

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

*In India, the concept of emigration as a means of subsistence has grown in popularity for a long time. Remittances and emigration have been commended as sources of money for the change of households and communities. Kerala is a particularly interesting state that has been one of the most important source regions for Indian temporary workers, mostly to the GCC (Gulf Cooperative Council) nations, because of its historical ties to overseas migration and its status as one of India's leading labor exporting states. Approximately 2.1 million migrants reside in Kerala, and their contributions account for 36% of the state's net state product. In order to understand how migrant homes differ from non-migrant households, this study examines empirical evidence from the socioeconomic discourses surrounding Gulf migration with regard to the emigrants, their households, and the location from which they migrated. The study discusses empirical research on migration's motivations, patterns of mobility, and the problem of migration as a tactic to reduce state unemployment. The importance of emigration in the state's socioeconomic changes is further covered in the article.*

**Key Words:** *Emigration, GCC, Household remittances, Female Headship, Standard of Living index*

## Introduction

One of the biggest emigration destinations worldwide has been India. International migrants increased from 248 million in 2015, 220 million in 2010, 191 million in 2005, and 173 million in 2000 to 258 million globally in 2017. The number of foreign migrants increased by almost 60%, or 90 million, between 1990 and 2015 (World Bank, 2018). With its diaspora sending an astounding USD 79 billion home, India maintained its top spot as the world's recipient of remittances (World Bank, 2018). Beginning with a few thousand each year in the mid-1970s, there has been a large-scale exodus of trained, semi-skilled, and unskilled labor from Kerala to the GCC countries, especially Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE.

Due to the extreme economic and social deprivation in the area, many people left Kerala. For people who migrate, the trip quite generally entails penances and vulnerabilities which run from the enthusiastic expenditures of division from relatives and companions to substantial financial charges (Rajan, 2014). The

majority of the trip expenses are the responsibility of the migrants. Even prior to migration, this raises the family's liability position. Should the agent fail to present appropriate documentation and a work visa, the immigrant will be promptly deported from the Gulf. The fact that migration to the Gulf countries is contract migration gives it a special quality. Remittances will decrease and movers risk harsh jail if the contract terms are broken. In this background, this article endeavours to illuminate the research questions, what has been the socio-economic consequence of emigration and how is it liable to affect the long-term demographic demeanour of the native household through amelioration in their standards of living, with the supposition that a more vigorous positive sodality between emigration and living standard will emerge.

## **Methodology**

The data for the study is taken from the Kerala Migration Survey (KMS), 2016 undertaken by Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram. To examine the change in the quality of life due to migration at household as well as individual level, a longitudinal study is undertaken by comparing 2011 and 2016 KMS data. Apart from looking at the overall scenario of the state, special focus is laid on three districts in the state, Thiruvananthapuram, Ernakulam and Malappuram, Thiruvananthapuram was selected as the state capital and it ranked third in terms of the number of emigrants, while Malappuram was selected as the highest migration pocket of Kerala (KMS, 2016). Ernakulam was selected as it is a highly urbanized district with the only smart city in the state, has a stock exchange, and is the financial capital of Kerala. Bivariate analysis was carried out to assess the effect of migration on the socio-economic characteristics of the Gulf migrant and non-migrant households. A standard of living index was constructed to compare the living standards of the Gulf migrant and non-migrant households. The same method used in the National Family Health Surveys (NFHS) was employed to construct the index. The variables used for constructing the index are ownership of house, size of land, type of house, cooking fuel, consumer durables such as car, taxi, computer, internet, refrigerator, microwave oven, TV, mobile and land phone, DVD player and monthly income of households (re-coded with the help of mean and standard deviation: Less than Mean – Low Income, Mean + S.D – Middle Income and above Mean + S.D – High Income). All these

variables were added by giving a standard weight for each variable. Based on the mean and standard deviation, 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). A logistic regression analysis was done to study the impact of migration. For this, a comparison was made between Gulf migrant and non-migrant households in terms of their standard of living, household headship, religion and locality.

