



Migration as a Catalyst of Change: The Impact of Indian Labour Migration to the GCC

Shibinu S^{a++} and Shabeer VP^{b++*}

^a Department of Economics, PSMO College, Tirurangadi, Kerala, PIN. 676 306, India.

^b Department of Management Studies, PSMO College, Tirurangadi, Kerala, PIN. 676 306, India.

Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

The idea of emigration as a method of subsistence has long gained traction in India. Emigration and remittances have been praised as financial sources for the transformation of communities and households. Due to its historical links to international migration and its position as one of India's top labor exporting states, Kerala is an especially intriguing state that has been one of the most significant source regions for Indian temporary workers, primarily to the GCC (Gulf Cooperative Council) countries. Kerala is home to almost 2.1 million migrants, and 36% of the state's net state product comes from their contributions. This study looks at empirical data from the socioeconomic discourses surrounding Gulf migration with respect to the emigrants, their households, and the place from where they migrated in order to comprehend how migrant houses differ from non-migrant households. The study covers empirical research on the reasons behind migration, mobility

⁺⁺Head of the Department;

*Corresponding author: Email: drshabeer@psmocollge.ac.in;

trends, and the issue of using migration as a strategy to lower state unemployment. The paper goes on to discuss the significance of emigration in the socioeconomic transformations of the state.

Keywords: Emigration; GCC; household remittances; female headship; standard of living index.

1. INTRODUCTION

India has been one of the most popular emigration destinations in the globe. Globally, there were 258 million international migrants in 2017, up from 248 million in 2015, 220 million in 2010, 191 million in 2005, and 173 million in 2000 (Human Development Report, 2009). Between 1990 and 2015, there were 90 million more international migrants, an increase of over 60% (World Bank, 2018). India remained the world's largest recipient of remittances, with its diaspora sending home an incredible USD 79 billion (World Bank, 2018). There has been a significant migration of trained, semi-skilled, and unskilled laborers from Kerala to the GCC nations, particularly Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates, starting with a few thousand annually in the mid-1970s (Chengrong & Nangia, 1997; Gulati & Mody, 1983; Zachariah & Rajan, 2012; Zachariah et al., 2002b; United Nations, 2017).

Many people left Kerala because of the severe social and economic hardship that existed there. For those who migrate, the journey typically involves vulnerabilities and penances, ranging from significant financial costs to the enthusiastic distribution of expenses from friends and family (Rajan, 2014). The migrants are responsible for the majority of the trip costs (Gurak & Caces, 1992; Zachariah, Mathew, & Rajan, 1999). This increases the family's liability position even before migrating (Rajan, 2022). The immigrant will be immediately deported from the Gulf if the agent does not have the necessary paperwork and a work visa. Migration to the Gulf countries has a unique quality because it is contract migration. If the conditions of the contract are broken, movers face severe jail time and a decline in remittances (Zachariah, Nair, & Rajan, 2001; Zachariah & Rajan, 2015). With the assumption that a stronger positive correlation between emigration and living standards will develop, this article aims to shed light on the research questions of what the socioeconomic effects of emigration have been and how it may influence the native household's long-term demographic demeanor through improvements in their standard of living.

2. METHODOLOGY

The study's data comes from the Kerala Migration Survey (KMS), which was conducted in 2016 by the Center for Development Studies in Thiruvananthapuram. A longitudinal study comparing 2011 and 2016 KMS data is conducted to investigate the shift in household and individual quality of life brought about by migration. In addition to examining the state's overall situation, particular attention is paid to three districts: Thiruvananthapuram, Ernakulam, and Malappuram. Thiruvananthapuram was chosen as the state capital and ranked third in terms of emigrants, while Malappuram was chosen as Kerala's most migratory pocket (KMS, 2016). Ernakulam was chosen because it is the financial center of Kerala, a highly urbanized area, the state's only smart city, and it has a stock exchange. The impact of migration on the socioeconomic traits of the Gulf migrant and non-migrant households was evaluated using bivariate analysis.

To compare the living conditions of Gulf migrant and non-migrant households, a standard of living index was created. The index was created using the same methodology as the National Family Health Surveys (NFHS). The index's variables include household ownership, land size, house type, cooking fuel, consumer durables like cars, taxis, computers, internet, refrigerators, microwaves, TVs, landlines, and DVD players, as well as monthly household income (re-coded using mean and standard deviation: less than mean = low income, mean + standard deviation = middle income, and above mean + standard deviation = high income). Each of these variables was given a standard weight before being added. It is re-coded as Lower Class (below (Mean - SD)), Lower Middle Class (between (Mean-SD) and Mean), Middle Class (between (Mean + SD) and Mean), and Upper Class (above Mean+ SD)) based on the mean and standard deviation. The impact of migration was examined using a logistic regression analysis. This was accomplished by comparing the standard of living, household headship, religion, and locality of Gulf migrant and non-migrant households.

3. SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE OF GULF-MIGRANTS

The majority of Kerala migrants to the Gulf are young people. Approximately 59% of men and 53% of women are between the ages of 20 and 39. For both sexes, the largest percentage falls between the 30-34 age range. Naturally, Gulf migrants are significantly younger when they leave the country. According to this study, they were 25.6 years old on average when they emigrated (Table 1). At the time of migration, females were younger than males (21.4 and 26.1 years, respectively). In contrast to the current cohort of emigrants, who have been living outside of India for an average of approximately 11 years, Gulf migrants from Malappuram migrated at an earlier age (25 years).

