grounds of migration to the Gulf. It influenced greatly the sector of education benefiting the families of the emigrants and in the society a whole.

Early migrants to the Gulf, especially from the Malabar were not well educated. They were compelled to go abroad for particular reasons. These unskilled and not so well educated people were associated with the less paid jobs. They were unable to meet their daily expenditure. It was during their term in the Gulf region that they gradually became conscious of the reality and realised the value of education. The dissimilarities in the skilled and unskilled workers and the disparities in salaries further made them understand the importance of education in migrants. It brought out some contemplation and sentiments towards their relatives and communities, and indeed they felt that the consequences be deficient in education and they wanted it should not happen with other aspirants. Hence they were ready to do whatever possible for providing quality education for their relatives and children.

Recent analysis of the condition of migrants indicates that the majority of the migrants is well educated and spends much of their remittances on educational purposes. They want better educational qualifications

for their children. "A large number of emigrant households use a significant part of the remittances they received for education of their children."²⁴ "More than a million families depend on internal migrants' earnings for subsistence, children's education and other economic requirements. Whereas the educationally backward Muslims from the Thrissur-Malappuram region provide the backbone of emigration, the impact of remittances on housing and housing quality as well as on the acquisition of sophisticated household gadgets and other durables and on educational development and occupational mobility."²⁵

As mentioned earlier, the process of migration had its influence in improving the skill and education, especially after the opening up of the labour market in the Gulf region. "In order to migrate to the Gulf, employed youths join courses that help them to get skills required for job in West Asia. A number of vocational courses have been started by private agencies to train young people. It includes courses on architecture, mechanics, welding, computer operations, catering, tailoring, technicians, paramedical etc. This also has resulted in a qualitative change in the vocational education system in Kerala."²⁶

It is a fact that the migration to the Gulf countries affected positively the educational status of migrants, their children and relatives, especially the Muslim community. Migrants want sound education for their children and relatives because they are well aware of the need of quality education in the present circumstances. They spend lot of remittances on this particular issue. Another significant achievement in relation to the migration is the increase in status of education among the Muslim girls. In the Malabar area it was unusual for a girl to cross

²⁴ K. C. Zachariah, n. 20 p, 31.

²⁵ E. T. Mathew, et all, *'Impact of Migration on Kerala's Economy and Society'* Thiruvananthapuram: Centre for Development Studies, October 1999 pp, 4&7.

²⁶ B.A Prakash, *'Gulf Migration and its Economic Impact, the Kerala Experience'*, Mumbai: Economic and Political Weekly, December 12, 1998, p, 3211.

the level of tenth standard. From time immemorial there existed a practice of marrying the girl as early as possible. This situation has dramatically changed, largely because of the awareness about education and its value. In turn it favoured the girls; undeniably most of them now have good education in various educational institutions both in the professional and non professional courses. Even majority of the parents allow them to choose courses of interest. It is considered as a major shift in contrast to the traditional approach. Studies further reveal that no girl is left behind without getting up to higher secondary education in Malabar. This change in educational of girls has affected in selecting their life partners also. It further rises the age for marriage. Earlier, it hardly exceeded twenty or twenty-one years. Educated girls are independent in selecting their life partners; as they prefer educated men. Their parents are also liberal enough to let their children select their partners according to their desire. The importance of this change will strengthen the point that, this transformation came in such a place where majority of the people could not even read a letter from the husband or son, who stays abroad.

The present day Malabar is characterized by the visible increase in the number of educational institutions both in aided and non aided categories. Majority of these institutions are aided financially by the migrants in the Gulf region, directly or indirectly. These institutions also function effectively for providing sound education to the poor and destitute children. Majority of them are Islamic institutions, Mosques, and other Muslim institutions like Arabic colleges, Arts and Science colleges, engineering colleges, English medium schools, and nurseries. Yet another impact in this field that provides education starts from the shape of Madrassa²⁷ system. Earlier it taught only religious books, but currently it offers courses extensively on the latest information

²⁷ Madrassa is for studying the Islamic religion. It teaches Quran, Hadith (Prophet's traditions) and other Islamic subject.

technologies with proficiency in English and other facilities like, computer with internet services. Further it has been included in the syllabus. Apart from English, languages like, Urdu and Sanskrit are also taught in some religious institutions.

