

**SOCIO ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF NITAQAT IN
KERALA: A STUDY IN MALAPPURAM
DISTRICT**

*Thesis submitted to
the University of Calicut in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the award of the degree of*

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

by

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I hereby certify that the thesis entitled “**Socio Economic Impacts of Nitaqat in Kerala: A Study in Malappuram District**” submitted by **Yunus C.**, is the result of an authentic work carried out under my guidance. I also certify that neither a part of the work nor the whole of it has been submitted for a degree here or elsewhere. The thesis is hereby submitted to the University of Calicut for examination for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science in the Faculty of Humanities.

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DECLARATION

I, **Yunus C.**, do hereby declare that this Ph.D. thesis entitled “**Socio Economic Impacts of Nitaqat in Kerala: A Study in Malappuram District**” is the summary of the research work carried out by me under the supervision of **Dr. Jiji Paul S.**, Associate Professor (Retd.), Department of Political Science, Mar Dionysious college, Pazhanji, Thrissur in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science. I also declare that neither a part of the work nor the whole of it has been published anywhere except quotations and references which have been duly acknowledged at appropriate places. I also declare that the thesis is free from AI generated content.

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ABSTRACT

This study looks into how Saudi Arabia's Nitaqat policy affected the Malappuram district in Kerala. Malappuram has a large number of people working in Gulf countries, especially in Saudi Arabia. The Nitaqat policy, which was part of Saudi Arabia's plan to give more jobs to its own citizens, forced many foreign workers to return home. Most of those affected were low- and semi-skilled workers from places like Malappuram.

The study focuses on four main areas. First, it explains how the Nitaqat policy was introduced and applied in Saudi Arabia. It shows how the government made private companies hire more Saudi citizens, which meant many foreign workers, including those from Kerala, had to leave their jobs and return.

Second, it studies the impact of this sudden return of migrants on Malappuram's economy and society. The district has long depended on the money sent home by workers in the Gulf. When this money stopped coming, many families faced financial problems. Spending in local markets went down, unemployment went up, and overall economic growth slowed down.

Third, the study looks at the problems faced by returnees. Many of them had trouble finding new jobs because the skills they had learned in Saudi Arabia were not useful in Kerala. Some returnees also faced health problems and found it hard to adjust back to life in their home communities. These challenges also caused stress within families and made it harder for returnees to feel supported.

Fourth, the research reviews how the Kerala government responded, especially through NORKA (Non-Resident Keralites Affairs). Some programs were launched to help returnees with money, training, and small business support. However, many returnees felt that these schemes were not enough. Some did not know how to apply, while others found the process slow and unhelpful. The lack of long-term support made the situation worse for many returnees.

The study found that the Nitaqat policy caused serious problems for returnees and the local economy of Malappuram. The district's strong dependence on Gulf jobs became clear. Many returnees suffered due to poor planning and weak support systems. The government's efforts helped a little but were not enough. The study ends by saying that there is a strong need for better policies and long-term support to help returnees rebuild their lives and to strengthen areas like Malappuram that send many people abroad for work.

Key words : Gulf migration, Nitaqat policy, human security, NORKA ROOTS

സംഗ്രഹം

സൗദി അറേബ്യയുടെ നിതാവത്ത് നയം കേരളത്തിലെ മലപ്പുറം ജില്ലയെ എങ്ങനെ ബാധിച്ചു എന്നതാണ് ഈ പഠനം പരിശോധിക്കുന്നത്. ഗൾഫ് രാജ്യങ്ങളിൽ, പ്രത്യേകിച്ച് സൗദി അറേബ്യയിൽ ജോലി ചെയ്യുന്ന ധാരാളം ആളുകളാണ് മലപ്പുറത്തുള്ളത്. സ്വന്തം പൗരന്മാർക്ക് കൂടുതൽ ജോലികൾ നൽകാനുള്ള സൗദി അറേബ്യയുടെ പദ്ധതിയുടെ ഭാഗമായിരുന്ന നിതാവത്ത് നയം നിരവധി വിദേശ തൊഴിലാളികളെ നാട്ടിലേക്ക് മടങ്ങാൻ നിർബന്ധിതരാക്കി. മലപ്പുറം പോലുള്ള സ്ഥലങ്ങളിൽ നിന്നുള്ള താഴ്ന്ന, അർദ്ധ വൈദഗ്ദ്ധ്യമുള്ള തൊഴിലാളികളായിരുന്നു ഇവരിൽ ഭൂരിഭാഗവും.

നാല് പ്രധാന മേഖലകളിലാണ് പഠനം ശ്രദ്ധ കേന്ദ്രീകരിക്കുന്നത്. ഒന്നാമതായി, നിതാവത്ത് നയം സൗദി അറേബ്യയിൽ എങ്ങനെ അവതരിപ്പിച്ചുവെന്നും പ്രയോഗിച്ചുവെന്നും ഇത് വിശദീകരിക്കുന്നു. സർക്കാർ സ്വകാര്യ കമ്പനികളെ കൂടുതൽ സൗദി പൗരന്മാരെ നിയമിച്ചതെങ്ങനെയെന്ന് ഇത് കാണിക്കുന്നു, അതായത് കേരളത്തിൽ നിന്നുള്ളവർ ഉൾപ്പെടെ നിരവധി വിദേശ തൊഴിലാളികൾക്ക് ജോലി ഉപേക്ഷിച്ച് മടങ്ങേണ്ടിവന്നു.

രണ്ടാമതായി, കുടിയേറ്റക്കാരുടെ ഈ പെട്ടെന്നുള്ള തിരിച്ചുവരവ് മലപ്പുറത്തിന്റെ സമ്പദ്‌വ്യവസ്ഥയിലും സമൂഹത്തിലും ചെലുത്തുന്ന സ്വാധീനം ഇത് പഠിക്കുന്നു. ഗൾഫിലെ തൊഴിലാളികൾ നാട്ടിലേക്ക് അയച്ച പണത്തയാണ് ജില്ല വളരെക്കാലമായി ആശ്രയിച്ചിരുന്നത്. ഈ പണം വരുന്നത് നിലച്ചപ്പോൾ, നിരവധി കുടുംബങ്ങൾ സാമ്പത്തിക പ്രശ്നങ്ങൾ നേരിട്ടു. പ്രാദേശിക വിപണികളിലെ ചെലവ് കുറഞ്ഞു, തൊഴിലില്ലായ്മ വർദ്ധിച്ചു, മൊത്തത്തിലുള്ള സാമ്പത്തിക വളർച്ച മന്ദഗതിയിലായി.

മൂന്നാമതായി, തിരിച്ചെത്തിയവർ നേരിടുന്ന പ്രശ്നങ്ങളെക്കുറിച്ചാണ് പഠനം. സൗദി അറേബ്യയിൽ നിന്ന് പഠിച്ച കഴിവുകൾ കേരളത്തിൽ ഉപയോഗപ്രദമല്ലാത്തതിനാൽ അവരിൽ പലർക്കും പുതിയ ജോലികൾ കണ്ടെത്തുന്നതിൽ ബുദ്ധിമുട്ട് അനുഭവപ്പെട്ടു. തിരിച്ചെത്തിയ ചിലർക്ക് ആരോഗ്യപ്രശ്നങ്ങളും നേരിടേണ്ടി വന്നു, സ്വന്തം നാട്ടിലെ ജീവിതത്തിലേക്ക് തിരികെ വരാൻ ബുദ്ധിമുട്ടായി. ഈ വെല്ലുവിളികൾ കുടുംബങ്ങൾക്കുള്ളിൽ സമ്മർദ്ദം സൃഷ്ടിക്കുകയും മടങ്ങിയെത്തിയവർക്ക് പിന്തുണ അനുഭവപ്പെടുന്നത് ബുദ്ധിമുട്ടാക്കുകയും ചെയ്തു.