Table 1. Mean age at migration of gulf-migrants by sex in the three districts

	Mean Age at Migration
Male	26.1
Female	21.4
Total	25.6

The bulk of male Gulf migrants stay for six to ten years, whereas female Gulf migrants stay for two to five years. Approximately 25% of Gulf migrants remain overseas for 11–20 years. Over ten percent of Gulf migrants have lately been

overseas, with stays of shorter than a year. The Gulf migrants from Malappuram and Thiruvananthapuram have the longest average stay in the Gulf countries (11 years), whilst those from Ernakulam have the shortest (ten years). The Gulf migrants from Malappuram district are distinguished by their early migration and extended stays in their destination nations (Table 2).

Males make up the majority of Gulf emigrants. The percentage of Gulf emigrants that are female is 9.2%. The largest percentage of female Gulf migrants is seen in Ernakulam district (22.0%), followed by Thiruvananthapuram (16.6%). There is very little (5%) female migration from the Malappuram district. Males make up to 95% of the Gulf migrants from Malappuram.

Compared to the other two districts, the Malappuram district has a larger percentage of younger Gulf migrants. Before they turned thirty, the majority of them moved. Some Gulf migrants go with their families, including young children and senior citizens. In the Gulf, children live with their parents while they study. While half of the Gulf migrants from Thiruvananthapuram (53.6%) and Ernakulam (50.5%) are in the 20–39 age range, over 62.4% of Gulf migrants from Malappuram are young people in this age range.

Table 2. Average duration of stay in gulf by gender

	Male	Female	Total
<1 year	11.3	6.7	10.8
2-5 years	16.0	38.7	18.1
6-10 years	32.4	25.3	31.8
11-20 years	24.0	26.7	24.3
21+ years	16.3	2.7	15.0

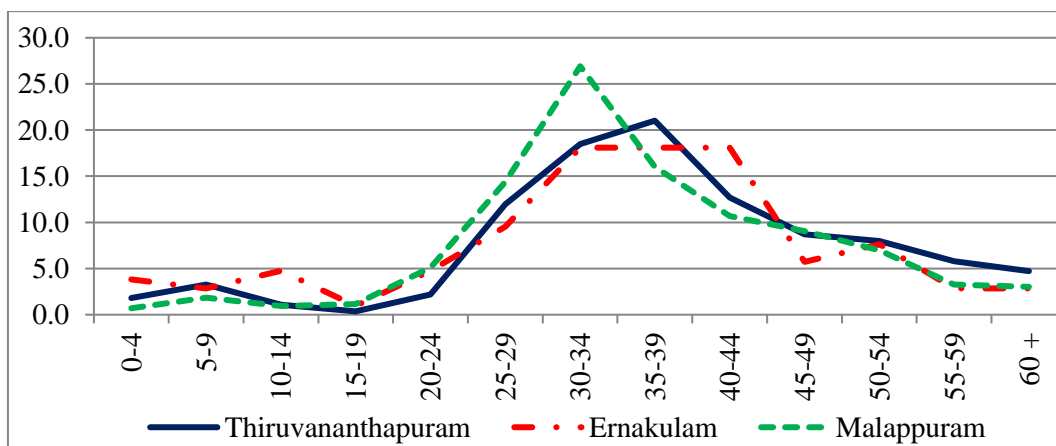


Fig. 1. Age composition of gulf-migrants by three districts

According to the distribution by religion, the majority of Gulf migrants from the Thiruvananthapuram district are Hindus (62%), whereas the largest group in Ernakulam is made up of Christians (49.5%). Malappuram district is dominated by Muslim Gulf migrants, as predicted (86.3%). Among the Gulf migrants, there is a gender gap by faith. Of the three religious groups, women make up the largest percentage of Christians (23.1%) (Fig. 2). Male migrants make up 94.3% of the Muslim population. Compared to women in the other two religious groups, Christians have greater freedom to go overseas.

The majority of Gulf migrants are devout. In Thiruvananthapuram, the percentage of married male and female migrants is 71.1% and 65.2%, respectively. In the Malappuram district, it is 76.9 percent and 74.7%, whilst in Ernakulam, it is 68.9 percent and 64.1%. In the districts of Thiruvananthapuram and Ernakulam, the percentage of unmarried Gulf migrants who are female is higher (31.5 and 31.2 percent, respectively), whereas it is lower in Malappuram (21.3 percent only). The Ernakulam district has the highest percentage of emigrants in the separated category, both male and female (2.3 and 2.3%, respectively).

The survey found one distinctive characteristic: approximately 1.3% of female Gulf migrants are widows and come from the Malappuram area. In the other two districts, the corresponding proportion is minuscule. This is an odd finding from the data (Table 3), even though the practice of female migration is mostly reduced in Malappuram on religious grounds.

While the majority of female migrants have a master degree or above (46.7%), the majority of male migrants have only completed secondary school (30.6%). The Gulf migrants ranged in educational attainment from highly professional degrees to illiteracy. Approximately 15% of male Gulf migrants have finished certificate programs and the upper secondary level. 13.3% of the female Gulf emigrants have completed at least primary school, whereas 2.7% are illiterate (Fig. 3).