At the school level there has been a strong preference for English schools by the migrants for their dependences. Number of English medium schools doubled in recent past, and most of the migrants send their children to these English medium schools rather than other government and unaided schools under private managements. They recognize privileges and priorities of English language in this era of technology. In these schools many of them acquire accreditation from the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSC).

Another peculiar feature is the inclusion of Gulf studies in the syllabus of school and colleges. According to Irudaya Rajan, Kerala's Gulf connection today is so strong that there is every reason to introduce Gulf studies in schools and colleges. "At this stage of Kerala's Gulf connection, there is every justification for exposing our youngsters more to the Gulf countries. There is every justification for introducing Gulf studies in our schools and colleges. Today we can make out a strong case for our students to learn much more about Gulf geography, Gulf history, Gulf politics and Gulf language." Before (India's) Independence, we studied the geography, history and politics of Britain. Today, this large scale emigration to the Gulf presents a strong case for our students to learn more about the Middle East.²⁸

Finally, the role of migration has had its significant impact in the educational field, particularly in the sector of Muslim education in Malabar. The institutions owned and run by the Muslim management

²⁸ Milli Gazette. (Indian Muslims First News paper) '*Gulf: favourite destination of Keralites*'. Published in 2004 1-15 August, contents 1-15.

has increased considerably. It varies from nursery schools to engineering colleges in different parts of the Malabar region. It provides education in various fields for both Muslim and non Muslim students without any discrimination on the basis of caste and community. It also permits the non Muslims to work as faculties in these institutions. On a whole, the influence of the migration to the Gulf countries motivated majority of the students, especially those from Muslim dominated Malabar region, to acquire at least a degree level education and for this reason the rate of dropouts from the school has come down substantially. As far as this area is concerned it can be considered as a major change.

Impacts on Housing and Consumerism

Undoubtedly, there has been a major inflow of money from the Gulf States in the each and every village in Malabar. It considerably affected in improving the standard of living in most of the family in recent past. The above mentioned wealth is being used variously. "The 'nouveau riche' showed an inclination for ostentatious display of their wealth by various means."²⁹ One of the inevitable consequences of emigration is the extensive boost in the huge remittance at the household level. This increase has had considerable impact on the spending outline of Kerala households. After paying back money borrowed from friends and relatives for meeting the cost of travel, remittances are used to acquire a variety of consumer goods as well as land, houses, vehicles. It is also being used for purchase of land, paying back debts, education of dependents, dowry of children and other relatives³⁰. It is most visible that majority of the migrants use these remittances for housing sector because the very incentive behind the migration emerges out of his desire to build a house of his own. "One of the priority items of

²⁹ T. V, Sekher, n. 14, p, 136.

³⁰ K. C. Zachariah, et all, '*Gulf Revisited, Economic Consequences of Emigration from Kerala. Emigration and Unemployment*' Thiruvananthapuram: Centre for Development Studies, Kerala, 2004 p, 40.

disposition of an emigrant's savings was improvement of the quality of his housing."³¹ Momentous changes have taken place in the construction of houses after migration to the Middle East. This kind of large number houses came up after the 1980s.³²

The style and shape of new houses are entirely different from their traditional ones. The old shape tiled and thatched houses were replaced by huge concrete houses with modern style and type. The old houses roofed with tiles and sheets are rarely seen now. Majority of the migrants, regardless of his income, possess at least a small concrete house. Everybody wants to have modern houses with all the facilities. Holding the possession of huge buildings like bungalows and shopping complexes is also considered as symbols of high status among others. "The satisfaction derived from the possession of such commodities (houses) depended not only on their "intrinsic utility" but also on their symbolic function within the reference group – the village community. In this situation, the "houses" displayed the newly acquired wealth of migrant families and had a "positional value" as symbols of social status and prestige"³³.

The increasing application of the Arab style and shape in construction of new houses is one of the other significant factors fashioned by migration. The old houses prior to their migration were constructed by thatch, or tiles, consisted of a basic room and an outer room, or two rooms with a varanda, with no separate rooms for men and women. They also had not interest in shaping houses as per their own desire due to lack of money. The other major problem they faced with their old houses was traditionally that, toilets were away from the house, and kitchen mostly built separately. And the majority of the houses

³¹ *ibid*, p, 28

³² C. Y Thangarajah, *'Conflict, migration and modernity in Sri Lanka,,* New Delhi: Contribution to the Indian Sociology, 37, (1-2) 2003, Jan- Aug, p, 156.