നാലാമതായി, പ്രത്യേകിച്ച് നോർക്ക (നോൺ-റസിഡന്റ് കേരളൈറ്റ്സ് അഫയേഴ്സ്) വഴി കേരള സർക്കാർ എങ്ങനെ പ്രതികരിച്ചുവെന്ന് ഗവേഷണം അവലോകനം ചെയ്യുന്നു. മടങ്ങിയെത്തിയവർക്ക് പണം, പരിശീലനം, ചെറുകിട ബിസിനസ് പിന്തുണ എന്നിവ നൽകുന്നതിന് ചില പരിപാടികൾ ആരംഭിച്ചു. എന്നിരുന്നാലും, മടങ്ങിയെത്തിയ പലർക്കും ഈ പദ്ധതികൾ പര്യാപ്തമല്ലെന്ന് തോന്നി. ചിലർക്ക് എങ്ങനെ അപേക്ഷിക്കണമെന്ന് അറിയില്ലായിരുന്നു, മറ്റുള്ളവർക്ക് പ്രക്രിയ മനഗതിയിലാണെന്നും സഹായകരമല്ലെന്നും കണ്ടെത്തി. ദീർഘകാല പിന്തുണയുടെ അഭാവം മടങ്ങിയെത്തിയ പലരുടെയും സ്ഥിതി കൂടുതൽ വഷളാക്കി.

നിതാഖത്ത് നയം തിരിച്ചെത്തിയവർക്കും മലപ്പുറത്തിന്റെ പ്രാദേശിക സമ്പദ്വ്യവസ്ഥയ്ക്കും ഗുരുതരമായ പ്രശ്നങ്ങൾ സൃഷ്ടിച്ചതായി പറയാം കണ്ടെത്തി. ജില്ലയുടെ ഗൾഫ് ജോലികളെ ശക്തമായി ആശ്രയിക്കുന്നത് വ്യക്തമായി. മോശം ആസൂത്രണവും ദുർബലമായ പിന്തുണാ സംവിധാനങ്ങളും കാരണം മടങ്ങിയെത്തിയ പലരും കഷ്ടപ്പെട്ടു. സർക്കാരിന്റെ ശ്രമങ്ങൾ അൽപ്പം സഹായിച്ചു, പക്ഷേ പര്യാപ്തമല്ല. മടങ്ങിയെത്തുന്നവരുടെ ജീവിതം പുനർനിർമ്മിക്കാൻ സഹായിക്കുന്നതിനും, മലപ്പുറം പോലുള്ള നിരവധി ആളുകളെ വിദേശത്തേക്ക് ജോലിക്ക് അയയ്ക്കുന്ന പ്രദേശങ്ങളെ ശക്തിപ്പെടുത്തുന്നതിനും മെച്ചപ്പെട്ട നയങ്ങളുടെയും ദീർഘകാല പിന്തുണയുടെയും ശക്തമായ ആവശ്യകതയുണ്ടെന്ന് പറഞ്ഞുകൊണ്ടാണ് പറയാൻ അവസാനിക്കുന്നത്.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ARAMCO	:	Arabian American Oil Company
CDS	:	Centre for Development Studies
CMD	:	Centre for Management Development
ECR	:	Emigration Check Required.
ESCAP	:	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific.
FDI	:	Foreign Direct Investment
GCC	:	Gulf Corporation Council
GST	:	Goods and Service Tax
LKS	:	Lok Kerala Sabha
HRD	:	Human Resources Development
HRDF	:	Human Resources Development Fund
IAC	:	International Advisory Council
IDPs	:	Internally Displaced Persons
IMF	:	International Monetary Fund
IOM	:	International Organization for Migration
KMS	:	Kerala Migration Survey.
KSA	:	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
MEA	:	Ministry of External Affairs
MHRD	:	Ministry of Human Resources Development
MHRSD	:	Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development
MoU	:	Memorandum of Understanding
NBFC	:	NORKA Business Facilitation Centre
NDPREM	:	NORKA Development Project for Return Emigrants
NELM	:	New Economic Labor Migration

NORKA	:	Non-Resident Keralites Welfare Agency
NORKWA	:	Non-Resident Keralites Welfare Agency
NPRI	:	NORKA Pravasi Raksha Insurance Policy
NRI	:	Non-Resident Indian
NRK	:	Non-resident Keralite.
ODEPC	:	Office of Development, Economic Planning, and Coordination.
OECD	:	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PIF	:	Public Investment Fund
PPF	:	Public Provident Funds
SAR	:	Saudi Arabian Riyal
SMEs	:	Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises
SUP	:	Skill Up-gradation Program
TVTC	:	Technical and Vocational Training Corporation
UAE	:	United Arab Emirates.
UK	:	United Kingdom.
UNDP	:	United Nations Development Program
USA	:	United States of America
USD	:	United States Dollar
WTO	:	World Trade Organization.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

Migration has been recognized as a vital element of global development which is driven by economic disparity, political uncertainties and demographic imbalances (Castles & Miller, 2009). Labour migration¹ particularly from developing to developed regions has become an essential feature of the global economy of the modern era. In this context, one of the major corridors of international labour migration is from South Asia to Gulf Cooperation council (GCC) countries. This movement has taken off with the oil boom of the 1970s² which has created transnational ties and it has shaped socio-economic patterns in both sending and receiving countries (Rahman, 2001).

Kerala, A south Indian state has a distinctive migration profile in this context and it is widely recognised. It has led to the emergence of remittance economy which is motivated by decades of sustained out migration to the Gulf region (Zachariah & Rajan, 2012). The migration has impacted Kerala's development profoundly, which influenced family income, consumption, housing sector, education and also political engagement. In this context, Malappuram is found to be consistently reporting highest migration rates within the state, and is serving as a major source of labour to Gulf countries, especially Saudi Arabia (Rajan & Joseph, 2016).

¹ Labour migration refers to the movement of individuals from one region or country to another for employment opportunities. It is often driven by economic disparities, lack of local jobs, or better wages and working conditions abroad. This phenomenon plays a vital role in shaping both the origin and destination economies, affecting demographics, labor markets, and social structures.

² The oil boom of the 1970s was triggered by a sharp rise in oil prices following the 1973 oil embargo imposed by the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). This sudden surge in revenue dramatically transformed oil-rich countries, particularly in the Middle East, leading to rapid economic development and increased demand for foreign labor.

In response to policy changes in the host countries, migration patterns and experiences are changing. The kingdom of Saudi Arabia introduced a Saudization initiative named Nitaqat program, which is aimed at reducing the foreign labour dependence and promoting employment among the nationals of Saudi (Hertog, 2014). The policy has created a classification system for the private companies based on their compliance with nationalization targets. It has created a chain of events and consequences for employers and migrant workers. Companies which failed to match with the prescribed quota faced restrictions and the migrant labourers in the firm were risked deportation or forced to regularise their status under new restrictions (ILO, 2017).

The Nitaqat policy implementation has led to the return of thousands of migrant workers from India, most of them from Kerala. This unexpected and sudden nature of return has raised several and severe socio-economic challenges, especially for the households which are dependent on remittance income. Another consequence was the returnees found it difficult to reintegrate into the local economy which is affected by mismatches in skillset, lack of proper savings and the absence of employment opportunities. In the meantime, the Government of Kerala was tasked with responding to the crisis through rehabilitation programs and the policy interventions, including the support from institutions like NORKA roots, arranged to deal with the concerns of non-resident Keralites.