The Ernakulam district had the highest percentage of migrants with higher educational levels (61 percent), followed by Thiruvananthapuram district (51.8 percent), according to an analysis of the educational profile of the Gulf migrants by district. A feature of the Malappuram district is that just 26.9% of the migrants have higher educational credentials, while the bulk (73.1%) are in the secondary level or below group.

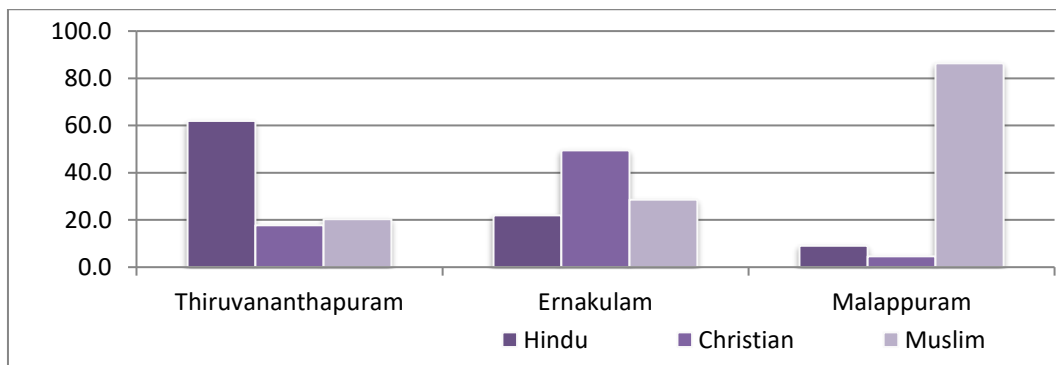


Fig. 2. Religious distribution of gulf-migrants by districts

Table 3. Marital status of gulf-migrants by sex

	Thiruvananthapuram		Ernakulam		Malappuram	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Unmarried	27	31.5	25.7	31.2	22.6	21.3
Married	71.1	65.2	68.9	64.1	76.9	74.7
Widowed	0.8	1.1	1.2	1.4	0.1	1.3
Divorced	0.6	1.2	1.9	1.1	0.1	1.2
Separated	0.5	1	2.3	2.2	0.3	1.5
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

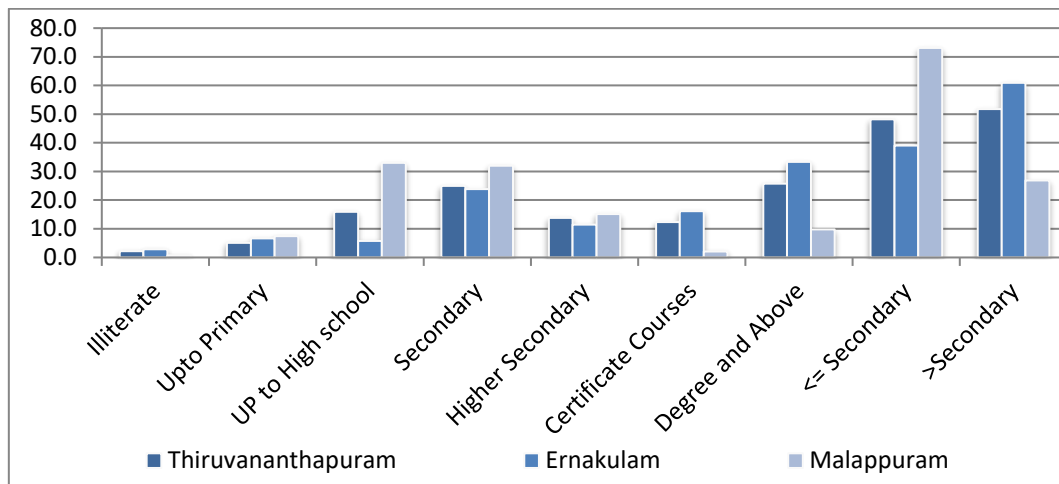


Fig. 3. Educational level of gulf-migrants by districts

Analysis of pre- and post-occupational status reveals notable changes for some employment categories, including business, accounting, teaching, and agriculture. Professionals like nurses have not seen any changes in their line of work. Approximately 12% of engineers were underemployed, while 88% of engineers were hired in the same position in the destination countries. Many of the Gulf migrants who were technically or professionally qualified ended up in jobs that did not align with their employment contract. The high and rising number of unsuccessful migration stories from various regions of the state may be due to this (Table 4).

Saudi Arabia is the most popular destination for Keralites among the Gulf nations, followed by the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Saudi Arabia is home to roughly 43.2% of all Gulf migrants, followed by the United Arab Emirates (37.2%) and Qatar (6.7%). The primary draw of these two

nations is the growing need for unskilled laborers in the oil and construction sectors. Although just 60% of female emigrants want to move to Gulf nations, around 91.1% of all male emigrants do.

Therefore, men predominate in the migration from Kerala to Middle Eastern nations. According to Table 5, around 40.5% of female emigrants would rather move abroad, such as to the United States, the United Kingdom, or Canada.

Prior to migration, the average monthly income of Gulf migrants was lower in Malappuram district but roughly equal in Thiruvananthapuram and Ernakulam. In the post-migration phase, all three districts exhibit comparable patterns. This disparity in income (Fig. 4) can result from variations in the educational attainment of Gulf migrants at the district level. Nonetheless, migration has resulted in a five-fold gain in income across all three districts (Fig. 4).

