

Labour Market Changes and In-Migration in Kerala: Reasons and Status

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Abstract

Among the Indian states, Kerala was in the advantage of labour migration in the form of emigration and resulted in an inflow of remittances. Kerala's peculiar development experience has created changes in the structure of the labour market and high in-migration in the state. There are certain factors which changed the attention of migration in Kerala from labour out-migration to labour in-migration. This paper examines the macroeconomic reasons for the in-migration in Kerala and its present status. The study uses available information from secondary sources intended to give an overview of in-migration in Kerala. The study found that demographic transition, high educational standards, high propensity for emigration and resulted inflow of remittances and consequent development experiences changed the labour market situation in the state. The changes in the labour market with an acute shortage of labourers in the informal sector prompted the inflow of interstate migrant workers to Kerala. This paper helps in the understanding of how a large out-flow of labourers from one region causes a reverse in-flow of labourers. This study alerts the policymakers to cure the labour market problems in Kerala and consequent internal and external labour flows and associated problems.

Keywords: *Emigration, In-migration, Labour market, Labour migration, Migrant workers.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The social, economic and regional imbalances among states influence its development process, people and their internal and external flows. The development experience has influenced the labour market of Kerala. It has been a focus of discussion in numerous studies. Kerala has achieved improvements in its social and human development indicators which is comparable to those of many developed countries. It is termed as 'Kerala Model of Development'. But this development experience itself created a divergence between the demand for labour in traditional industries and the supply of educated labour (Mallika, 2011). This culminated in making Kerala a state with high-level unemployment in which low female participation in the labour market and outmigration. The impact of large out-migration especially to the Middle East Countries and related inflow of remittances have influenced the employment situation in the state.

States like Maharashtra, Delhi, UP, Haryana, West Bengal, Karnataka and Gujarat were the major in-migrant states earlier (NSSO 64th Round). But after a long gap of about 60 years, Kerala is now becoming an in-migrant state. The migrant population are taking away the places where Kerala workers could have filled. This is called the "spin-off effect" which benefited outside workers than Kerala workers (Zachariah and Rajan, 2012). Therefore in this context, an attempt has been made to examine the macroeconomic reasons or factors which led to the labour migration to Kerala and status of in-migration in the state.

Sufficient literature has discussed Kerala's development experiences, its labour market situation, Kerala-Gulf connection and in-migration in the state. Many studies concentrate on the recent development of in-migration in Kerala and about the inter-state migrant labourers engaged in different sectors in Kerala. This paper is a revisit to examine the causes and status of in-migration in Kerala based on the information from secondary sources.

2. OBJECTIVES

This study aims at the following objectives:

1. To examine the macroeconomic reasons for the in-migration of interstate migrant workers in Kerala.

2. To analyse the status of in-migration in Kerala.

3. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The literature on migration is very extensive and it is increasing over the years. But when we take Kerala into consideration, most studies bring up 'Kerala-Gulf Diaspora'. The literature on labour migration to Kerala and its different dimensions in detail is received less attention. The studies discussing in-migration of workers in Kerala mainly analyse the impacts of in-migration on Kerala economy and other related issues and challenges, migrants' employment and living conditions, their composition and background and their needs. This paper offers an overview of in-migration in Kerala and its causative factors based on the available information from secondary sources.

The economic and labour market situation in Kerala has attracted a large number of migrant labourers from backward regions of India to the informal job market in Kerala. These poor labourers play a crucial role in sustaining many industries and the economic prosperity of the state. Therefore, here an attempt has been made to examine the macroeconomic reasons for extensive in-migration in Kerala and the status of in-migration in the state.

4. DATA AND METHODS

The present study resorts only to secondary sources of data to analyse the reasons and status of in-migration in Kerala. For this purpose, the findings of the study depend on previous studies in the same field and various government reports. Descriptive statistics like tabulation analysis, percentages, etc. were used for the analysis.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

5.1.Reasons for In-Migration in Kerala

The reasons for labour in-migration to Kerala can be broadly explained under the following heads and these can be considered as the major macroeconomic reasons behind huge in-migration in Kerala:

5.1.1. Demographic transition

Kerala economy was performing unwell till the 1960s with high poverty, low per capita income, high undernutrition, etc. But demographic transition helped Kerala to overcome the illness of the economy. “The existing demographic indicators of Kerala suggest that the state is much ahead of the rest of the states in India by at least about 25 years” (Rajan and James, 2008). Demographic transition includes age structural transition played a prominent role in the development process of Kerala. “Age structural transition is a process of shifting age structure from a young population to an old population. There is an ‘interim period’ during this process, in which the working-age population increases more quickly than of children and the elderly population” (Rajan and James, 2008). Thus the dependency rate will be the lowest during this period. Now Kerala is experiencing such an interim transition period which, in fact, provides a demographic dividend to the state which is highly favourable for economic development.