³³ T. V, Sekher, n.29, p, 137.

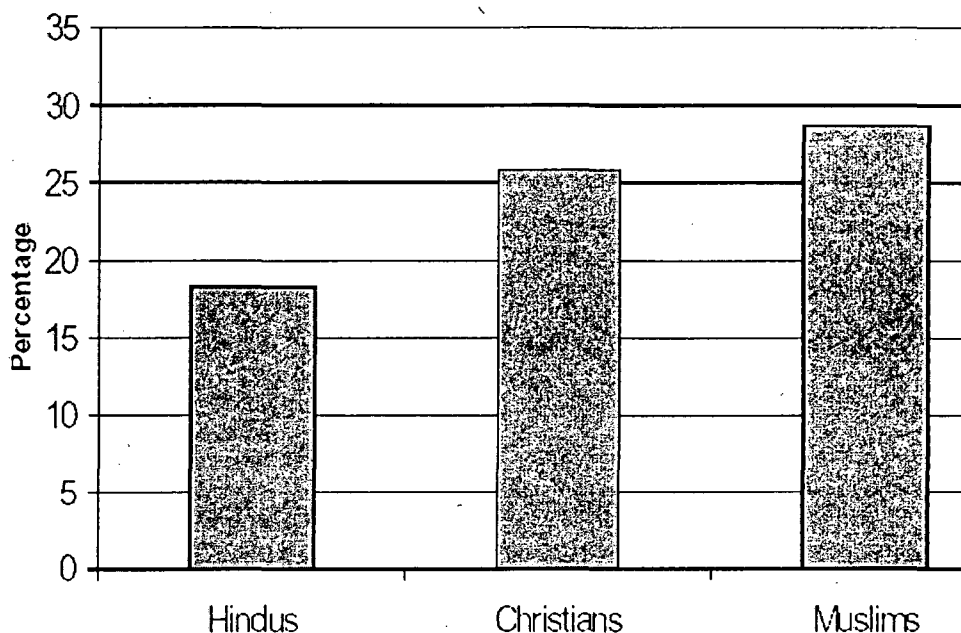
were congested with large family. This situation has improved drastically with the construction of new houses, and as mentioned above, increase in the number of nuclear families have reduced the difficulties they had faced earlier. The new houses built by migrants are huge with all facilities. The houses are now being furnished in Arabian style. The commodities that are brought from the Middle East supply the necessary trappings to create the atmosphere of a modern house. This Arabian style furnishing includes, "small artifacts that have been discarded by the hosts, such as lampshades, ornamental mirrors, carpets, plastic flowers, etc. Walls are hanging with Islamic motifs and pictures of the Karbala form an essential part of recreating the Arab life style. Such artifacts, which accumulate in the housemaids' room, are packed in large boxes and freighted back to the village"³⁴. Some of the people try to import the furnishing materials from the countries they work in or receive the same from their native places ensuring the quality of the materials as they are found in the Gulf States.³⁵ Now the style of house turned from good to luxurious. "The proportion of luxurious or very good houses was 18.3 percent among the Hindus, 25.8 percent among the Christian sand as much as 28.7 percent among Muslims. Emigration has had considerable impact on the quality of housing. Perhaps housing has been the very first requirement to receive emigrants' attention. About 58.3 percent of the houses of the Non Resident Keralites (NRK) in 2004 were either "luxurious" or "very good."³⁶

³⁴ C. Y. Thangarajah, n. 32, p, 157.

³⁵ It is visible that the bulk of 'Gulf Bazaars' (shops which providing the Gulf materials) in almost all major cities and small towns of Malabar.

³⁶ K. C. Zachariah, n. 31, p, 43.