Table 4. Main occupation of gulf-migrants before and after migration

Before Migration	Per cent	After Migration	Per cent
Agriculture	11.1	Salesman	20.8
Salesman	10.8	Motor vehicle driver	7.8
Motor vehicle driver	9.0	Others	7.0
Peon	7.1	Engineer	6.0
Engineer	6.3	Accountant	4.8
Others	5.3	Peon	4.6
Construction worker	4.0	Manager	3.7
Painter	3.7	Construction worker	3.5
Cook	2.9	Business	2.7
Accountant	2.7	Storekeeper	2.4
Teacher	2.7	Electrician	2.1
Business	1.9	Painter	2.1
Carpenter	1.8	Mechanic	2.0
Manager	1.8	Nurse	1.9

Table 5. Destination countries

	Male	Female
UAE	32.9	28.6
Saudi Arabia	41.7	11.1
Oman	5.7	4.0
Qatar	6.1	4.0
Kuwait	3.2	9.5
Bahrain	1.6	2.4
Gulf	91.1	59.5
USA	3.2	18.3
United Kingdom	1.1	7.1
Canada	1.2	7.1
Australia	0.5	4.0
Others	2.8	4.0
Non-gulf	8.9	40.5

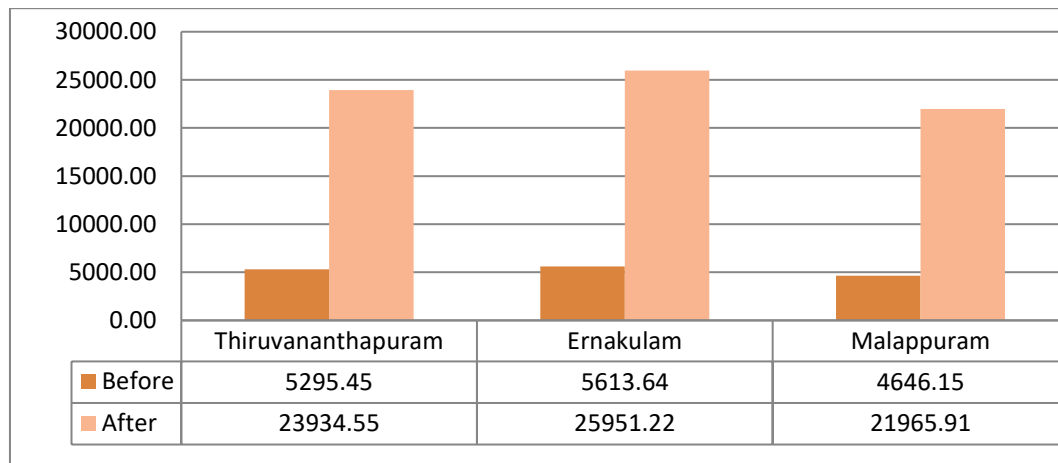


Fig. 4. Average monthly income of gulf-migrants during the pre and post-migration phase by Districts (in Rs)

4. REMITTANCE AND COST OF MIGRATION

Family members of Gulf migrant households receive household remittances from their family members who are employed in the Gulf nations. In this study, remittances are computed using a weight, or raising factor, that is derived by dividing the sample families by the quotient of the expected Census households for 2016. The household remittances are calculated by multiplying the rising factor by the actual remittances for each district. Households received the majority of the remittances as regular recurring payments. The district that received the most remittances, Malappuram, received Rs. 2283 crore, followed by Ernakulam (Rs. 556) and Thiruvananthapuram (Rs. 1462 crore). The Gulf migrants from Ernakulam earn a lot of money each month, yet they send little back. Kerala does not receive the revenue they

earn in the destination countries. This might be as a result of the fact that they save their money in other ways, either in foreign banks or in Gulf countries. The majority of the Gulf's low-skilled migrants come from unstable economic backgrounds. They are forced to remit a significant amount of their income in order to enhance the well-being of their families. This could be the cause of Malappuram's greater remittances (Table 6).

The private costs and benefits of migration were shown by the socioeconomic profiles of migrant households in the Gulf. Malappuram district has the lowest average cost of migration, the greatest number of Gulf migrants, and the highest remittances. There is a noticeable difference in the living standards of Gulf migrant and non-migrant households. Nevertheless, there is no discernible difference between these households in terms of savings, investments,

Table 6. Household remittance in crores

	Census HH 2016	Sample HH	HH Remittances
Thiruvananthapuram	882229	1064	1462
Ernakulam	886084	1110	556
Malappuram	910744	1046	2283
Total	2679057	3220	4300

Table 7. Manner of utilization of the loan taken by the gulf-migrant households

	Thiruvananthapuram	Ernakulam	Malappuram
Purchase of land	2.1	0.0	3.3
Purchase of agricultural equipment	2.8	0.0	16.7
Investment in business	2.8	0.0	0.0
Purchase of house (including construction)	35.2	43.8	33.3
Purchase of vehicles or Household durables	8.3	6.3	3.3
Educational purpose	7.6	12.5	0.0
Medical purpose	6.9	6.3	6.7
Wedding / dowry	12.4	6.3	13.3
Emigration expenses	6.2	6.3	3.3
Other	15.9	18.8	20.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

and consumption. Thus, it may be said that the demonstration effect is highly noticeable in Kerala these days. Previous research on Kerala migration has shown a decline in inequality. This effect was further enhanced by Kerala's wage hike. The primary purpose of the loans that the Gulf-migrant households take out is to buy or build homes. Roughly 12% of Gulf-migrant households use their loans for dowries or weddings. Approximately 6% of households with Gulf migrants used the loan to cover their emigration costs. In the Ernakulam district, approximately 44% of gulf-migrant households used the credit to build or buy homes (Table 7). This is somewhat related to the higher building costs that are typical in urban areas.