## Socio-Economic Profile of Gulf-migrants: Pre and Post Emigration Phase

The youth form the major proportion of migrants to the Gulf from Kerala. About 59 per cent of males and 53 per cent of females fall under the age group 20-39 years. The highest percentage is in the age category 30-34 years for both sexes. Gulf migrants are, of course, much younger at the time of emigration. This study found that the average age at the time they emigrated was 25.6 years (Table 1). Females were younger than males at the time of migration (21.4 and 26.1 years respectively). Gulf-migrants from Malappuram migrated at an earlier age (25 years) compared to those in the present cohort of emigrants has been, on an average, outside India for about 11 years (duration of residence abroad).

**Table 1:** Mean age at Migration of Gulf-migrants by Sex in the three Districts

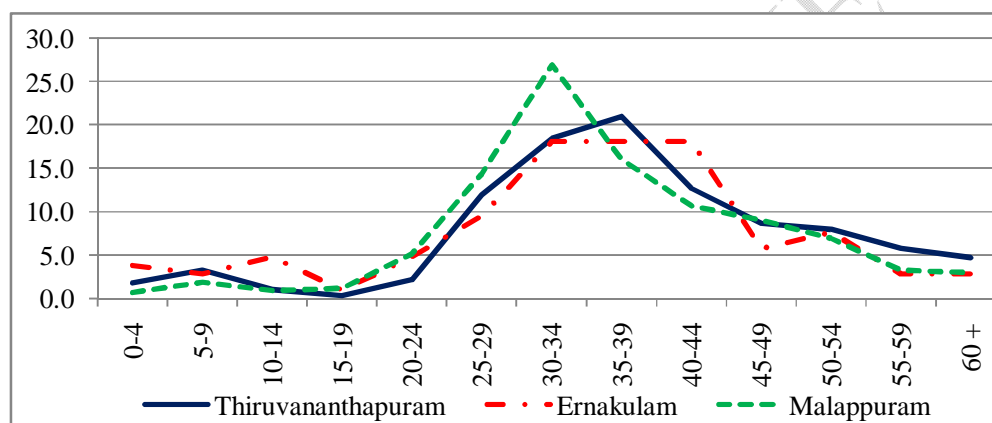
	Mean Age at Migration
Male	26.1
Female	21.4
Total	25.6

Duration of stay of majority of the male Gulf migrants is 6 to 10 years whereas for female Gulf-migrants, it is 2 to 5 years. About one-fourth of the Gulf migrants stay abroad for 11 to 20 years. More than 10 per cent the Gulf migrants had gone abroad recently and their duration of stay is less than one year. The average years of stay in the Gulf countries is the highest among the Gulf migrants from Malappuram and Thiruvananthapuram (11 years), while for Ernakulam, it is 10 years. Early migration and long duration of stay in the destination countries are unique characteristics of the Gulf migrants from Malappuram district (Table 2).

**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

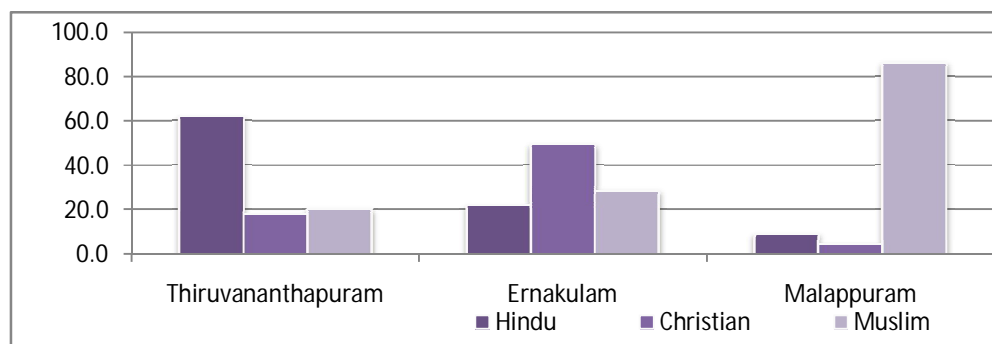
Majority of the Gulf emigrants are males. The proportion of females among the Gulf emigrants is 9.2 per cent. Ernakulam district has the highest proportion of female Gulf migrants (22.0 per cent) followed by Thiruvananthapuram (16.6 per cent). Female migration from Malappuram district is negligible (5 per cent). Up to 95 percent of the Gulf migrants from Malappuram are males.