As per the Economic Review- 2016 by Gov. of Kerala, the state has the lowest population growth rate with 4.9 per cent compared to other Indian states and it has become the first state with zero or negative population growth rate and also the growth rate of child population belonging to the age group 0-6 years is moving on a negative trend (-8.44 per cent). Even though Kerala is in a crucial period of its demographic transition which adds the younger working class to the population, the labour supply of its population is not according to its demanding fields.

5.1.2. High Educational Attainments

Kerala has achieved a unique literacy rate which is comparable to the developed countries of the world. Almost universal enrolment of children in schools and high educational attainment of youth delayed their entry into the labour market. Those who come out of the educational system do not enter in many sectors which need manual labour such as agriculture, construction and so on. The highly educated young generation is reluctant to take up manual jobs. And lack of skilled jobs led to unemployment for the educated labour which compelled them to migrate for a better economic position.

5.1.3. Out-migration of Youth and Inflow of Remittances

Kerala had experienced in-migration around six decades back. But it has turned from an in-migrant to an out-migrant state almost at the same time of demographic transition, (Zachariah, Mathew and Rajan, 2003). The rate of labour out-migration from the state has been steadily on the rise from decade to decade, particularly since 1961. Migration to other states in the first phase and emigration to other countries particularly Gulf countries later had actually helped the state to overcome the problems aroused out of increasing working-age population and the severe pressure on land (Kerala is a small state and is one of the highest population density states in India even now). In fact, emigration to the Gulf and resulting remittances helped the state to overcome poverty and achieve growth in many sectors to a great extent. One of the recent studies concluded that “In Kerala, migration must have contributed more to poverty alleviation than any other factors...” (Zachariah, Mathew and Rajan, 2001).

Migration act as a coping strategy in many cases. The gulf migration of Keralites brought in a tremendous change in the socio-economic sphere of the economy. The number of emigrants from Kerala was 23.63 lakhs as estimated by the Kerala Migration Survey (KMS) - 2014. The corresponding number in 2011, 2008, and 2003 were 22.81 lakhs, 21.93 lakhs and 18.38 lakhs respectively. Though the number of expatriates from Kerala increases during inter-survey periods, it shows a declining trend (Zachariah and Rajan, 2015). The survey report also conveys that flow of remittances to Kerala have also continued to grow ever since Keralites started migrating to the Gulf region. The total remittance to Kerala was Rs. 72680 crores as on 1st March 2014 as per the KMS report. In fact, the present in-migration experiencing by the state is an indirect outcome of emigration and resulted in remittances.

5.1.4. Changes in the Labour Market

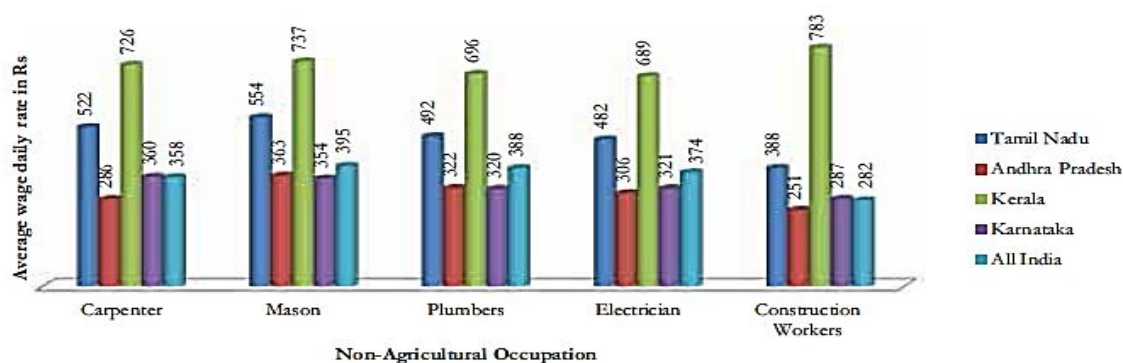
The gap between the supply of and demand for labour indicates the condition of the labour market in an economy. Labour market imperfections often lead to labour migration and vice-versa. In Kerala, there is a mismatch between demand for and supply of labourers since long back. Kerala's labour market is constituted by features like labour shortage, high unemployment rate, the lower economic participation of females and a higher tendency for

migration...etc. (Rajan and James, 2008). The key dynamics of the labour market that prompted the in-migration of labourers in the state are discussed below:

5.1.4.i. Labour Shortage: The high unemployment rate, coupled with lower economic participation, a higher propensity for migration and consequent inflow of remittances created tremendous change in education, health, infrastructure, living standards of the people, construction boom...etc. (Rajan and Sumeetha, 2015). It resulted in a huge shortage of labourers especially in the informal sector of the state and it, in turn, increased the wage rate in the state.

5.1.4.ii. High Wage Rate and Strong Labour Unions: Frequent wage revision is a feature of Kerala's labour market. Kerala is perhaps the only state in the country where minimum wage regulations are effectively implemented. The labour unions are very strong and they significantly influence on wage determination in the state. The wage rates of workers in both agricultural and non-agricultural sectors in Kerala are very high as compared to the other parts of the country. The average daily wage rate for male agricultural workers in rural Kerala is Rs. 590 as on June 2015, according to the Labour Bureau, Govt. of India. But the national average of wages for this category is only Rs. 232. For female agricultural workers, the wage rate is Rs. 410 per day. The wage rate in Kerala is over 150 per cent higher than the national average.

Figure.1. Average Daily Wage Rate of Non-agricultural Workers in Rural Kerala



Source: Economic Review 2016, Gov. of Kerala, Labour Bureau, Ministry of Labour & Employment, GoI.

At the same time, the average daily wage rate for non-agricultural labourers also are very high (ranges between Rs. 700 to Rs.800 among different employment categories) in Kerala

compared to other south Indian states and even than the national average which ranges between Rs. 280 and Rs.400 among different non-agricultural sectors (see Figure-1).

Apart from higher wages in Kerala the lower wage rate for agricultural as well as non-agricultural workers in other Indian states like West Bengal, Odisha, Bihar, Assam...etc. is also a major factor pushing people from such regions to other high-income regions like Kerala (see Table-1).

Table.1. Low Wages in the state of origin and high wages in Kerala

Average Wage Rate for Male Construction and Agricultural Workers 2015 in Rural Areas		
States	Construction Workers (Wages in Rs.)	Agricultural Workers (Wages in Rs.)
Kerala	798	582
West Bengal	233	232
Odisha	202	186
Assam	251	209
Bihar	232	200
Gujarat	237	169
Maharashtra	274	196
Punjab	308	288
Tamil Nadu	383	351
All India	279	230
<i>Source: Labour Bureau, Ministry of Labour & Employment, GoI.</i>		

5.1.4.iii. Low Labour Force Participation and Worker Population Ratios

Even though labour in Kerala is more literate, the Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR)¹ and Worker Population Ratio (WPR)² for the persons with age group of above 15 are below the national average and this has been a persistent characteristic of the Kerala labour market since a long period. The 4th Round of the Report on Employment & Unemployment Survey, 2013-14 shows that LFPR in Kerala is 49.7 per cent while it is 52.25 per cent for the country as a whole. Telangana and Andhra Pradesh reported LFPR of 66.3 per cent and 64.5 per cent respectively and are at the top among all Indian states.

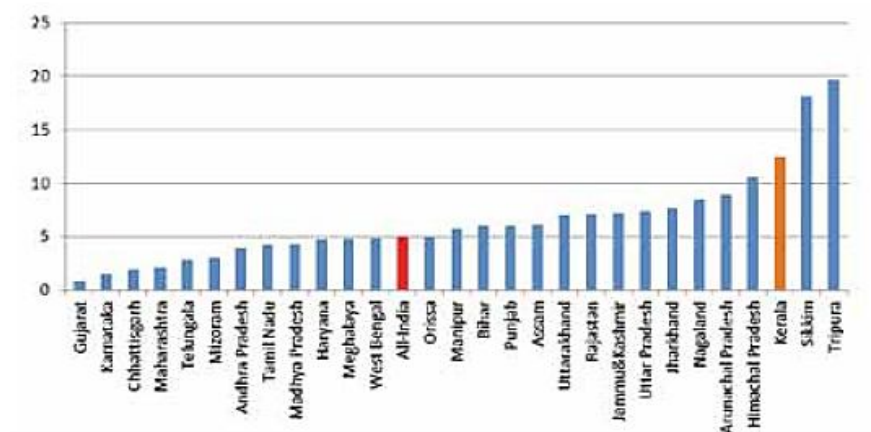
¹Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) is defined as the number of persons in the labour force per thousand population.