Having a decent home is every immigrant's top priority. The scenery all around Kerala makes this clear. Additionally, a relatively high percentage of loans are used for educational purposes in Ernakulam district's Gulf-migrant households. Gulf-migrant households in Malappuram district and Thiruvananthapuram district have the highest rates of loans taken out for marriage. Due to the prominence of the "chain migration" process—meaning that most migrations occur through friends and family rather than recruitment agencies—loans obtained to cover emigration fees are relatively lower in the Malappuram district.

5. SOCIAL IMPACT OF MIGRATION

Regardless of their immigration status, homes in the districts of Thiruvananthapuram and Ernakulam typically include four members. However, Malappuram's non-migrant households typically include five family members. Compared to Gulf migrant homes, non-migrant households have a higher proportion of single people. However, compared to non-migrant homes, a higher percentage of migrant households in Malappuram district had more than five individuals. Fig. 5 shows that over 33% of Gulf migrant households consist of two or three people.

A female member typically assumes the role of head of the household if the head of the household has moved. Male-headed households make up 74% of non-migrant households. Whether this is a good or bad thing, the primary effect of migration is that, when compared Gulf-migrant households, women make up about half of the households (Table 8). To put it another way, women work "double shifts" or "double days," meaning they also work for their spouses. After a family member emigrated, the economic standing of their families and their dignity within the family and relatives' circle significantly improved, despite the fact that caring for their children and other family members is a dual burden.

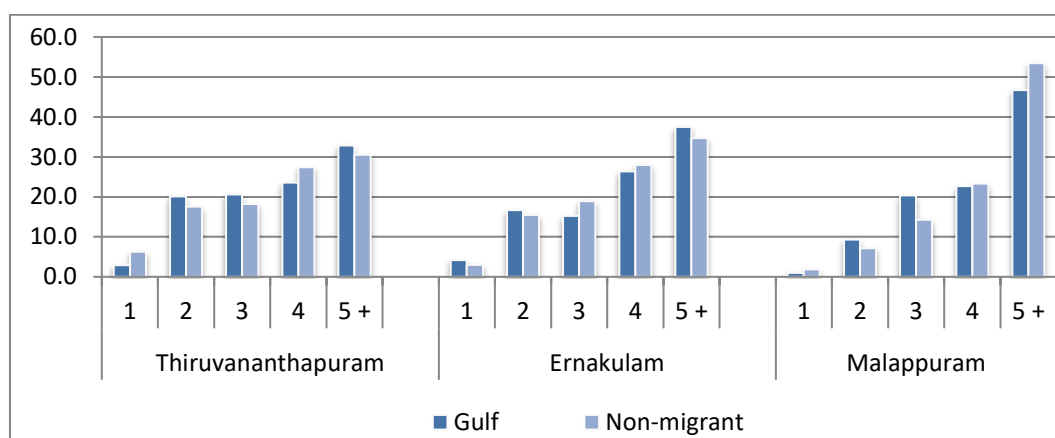


Fig. 5. Per cent distribution of households by family size, 2016

Table 8. Percent distribution of headship by sex and households, 2016

		Gulf-migrant HH	Non-Migrant HH
Thiruvananthapuram	Male	46.1	71.7
	Female	53.9	28.3
Ernakulam	Male	72.2	75.6
	Female	27.8	24.4
Malappuram	Male	50.3	74.4
	Female	49.7	25.6
Total	Male	51.6	74.2
	Female	48.4	25.8

Regardless of the makeup of their households, women possess higher levels of education than men. More than 71% of the male youth in Gulf migrant homes in Thiruvananthapuram have completed secondary or higher education, compared to 88% in Ernakulam. Compared to their counterparts in non-migrant homes (28.2%), a larger percentage of Gulf-migrant households in Ernakulam (41.4%) have higher educational qualifications (degree and above). Higher education is approached differently in Malappuram. There are fewer degree holders in both kinds of households than in the other two districts. Members of this district's non-migrant households, however, had higher educational

status than those of Gulf-migrant households (Table 9).

The number of older people living alone in families tends to rise when children leave the home. We classified households as elderly in our study if all of the members are 60 years of age or older. According to the survey, when it comes to senior families, there aren't many notable differences between emigrant and non-migrant homes in the Gulf. In contrast to the gulf emigrant families, it is seen that the non-migrant households in all three districts have a greater number of elderly households.