**Figure 1:** Age Composition of Gulf-migrants by Three Districts

Malappuram district has a higher proportion of younger Gulf migrants than the other two districts. Most of them migrated before reaching the age of thirty. Some of the Gulf migrants are accompanied by their families, which includes children and elderly persons. Children residing with their parents are studying in the Gulf. About 62.4 per cent of Gulf migrants from Malappuram are youth in the age group 20-39 years, whereas half of the Gulf migrants from Thiruvananthapuram (53.6 per cent) and Ernakulam (50.5 per cent) are in this age group.

Looking at the distribution by religion, it is found that majority of the Gulf migrants from Thiruvananthapuram district are Hindus (62 per cent) whereas in Ernakulam, Christians comprise the highest number (49.5 per cent). As expected, Muslim Gulf migrants dominate in Malappuram district (86.3 per cent). Gender disparity by religion can be observed among the Gulf migrants. Among Christians, 23.1 per cent are female, which are the highest among all the three religious categories (Figure 2). Among Muslims, 94.3 per cent of the migrants are male. Females among Christians are more empowered to go abroad than those in other two religious groups.



**Figure 2:**Religious Distribution of Gulf-migrants by Districts

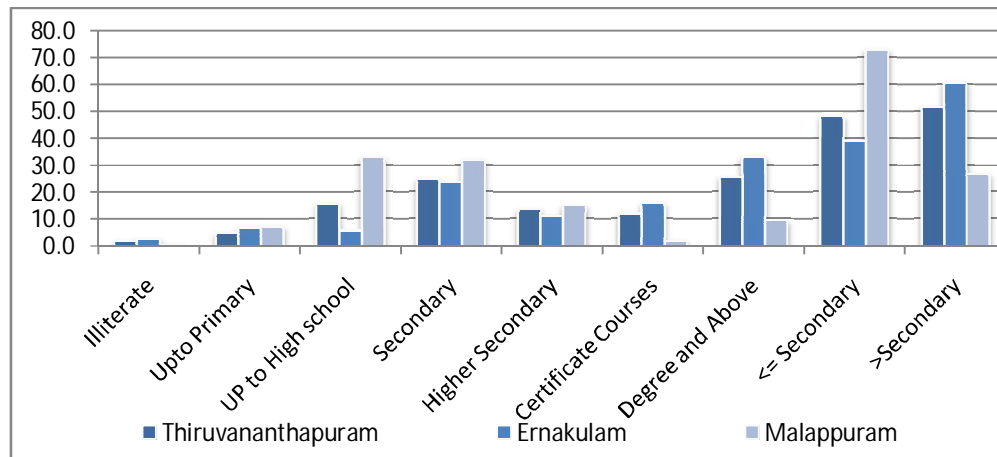
Most of the Gulf migrants are espoused. The proportion of married male and female migrants in Thiruvananthapuram is 71.1 per cent and 65.2 per cent respectively. Respectively in Ernakulam, it is 68.9 per cent and 64.1 per cent where as it is 76.9 per cent and 74.7 per cent in Malappuram district. Among the unmarried Gulf migrants, the proportion of females is greater in Thiruvananthapuram and Ernakulam districts (31.5 per cent and 31.2 per cent respectively) whereas it is lower in Malappuram (21.3 per cent only). Largest number of male and female emigrants in the separated category is from Ernakulam district (2.3 per cent and 2.3 per cent respectively).

**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

One unique feature identified by the study is that about 1.3 per cent of female Gulf migrants are widows and they are from Malappuram district. The corresponding proportion is negligibly low in the other two districts. Though the practice of female migration is predominantly lower in Malappuram on religious grounds, this is a strange found from the data (Table 3).