²Worker Population Ratio (WPR) is defined as the number of persons actually employed per thousand population.

5.1.4.iv. Unemployment and Job preferences

It can be seen from Figure-2 that high rate of unemployment prevails in Kerala compared to other Indian states. Kerala is the third highest in the unemployment rate after Tripura and Sikkim. In Kerala, it is the unemployment of educated and skilled people. The work seekers in Kerala are largely professionally and technically qualified people. The Employment and Unemployment Survey 2015-16 reported that the unemployment rate among the youth in Kerala is much higher as compared to the overall population.

Figure.2. Unemployment Rate of Major Indian states



Source: Fifth Annual Employment and Unemployment Survey 2015-2016, Gov. of India

The job preferences of workers have an impact on the labour supply. Highly educated and professionally qualified youth are more interested in less hazardous, non-farm, white-collar jobs. They prefer and wait mainly for government jobs. Some of them may be engaged in the private sector and some may resort to migration to other states or foreign countries for employment. As a result of such job preferences, labour shortages are observed in activities like farming, coconut plucking, rubber taping, construction activities and many other low skilled works. They, in general, show an aversion to manual work.

5.1.4.v. Declining Organized Sector and Growing Unorganized Sector

The recent statistics show that in Kerala, the employment in the organized sector is declining and that of the unorganised or informal sector is growing. Individuals employed in the organized sector declined from 12.26lakhs in 2000 to 11.75 lakhs in 2016, a reduction of

4 per cent is found over the period of 15 years (Economic Review 2016, Gov. of Kerala). The reason behind the downfall is the growing informal sector in Kerala.

The unorganized sector is an essential part of the Kerala economy same as Indian economy. According to the 68th round of Employment and Unemployment Survey carried out by the NSSO during 2011-12 accounted that 37.7 per cent of the total workforce is self-employed in Kerala. The percentage share of regular wage or salaried employees estimated at 22.5 per cent and that of casual labour accounted for 39.8 per cent. As per the present situation in the state, migrant workers utilise the employment opportunities in the unorganized sector while highly educated, skilled natives are trying to get employment either in the organized sector within the state or resort to migration.

5.1.4.vi. High Man-days lost due to strikes and lock-outs in Kerala

The attitude of the workers in Kerala is another major challenge to the labour market. The man-days lost due to strikes and lockouts in the state are very high and shows an increasing trend especially in the last two years as compared to other Indian states. The total man-days lost due to lock-outs increased from 2.91 lakhs in 2014 to 4.69 lakhs in the year 2016. Importantly this could be one of the reasons for migrant workers are preferred and hired by the employers in the state on a large scale.

Hence all the above factors contributed to the inflow migrant workers in Kerala. This phenomenon has changed Kerala as one of the major 'migrant-centric' regions in the country recently. The huge influx of migrants from different parts of the country has affected the Kerala economy in its every sphere. This situation changed the attention of migration in Kerala from the old pattern of Kerala-Gulf connection to a new focus of in-migration.

5.2.Labour Migration to Kerala: an Overview

There are limited secondary data exist on in-migration and migrant workers in Kerala. Though there are various studies done in this area, they are mostly small case studies of migrant workers. At this point, researchers can resort to only one authentic report came up based on a large sample study conducted by Dr D. Narayana, and Dr C. S. Venkiteswaran with M. P. Joseph IAS on behalf of the Gulati Institute of Finance and Taxation (GIFT) for

the Department of Labour and Skills of the Government of Kerala. The report based on their study, titled “Domestic Migrant Labour in Kerala” was published in 2013. It was a train based survey of domestic migrant labour (DML) to estimate their stock and their annual inflow. The unique trains’ survey covered all the 63 long distant trains going via Kerala through Kasargode and Palakkad.