The study focused on Malappuram district in order to explore the socio-economic impacts of the Nitaqat policy on the returning migrants and the community. It also aims to measure how this unexpected and sudden return had affected livelihoods, human security and the broader development of the region.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Since the early 1970s migration from Kerala to the Middle East countries has been a major socio-economic trend for the state Kerala. The oil boom in the Gulf region opened up vast employment opportunities, attracting many Keralites, especially from northern districts like Malappuram, to seek a better livelihood abroad. Since Kerala's industrial sector was underdeveloped and local employment

was scarce, this wave of migration was largely driven by economic necessity (Zakaria & Rajan, 2012). Over time, this trend evolved into a sustainable migration culture, where migration became a domestic strategy for economic survival and advancement. The money sent home – remittances – contributed significantly to the development of Kerala's infrastructure, education, health care, and consumer economy. Malappuram District became a major centre in terms of the number of migrants and it emerged as a main centre in the international migration corridor.

In 2011, Saudi Arabia implemented Nitaqat Policy, which caused an extraordinary disruption to this long-standing migration trend. The policy aimed to increase employment among Saudi nationals, and imposed stringent quotas on private firms to hire Saudi people. The firms that failed to meet these quotas faced harsh penalties, leading to the layoff of many migrant workers, including a substantial number of Keralites (Rahman, 2014). Unlike those who returned voluntarily with sufficient savings, those affected by Nitaqat were forced to return suddenly, often without any preparation. This sudden return posed complex socio-economic challenges for returnees and their families in Kerala, especially in areas that relied heavily on migration, such as Malappuram.

The massive return of migrants from Saudi Arabia following the implementation of the Nitaqat has affected the family finances in Malappuram. Families who used to send remittances for daily living, children's education, healthcare, and loan repayments were suddenly thrown into financial uncertainty. The steady flow of remittances that had sustained these families disappeared overnight, pushing many into debt and poverty. Moreover, many of the returnees had no income-generating alternatives locally. Having worked in low-skilled jobs abroad, they returned with skills that were outdated or irrelevant to the Kerala labor market. As a result, they faced difficulties in finding gainful employment locally (Nair & Peedikayil, 2019). The Kerala labor market, characterized by a mismatch between the supply of labor and the demand for specific skills, failed to adequately accommodate these returnees, pushing many into the informal sector or forcing them to remain unemployed.

Furthermore, the socio-psychological impact on returnees is incalculable. Those returning to their home countries after years of working abroad often struggle with reintegration. The sense of identity, pride, and status as Gulf workers are often lost upon return, especially when the return is voluntary and accompanied by financial hardship. This can lead to emotional distress, mental health problems such as anxiety and depression, and social isolation (Nair & Menon, 2020). In districts like Malappuram, where migration to the Gulf is seen as a sign of social prestige, returnees are sometimes treated as “failures” abroad, which adds to their psychological burden. The situation is even worse for those who return empty-handed, without savings or assets, and thereby become financially dependent on donors.

Remittances not only sustained individual households, but also contributed to the local economy through consumption, housing, education, and investments in small businesses. As remittance inflows decreased, demand for local businesses decreased, construction projects slowed, and real estate activity weakened. This created a local economic recession in some areas, further limiting job creation and economic resilience. The consequences of this shock affected not only returnees, but also service providers, shopkeepers, and other informal workers who indirectly depended on the spending patterns of migrant households.

To address the crisis, the Kerala government, through institutions such as Norka Roots³, has launched various rehabilitation and welfare schemes for returning migrants. These include skill development programmes, soft loans for starting small businesses, counselling services and assistance with job placement. However, there is growing evidence that these schemes often fail to address the multifaceted challenges faced by returnees. Many beneficiaries report bureaucratic barriers to accessing assistance, lack of ongoing support and poor tailoring of programmes to

³ NORKA Roots is the field agency of the Department of Non-Resident Keralites Affairs (NORKA), Government of Kerala, established to address the needs and concerns of Keralites living outside the state and country. It facilitates welfare programs, skill development, and reintegration support for returning migrants. The agency also acts as a liaison between non-resident Keralites and the state government to ensure effective service delivery and grievance redressal.

meet individual needs . Furthermore, the schemes lack adequate mechanisms to assess the success or sustainability of the support provided, leading to questions about their long-term impact.

The main issue lies in the inadequate preparedness and response of local systems and institutions to handle involuntary return migration, particularly when such migration is caused by external policies beyond the control of the state. The Nitakhat policy, a unilateral decision by a foreign government, has exposed the vulnerabilities of Kerala's migration model. It highlights the dangers of over-reliance on foreign labour markets and the lack of a thoroughly reintegration framework for returnees. For a district like Malappuram, where migration is not only an economic activity but also a socio-cultural phenomenon, the impact of such a policy is profound and far-reaching

Furthermore, the socio-economic impacts of return migration due to Nitaqat are not experienced uniformly. Variables such as age, gender, educational background, type of employment abroad, and length of stay influence how returnees cope with reintegration. Older returnees approaching retirement may not seek employment again, but younger workers with family responsibilities face a more acute crisis. Returning women or spouses of male migrants also experience indirect impacts, including care burdens and financial insecurity. Therefore, a one-size-fits-all approach to reintegration and resettlement is unlikely to be effective. Instead, a nuanced understanding of the different needs and vulnerabilities of returnees is essential

In this context, this study attempts to explore the socio-economic impacts of the Nithaqat policy in Kerala, with a specific focus on Malappuram district. This study attempts to assess how voluntary repatriation has affected the employment, household income, quality of life, social mobility, and psychological well-being of returnees. The aim is to examine the effectiveness and limitations of state-led reintegration programs and suggest policy interventions that best suit the needs of the affected population. Given the high number of returnees from Saudi Arabia and

the socio-economic importance of remittances in Malappuram, this study is timely and necessary

The difficulties presented by the Nitakhat policy also provide an opportunity for Kerala to reconsider its migration management strategy. While foreign employment will continue to be a major source of livelihood, the state must develop robust return and reintegration frameworks to support migrants during sudden policy shocks. This includes creating better databases of migrants, increasing skills identification and job training, promoting local job creation, and strengthening welfare delivery systems. Without such systems in place, future waves of return migration due to economic downturns, pandemics, or geopolitical decisions could have more disastrous effects.

The implementation of the Nitakhat policy has created a serious issue for migrant-dependent communities in Kerala. It has forced thousands of workers to return prematurely, disrupted household economies, strained social systems, and exposed gaps in state-level reintegration efforts. The lack of timely and targeted policy interventions has further deepened the socio-economic vulnerability of returnees. As a district with deep migrant roots and a high density of returnees, Malappuram is at the epicenter of this crisis. A comprehensive and empirical assessment of the impacts of Nitakhat in the region is urgently needed to inform policy, protect migrant welfare, and ensure sustainable development.

1.3 Significance of the study

In Kerala, emigration and subsequent return migration have become a noteworthy phenomenon. The state underwent a significant socioeconomic and demographic shift as a result of the widespread exodus of Keralite labourers. People from Kerala have been migrating to the Gulf nations over the past forty years, particularly after 1973. Large-scale development plans and projects in the Gulf were able to be implemented because of the economically advantageous jobs created by oil excavation. To this day, this is still the case, with over 25 lakh migrants from Kerala ending up in the Gulf.

Many Keralites leave their home country and move as unskilled labourers to the Gulf and other Middle Eastern nations. In the Saudi Kingdom, there were about 5, 95,000 Keralites at work. The migration process was, however, reversed by the indigenization movements in the Gulf states. Targeting the replacement of immigrants with citizens is the goal of Nitaqat (Peck, 2014).

The 2008's financial crisis⁴ and 2011's Arab Spring⁵ were sped up to address the socioeconomic realities of Arab nations and guarantee regime instability. Reduced expat population was the goal of "nationalisation" or "Arabization" initiatives. Policies of this nature affected the eight million people living in the area. Much uncertainty has been brought to the region by the so-called "Arab spring" or "awakening.". The unrest in West Asia is bound to have an impact on India, given its geopolitical interest in the region (Ramady, 2013).

Because of their magnitude and steady increase, the locals view foreigners as a potential security risk. They also worry about asking for citizenship with permanent residence in the future. Due to increased local labour supply brought about by population expansion and university graduates, Saudi Arabia's unemployment rate has been steadily rising at a pace of thirteen percent.