Majority of the male migrants have completed secondary level of education (30.6 per cent) while majority of the female migrants have a graduate degree or above (46.7 per cent). The educational level of the Gulf migrants varied from illiterate to highly professional degrees. About 15 per cent of the male Gulf migrants have completed the higher secondary level and 15 per cent have done certificate courses. Among the female Gulf emigrants, 13.3 per cent have up to primary level of education and 2.7 per cent are illiterate (Figure 3).



**Figure 3:** Educational Level of Gulf-migrants by Districts

Analysis of the district-wise educational profile of the Gulf migrants, revealed that migrants from Ernakulam district dominated in terms of higher educational qualifications (61 per cent), followed by Thiruvananthapuram (51.8 per cent). Malappuram district has a peculiarity in that majority of the migrants are in the secondary level or below category (73.1 per cent), while the proportion of those with higher educational qualifications is only 26.9 per cent.

Analysis of the pre- and post-occupational status shows significant differences in the case of certain job categories such as agriculture, accountant, teacher and business. In the case of professionals, nurses have experienced no change in their occupation. About 88 per cent of engineers got the same job at the destination country while about 12 per cent of them were under-employed. Many of the professionally or technically qualified Gulf migrants ended up in occupations other than what they were promised in their job contract. This might be the reason for the large and increasing number of unsuccessful migration stories reported from different parts of the state (Table 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
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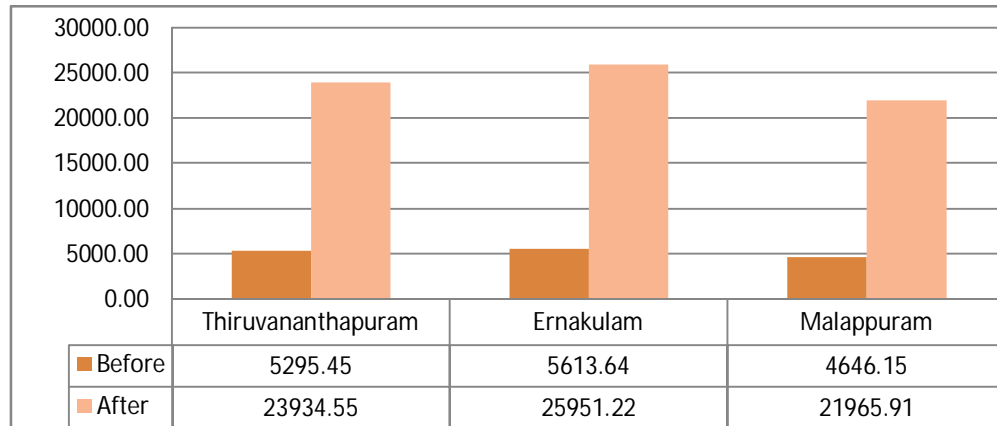
Among the Gulf countries, the major destination country for Keralites is Saudi Arabia followed by United Arab Emirates (UAE). About 43.2 per cent of Gulf migrants are in Saudi Arabia followed by UAE (37.2 per cent) and Qatar (6.7 per cent). The major attraction of these two countries is the increased demand for unskilled labourers by the construction industry and oil fields. About 91.1 per cent of the total male emigrants prefer to go to Gulf countries while only 60 per cent females prefer to go to Gulf countries.

**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
<b>Gulf</b>	<b>91.1</b>	<b>59.5</b>
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
<b>Non-gulf</b>	<b>8.9</b>	<b>40.5</b>

So the migration from Kerala to Middle East countries is male dominated. About 40.5 per cent of female emigrants prefer to go to other countries such as USA, UK or Canada (Table 5).

The average monthly income of the Gulf migrants prior to migration is more or less similar in Thiruvananthapuram and Ernakulam, but it is lower in Malappuram district. Similar trends are seen in the post-migration phase also in all the three districts. This deviation in income (Figure 4) may be the after-effect of differences in the achievement of education of gulf-migrants at district level. However, a five-fold increase in income can be seen in all the three districts as a result of migration (Figure 4).