The study estimated that the stock of migrant labourers in Kerala to be over 25 lakh (2.5 million) and their number will increase to 4.8 million by 2023, with an annual arrival rate of 2.35 lakhs. At present, the number of in-migrants working in Kerala is greater than the out-migrants from Kerala working in different countries. The findings of their study also reveal that Rs.17500 crores a year flow out of the state as remittances of migrant workers. Migrant workers are not a homogeneous group but they are differentiated mass by their state and district of origin, language, the channels through which they reach Kerala and place and sector in which they employed. Migrants are largely male workforce aged between 18 and 35 years with poor social and economic background uses friends and family members or relatives as the main channels of migration (Narayana, Venkiteswaran and Joseph, 2013).

5.2.1. Origin of Interstate Migrant Workers in Kerala

Table 2. Percentage Distribution of Migrants by the Native States

Sl.No.	States	Percentage (%)
1	Assam	10.4
2	Uttar Pradesh	2.48
3	Karnataka	7.48
4	Tamil Nadu	3.1
5	Orissa	15.7
6	Jharkhand	2.77
7	West Bengal	45.97
8	Bihar	9.36
9	Others	2.74

Source: Labour Commissionerate, GoK, (obtained from Kerala Economic Review, 2016)

According to the Economic Review- 2016 by Govt. of Kerala, migrant workers in Kerala are mainly from the north and north-eastern parts of India specifically from West Bengal, Odisha, Assam, Bihar, Jharkhand, UP and also from bordering states like Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. Table-2 delivered that around 46 per cent of the migrant population in

Kerala is from West Bengal. Odisha (15.7%), Assam (10.40%) and Bihar (9.36%) are other major states sending migrants to Kerala.

Apart from North and Eastern states, workers from adjacent states like Karnataka and Tamil Nadu are present in Kerala by 7.48 per cent and 3.10 per cent respectively, even though they are a comparatively smaller group (see Table.2).

Table 3. Distribution of Migrant Workers by Native States and Religion

States	Religion				Total
	Hindus	Muslims	Christians	Not reported	
Uttar Pradesh	81.65	16.51	0.92	0.92	100
Assam	40.16	45.67	12.6	1.57	100
West Bengal	47.62	48.98	1.36	2.04	100
Bihar	88.72	6.77	1.5	3.01	100
Odisha	73.47	6.12	20.41	0	100
Others	85.29	7.65	2.35	3.53	100
Total	69.25	23.54	4.76	2.18	100

Source: DML (Domestic Migrant Labour) report by GIFT, 2013), GoK.

Table-3 describes the percentage distribution of migrant workers from each state according to their religion. The table conveys that among the migrant workers in Kerala, the Hindu population is a majority of all the mentioned states except from Assam and West Bengal. Muslims are more in the out-migration from West Bengal and Assam. About 16.51 per cent of UP migrants in Kerala are also Muslims. After Hindus, about 20 per cent of migrants from Odisha to Kerala are Christians. The concentration of Christian Assamese is also prominent (12.60 %) in Kerala.

5.2.2. Distribution of Registered Migrant Workers in Kerala

In Kerala, the most number of registered migrants is from West Bengal (23713 workers). Then Assam and Bihar occupy 2nd and 3rd position respectively. From Table-4, we can understand that migrants from these states are more prevalent in Kerala. The registered workers from neighbouring states also indicate their presence in the state.

Table 4. State Wise Distribution of Registered Migrant Labourers

Sl. No.	States	No. of Registered Migrants
1	Assam	5364
2	Bihar	4829
3	Jharkhand	1427
4	West Bengal	23713
5	UP	1279
6	Tamil Nadu	1597
7	Karnataka	3859

Source: Kerala Building and other construction workers welfare Board, Government of Kerala, 2015.

Table-5 displays the number of registered migrant workers from each district in Kerala. Ernakulam district holds the highest in the number of registered migrant workers. Northern districts like Wayanad, Kannur and Kozhikode and Kasaragod are the other major districts which show higher registered migrants, after Ernakulam. Among these districts, Wayanad and Kasaragod may be experiencing different nature of migration. Because, Wayanad shares border with Karnataka and Tamilnadu, thus apart from North or North-East migrants Tamil and Karnataka migrants are more in the district. Likewise, Kasargode in the northern end of Kerala and it shares the border with Karnataka and therefore, people from Karnataka are more prevalent in the district rather than “Bengali” or “Bihari” migrants. Kollam and Idukki have the least number of registered migrant population as per the data.

