

Impacts of International migration of women from Kerala

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Concepts

Migration: According to Webster's New World Dictionary migration means to "move from one place to another, especially to another country" or "to move from place to place to harvest seasonal crops". Lee views migration "broadly as a permanent or semi-permanent change of residence". According to Weinberg human migration is the changing of the place of abode permanently or, when temporarily, for an appreciable duration as e.g., in the case of seasonal workers. It is used symbolically in the transition from one surrounding to another in the course of human life.

Migrants fall in to four categories:

Emigrants: Emigrants are those persons who are usual residence of a household, migrated from Kerala and living outside India in 2006.

Return emigrants: They returned to Kerala after living outside India for a year or more.

Out migrants: They are usual residents of a household who migrated out of Kerala and living outside Kerala but within India.

Return out-migrants: They returned to Kerala after living outside Kerala but within India for a year or more. This study deals only with female emigrants. The first two types deal with external migration or international migration and last two deal with internal migration.

Here migration means international migration that includes a geographical move from one country to another.

Determinants of female migration

Feminization of migration is an important feature of migration in the 20th and 21st centuries. The sustainability of female migration depends on a number of factors: (a) gender – specific labour demand in host countries in areas like domestic workers, care givers and entertainers, (b) a gender – specific labour supply in source countries. (c) gender – specific reciprocity and (d) women empowerment (world survey, 2004:17). Women are referred to as "servants of globalization" (World Bank, 2006). Women go abroad to serve families of a higher social status, while they pass their own family earning role to other family members or less privileged women in their countries of origin. Migration is a transforming experience for women. It can improve or worsen the position of women in families and society.

The important determinants of female migration are :(a) Economic disparities between developing and developed countries of the world. (b) Transglobalization of economies, which created a labour demand in low paying service sectors of, developed economies. (c) The combination of demographic change, growing participation of women in the workforce which reduced social services for child and aged. (d) Education and migration of women have a direct relation (e) Health-disease affected agriculture tends women to migrate (f) It is not necessary that the poorest or deprived are migrating (g) Socio– cultural determinants. (h) Gender-blind government policies.

The local impact of international migration of women from Kerala is done by comparing two districts Kottayam and Kasargod using certain vital variables like, income, population, education, infrastructure development, industrial growth and many more. Among the district of Kerala Kottayam represents the highest percent of women migration and Kasargod with the lowest proportion. The local impact of migration is divided into five categories viz, economic impacts, social impacts, demographic impacts, cultural impacts and political impacts. Kottayam and Kasargod districts are compared because the highest proportion (20.59%) of women migration is from Kottayam district while the lowest is from Kasargod district (9.29%).

Economic impacts

For measuring economic impacts on local area the variables taken into consideration are State Domestic Product, growth rate of the economy, sector wise distribution of Gross State Domestic Product and annual growth rate, women's employment, infrastructure development, industrial development, self-employment measures, community based organization status, etc. Gross State Domestic Product at factor cost at

current prices (Rs. 19053.62cr) and at constant prices(Rs.13440.40 cr.) are higher in Kottayam district while compared to Kasargod district (Rs. 8540.39cr and Rs. 5919.19cr) respectively. The growth rate of Gross State Domestic Product at current prices and constant prices is almost same for both districts, but Gross State Domestic Product is more than twice in Kottayam Compared to Kasargod district. Excluding primary sector in the sector wise distribution also the Gross State Domestic Product at Kottayam district is higher than that of Kasargod district.

District wise employment analysis in organized public and private sectors in Kerala shows that the number of persons employed 62458, higher in Kottayam than in Kasargod district (46523). District wise employment in Kerala's public sector shows that in the case of both total employment and women's employment, the number of persons are higher in Kottayam district. District wise work seekers in Kerala explains that general work seekers, professional/ technical workers and total work seekers are high in Kottayam district both in the case of men and women.

District wise analysis of infrastructure development related to banking facilities, growth of motor vehicles, length of roads maintained by PWD, post office facilities, telephone network, irrigation facilities, development in the case of schools etc.

In the case of banking facilities related to total number of branches, deposits and credits Kottayam district is higher in all cases when compared to Kasargod district. The growth in number of motors vehicles 445940 is also higher in Kottayam district. The district wise length of roads maintained by PWD is higher in Kottayam district. Area and populations served by one post office is also higher in Kottayam district compared to Kasargod district. Telephone net work related to numbers of exchanges (101 vs. 59), area (2203 vs. 153) and numbers of telephones/1000 population (341.51 Vs 278.67) are better in Kottayam district.

While accounting numbers of government school having drinking water, urinals/latrines facilities, enrolment of students in lower primary schools. Total numbers of beds in medical institutions and population for one doctor are higher in Kottayam district.

While considering micro, macro and medium enterprises, number of units promoted by women, total number of micro, macro and medium enterprises, total employment created by these units, total number of registered working factories are higher in Kottayam district.