**Figure 4:** Average Monthly income of gulf-migrants during the pre and post-migration phase by Districts (in Rs)

### Remittance and Cost of Migration

Household remittances are the remittances received by family members of the Gulf migrant households from their members working in the Gulf countries. Remittances are calculated in this study with the help of a raising factor (weight) which is obtained by taking the quotient of estimated Census households for 2016 and the sample households. Actual remittances for each district are multiplied by the raising factor to obtain the household remittances. Most of the household remittances were received by the households as regular periodic remittances. Malappuram district received the largest amount of remittances Rs. 2283 crore, followed by Thiruvananthapuram (Rs. 1462 crore) and Ernakulam (Rs.556 crore). Though the monthly income of the Gulf migrants from Ernakulam is high, their remittance is low. The income they acquire in the destination country is not coming to Kerala. This may be because they save their income in some other way either in Gulf countries or in other foreign banks. Most of the low-skilled Gulf migrants are from a fragile economic background. To improve their family well-being, they are compelled to send a sizable proportion of their income back as remittances. This may be the reason for higher remittances in case of Malappuram (Table 6).

**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

The socio-economic characteristics of Gulf migrant households revealed that the private costs and private benefits of migration. Malappuram district has the highest number of Gulf migrants, receives the largest amount of remittances,

and has the lowest average cost of migration. A real disparity is observed between the standard of living of the Gulf migrant and non-migrant households. However, in the case of savings, investment and consumption, there is no valid variation between these households. So, it can be concluded that now-a-days the demonstration effect is very evident in Kerala. Earlier studies on migration from Kerala have indicated that inequality has fallen. The increase of wages in Kerala also boosted this effect.

Loans taken by the gulf-migrant households are mainly utilized for purchasing or constructing houses. About 12 per cent gulf-migrant households are utilized the loans for wedding/ dowry purpose. About 6 per cent gulf-migrant households utilized the loan for emigration expenses. About 44 per cent of gulf-migrant households in Ernakulam district utilized the loan for the construction or purchase of houses (Table 7). This is partly associated with increased cost of construction prevailing in the urban centers’.

**Table 7:** Manner of Utilization of the Loan taken by the Gulf-migrant Households

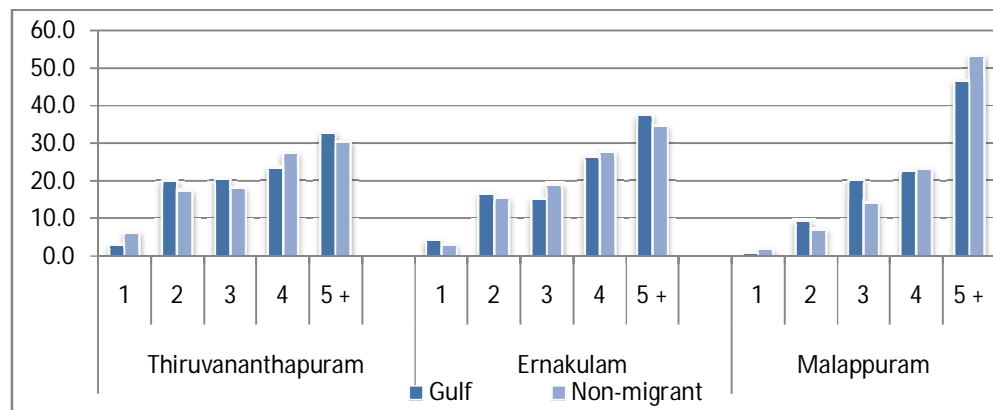
	Thiruvananthapuram	Ernakulam	Malappuram
Purchase of land	2.1	0.0	3.3
Purchase of agricultural equipment	2.8	0.0	16.7
Investment in business	2.8	0.0	0.0
Purchase of house (including construction)	35.2	43.8	33.3
Purchase of vehicles or Household durables	8.3	6.3	3.3
Educational purpose	7.6	12.5	0.0
Medical 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

The main dream of any migrant is to have a good home. This is evident from the landscape throughout Kerala. Also, loans utilized for educational purpose is comparatively high in the gulf-migrant households of Ernakulam district. Loans taken for marriage purpose is high in gulf-migrant households of Malappuram district followed by Thiruvananthapuram. Loans availed for meeting the emigration expenses in Malappuram district is comparatively smaller because of the prevalence of ‘chain migration’ process, which means, majority of the migration happened through friends and relatives rather than recruitment agencies.