Table 5. District wise Distribution of Registered Migrant Workers

Sl. No.	Districts	No. of Registered Migrants
1	Thiruvananthapuram	1763
2	Kollam	985
3	Pathanamthitta	2295
4	Alappuzha	2264
5	Kottayam	3618
6	Idukki	1142
7	Ernakulam	8752
8	Thrissur	3841
9	Palakkad	3255
10	Malappuram	2584
11	Kozhikode	4377
12	Wayanad	6632
13	Kannur	5963
14	Kasaragod	4138
Total		51609

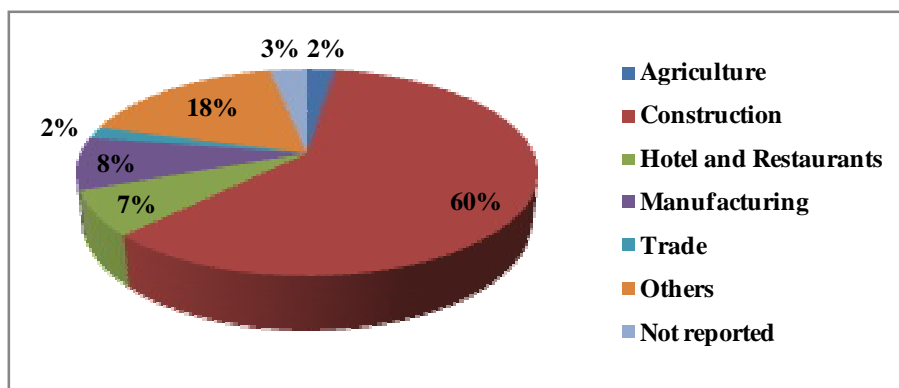
Source: Kerala Building and other construction workers welfare Board, Government of Kerala, 2015

However, these numbers are hiding the real volume of inter-state migration to Kerala. A large chunk of migrants in the state are undocumented. They are even coming from Bangladesh and Nepal. This is a major issue currently facing the state and it may have serious implications.

5.2.3. Major Employment Sectors

The inter-state migrant (ISM) workers are employed in different sectors such as construction, hotels and restaurants, manufacturing and trade, agriculture and so on. From Figure.3, it can be seen that 60 per cent of the migrant workers in Kerala are engaged in the construction sector, 8.30 per cent in manufacturing, 6.94 per cent of the workers engaged under hotels and restaurants, and about 2 per cent each in trade and agriculture sectors. The remaining 17.55 per cent of workers are engaged in other sectors.

Figure.3. Domestic Migrant Workers by Sector of Employment



Source: compiled from DML (Domestic Migrant Labour) report by GIFT, 2013, GoK.

5.2.4. Employment and Living Conditions of the In-Migrants in Kerala

Narayana et.al.reported that most migrants work under contractors and get employment of 6 to 7 days a week. The skillset of the workers ranges from unskilled to skilled carpentry, masonry, electrician, painter...etc. Many of the workers, who have worked outside their states of origin, have been attracted to Kerala due to the higher wage level and prompt payment.

Table.6. Distribution of Migrant Workers by Daily Wages

Daily wage rate	Percentage of workers
Not reported	2.45
Below 300	29.12
300-399	35.51
400-499	23.13
500 and above	9.8
Total	100

Source: DML report by GIFT, 2013, GoK.

It can be seen from Table-6 that about 70 per cent of workers in the study earn wages above Rs.300 per day. Though 10 per cent of migrant workers reported a wage rate above Rs.500 per day as per the study, at present they receive a daily wage up to Rs.900. The study also estimated the average remittance amount per migrant as Rs. 70,000 annually through banking channels.

‘DML’ study illustrates that migrant workers work long hours and they are dedicated and sincere. They put in long working hours and are ready to do overtime. The normal working hours of the migrant workers range between 8 to 14 hours depending upon the sector, location and type of contract. But most of them are denied social security benefits in majority cases according to the study. The size of the migrant labourers has grown in the state over the years but their understanding of the employment is found to be poor. Most workers are new to their employment and having no experience.

The study also reported that most workers live in crowded rooms with hardly any space to move around and about 42 per cent of the workers in the DML study reported seven or more workers in a room. Only about 5 per cent of all the DML reported one or two people in a room. Almost all the labourers in the study reported access to the toilet but 95 per cent of them have common toilets. Findings of the study reveal that the majority (84 per cent of the sample workers in the DML study) of the workers stay and cook commonly among their own language groups. But this study could not get an idea about the exact share of migrants in total workers in the establishments in Kerala (Narayana and Venkiteswaran, 2013).