The number of beneficiaries who received financial assistance under Kerala State Self employment scheme and the amount of subsidy disbursed; Community based organisation status in rural areas containing numbers of NITUS and number of families covered and numbers of micro enterprises are higher in Kottayam district.

In short while analysing economic impact on local area the effect of almost all factors like income, infrastructure facilities, industrial development etc positively helped for the growth of the Kottayam district.

Demographic Impact

Migration both internal and international have reduced the size of population in Kerala economy. To analyse local impact thought demography, the demographic factors taken into consideration are age composition of population, wage increase, expansion of aged population, brain drain, in migration, wage increase etc.

The proportion to Kerala population is higher 5.93% in Kottayam district than in Kasargod district (3.90%). Except density of population, other factors like population growth rate, sex ratio, urban population and child sex ratio are higher in Kasargod district. Likewise Kerala, migration has a negative impact on population growth rate and the other related demographic factors in the economy. But the wage is high for both men Rs. 500 and women Rs. 300 in Kottayam district. The proportion at elderly population per 100 head is also high 13.85% in Kottayam district.

In Migration in Kerala

A new trend in employment sector in Kerala is the in migration, that is, migration from other states to Kerala like West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and from neighbouring states. The reasons for in migration are higher wages for unskilled workers in the state, large opportunities for employment and the paradoxical situation with high unemployment in Kerala with shortage of local labour.

Distribution of migrants from other states/ Union Territories in the districts of Kerala

No of migrants	Kottayam	Kasargod
	16797	31884
Share of migrants	4.07	7.72

Census of India,2001

The table shows that the in migration is higher in Kasargod district (7.72%) Than in Kottayam district (4.07%). The higher monetary wages in Kerala is the most important reason for in migration. They are usually engaged in construction, plywood and steel industries and almost all employment including service sector.

Social impact

Here while comparing educational status of women, health status, decision making power of women, genders equality in house hold resource distribution and remittance by districts, the average literary rate 94.4% is higher in Kottayam district than in Kasargod district ,89.85%.The number of medical institutions and the number of beds in the hospitals are also higher in Kottayam district. The decision making power and gender equality in household resource distribution is also high in Kottayam district, which are obtained from primary data and nil in Kasargod district. Remittance by districts is also high in Kottayam district (2.1%) while compared with Kasargod district (0.6%).

Remittances and development

Remittances—that is, migrant earnings sent back to countries of origin—are the main reason experts point to international migration as important for poverty reduction. Although exact numbers are hard to pin down, the sums are enormous. The World Bank estimates that, in 2005, formally transferred remittances rang in at about US\$232 billion —of which developing countries received \$167 billion. The actual amount of remittances is considered to be substantially higher, since this figure does not take into account funds transferred through non-formal channels. Remittances are considerably larger than the value of Official Development Assistance (ODA) and comprise the second-largest source of external funding for developing countries after Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). Furthermore, remittances tend to be a more predictable and stable source of income than either FDI or ODA. For some small countries they represent a high share of GDP, such as in Tonga (31 per cent), the Republic of Moldova (27 per cent), Lesotho (26 per cent) and Haiti (25 per cent) (World Bank, 2006). Fully 70 per cent of China’s FDI comes from the Chinese Diaspora (Bajpai and Dasgupta, 2004:15). So great is the impact on developing world economies that the World Bank theorizes that a 10 per cent increase in remittances as a proportion of a country’s GDP could result in a 1.2 per cent reduction in the share of people living in extreme poverty. This is borne out by statistics. In Nicaragua, more than 60 per cent of the 22,000 households who escaped poverty between 1998 and 2001 had a family member living abroad. Remittances sent by migrants to El Salvador, Eritrea, Jamaica, Jordan, Nicaragua and Yemen in 2000 increased the GNP of these countries by more than 10 per cent. That same year, 1.2 million Moroccans managed to escape poverty purely on the strength of remittance income alone. According to ECLAC, in 2002, remittances from abroad helped to boost 2.5 million people living in Latin American and the Caribbean above the poverty line. The propensity to remit—and the amount sent—depends on a variety of factors such as age, number of dependents, the marital status of the migrant and the duration of residence in the host country.