## Social Impact of Migration

Average family size in the households in Thiruvananthapuram and Ernakulam districts is four, irrespective of their migration status. But the average

family size of the non-migrant households in Malappuram is five. There are more single members in the non-migrant households compared to the Gulf migrant households. However, in Malappuram district, more migrant households have more than five members than non-migrant households. More than 33 per cent of the Gulf migrant households have 2 or 3 members (Figure 5).



**Figure 5:**Per cent Distribution of Households by Family Size, 2016

Generally, if the head of the household has migrated, a female member takes up the position as head of the household. Among the non-migrant households, 74 per cent are male-headed households. When comparing the Gulf-migrant households, it is found that around half of the households are headed by females; whether this is a positive or negative development, this is the main impact of migration (Table 8). In other words, women do ‘double-shifts’ or ‘double-days’ which means they work for their husbands too. Though it is a dual task to look after their children as well as other family members, the economic status of their households and their dignity within the family and relatives’ circle considerably went up following the emigration of a family member.

**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

Females are more educationally qualified than males, irrespective of their household composition. In Thiruvananthapuram, more than 71 per cent male youth members of the Gulf migrant households have secondary or higher level of education while in Ernakulam, 88 per cent have acquired the same. A greater proportion of the members Gulf-migrant households in Ernakulam (41.4 per cent)

have the higher educational qualifications (degree and above) than their counterparts in non-migrant households (28.2 per cent). Malappuram has a different approach towards higher education. Compared to the other two districts, the number of degree holders is fewer among both types of households. However, members in non-migrant households of this district have better educational status compared to those in the Gulf-migrant households (Table 9).

**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 <sup>th</sup> Class	28.0	29.0	20.2	26.8
	>=10 <sup>th</sup> Class	71.4	69.4	79.8	70.8
Ernakulam	<10 <sup>th</sup> Class	12.1	19.9	4.2	18.6
	>=10 <sup>th</sup> Class	87.9	79.5	95.8	81.1
Malappuram	<10 <sup>th</sup> Class	47.4	39.9	37.1	36.6
	>=10 <sup>th</sup> Class	52.3	58.6	62.6	61.5

Migration of children from the home usually is seen to increase the number of elderly living alone in households. In our study, we have considered households composing of only members aged 60 and above, as elderly households. As per the study, it is seen that there are not much significant difference observed between the gulf emigrant households and non-migrant households when it comes to elderly households. On the contrary, it is seen that there are higher number of elderly households in the non-migrant households across the three districts when compared to the gulf emigrant households.

**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

Emigration from Kerala is mainly male dominant. This could often lead to households with no adult members in the household, thus increasing the burden of the women in the left behind households. The study shows that among the non-migrant households across all three districts, we see the proportion of households where there are no adult males present is significantly higher in the gulf migrant households when compared to the non-migrant households (Table 11).

**Table 11:** Percent Distribution of Households with Adult Male Member, 2016

Type of HH	Trivandrum	Ernakulam	Malappuram
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	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

## Economic Impact of Migration

The quality of houses varies sharply among the Gulf migrant and non-migrant households. About 46 per cent of migrant households have a luxurious or very good house while only 27 per cent of the non-migrant households have such quality houses. More than 20 per cent of the non-migrant households have poor or *kutch*a houses (Table 12).

**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
<i>Kutch</i> a	0.7	1.8
Total	100.0	100.0

Thiruvananthapuram has the highest proportion of poor or *kutch*a houses. It is interesting to note that though Malappuram has the highest proportion of Gulf-migrants, there are a larger number of luxurious or very good houses in Ernakulam (55.6 per cent) followed by Thiruvananthapuram (46.1 per cent).