Research on the socio-economic effects of Nitaqat in Kerala, particularly in the Malappuram area, is important for addressing the various ramifications of Saudi Arabia's labour market laws in a unique regional setting. Nitaqat was imposed to give Saudi citizens more work options, but its effects extend beyond its borders. In order to fully understand the complex effects of Nitaqat on Malappuram's

⁴ The 2008 financial crisis was a global economic meltdown triggered primarily by the collapse of the U.S. housing bubble and the widespread failure of financial institutions that had invested heavily in subprime mortgages. It led to the bankruptcy of major firms, a severe credit crunch, and massive government bailouts to stabilize the financial system. The crisis had far-reaching consequences, including global recession, high unemployment, and long-term regulatory reforms

⁵ The Arab Spring was a wave of pro-democracy uprisings that began in Tunisia in late 2010 and quickly spread across the Arab world in 2011. Citizens protested against authoritarian regimes, political corruption, unemployment, and human rights abuses. While the uprisings led to regime changes in some countries, they also triggered prolonged conflicts and instability in others

socioeconomic landscape—a district renowned for its high emigration rates and reliance on remittances as a major economic driver—this study is essential.

Determining the changes in employment trends and remittance flows in the area requires an understanding of the socio-economic effects of Nitaqat in Malappuram. The purpose of the study is to clarify if the policy has caused job displacements among expatriate workers and how local employment dynamics are impacted by this. Additionally, examining changes in remittance trends and economic contributions to Malappuram would shed important light on the soundness of local businesses and people's finances. By exploring these facets, the research aims to shed light on the complex issues and possibilities brought about by Nitaqat, providing a thorough grasp of the policy's implications for the district's economic resilience.

The social aspects of this study is also important. Analysing how Nitaqat affects Malappuram's family structures, community ties, and educational goals offers a comprehensive understanding of how labour market laws can influence social dynamics. This entails examining the possible impacts that job losses may have on families, the difficulties that returning expatriates encounter in reintegrating, and how young people's goals for their education are changing in response to changing economic opportunities. Analysing these social ramifications helps to foster community support programmes and policymaking that is empathy-driven by providing a more nuanced knowledge of the human faces of policy changes.

The study's importance also extends to the larger discussion of labour market laws and patterns of migration around the world. Policymakers, corporations, and non-governmental organisations that work to promote diaspora communities and shape migration policies can find great value in these findings. The case study provides valuable insights that can guide the creation of focused interventions and support systems, enhancing the adaptability and resilience of areas affected by shifts in the labour market.

Conclusively, the investigation into the socio-economic ramifications of Nitaqat in Kerala, particularly in the Malappuram area, has significant ramifications

for scholars, policymakers, enterprises, and the regional populace. It explores the complex social processes involved in addition to the immediate issues with work and remittances. The study serves as a basis for proactive policy actions, community-based activities, and informed decision-making by providing a thorough understanding of the effects of Nitaqat. This enables the community to prosper in the changing environment that labour market restrictions in Malappuram have shaped.

1.4 Review of literature

In order to determine the research gap, the researcher has conducted a thorough examination of all pertinent papers that are relevant to the field of the current study. For this reason, the subjects addressed by prior researchers as well as the conclusions of earlier studies that they used are evaluated critically. Even though the study is centred on the state of Kerala, studies conducted nationally and internationally are also covered. To find the gaps and opportunities for more research in the field of study, a variety of materials are gathered and methodically reviewed, including research theses, journal articles, working papers, articles in periodicals, reports from specific organisations like the Centre for Development Studies (CDS), Trivandrum, and documents from various websites.

Based on the research work's theme, the researcher has rationally separated these reviews into three heads.

1. Studies related to migration from Kerala
2. Studies related to human security on migrant workers
3. Studies related to Nitaqat

1.5 Migration from Kerala

Migration from Kerala attracted scholarly interest since early 1970s . Since then, a number of research on the subject have been published, the most of which were micro level studies concentrating on emigration patterns, causes of emigration, impact of remittances on the economy, etc. The Centre for Development Studies (CDS) released a series of studies under the Kerala Migration Survey(KMS)

beginning in 1998 and continuing in 2003, 2007, 2008, 2011, 2014, 2016, and 2018. The size of migration, its demographic and socioeconomic causes and effects, the volume of remittances and their influence on local economies, and the rate of return migration have all been the main subjects of this research (Prakash 1998, Kannan 2002, Pushpagandan 2003). As a result, the Kerala Migration Surveys serve as a special informational resource for migrants from Kerala.

The first Kerala Migration Survey conducted in 1998 found that agricultural changes, labour union activity and social welfare legislation had the greatest impact on reducing poverty in Kerala (Zachariah, Mathew, & Rajan, 1999). According to survey estimates, about 1.5 million Keralites reside outside of India and send home remittances totaling Rs 4000 million annually. Rajan (2004) calculated that Kerala got seven times as much in international remittances in 2003 as it did in budget support from the Indian government. It also made note of how Kerala's emigrants have changed the state into a new gulf by luring migrant workers from other states. It considered replacement migration to be one of the main effects of emigration from Kerala that has a more detrimental influence on the economy. South Asia Migration Studies (SMS), the second Kerala Migration Survey conducted in 2003, using the same approach as KMS 1998.

The Kerala government's NORKA Department requested that CDS perform migration surveys in 2007 and 2008. Based on the Migration Monitoring Study of 2007, Zachariah and Rajan (2007) conducted a study of the short-term trends and long-term development consequences of migration, remittances, and employment. Both the state's unemployment issue and Kerala households' subsistence issues were partially being solved by migration. The 2008 Kerala Migration Survey made an effort to examine how migration affected the elderly and children who were left behind. The study revealed information about family dynamics, health, food and nutrition, economic and social security, as well as the psychological effects on the elderly and the migrants' left-behind children. The study might be viewed as laying the groundwork for future investigations on transnational families. Zachariah and Rajan's (2010) study of Kerala's migration trends found some unexpected

developments, such as large-scale and return emigration after 2003 in the context of an increase in oil costs. Between 2003 and 2008, the overall number of emigrants rose from 18.4 to 21.9 lakh, while remittances rose from 18.4 to 43.3 trillion rupees.

Zachariah & Rajan (2010) evaluated how the global recession affected Kerala immigrants, and the findings clearly demonstrated that there were other factors at play in 2009 when emigrants returned to Kerala. Although it was thought that emigrants were affected by unemployment and job loss as a result of the recession, it was FOUND that this was less of an issue than the unemployment rate in Kerala prior to emigration. It is believed that the global crisis was not a disaster for the state because statistical data showed an increase in remittances at the national and state levels during the economic crisis. Even though the study's broad goal was to analyse the socioeconomic effects of the recession, its actual scope was primarily the economic effects of employment loss, as determined by changes in remittances. The study also discussed the initiatives launched by NORKA to assist migrants who are leaving the country and those who are returning, such as training courses, financial aid for returning migrants, etc.

Zachariah & Rajan (2012) published the findings of the fifth Kerala Migration Survey (2011), which was carried out among households dispersed across the 14 districts of Kerala. It demonstrated that despite an increase in the number of immigrants from Kerala from 1.36 million in 1998 to 1.84 million in 2003, 2.19 million in 2008, and 2.28 million in 2011, Kerala has been experiencing a decline in both the total number of emigrants and the number of emigrants per family. The KMS 2014 revealed the rising educational levels of Kerala migrants, which have a beneficial impact on emigration. A significant contributing cause to the emigration is the state's inability to develop long-term and adequate work alternatives for the educated individuals in Kerala. Therefore, it is necessary to reduce the state's unemployment rate by creating jobs within the state rather than "getting the unemployed out of the state" (Zachariah & Rajan, 2015).