While the impact of remittances on developing countries would appear to be clearly beneficial, part of the literature still questions whether remittances have positive implications for short-term poverty or longer-term development. A major issue is that the poorest people and the poorest countries profit the least from remittances. The largest recipients are middle-income countries: Sub-Saharan Africa received only 1.5 per cent of all remittance flows in 2002 (UN, 2004: 105 -108). This only serves to show that people from the poorest regions have the most difficulty migrating, earning and remitting funds from abroad. Another concern is that remittances can sometimes exacerbate income inequality in the country of origin, with remittance receiving families and communities prospering while less fortunate neighbours do without. In addition, some experts argue that remittances encourage dependency by discouraging government efforts to take the steps necessary to restructure their economies. Still others contend that donor countries will use remittances as an excuse to shrug off ODA commitments to combat poverty, while developing countries might neglect the needs of their most vulnerable populations because some poor families are receiving remittance income. Thus, despite its contribution to poverty reduction, migration is not necessarily the ultimate equalizer—particularly in an increasingly unequal world. Some experts also express concern that most remittances do not generally find their way into productive investments (IOM, 2005: 178). This is because remittances are privately owned monies that are largely used to contribute to family income rather than to capital flows, and because migrants tend to be unfamiliar with investment instruments. Existing research, however, underscores the fact that remittances could play a more significant role in development and poverty alleviation. Whether remittances are used for the purposes of investment or consumption, they bring important benefits to the households, communities and countries that receive them.

There is no simple answer to the question on what the remittances are spent on. Situations vary greatly, not just from family to family but also country to country. But for a variety of reasons, it is relatively unusual for families receiving remittances to invest directly in the economy by, for instance, opening businesses. Instead, much of the money tends to go on typical day-today expenditures, like food and clothing, especially among poorer families. Typically remittances are also devoted to children’s education, paying off debts, paying for health care, buying land and building houses. A share also may go on luxuries, some of which are likely to be imported, meaning that money sent back to the home country may soon leave it.

Whatever way they are utilized – individually or collectively – remittances can have a significant economic impact, mainly through the “multiplier effect”. A family building a new house will have to hire a builder, he in turn will have to hire workers, purchase building materials etc. This chain of consequences is so significant that researchers have even set out to measure it. In Mexico, for instance, it has been estimated that every dollar in remittance, or “migradollar”, received by families in cities leads to an increase in GNP of \$ 2.90.

Remittances represent a positive contribution to the balance of payments, which is why some developing countries over the years have actively encouraged migrants to send money home. Further, there is the issue of “social” remittances—the transfer of ideas, information, knowledge, attitudes, behaviour patterns, identities, culture and social capital from one culture to another. In their contacts with, or return to, communities of origin, migrants can become agents of political and cultural transformation, which can be particularly beneficial to furthering gender equality. Not only do source countries benefit, but receiving countries as well (Levitt, 1996:24).

Remittances and poverty Reduction in Kerala

In Asia, more than half of the total remittance flow is received by India and China. In India, Kerala is one of the top remittance recipient in the country. Empirical studies proved that there is a positive correlation between remittance, development and poverty reduction. A study recently conducted by UNCTAD (1980-2008) shows that Kerala receives 20% of the total remittances in India and experienced high level of per capita consumption than the rest of India. Between 1988-2008, Kerala experienced an annual average per capita net domestic product by 5.7% as against a 14.7% increase in per capita remittances. Empirical studies in Kerala proves that per capita income and higher levels of investment which are considered as key variables affecting poverty reduction (Economic review, 2010.)

In short, social impact on local area shows that international migration of women have led to a positive growth in literacy rate, health status, decision making power of women and gender equality in the household resource distribution.

Cultural Impact

Cultural impacts shows that the international migration at women in Kottayam district leads to negative cultural impact on the economy. The negative effect in the economy like break up of family system, harassment of women, downward deaths, emergency of welfare institution etc.

Political Impact

It explains the various measures taken by the government for promoting international migration of women from Kerala.

Welfare of Non Resident Keralite (NRK'S)

Kerala is the first state in India to set up a separate Department for the welfare of Non-resident Keralite hailing from the state. Government of Kerala has launched the department of Non-resident Keralites Affairs (NORKA) on 6th December 1999, to redress the grievances of Non-Resident Keralites.

NORKA-ROOTS, the field agency of NORKA department acts as a counsel for the non-resident Keralite and provides social security them and their families. Main activities of NORKA - ROOTS are:

- 1) Attestation of educational certificates
- 2) Santhana scheme for NRK's (retunes)'
- 3) Pre-departure orientation programme to give maximum knowledge about the adopted country.
- 4) Insurance of INK identity card with insurance:
- 5) Still up gradation programme.
- 6) KARNAYAM, Fund for meeting repatriation of mortal remains of NRK's who died aboard.
- 7) NORKA NEWS-News letter published.
- 8) 16 hours helpline for the redressal of the NRK's.
- 9) Job Portal and recruitment

Conclusion

The waves of migration from Kerala has a significant impact on states' economy and living conditions. Emigration and remittances is the most important dynamic factor in the economic scenario of Kerala in the first decade of the 21st century. Migration has influenced the economy through land relationship, decline of agriculture, growth of consumer and service sector, rise of education and a relatively less skilled and knowledge

based young leadership pool for political parties. Considering the status of women in the society over the last one hundred years females outnumber males consistently due to decline in female infant mortality rate and increase in the life expectancy of women.

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