**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 /	21.3	24.0	2.7	26.0	41.7	15.7	11.6	18.7	7.1

Laptops									
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

Analysis of data on household amenities possessed by the Gulf migrant households is a major indicator of the impact of migration. One out of four Gulf-migrant households has a four-wheeler. Possession of a motor car is 6.8 points higher for Gulf-migrant households than non-migrant households in Malappuram. It is interesting to note that though most Gulf migrant households possess mobile phones and an Internet connection, the picture is not too bad among the non-migrant households. When it comes to possessing refrigerator, there is a big gap between gulf-migrant and non-migrant households (Table 13).

A feasible option to study the direct impact of economic indicators on the households is the construction of the standard of living index. Here, the index is group at four levels. Clearly, non-migrant households are fall in the lower level of living standard category, whereas Gulf-migrant households are skewed towards the high level or middle level of living standard. Thus, a clear evidence of the disparity in the standard of living of the Gulf-migrant and non-migrant households is demarcated (Table 14).

**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

Average total investment in Gulf-migrant households is Rs. 11,70,00 and that in non-migrant households is Rs. 11,30,00. It is found that though the investment is positively skewed to migration, its indirect effect shadowed to the non-migrant households. There is not much variation between investments of Gulf-migrant and non-migrant households. This trend can be seen in savings and consumption also. Though Gulf-migrant households lead the position, the disparity among them is very less. Average total savings of Gulf-migrant

households is Rs. 14132 and that of non-migrant households is Rs. 13322. Thus, it can be inferred that migration has a direct impact on the migrant households and an indirect impact on the non-migrant households. Mean consumer expenditure of the Gulf-migrant households for a month is Rs.12380 while it is Rs. 10990 for non-migrant households. Consumption expenditure is higher in a Gulf-migrant household than in a non-migrant household. Investment among Gulf-migrant households is high in Thiruvananthapuram while it is high among non-migrant households in Ernakulam district. Consumption expenditure among the Gulf-migrant households is higher in Ernakulam district compared to other two districts. Savings are higher among the Gulf-migrant households of Malappuram and Ernakulam compared to those in Thiruvananthapuram.

**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
<b>Education Expense</b>			
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

Due to the increase in the income over the period among Gulf-migrant households, their monthly consumption expenditure was also higher compared to non-migrant households. The migrant households incurred higher expenditure on food, clothing, education, fuel, light, travel, entertainment, medical expenses, etc. The households also spent more money on marriages, other ceremonies and on the durable goods.

Another major area of spending is on health and education sector. A slight difference can be seen in the expenditure pattern of Gulf- migrant and non-migrant households on these sectors. The study considered the hospitalization charges as the health expenses. About 58 per cent of Gulf-migrant households utilized private hospitals for their treatments whereas it is 40 per cent in the case

of non-migrants. Utilization pattern of education reveals that Ernakulam district incurred higher expenditure on education compared to other two districts.

Thus, it can be concluded that there is not much difference between Gulf-migrant and non-migrant households in terms of their savings, investment and consumption; though a slight domination is evident in the case of Gulf-migrant households. Theoretically, this can be explained by the result the demonstration effect - how an individual's behavior is affected by observing that of others, especially with respect to consumption.

The number of dependents is higher in Gulf-migrant households compared to non-migrant households and a higher percentage is in Malappuram district. About 80 per cent of the family members of the Gulf-migrants are outside the labor force and 2.6 per cent are job seekers. Unemployment rate is high among the family members of Gulf-migrant households compared to non-migrant households and it is higher in Thiruvananthapuram district compared to the other two districts (Table 16).

In the Gulf-migrant households, most of the family members are women and children and they are outside labor force. So it is not surprising that the proportion of the members in these households in the working group is lower compared to those in the non-migrant households. One-fourth of the family members of the Gulf-migrant households in Ernakulam are economically actives. Among the non-migrant households, about 38 per cent households in Thiruvananthapuram have economically active family members.