Percent of houses that are luxurious or very good By Community. 2004



Source: K. C. Zachariah, S. Irudaya Rajan, op cit, *ibid*, *Gulf Revisited*, Economic Consequences of Emigration from Kerala: Emigration and Unemployment. Working Paper 363. September 200

Impacts of Gulf migration also become obvious with the amenities in houses and consumption behaviours of people. The outstanding inflow of money from the Gulf has gone ahead to raise consumptions of families, which visible more in food habits and clothing. They spend lavishly for getting the best quality of commodities. Purchasing new and latest consumer durables is a fashion of the Gulf migrants after they return home, and a large number of migrants also bring goods from Gulf countries itself. "There has also been a fillip in the purchase of consumer durables like televisions, video-cassette players, refrigerators, tape- recorders, gold jewellerys and even cars.³⁷

Clothing forms an important cultural derivative of all times and it had its impact in the modern time as well. Dress is one of the oldest inventions of the world, woven by the leaves of trees. Long ago man used to wear the skin of animals, after long time man became more

³⁷ T. V, Sekher, n. 33, p, 137

civilized, started to wear wool, cotton, silk, etc. And cloths are one of the important things in Islamic culture, to hide the parts of the body.³⁸ The members of immigrants families especially children studying in schools and colleges try to wear the dresses of latest fashions available in the market. They like to update the fashion and mostly wearing when attending educational institutions and other functions like marriage of relatives and housewarming parties. Wearing new and good dress is also considered as a prestigious sign of the family. When their parents return from Gulf, the children demand from them dresses, musical and other instruments of entertainment.

Food habits also got some essential impacts due to migration. "Farming or food producing techniques appeared late in human history, pre historical people gathered their food from the edible plants and animals."³⁹ But in this age of modern technology even food production is also closely connected with technology. Every people and society has their own habits of food processing and eating. Imitating the style of particular people is a fashion even in Kerala too. It can be seen that foreign food like Chinese, is found even in some towns of Kerala. If they are on outing they prefer foreign food, the coconut water has been replaced to multi-national products.

Studies conducted by CDS (centre for development studies) indicate that the majority of houses are well equipped with electricity and phone connections. According to this study in 2004, 85 percent of the houses were electrified, which was 74 percent in 1999. About seven lakhs of houses were newly electrified during 1999-2004 in Kerala. A higher proportion of houses of migrants have flush-out toilets in comparison with non-migrants houses. The difference is maintained in

³⁸ Mohsen Saeidi Madani, *Impact of Hindu Culture on Muslims*, New Delhi: M.D Publications, Pvt Ltd, 1993, p, 139.

³⁹ Ibid, p, 147.

all the communities, the percent of the households use LPG for cooking has increased. The traditional system of cooking is not prevalent in majority of the households now a day.

Eye-catching consumption is a characteristic of an emigrant, especially a Kerala emigrant. Emigrants become habituated to the use of many new consumer goods while abroad. Since many of these goods were unavailable locally they brought them on return. Most of these goods are now locally available, and the higher purchasing power of migrants enables them to acquire these goods more frequently and effortlessly than non-migrants could.⁴⁰ Now a good number of migrants' family possesses televisions, refrigerators, and phone connections. The CDS (working paper 363) 2004, studies indicate the estimation of Kerala on the possession of goods like TV, Fridge, and phone from 1999 to 2004 in the migrants household. "In terms of actual numbers the increase between 1999 and 2004 were 2,048 thousand telephone connections, 1,720 thousand television sets, 852 thousand refrigerators, 548 thousand VCRs, 509 thousand scooters/motor cycles and 330 thousand motor cars. The effect of emigration on the possession of the consumer durables could be understood better by comparing the increases during 1999-2004 as between emigrant households and non-emigrant households.

It is very interesting that, the consumption level in migrants' households had a significant effect on non migrants' families of the villages with change in their life styles. For instance, some time in the past, goods like television were symbols of luxurious and fame in villages, now they believe that all these thing are necessities for each and every one. Consumerist behaviour of migrants' families in these rural areas has now become the accepted-pattern and the local

⁴⁰ K.C. Zachariah, n. 24, p, 25.

populace tries to respond accordingly.⁴¹ The amplification in consumerism has resulted in the initiation of business in rural areas with good form. Price of land has also increased due to the urbanizations of rural areas. The agricultural lands have been converted for house constructions in these areas, and the increased construction works caused hike in wage of both skilled and unskilled workers, especially for carpenter and mason.