According to KMS 2016, emigration decreased from 24 lakh in 2014 to 22.4 lakh in 2016, marking the first reduction in 50 years. Birth control policies put in

place in the state throughout the 1980s and 1990s, which resulted in a fall in the migration-prone age group during the survey period, were the primary cause of this decreased emigration (Rajan S. I., 2016). The study also suggested that a decrease in emigration in the upcoming years may lead to a decrease in remittances. The KMS 2018 data, however, proved this assumption incorrect, demonstrating that remittances to Kerala have gradually increased as migrants in the gulf countries have climbed the social ladder, earning greater income and making it possible for them to remit more. In addition, it demonstrated that Kerala has been experiencing a reverse migration of labour as a result of rising domestic wages, falling oil prices, nationalisation policies in the GCC, high skilled migration to western countries, and a decline in the state's working-age population (Rajan & Zachariah, 2019). Even though migration initially resulted in lessened socioeconomic, wealth, and income disparities, it has recently been causing significant disparities in the state.

The pattern, scope, and effects of migration from Kerala were studied by Prakash (2004), Misriya (2009), and John Samuel (2010). As a result of revisions to UAE immigration regulations, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia's strong limits on the employment of migrant labour, and wage rate reductions, it was found that the districts with high migration rates also had high return emigration rates (Prakash, 2004). The trend, causes, and status of return emigrants were examined in a field research in the Trivandrum neighbourhood of Varkala. It was revealed that a high population density, high unemployment rate, stagnant agricultural sector, and a backward industrial sector of the state drove Keralites to the Gulf countries, while the Gulf countries' new employment opportunities, better wages, and future prospects served as pull factors(Misriya ,2009). The study also found that NRI investment in the economy's productive sectors was relatively lower. According to Samuel. J (2010), even though significant remittances contributed to the reduction of poverty, unemployment, and hardship in Kerala, they also prepared the way for a consumerist culture and altered the state's agriculture, environment, and ecology. People from Punjab, Gujarat, and Kerala have been seen to migrate around the globe more frequently. The study has also revealed another fact: migration has affected the

film industry since wealthy remittances from businesses in the Gulf spent heavily in films.

Rahila & George (2013), Jose. M(2004), and Thomas. A (2008) emphasised the significance of investing remittances in infrastructure and productive enterprises. With the massive NRI remittances, Kerala's economy has transformed from an agricultural to a consumer state, and Kerala has become the "new gulf" for migratory workers from other Indian states (Rahila & George.K.L, 2013). NRIs are facing a significant threat from the nativization process in the gulf countries, thus if they are forced to return home, the nation must create enough jobs by using the talent and resources of foreign workers. Jose. M (2004) has made an effort to research the influences of location of living, place of employment, and educational attainment on NRIs from Kerala who make investment decisions. The study revealed that public provident funds (PPF) are given the least priority among NRI investors and that real estate is the most preferred investment among them. Additionally, it was shown that NRIs encounter numerous obstacles when making investments in Kerala, mainly due to the subpar infrastructure. This is why the study emphasised the need to instill a culture of investing in the state by persuading political parties, the administration, the press, and the populace to adopt new perspectives and make profitable investments.

Thomas. A. (2008) looked into the personal financial planning undertaken by the Gulf-returned Keralites during their working lives. The income, spending, savings, and investments of NRKs during and after their time working in Gulf nations were examined for this reason. Only 13% of the respondents to the survey had personal planning during their working years, but they were nevertheless able to earn more money after returning from the Gulf because they had invested in income-producing assets such shares, mutual funds, business initiatives, etc. The report suggests that in order to promote NRI investments in the state, NORKA cooperate with the Department of Industries and other organisations.

Seshan. G. (2015) looked at how financial literacy training affected migrant workers' savings, consumption, and amount of remittances. 200 migrant workers

from Kerala living in Qatar were chosen for the study. The study was carried out by conducting a detailed comparison of the treatment group (134 respondents) who participated in the financial literacy programme and the control group (66 respondents) who were not invited to the programme. The outcomes showed that the motivating workshop had a substantial impact on how migrants and their households made financial decisions. South Indian migrants in Qatar raised their savings and remittances. To maximise the economic contributions of immigrants, the author also emphasised the necessity for various measures and policies in both the home and host countries. Rasheedudheen (2011) examined how migration and remittances have led to the rapid growth of the Kerala economy in a few key industries. It is observed that China and Korea were starting to take over the majority of the development projects in the gulf countries, making it harder for India to export cheap human resources as it formerly did. As a result, migrants from nations like Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and the Philippines are putting a great deal of pressure on Indian employees.

Studies by Zachariah, Prakash, and Rajan (2002), Santhosh (2009), and Benoy (2012) shed information on Kerala emigrants' employment situation, earnings, working conditions, and other issues in the United Arab Emirates. They found out that primary issues NRKs in the UAE confront include the failure to pay salaries, the denial of non-wage benefits specified in the employment contracts, the reluctance to release passports for travel back to Kerala, subpar housing circumstances, and high plane costs during peak travel times. In addition, Zachariah, Prakash, and Rajan (2002) noted that the region's economic downturn and changes to the UAE government's immigration policies, such as demographic balance and Emiratization, have reduced the need for unskilled and semi-skilled workers in the Gulf countries. Santhosh (2009) emphasised the initiatives and programmes of NORKA to address the issues encountered by NRKs, and it was discovered that most NRKs were not aware of NORKA department and NORKA ROOTS operations. The author created a conceptual model called the Migrant Welfare Model that shows a successful migrant data management and monitoring system. Benoy (2012) highlighted the rights of immigrants in the country where they find

work and suggested various stress management methods and training courses for the immigrants' psychological wellbeing.

The issues and future prospects of Keralite workers in the Middle East was the subject of a study by George (2005). Analysis was conducted from the perspectives of employers, recruiters, and Kerala employees in the Middle East. The study comprised an empirical evaluation by investigating the problems of localization movements in Middle Eastern nations and their effects on Keralite labour. It was also looked at how different organisations, such as ODEPC and NORKA, had a part in promoting migration.

Percot and Rajan (2007) and Oda. H., Rajan, and Tsujita. Y. (2016) addressed the issue of women leaving Kerala. According to the study conducted by Percot and Rajan (2007) among Keralan nurses, there will soon be a significant difference between nurses travelling to western countries from middle-class households and those relocating from high-income families to Gulf nations. The report also outlined the social and economic issues that emigrant nurses faced. According to data from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Hisaya, Rajan, and Yuko (2016) created a working draft on the migration of nurses from Kerala and showed the trend in the international migration of nurses. The study suggested that even though India is the world's top supplier of nurses, the government is not as engaged as it is in other nations like the Philippines.

Ashraf (2018) and Rafeek (2017) examined the effects of migration on the socioeconomic well-being of Kerala's Muslim population. The investigations revealed the pattern of migration to gulf nations as well as the unmatched change in the socioeconomic and political life of the Muslims in Kerala. The effects were felt not only at the micro level (an individual's private life), but also at the meso level (a family), and the macro level (the general public) (Ashraf, 2018). The author used focus groups and participant observations to comprehend the socio-political shift in the Malabar region. By analysing the relationship between migration and human development, Rafeek (2017) concluded that Kerala's notable human development

achievement is mostly due to the state's widespread emigration and the remittances that follow. Through economic mobility, which transforms the economic position achieved through emigration and remittances, the educational and health status of the Muslim community must be enhanced (Rafeek, 2017). In addition, effective government actions and policies are needed to convert the benefits of emigration and remittances into better outcomes for human development.

Through a thorough survey of the Kerala community in Udaipur, Rajasthan, John (2017) highlighted the significance of migrant associations in the lives of migrants. 180 participants in the study were chosen at random from the "Kerala Samajam" list of migrant associations in Udaipur. The findings showed that Keralites easily assimilated into the Rajasthani indigenous population without encountering any antagonism. Through their active participation, the Kerala Migrant Associations in Udaipur helped the integration process even more. It illustrates how Migrant Associations help migrants maintain their own cultures while also adjusting to the new cultural norms of the host country.