**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

On looking closely at the labour force participation of women in the gulf and non-migrant households, we see that across all three districts, even though the labour force participation of women is low, women in the non-migrant households are seen to be more involved in the labour force than the women in the gulf migrant households. Malappuram, which is shown to have just 11.89% of women involved in labour force in the non-migrant households, the same figures for the women in the gulf migrant household is seen to be extremely low at 4.32% (Table 17).

**Table17:** 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

Looking at the age-specific labour force participation of women, we see a different picture. Across all three districts, the proportion of women between the age group of 18-29 engaged in the labour force is seen to be significantly higher in the Gulf migrant households. The proportion of young women engaged in labour force in all three districts is also seen to be higher than the proportion of women in labour force, in the same age group, in the non-migrant households (Table 18).

**Table18:** 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

Logistic regression analysis<sup>1</sup> carried out to investigate the inequality between Gulf migrant and non-migrant households and finally, the impact of migration in terms of their place of residence, household headship, religion, Standard of Living Index and level of consumption and savings revealed that all the variables are statistically significant except household savings. The odds ratio of Gulf-migrant households is 1.63 times greater for rural areas as opposed to urban areas. It can be identified that the probability of become lower level of standard of living is less among the gulf-migrant households compared to high

level of standard of living, which is highly significant. That is, the expected odds decreased by 39 per cent. Also, there is a less chance of lower middle level of standard of living in Gulf-migrant households compared to high level of standard of living. Hindu households had a lesser chance of becoming a Gulf-migrant household compared to a Muslim household (Table 19).

**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

## Conclusions

It is thus clear from the above discussions that a good number of Keralites have been migrated towards the Gulf region in quest of their fortune. These emigrants are mainly semiskilled/unskilled young men with a low level of education and occupation who have moved temporarily, leaving behind their nearest kin in order to accumulate wealth for their native households. In this regard, we can summaries the ultimate impact of the migratory movement on the living standard of the migrant households.

- i. 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.
- ii. 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.
- iii. 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.

- iv. 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.
- v. 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.
- vi. 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.
- vii. 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.
- viii. 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.
- ix. When it comes to the labour force participation of women in the emigrant households, we see that although the proportion of women in labour force is significantly lower in the gulf migrant households than the non-emigrant households, it is also to be noted that there is seen to be change in trend in the labour force participation in the gulf migrant households, with more women in the younger age groups being involved in the labour force than their older counterparts.

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i A logistic regression analysis is carried out to measure the degree of effect of dependent variable to the selected independent variables by controlling one category in each of the variable. Logistic regression is one of the forms of multivariate analysis for estimating the probability that an event occurs. It is a way of manipulating the general multiple regression models in order to estimate the degree of effect of each independent variable on the dependent variable and to provide a practical way of analysing data with the power of multivariate analysis (Fred, 2000).

The basic form of multivariate logistic function is, 
$$p = \frac{1}{1+e^{-z}}$$

Where p is the estimated probability of the event and z is a linear function of a set of independent variables. i.e.,  $z = b_0 + b_1x_1 + b_2x_2 + \dots + b_kx_k$

Instead of viewing the dependent variable as a proportion or probability, we can view as the dependent variable as the odds. The odds is the ratio of p to q ( $q = 1 - p$ ).  $p/q = e^z$  .. The odds will always be positive and greater than zero. The value estimated by a logistic regression model is a logit. In logistic regression, parameters of the model are estimated using the maximum likelihood method, i.e., the coefficients that make the observed results most likely are selected. Odds ratios are shown in place of regression coefficients for the easy interpretation of results. A statistically significant odds ratio below 1.00 means a negative effect of an independent variable, while a statistically significant odds ratio above 1.00 means a positive effect. The study focuses on the changes that occurred in households during the period 2011-2016. A panel analysis was carried out for the purpose. Panel analysis is a powerful method for estimating changes over a period of time. The uniqueness of panel data is that it measures changes during the inter-survey period with much less sampling bias (Zachariah and Rajan, 2015). The statistical programming for social science (SPSS) package and STATA was used for this analysis.