Table 9. Educational level of family members in the age group 20-49 by households and three districts, 2016

Districts	Educational Level	Male		Female	
		Gulf-migrant HH	Non-migrant HH	Gulf-migrant HH	Non-migrant HH
Thiruvananthapuram	<10 th Class	28.0	29.0	20.2	26.8
	>=10 th Class	71.4	69.4	79.8	70.8
Ernakulam	<10 th Class	12.1	19.9	4.2	18.6
	>=10 th Class	87.9	79.5	95.8	81.1
Malappuram	<10 th Class	47.4	39.9	37.1	36.6
	>=10 th Class	52.3	58.6	62.6	61.5

Table 10. Percent distribution of elderly households, 2016

Type of HH	Trivandrum		Ernakulam		Malappuram	
	Gulf migrant HH	Non-migrant HH	Gulf migrant HH	Non-migrant HH	Gulf migrant HH	Non-migrant HH
Non-Elderly HH	92.54	88.85	91.89	91.16	98.53	96.86
Elderly HH	7.46	11.15	8.11	8.84	1.47	3.14

Males predominate in Kerala emigration. The strain on the women in the houses left behind may increase as a result of this, as it frequently results in households with no adult members. According to the survey, the percentage of non-migrant homes in all three districts that do not have an adult male present is considerably greater in gulf migrant households than in non-migrant households (Table 11).

Table 11. Percent distribution of households with adult male member, 2016

Type of HH	Trivandrum		Ernakulam		Malappuram	
	Gulf migrant HH	Non-migrant HH	Gulf migrant HH	Non-migrant HH	Gulf migrant HH	Non-migrant HH
Male Absent	30.85	8.19	27.03	4.62	20	4.37
Male Present	69.15	91.81	72.97	95.38	80	95.63

6. ECONOMIC IMPACT OF MIGRATION

The quality of homes in the Gulf differs significantly between migrant and non-migrant households. About 46% of migrant households own a home that is opulent or of very high quality, compared to 27% of non-migrant households. Over 20% of non-migrant households live in substandard or kutcha housing (Table 12).

The largest percentage of impoverished or kutcha homes is seen in Thiruvananthapuram. The number of opulent or excellent homes is higher in Ernakulam (55.6%) than in Thiruvananthapuram (46.1%), despite the fact that Malappuram has the largest percentage of Gulf migrants.

One important measure of the effects of migration is the examination of data on the amenities that Gulf migrant households own. Four-wheelers are owned by one in four Gulf migrant households. In Malappuram, Gulf-migrant households are 6.8 points more likely

than non-migrant households to own a motor vehicle. Interestingly, the situation is not very terrible among non-migrant households, even though the majority of Gulf migrant households have mobile phones and an Internet connection. There is a significant difference between households with and without Gulf migrants in terms of having refrigerators (Table 13).

The creation of the standard of life index is a workable way to investigate how economic variables directly affect households. The index is grouped into four levels here. While Gulf-migrant households are biased toward the high or middle level of living standards, non-migrant households are obviously in the lower level of living standard category. As a result, Table 14 clearly shows the difference between the standard of life of Gulf-migrant and non-migrant households.

The average total investment for non-migrant households is Rs. 11,30.00, whereas it is Rs. 11,70.00 for Gulf-migrant households. Despite the investment's positive bias toward migration, it has an indirect impact on households that

Table 12. Percent distribution of type of houses by the households, 2016

	Gulf-Migrant HH	Non-Migrant HH
Luxurious	11.5	7.6
Very Good	34.4	23.4
Good	46.4	48.5
Poor	7.1	18.7
Kutcha	0.7	1.8
Total	100.0	100.0

Table 13. Possession of household amenities by type of households, 2016

	Thiruvananthapuram			Ernakulam			Malappuram		
	Non-migrant HH	Gulf-migrant HH	Gap	Non-migrant HH	Gulf-migrant HH	Gap	Non-migrant HH	Gulf-migrant HH	Gap
Motor car	18.2	23.0	4.8	20.2	25.0	4.8	13.2	20.0	6.8
Taxi / Truck / Lorry	3.1	5.9	2.8	6.3	1.4	-4.9	4.5	4.0	-0.5
Motor Cycle /Scooter	44.6	47.1	2.5	57.1	66.7	9.6	31.1	42.0	10.9
Telephone	22.3	33.3	11	44.1	52.8	8.7	21.9	43.0	21.1
Mobile Phone	89.4	96.6	7.2	87.7	95.8	8.1	88.8	93.3	4.5
Television	88.4	96.1	7.7	94.2	97.2	3.0	84.3	87.3	3.0
MP3/DVD/VCD	27.6	50.0	22.4	51.1	65.3	14.2	16.3	18.3	2.0
Refrigerator	56.7	84.8	28.1	64.9	81.9	17.0	35.9	57.3	21.4
Computer / Laptops	21.3	24.0	2.7	26.0	41.7	15.7	11.6	18.7	7.1
Microwave Oven	5.5	6.4	0.9	13.8	18.1	4.3	2.2	4.0	1.8
Internet connection	14.3	17.6	3.3	18.7	23.6	4.9	2.5	3.3	0.8

Table 14. Standard of living of gulf-migrant and non-migrant households, 2016

		Gulf-migrant HH	Non-migrant HH
Thiruvananthapuram	Lower class	5.9	19.6
	Lower middle class	37.3	41.2
	Middle class	36.3	18.9
	High Class	20.6	20.3
Ernakulam	Lower class	0.0	6.8
	Lower middle class	30.6	42.8
	Middle class	37.5	29.1
	High Class	31.9	21.4
Malappuram	Lower class	3.7	17.5
	Lower middle class	54.0	63.5
	Middle class	31.7	13.2
	High Class	10.7	5.7