Kannan & Hari (2020) made an attempt to estimate the foreign remittances to Kerala. Even if remittances have continued to grow in nominal terms, the study found that the growth rate has decreased by 3.4% annually from 2011 to 2012. Additionally, it was noted that the state's deteriorating tax collection efficiency and the rising trend in income disparity are the main problems that need to be addressed. It also underlined the need for a new developmental route with employment creation for the educated people and the potential for a crisis in the state due to the drop in economic activity brought on by the COVID 19 Pandemic. The impact of the Corona 19 pandemic on foreign remittances and Kerala's economic growth was examined by Pushpagadan and Murugan. The findings showed that the pandemic had a significant negative impact on Kerala's economy and growth. The authors argued that the state needed a proper growth recovery strategy to make up for the shortfall in overseas remittances from return migration. (Murukan, Pushpagandan 2021)

The return migration to Kerala and the challenges the returned migrants experienced have been studied by Zachariah, Nair & Rajan (2001), Tsai (2020), Michelle Buckley (2012), and Jabir (2014). The social and economic features of return migrants before, after, and after returning to Kerala are provided by Zachariah, Nair, and Rajan (2001). The study found that return migrants' inability to find a suitable self-employment project is the primary cause of the rehabilitation program's failure in Kerala. The development of a welfare scheme organisation of co-operatives in the state was also recommended by the authors. Since Kerala's commercial banks have greatly profited from the large amounts of remittances sent home by migrants, they should provide funding for the scheme. The rehabilitation and reintegration of returned NRKs are neglected by the governmental infrastructure, according to Tsai's (2020) study on the social remittances of Keralites. It ultimately results in the rise of NRK political organisations that seek to highlight migrant difficulties.

Michelle Buckley (2012) evaluated the effects of the financial crisis in late 2008 on the migrant construction workers from Kerala who lost their employment in Dubai and returned to Kerala. Although the collapse of the UAE's construction industry had an effect on all of the respondents, he argued that the casual Keralite workers, particularly the poorer and less skilled migrants, had been the actual victims of this catastrophe. These workers had to deal with a variety of financial hazards, including debt from emigration, unethical hiring practises, collecting Kafala fees, immigration, and labour laws. Jabir (2014) concentrated on the governmental policy initiatives and programmes for the return migrants, their actual situation, and significant difficulties in the reintegration process. It was discovered that returnees' poor financial situations and significant debt posed the biggest obstacle to their successful reintegration. Jabir further observed that, in contrast to other states, the state government has taken greater measures by creating special departments like NORKA and NORKA ROOTS for the welfare of returnees.

1.6 Human security

Fitria (2023) examines the growing demand for migrant workers in the age of globalisation. In-depth discussions of severe human rights violations are included in the paper, including the keeping of court records, operating outside regular business hours, and situations when human trafficking results in physical assault. Interestingly, the author highlights Southeast Asia as an important region for migrant labour sending and receiving. The paper takes a calculated stance to examine how Malaysia and Hong Kong handle human rights abuses in different ways. Utilizing the Human Security idea as its conceptual framework, the study breaks down the policies put in place in both countries using two primary approaches: Economic Security and Personal Security.

The impact of the global COVID-19 outbreak on Nepali migrant workers in important destination countries is examined by Bhattarai, G., and Baniya, J. (2020) in their study, "Nepali Migrant Workers Amid Covid-19 In Major Destination Countries: A Human Security Approach." The authors contend that serious obstacles to these workers' human security have been exposed by the crisis, necessitating a review of current security theories. The Persian Gulf and Malaysia are the main areas of interest, and variables affecting the safety, dignity, and insecurity of Nepali migrants are investigated. According to the article, vulnerability is caused by prejudice, hazardous living circumstances, limited access to key services, job loss, infection risks, and inadequate repatriation.

Song (2014) examines North Korean migration during the past 20 years that evolved from forced migration to a variety of forms, including people smuggling, undocumented labour migration, and trafficking in women. The study follows North Korean migrants as they travel from China via Southeast Asia to South Korea and the UK, emphasising the connections between irregular migration and human (in)security. The study highlights a people-centered approach and uses a human security conceptual framework to offer light on growing macro patterns of irregular migration.

The investigation by Voelkner (2011) in his paper "Managing pathogenic circulation: Human security and The health assembly of migrants in Thailand examines the development of human security as a political tactic to counter the spread of pathogens among Burmese immigrant populations in Thailand. By highlighting the complex interactions between human and non-human factors, the paper reveals the micropolitics of human security. It demonstrates how dichotomies defining the health landscape of migrants facilitate biopolitical governance by describing techno-(bio)political mechanisms in two provinces of Thailand. The emphasis on controlling pathogenic circulation reduces migrant health to a technical issue, focusing instead on self-management and the governmentalization of the Thai state, avoiding difficult considerations of potentially discriminatory politics.

M. Kaldar (2007) examined the variables influencing human security. Kaldar defined human security as a novel method of security analysis that is predicated on an international dialogue involving individuals and civil society organisations in addition to governmental and international organisations. Following a cursory examination, the author discovered that the Middle East, East and Central Africa, or Central Asia, was rather unstable due to conflict, the spread of illness, the region's susceptibility to natural disasters, poverty, and homelessness.

Tadjabakhsh, S., and Chenoy, A.M (2007) outlined how policymaking is affected by human security. They advised that human security be treated as a major issue for the entire globe, but especially for Asia, and that cooperation between the domains of social change, such as event management, conflict resolution, human rights, and humanitarian aid, be controlled. The authors also argued that security could hardly be centralised in a single-layered design in an increasingly globalised society where dangers have become transnational and states are no longer in control.

G. King, C. J. L. Murray (2002) created a new definition of human security that took into account the possibility of falling below the welfare threshold. They examined human security from the perspective of widespread poverty. They viewed the UNDP definition of well-being as applying to all aspects of life, including health, money, education, political freedom, and democracy. The authors used the

human development index and money-metric utility as two methods to gauge each person's level of well-being.

D. A. Hastings (2009) analysed the shortcomings of geographic incompleteness and economic insufficiencies, which were not covered by the Human Development Index as the parameters of human development. With the aid of the social fabric and human development indices, the author created the human security index. In order to raise the level of security, he concentrated on sound government, material progress, and a tranquil environment.

Basu, R. (2012). covered many threats to human security and emphasised human security as a substitute for the human development paradigm. MacFarlane, S. N. and Khong, Y. F. (2006). covered the background of human security, the current state of the UN, and human security during the Cold War. The article also covered the growing security critique. The developmental aspects, the safeguarding of vulnerable populations, and criticisms of these were covered in the second section of this work.

Johnson and Cornell, A. J. (2009) looked at the issue of people trafficking in former Soviet states. They looked into the issue and talked about local and global alternatives that may be used to raise security. The experiences of the Baltic Sea region were highlighted in this book, which also described the nature of organised crime and the range of hazards it poses to society. Human trafficking has become a significant threat to security, according to the authors, and should worry anybody researching population and migration, economics, politics, international relations, or security studies.

P. Bettersby and Siracusa, J. M. (2009) explored a targeted, comprehensive, and impartial introduction to the idea of human security. The contention put up was that scholars have to promptly reevaluate the notion of state sovereignty in an international arena where dangers to humankind emerge beyond the ability of any one country to tackle them via unilateral measures. Through the role of international and non-governmental groups, in particular, the writers emphasised the conditions and factors that encourage looking beyond the conventional focus on state

security. In addition, they stressed the value of human rights while also arguing in favour of building up the ability to intervene effectively to shield citizens from government action and other security risks brought on by sickness, conflict, poverty, and environmental degradation.