Negative impacts of Gulf migration

Similar to the favourable impacts to the migrant's household and in the society on the whole, Gulf migration has some unfavorable effects as well. First and foremost negative impact is the situations of the 'Gulf Wives'. In spite of the fact that they got considerable achievements in interacting with the society in all aspects of their life and their attitude were more loving and caring due to the Gulf money. Every migrant cannot afford to live with their family in Gulf due to lack of earnings. These wives are compelled to live alone two or three years at a stretch in absence of their husbands which creates psychological problems. Added responsibility and loneliness weigh up too much of them. As a result of these psychological problems, some confrontations are taking place and it resulted in to infidelity and divorce. "International migration usually throw up a number of social problems such as weakening of the family, marital disruption, neglect of children and their educations, and psychological stresses and strains of the spouse."⁴² The absence of men in the family has badly affected with increase in bad habits in their children like, smoking, wasteful expenditure, and being irregular in colleges and schools, deliberately neglecting the strain and hard work of their parents in the Gulf desert. These children feel free in the absence of their father or elder brothers. Some of them even do not want to continue their studies because they

⁴¹ T. V, Sekher, n.37, p, 137

⁴² Prakash C Jain, n.15, p, 4.

were largely impressed with Gulf and want to join their father or relatives. Further they constantly compel their relatives and friends to get a chance, in order to acquire a job in the Gulf. Non residence of adult male in the households, and the poor level of attachment of parents to their children's studies are the central cause for the poor performance of these students. Keeping away from home and from their beloveds affect negatively the migrant too; missing their beloved children, wives, their old parents for quite long time bring some problems in them. It often leads to headache, sleeplessness, habits like smoking and some other diseases. The same health problems are happening in the family members of the migrants of Kerala in general and Malabar in particular.

A study conducted in Kozhikode district indicates that during the last two decades, there was a rise in the growth of patients. "During 1974 (just before the large scale migration) the rate of patients per 1000 was 71 but it increased to 206 on 1987."⁴³ The number of patients visiting hospitals for blood pressure, diabetes, cancer and heart diseases are greater than before. In fact most of the patients are from the families of the emigrants. The reason for these remarkable changes is due to the change in life styles, lack of physical work, consumption of more food, which contains cholesterol and also the long separation from the beloveds.

In fact, the Gulf migration in a way positively affects to decrease the unemployment rates, but on the other hand it affects negatively too. Appearance of 'replacement migration', migrants from Kerala transformed Kerala itself into a "Gulf," for number of other migrants workers from out side Kerala. These out side workers are ready to

⁴³ Kodi Abdurrahman, *the socio-economic impact of migration to the Gulf on Kerala Muslims, A brief study of Malabar Muslims*, Delhi: Muslim India, 22: 11-12, (November-December 2004) p, 1268.

work with the lower wage and could adjust with the poor living conditions. With these reasons, numbers of works and benefits have gone to other states, which could have gone to the labourers of Kerala. 'Replacement migration is a consequence of emigration, and is having a significant effect on unemployment and wage rates in Kerala. It is nullifying some of the potentially positive spin-off effects of emigration.'⁴⁴ On view of the Gulf migration, the consumption pattern has been increased, but it could not affect much the Kerala industries because of the majority of migrants consume goods produced outside Kerala. So this high level of consumerism benefits workers of other states.

The migrants' inability to utilize and supervise their remittance for making their future bright is considered to be another negative impact of migration. They spend their money lavishly in various ways which cannot make them economically steady later. Majority of the migrants spend their remittances in purchasing gold ornaments, construction of buildings and marriage of their daughters. They are also compelled to give much in dowry on these particular occasions. The evil of dowry further turn out to be a severe social trouble as the Gulf migrants are willing to pay high amount of dowry for the marriage of their daughters. According to them, the custom of paying dowry is not at all wrong because they are investing money for the future of their daughters. Adversely, the custom affects the society on a whole, in which those who are not economically sound also have to pay the same or in some range which they can't afford.

As a consequence of migration, consumerism has increased, it causes the price hike. Increase in volume of remittance also caused an increase in the price of land, construction materials, consumer foods and charges on health, education and transport etc. It in turn not only

⁴⁴ K.C. Zachariah, n. 40, p, 5 & 6

affects adversely to the emigrants and their families but also affects the non migrants as well. Agricultural lands are disappearing and they are being replaced by concrete jungle. The wages of skilled and unskilled worker have also gone up.