5.2.5. Education & Health Status of Migrant Workers

Several previous studies of in-migrant workers reveal that the majority of migrant workers have very poor educational standards. Some are illiterate with no school education and rarely people complete their secondary school education. Majority of workers do not have any special skill. In order to impart skill development programmes for migrant workers from North Indian states, Kerala government set up Indian Institute of Infrastructure and Construction (IIIC) with the help of Central Government. The state education department has also extended educational facilities to migrants' children. A considerable share of migrant children is enrolled in government schools in different parts of the state. But due to a sizeable share of the migrant population, it has been found that there is a small downfall in the literacy rate of Kerala.

The migrant workers are more exposed to diseases may be because of low awareness, lack of education and stay in the unhygienic environment. They keep their living place dirty. Their incidence of approaching hospitals is very low. The workers' perception of their health is generally found to be poor. Ministry of Health, Govt. of Kerala has been found that the eradicated diseases from the state like malaria were being carried to the state by migrant workers.

5.2.6. Social Security and Welfare Schemes for Migrants

The migrant workers' welfare scheme was set up in Kerala in 2010. Kerala is the first state in the country which implemented a social welfare scheme for migrant workers. A new health insurance scheme called 'Awas' was also launched by the state in 2016 to provide Rs. 15,000 worth free treatment to the migrant workers aged between 18 and 65 years. It is being implemented to ensure the proper data collection of migrants and to provide them with health care. Under the scheme, migrant workers will be given registration and identity cards. Thus, this scheme also works as a proper registration programme for migrant labourers for the state.

The Government of Kerala is also the first state which built official labour camp as part of "Apna Khar" (meaning 'our home' in English) scheme for migrant workers. It is built in Palakkad district and will be opened soon probably January 2018, where workers can stay by paying a nominal rent. There are many private foundations and NGOs working on their

own projects to provide free medical aids which aim to improve the health and life of migrants working in the state. Apart from these, local bodies also propose to identify the migrants and their problems and needs.

5.2.7. Issues and Challenges

Kerala's experience of labour in-migration starts with workers from neighbouring states, especially with the Tamil migrants. But after a certain period, appropriate action had been taken by the Tamil Nadu government to control losing their labour force by providing job opportunities and welfare schemes, which called many of the workers back. Tamil workers were well integrated with the local community since they have cultural similarities with the state of Kerala. Therefore they are generally accepted by the local community. But the on-going large-scale migration of labourers from North Indian states often finds difficulty to integrate them with the local community due to the large differences in culture, custom, food habits, language and lifestyle.

The Kerala government is very much concerned about public hygiene and social and security issues associated with the presence of a large number of illegal migrants in Kerala. Many illegal migrants come from Bangladesh to Kerala by name of Bengalis with duplicate identity cards. The rising rate of crimes with migrants' involvement in the state urges strict implementation of rules. This also made their acceptance into the local community harder. These raise the security issues in Kerala.

6. CONCLUSION

The age structural transition accompanied by high literacy level, higher out-migration and consequent changes in Kerala's labour market significantly impacted the society and economy of Kerala and paved the way for large-scale labour in-migration to the state. It is contradictory that while a large number of Keralites are moving out of the state in search of jobs, some segment of the out-siders are moving towards Kerala to find out their livelihood (it can be termed as "reverse migration"). The scarcity of labour and consequent increase in wage rate attracted people from all over the country and even from neighbouring countries to

fill the gap in some sections of the labour market. This led to a new era of in-migration in Kerala, after a gap of nearly six decades.

The state government is taking many initiatives to count the migrant workers in the state and get their registration with local police stations as their number increases at a more rapid pace. But still the registration of migrant workers is not working correctly and the share of undocumented migrants is more than the documented workers in the state. Labour contractors or employers often ignore this for their own benefits. It raises many security issues and challenges to the state. In many cases, welfare schemes implemented for migrant workers have not found its result due to the un-registration of migrants and lack of their records. Due to poor education and lack of awareness, even migrant workers themselves are not trying to reap the benefits out of the programmes implemented for them.

Hence, the state government should come up with more alternative plans and make sure that those are strictly followed and implemented. The poor people who travelled long and stay away from their family for a livelihood should reap its benefit. The rapidly increasing in-migration in Kerala is evidence of betterment of the migrant workers and their family. If this trend continues, the native states of these migrant workers may also achieve unique economic progress as Kerala achieved during its out-migration years.

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