Tigerstrom B. V. (2007) discussed the importance of the human security approach to international law reform. The author covered humanitarian involvement in international security, the human-centered approach to international law, and the security and protection of internally displaced people. The author also spoke about the need for monitoring and control to prevent insecurity due to the spread of weapons, particularly light weapons, and the global health crisis.

F. Vietti and T. Scribner (2013) noted that many developmental programmes on state security, human rights, and human security have contributed to migration. People can be forced to relocate due to social, political, or economic insecurity. The author condemned international organisations for their attention to a prospective crisis, such as national security, rather than the real issue facing individuals. Regarding migration, the author proposed that the state address the root causes of movement rather than participating in the implementation of restrictive immigration laws in an effort to resolve irregular migration. More effective communication and collaboration between governments and international organisations on a global scale, as well as more consultation and cooperation between states at the regional level, are necessary to manage international migration.

Huliaras A., Tzifakis N. (2007) looked at how Japan and Canada implemented their policies in particular areas. In the years following the Cold War, the Balkans was a region that experienced significant problems with human security. The writers stated that the goals of the Canadian and Japanese viewpoints were to balance human security with other interests and priorities. As per their assertion, the notion of human security is adaptable and versatile, enabling states to devise strategies for implementing their foreign policy agenda in order to safeguard their interests.

Pathak, B. (2014) holds that the absence of slavery, apartheid, injustice, inequality, indignity, insecurity, and inhibition is a necessary prerequisite for human security. It could be compared to the exercise of one's human rights. While rights work to respect or maintain people's fundamental wants and abilities, security guards against harm to these things. Thus, by requiring the use of both international and domestic legal procedures, human security was able to combine the two in order to guarantee everyone's protection, including asylum seekers.

Adaria, B. and Asgharpour, S. E (2011) attempted to ascertain the relationship between human security and sustainable development from a geographical perspective . In order to accomplish the ultimate objective of fostering human security and establishing sustainable development in the Western Asian region, they claimed that those were specifically related to one another. And they had different definitions of security. Security has been a major concern for people since the beginning of time. To build human security in particular nations, the authors claimed that new political approaches and interregional cooperation were required.

K. Bajpai (2000) examined various direct threats that affect human security, such as dehumanisation, drugs, discrimination and domination, international disputes, most destructive weapons, and violent death or disability. He also examined indirect threats, such as deprivation, disease, natural and man-made disasters, underdevelopment, population displacement, and environmental degradation.

1.7 Studies related to Nitaqat

Ismayil. P. (2015) focused socio-economic impact of Nitaqat in Kerala. He argues that impact of Nitaqat would mainly affect the people of Malabar region, especially in Malappuram because of lion share of emigrants working in Saudi Arabia is from Malabar. It found the consequences of Nitaqat affect on various sectors including employment sectors of Kerala.

Peck (2014) conducted an empirical analysis of how nationalization, business size, and firm exit in the Saudi private sector were affected by quota-based Nitaqat policy. In order to perform a regression, the study used a large dataset on all Saudi private-sector companies. The total impacts of the program were then estimated by combining the regression results with a differences-in-differences technique. The Nitaqat initiative was successful in boosting the number of Saudi citizens employed, but it also resulted in high expenditures for private enterprises and the closure of about 11,000 of them within 16 months of its introduction, according to the study.

Khan. J. A.(2007) deal with the bilateral economic and trade relation among India and Saudi Arabia Both Saudi and India are major partners in trade, investment and joint ventures. it discuss about access of Saudi to WTO and the New investment climate and this also highlight about joint commission of both countries for economic, trade, scientific, technical and cultural corporation.

Ramady (2013) investigated how the Nitaqat affected Saudi Arabia's total economic development and productivity, assuming that the government's Hafiz system would be implemented and Saudi workers in the private sector would be paid a minimum salary of SAR 3,000 per month. The study came to the conclusion that the minimum wage laws and the Nitaqat programme will reduce worker productivity and could have an impact on other Saudi government priorities including expanding Saudi Arabia's economy internationally and attracting more foreign direct investment (FDI). The study also made the suggestion that international businesses may decide to withdraw from Saudi Arabia if they feel that the Saudization policies will harm them relative to their international rivals, particularly in terms of cost. Additionally, there will be a decline in FDI as prospective new investors grow less inclined to make investments in Saudi Arabia.

Sadi, M.A. (2013) deals with implementation of "saudization" and "Nitaqat" policy to boost employment among local citizens and reduce the number of expatriate. It also highlights the critical view of the implementation of Nitaqat. Although the main aim of Nitaqat was to boost employment among local citizen and

reduce the number of foreign workers, most firms have started hiring unqualified locals and also illegal visa trade and over up-business is happening in huge level in the Saudi causing the negative impact on the implementation of the law as well as economy.

Jha,Naithani (2010) examined various issues like economic, work visa, gender difference, nationalization of workforce, weak labor law etc faced by expatriate workers in GCC countries. It also discusses certain suggestions for facilitating adjustment of expatriate workers in GCC countries.

The paradox of Saudi residents' high unemployment and riches in the Kingdom is covered in a doctoral thesis by Fakeeh (2009). The study was carried out in the Saudi Western Province of Jeddah using recorded evidence and interviews with important stakeholders, including employers, policymakers, and employees. The study came to the conclusion that although policymakers are aware of the challenges saudization policies provide to private enterprises and their reluctance to use them, they still see saudization as an economic and social imperative. According to the study, in order for saudization policies to be more effective, they need to take into account the realities of the labour market.

Hammad S. A. (2014) discuss about implementation of Nitaqat, minimum wage in Saudi Arabia, Deportation law and Impacts on productivity. It says the Saudi Arabia had never had a minimum wage, but in September of 2012 the king announced a new one of \$800 per month for Saudis working in the public sector, and the private sector also was encouraged to implement the new wage law. It also discuss about deportation, one million foreign workers have been deported due to new law in the period from November of 2012 to 2014.

Alshanbri,N., khalfan,M.,&maqsood. T. (2014) looks at Nitaqat program in Saudi Arabia. The Article provides statistical data about the unemployment rate in KSA. It highlight the number of unemployed Saudis increased to 657047 at the end of the first half of 2014, compared to 622533 at the end of the year 2013, An increase of 34514 unemployed in just six months. The findings of this study show some barriers of Nitaqat program such as the quality of the education system in the

country which need essentially to be improve and upgrade in order to link it with the current jobs market needs And, type of the jobs and the working hours etc.

Koyame-marsh, R. O.(2016) examine the performance of the Saudization program before and after the introduction of the Nitaqat.The study claims that Nitaqat was not also able to curtail Saudi's unemployment rate three years after its implementation. The study found that Nitaqat had a very small impact on Saudi's unemployment rate and couldn't curb the number of expatriates employed in the private sector.

A research by Ahmed. M. (2017) examines impact of expulsion of migrant workers on Saudi Arabia's economy and also analyze promoting young Saudi citizens with purpose to replace remaining migrant workers with local. It also discuss about the need for newly implemented Nitaqat law and it highlights both positive and negative sides of Nitaqat. The work of Jabir (2017) discuss impact of return migration on Kerala.The study observes that the return migration have made highly impact on life of return emigrants in Kerala and those who return is living in a traumatic life condition without any adequate job opportunities, health related issues etc. The family and neighboring community are relief to them for operating as supporting mechanism. The study suggest that both state and central government should interfere in this issue as return of large number of migrants will create severe economic consequences including unemployment, consumption investment and savings in common people

Alfiya. M.(2017) examines the reasons for return migration to Kerala from Saudi Arabia. It highlights the various causes for return migration such as loss of job, Nitaqat, Expiry of contract, poor working condition and health problem. It found that in return migrants are men' more than the women and large numbers of return migrants are below SSLC Qualification etc. The study put forward some suggestions in order to improve the living condition of the return migrants.