Table 15. Income utilization pattern by type of households, 2016

		Mean	S.D
Savings	Non-migrant HH	13321.8	10057.1
	Gulf-migrant HH	14131.6	10255.5
Consumption	Non-migrant HH	10990.0	11258.5
	Gulf-migrant HH	12379.8	13094.4
Investment	Non-migrant HH	1134004.2	579728.8
	Gulf-migrant HH	1174879.4	603027.6
Health Expenditure	Non-migrant HH	6176.29	3237.420
	Gulf-migrant HH	6690.28	3267.387
Education Expense			
Thiruvananthapuram	Non-migrant HH	15454.6	5581.8
	Gulf-migrant HH	16166.5	5935.0
Ernakulam	Non-migrant HH	15139.7	5989.3
	Gulf-migrant HH	16322.6	6979.1
Malappuram	Non-migrant HH	11186.4	4792.1
	Gulf-migrant HH	11543.9	4401.6

are not migrants. The differences between Gulf-migrant and non-migrant households' investments are minimal. This pattern is also seen in spending and savings. Despite the fact that Gulf-migrant households are the majority, there is very little difference amongst them. Gulf migrant households save an average of Rs. 14132, whereas non-migrant households save an average of Rs. 13322. Therefore, it may be concluded that migration affects migrant households directly and non-migrant households indirectly. The average monthly consumer spending of Gulf migrant households is Rs. 12380, whereas that of non-migrant households is Rs. 10990. A household with Gulf migrants spends more on consumption than a home without migrants. Thiruvananthapuram has a high rate of investment among Gulf-migrant households, whilst Ernakulam district has a high rate among non-migrant households. Ernakulam district has higher consumption expenditures

among Gulf-migrant households than the other two districts. Compared to households in Thiruvananthapuram, Gulf-migrant households in Malappuram and Ernakulam have greater savings.

Gulf-migrant households' monthly consumption expenditures were higher than those of non-migrant households as a result of their incomes increasing over time. Food, clothing, education, gasoline, light, transport, entertainment, medical costs, and other expenses were more expensive for migrant households. Additionally, the households spent more on durable goods, marriages, and other rituals. Spending on the health and education sectors is another significant area. The spending patterns of Gulf-migrant and non-migrant households on these sectors show a minor variation. Hospitalization costs were taken into account as health expenses in the study. Approximately 58% of

Gulf migrant households sought care at private hospitals, compared to 40% of non-migrant households. Ernakulam district spent more on education than the other two districts, according to the utilization pattern of education.

Thus, it can be said that, in terms of savings, investments, and consumption, there is little difference between Gulf-migrant and non-migrant households, but there is a minor dominance in the case of Gulf-migrant households. The demonstration effect, which describes how seeing the behavior of others influences one's own, particularly in the area of consumption, provides a theoretical explanation for this. Gulf-migrant households had more dependents than non-migrant households, with a larger share in the Malappuram district. Approximately 2.6 percent of Gulf migrants' family members are looking for work, and 80 percent of them are not employed. Family members of Gulf-migrant families had a greater unemployment rate than those of non-migrant households, and Thiruvananthapuram district has a higher unemployment rate than the other two districts (Table 16).

The majority of family members in Gulf migrant homes are women and children who do not work. Therefore, it is not surprising that a smaller percentage of the members of these homes belong to the working group than those in households with no migrants. In the Gulf-migrant families in Ernakulam, one-fourth of the family members are employed. In Thiruvananthapuram,

over 38% of non-migrant homes have family members who are employed.

Upon closely examining the labor force participation of women in non-migrant and gulf households, we find that, despite the low labor force participation rate for women in all three districts, women in non-migrant households appear to be more engaged in the workforce than those in gulf migrant households. Just 11.89% of women in non-migrant homes in Malappuram are employed; similarly, the percentage of women in gulf migrant households is 4.32%, which is incredibly low (Table 17).

We get a different picture when we look at women's labor force participation by age. The percentage of women in the Gulf migrant households between the ages of 18 and 29 who are employed is considerably higher across all three districts. It is also observed that the percentage of young women working in all three districts is more than the percentage of working-age women in non-migrant homes (Table 18).

Finally, the impact of migration on their place of residence, household headship, religion, Standard of Living Index, level of consumption, and savings showed that all the variables are statistically significant except for household savings. This was determined by using logistic regression analysis to examine the inequality between Gulf migrant and non-migrant households. Rural areas have a 1.63-fold higher odds ratio of Gulf-migrant households

Table 16. Employment status of family members of gulf-migrant and non-migrant households, 2016

		Gulf-migrant HH	Non-migrant HH	Total
Thiruvananthapuram	Employed	20.4	37.9	33.1
	Unemployed	3.9	2.8	3.1
	Not in Labour force	75.6	59.3	63.8
	Unemployment Rate	16.2	6.8	8.6
Ernakulam	Employed	24.2	34.5	33.7
	Unemployed	3.1	4.2	4.1
	Not in Labour force	72.7	61.3	62.1
	Unemployment Rate	11.4	10.9	10.9
Malappuram	Employed	15.2	29.2	24.7
	Unemployed	1.8	1.7	1.8
	Not in Labour force	83.1	69.1	73.6
	Unemployment Rate	10.6	5.6	6.6
Total	Employed	17.9	33.5	30.0
	Unemployed	2.6	3.0	2.9
	Not in Labour force	79.5	63.5	67.0
	Unemployment Rate	12.7	8.3	8.9