The rehabilitation of the return migrants is an enduring problem in the state of Kerala. Kerala has been experiencing massive migration towards Gulf region since long time and the impact of return migrants strongly felt in the state. Both the migration and return migration has been a phenomenon in Kerala. Even the state government fails to do much in favour to these returnees. It results in the increase rates of unemployment in the state. "The problem of unemployment is particularly acute among the highly educated and technically qualified persons, as the substantial proportion of the Gulf returnees to this category of work force."⁴⁵ These return migrants and their big proportion of unemployment rate create serious concern to the government.

In short, Gulf migration from Kerala in general and from Malabar in particular has had its impacts in the socio-economic and cultural life of the society on the whole. It covers all aspects of life starting from the migrants to the non migrants' households. It is a fact that there are some adverse negative impacts also, but the positive impacts outshines the negative impacts, particularly in case of Gulf migration. The effect of migration has also brought important changes in social life like the changes in the life style of the people. To a large extent it includes high level of the status of education, consumerism, and food habits with major shift in the attitude for dressings, engagement with information technologies, migrants' involvements in the social activities, and the change in religious performances. Another important impact is the tremendous change in the life of women, especially in Malabar region.

⁴⁵ Prakash C Jain, n. 42, p, 20.

It facilitated them to interact with the society and handle things quite decently like economic and education of children in the absence of their husbands. All these improvements can be identified as evidences of the fact that the migration has had its role in developing a new style in the entire cultural life of the state.

Conclusion

International migration, which has been on an upward trajectory, is a challenging issue that the contemporary world faces. It is a fact that, this phenomenon and its impacts are steadily growing in all over the world. Migration is an unconventional form of development, or in other word, development clearly has a link with migration. The study by International Organization for Migration (IOM) indicates that, no country of the world remains unaffected by flows of international migration that is unquestionably significant. Migration, apart from the movement of people from one place to another, is a multidisciplinary venture, with a plenty of issues tied to it.

India with a massive emigrant population in to various countries for a long time has had an important role in the international migration. Migration in large number and the money sent by them from various countries have stabilized the national economy since late 1970s. Apart from the remittances, the migrants' contributions in various aspects of life are worth mentioning. Though international migration from India took place to various parts of the world, majority of them seek their fortune in the Arabian Gulf Countries. Unlike other destinations, Gulf migration from India became important for many educated and uneducated youths of the country. Moreover, it significantly helped in curtailing unemployment. While discussing the Arabian Gulf migration from India, migration from Kerala is pertinent as the state has major share in the number of migrant labourers in the Arabian Gulf.

Kerala has been experiencing massive migration of its population to the oil producing countries of the Middle East. It started from Kerala in seventies and early eighties. The oil boom of the 1970s brought about a new chapter in the history of migration from the state. This mass migration to the Gulf countries has received much attention from various scholars and attracted observations for a serious study. This has

imposed major socio—cultural and economic development on Kerala society.

This study has focused on the various impacts and developments caused by migrations to the Gulf from Kerala, which are broad and varying across different regions of the state. For instance, in the case of Malabar, migrants from this area have had significant economic gains. Malabar over the time, has become too much depended on migration for employment subsistence, housing, household amenities, institution building, and many other developmental activities. Remittances, sent to home from abroad, are the main catalyst of state's development. Remittances increased the standard of living and the stability of families' economy, as outlined under the new household economies of migration theory.

Migration to the Arabian Gulf states has played an important role in bringing new culture and life style to Malabar. It happened because of their interactions with the emigrant workers from other countries and the local populace. The Gulf migration that affect every facet of life in Kerala in general with rapid changes in economic, social, demographic and political realms, has dramatically transformed Malabar. It even influenced the religious life of the people and noticeably improved the literacy in Malabar. Migration also encouraged the desire of people for acquiring higher education in Kerala, especially amongst Malabar Muslims. Women's status and responsibilities in the society are also found to be increasing as result of migration. In the absence of their husbands, they became duty-bound to come forward to public spaces. Now majority of the migrants' households are headed by females. When examining all this, it is clear that the positive impacts of migration outshine the negatives. The study asserts that the Arabian Gulf migration that has significantly influenced the living standards of people in Kerala in general, has brought about dramatic socio— cultural changes in Malabar.

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