Table 17. Labour force participation of women in gulf and non-emigrant household

Districts	Type of Household	Labour Force (%)	Not in Labour Force (%)
Trivandrum	Gulf migrant HH	22.39	77.61
	Non-migrant HH	40.54	59.46
Ernakulam	Gulf migrant HH	19.23	80.77
	Non-migrant HH	29.36	70.64
Malappuram	Gulf migrant HH	4.32	95.68
	Non-migrant HH	11.89	88.11

Table 18. Age specific labour force participation of women in gulf and non-emigrant household

Age	Trivandrum		Ernakulam		Malappuram	
	Gulf migrant HH	Non-migrant HH	Gulf migrant HH	Non-migrant HH	Gulf migrant HH	Non-migrant HH
18-29	35	23.73	40	33.02	66.67	27.68
30-39	23.33	22.67	33.33	24.76	33.33	26.79
40-49	20	32.53	13.33	23.81	0	25.89
50-59	21.67	21.07	13.33	18.41	0	19.64

Table 19. Logistic regression analysis to find out the impact of migration

Gulf-migrant Household = 1, Non-migrant Household=0				
	Variables	Reference category	B	Exp(B)
Place of Residence	Rural	Urban	0.489	1.630**
Religion	Hindu	Muslim	-1.010	0.364**
	Christian		-1.464	0.231**
Household Headship	Male	Female	-1.055	0.348**
SL Index	Lower Class	High Class	-1.390	0.249**
	Lower Middle Class		-0.498	0.608*
	Middle Class		0.328	1.389
HH Consumption	Lower	High	-0.664	0.515**
	Medium		-0.190	0.827
HH Savings	Lower	High	-0.108	0.898
	Medium		0.142	1.153
Constant			0.195	1.215

Note: * <0.05 and **< 0.001- significant levels

than urban areas. It is evident that the likelihood of a lower standard of life among Gulf-migrant homes is lower than that of households with a higher standard of living, which is quite significant. In other words, there was a 39% drop in the estimated probabilities. Additionally, compared to households with high standards of living, Gulf migrant households are less likely to have lower middle-level standards of living. Compared to Muslim households, Hindu households were less likely to become Gulf-migrant households (Table 19).

7. CONCLUSIONS

Thus, it is evident from the discussions above that many Keralites have relocated to the Gulf region in search of their fortune. The majority of

these emigrants are young males who are semi-skilled or unskilled, have little schooling, and work in a low-skilled occupation. They have left their closest relatives behind in order to build riches for their home homes. In this sense, we may summarize how the migratory movement ultimately affects the migrant households' level of living.

1. The living condition of migrant households has changed substantially through the inflow of foreign remittances. A good share of these households perceived improvement in terms of the economic status of their households. The extent of improvement, however, largely varies according to emigrant's duration of stay abroad. The longer the duration of stay

- abroad the better is the economic status of native household.
2. The analysis proved that education is an essential factor for migration. The change in economic activity of the Gulf-migrants revealed that migration is a solution for educated unemployed persons in Kerala. Most of the young members in Gulf migrant households had professional or technical qualifications. They are directed to study in that direction to improve their prospects for migration.
 3. Most of the migrants from Malappuram are able to go to Saudi Arabia at a lowest cost than those Thiruvananthapuram and Ernakulam. It also proved that migration is a chain process.
 4. Malappuram district has the highest number of emigrants and ranked first in terms of remittances. Most of the low skilled Gulf-migrants are from a fragile economic background and send a sizable proportion of their income home as remittances for their family's well-being. This may be the reason for higher remittances in Malappuram.
 5. The liabilities of the Gulf migrants are incurred on the purchase or construction of houses followed by wedding expenses. From the study it is clear that the consumption expenditure is higher in a Gulf-migrant household than in a non-migrant household. Consumption expenditure among the Gulf-migrant households is higher in Ernakulam district compared to other two districts.
 6. Migration has changed the headship of the family in favor of females as the males are migrating to the Gulf. Generally, female headship results backwardness in the income level of the family. But here, the fact is that though the head of household is a female, the expenses for household needs are met by the income of her husband in Gulf. One among five Gulf-migrant households has changed their headship from male to female because of migration over the period of study.
 7. Religion has a significant role in migration. As the Gulf countries are Muslim countries, Muslims are attracted to these places. The beliefs and custom are same and they can survive there as in their family. They know the Arabic language and can communicate with the people in the destination countries.

8. The impact of migration can be seen in the household possessions of the Gulf-migrant households. Good quality houses, costly household durables and other luxury items can be seen more among gulf-migrant households. One among four Gulf-migrant households has four wheelers. Though Gulf-migrant households dominated in the savings and investment, there is not much variation with non-migrant households. Thus it can be said there is a direct impact of migration on the migrant households and indirect impact of migration on the non-migrant households.

DISCLAIMER (ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE)

We, Dr Shabeer VP and Dr Shibinu S, the Author(s) hereby declare that NO generative AI technologies such as Large Language Models (ChatGPT, COPILOT, etc.) and text-to-image generators have been used during the writing or editing of this manuscript.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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