A review of the literature in the field of study found that most of the studies addressed general aspects of migration, such as the factors influencing migration, the employment status of migrants, the socioeconomic impact of migration, labour

issues in the destination country, and the causes and effects of return migration. Although some research provided an overview of the issues surrounding Niraqat and its effects in Kerala, none of the studies sought to evaluate Niraqat's effects exclusively. There is sufficient room in this context to evaluate the application of nitaqat and its effects in Kerala in detail.

1.8 Objectives of the Study

1. To analyse the situation of implementation of Nitaqat in Saudi Arabia.
2. To understand the impact of the Nitaqat on the Socio-Economic development of Malappuram district.
3. To assess the implications of Nitaqat on the human security condition of return migrants.
4. To Find out the various government welfare measures for return migrants and its impacts

1.9 Hypothesis

1. Saudi government has implemented Nitaqat because of increasing unemployment and high flow of remittances to foreign countries.
2. The Nitaqat has badly affected the Solo-economic development in Malappuram district.
3. The human security condition of return migrants have weakened following the implementation of Nitaqat
4. The welfare measures implemented by government has low impact on return migrants

1.10 Methodology

The study is an empirical study in nature. The basic aim of this study is to understand the socio-economic impact of Nitaqat in Malappuram district. The study was undertaken in Malappuram District. There are seven taluks in the Malappuram

district; three panchayats were chosen for this study from each taluk, with a total of 21 panchayats.

The returning migrants from Saudi Arabia who were forced to return to Kerala as a result of the Nitaqat policy's implementation make up the main sample for the quantitative analysis⁶. A sample size of 315 individuals was obtained by selecting 15 return migrants from each of the 21 panchayats. To guarantee that the chosen individuals had firsthand experience with the effects of Nitaqat and were representative of the greater number of return migrants in the Malappuram district, a purposive sampling technique⁷ was used.

In order to gather primary data from the 315 return migrants, a structured questionnaire⁸ was created. A variety of information was gathered via the questionnaire, such as past jobs, reasons for returning, present financial situation, social adaptations, and goals for the future. The information acquired using this application offers quantifiable insights into the socioeconomic effects on the returnees of the Nitaqat policy.

In addition, discussions were conducted with various scholars who have already studied about Nitaqat and also carried out discussion with social and religious leaders of locality, leaders of various pravasi associations and charity workers to understand how much socio-economic impact of Nitaqat in Saudi Arabia has created in Kerala. Books journals, articles, newspapers, and documents and

⁶ Quantitative analysis is a research method focused on collecting and interpreting numerical data to identify patterns, relationships, or trends. It involves the use of statistical tools to test hypotheses and draw generalizable conclusions from large datasets. This approach is widely used in fields like economics, sociology, and psychology for its objectivity and precision.

⁷ Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method in which participants are deliberately selected based on specific characteristics relevant to the research objective. This technique allows researchers to focus on individuals who are especially knowledgeable or experienced with the topic being studied. It is commonly used in qualitative research where depth and insight are prioritized over generalizability

⁸ A structured questionnaire is a research tool consisting of a standardized set of closed-ended questions used to collect data systematically from respondents. It ensures uniformity in the way questions are asked and answers are recorded, making it ideal for quantitative studies. This format enhances reliability and comparability across a large sample.

records available with other government and non-government organization (Norka-Non Residence Kerala Agency) were used as secondary sources.

1.11 Limitations of the study

Data was gathered from returning migrants using a sample methodology. Including every returnee impacted by the Nitaqat policy was not possible due to practical limitations like time, accessibility, and finances. The results may therefore not accurately reflect the range of experiences among the total population of returnees because they are based on a chosen sample.

This study is limited to the Malappuram district, which may not accurately reflect the socioeconomic circumstances or experiences of return migrants throughout the entire state of Kerala, despite having a sizable population of return migrants. Therefore, care must be taken when extrapolating the findings of this study to other districts.

1.12 Chapter Scheme

The study is arranged in six chapters. A basic overview of the study is given in the first Chapter. It begins with an introduction to the research topic. A thematic review of the literature is presented in this chapter along with an explanation of the study's importance. It describes research methodology along with the research objectives and hypothesis. It also addresses the study's shortcomings before providing a thesis roadmap through an organised chapterization at the end.

The second chapter examines the complex relationship between migration and human security, highlighting how migration can both expose individuals to risks and offer opportunities for improved livelihoods. It explores the impact of migration on the security of both migrants and communities, addressing vulnerabilities, responses to threats, and the role of remittances. The chapter also considers the effects of migration securitization and aims to propose approaches that protect the fundamental rights of migrants while enhancing human security.

The evolution of Nitaqat, the Saudization process, and Saudi Arabia's labour policy are examined in the third chapter.

The fourth chapter, "Kerala Diaspora in the Gulf: Historical and Political Connections," examines remittances, return migration trends, and the reasons behind migration from Kerala. It looks at NORKA-Roots and its welfare programs while assessing how Gulf migration has affected Kerala's economic growth.

The Fifth chapter contains a detailed data analysis and the final chapter gives the findings, recommendations and conclusion.

CHAPTER 2

MIGRATION AND HUMAN SECURITY: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

The movement of people across borders, encompassing both voluntary migration and forced displacement, presents a complex and multifaceted relationship with the concept of human security. While migration can offer individuals and communities opportunities for improved livelihoods, safety, and well-being, it can also expose them to various threats and vulnerabilities, jeopardizing their fundamental human security. This chapter delves into this intricate web, exploring the multifaceted connections between migration and human security through the lens of key theoretical frameworks.

In today's increasingly interconnected world, characterized by heightened mobility and interdependence, the study of migration and its intricate relationship with human security holds greater importance than ever before. Firstly, globalization has facilitated unprecedented levels of human mobility, with individuals crossing borders for various reasons, including economic opportunities, family reunification, and escaping persecution or conflict. This rise in migration has amplified the vulnerabilities faced by these individuals, especially refugees and asylum seekers, who often encounter challenges in accessing basic necessities, healthcare, and education in host countries, thereby jeopardizing their human security (Bakewell, 2020). Furthermore, irregular migration routes expose individuals to exploitation, trafficking, and violence, further highlighting the need for robust frameworks to ensure their safety and well-being (IOM, 2019).

Secondly, the interconnectedness of the world has led to the transnational nature of threats to human security. Climate change, for instance, is expected to cause mass displacement due to extreme weather events, rising sea levels, and resource scarcity, impacting the human security of both sending and receiving communities (Castles, 2010). Additionally, pandemics and other global health

threats can disproportionately affect migrants who often reside in overcrowded and unsanitary conditions, exacerbating their vulnerabilities and highlighting the need for coordinated efforts to protect their health and well-being.

Thirdly, studying migration and human security is crucial for informing policy decisions that balance the interests of both states and migrants. Restrictive border policies aimed at curbing migration can lead to human rights violations and unintended consequences, such as fostering the growth of irregular migration and hindering potential economic benefits. Therefore, research in this area can contribute to the development of evidence-based policies that address both security concerns and the human rights and fundamental freedoms of migrants (Huysmans, 2006).

Fourthly, understanding the intricate links between migration and human security is vital for promoting global cooperation and shared responsibility. As migration increasingly transcends national borders, international collaboration is essential to address the multifaceted challenges faced by migrants and ensure their protection. Research in this field can pave the way for effective multilateral mechanisms to manage migration flows, provide assistance to vulnerable populations, and promote sustainable solutions that address the root causes of displacement.

The study of migration and human security has become increasingly relevant in today's globalized world characterized by heightened mobility, interconnected threats, and the need for evidence-based policy responses. By critically examining these complex linkages, research can contribute to the formulation of humane and effective solutions that uphold the human security of all individuals, both migrants and non-migrants alike, in a globalized and interconnected world.

It is crucial to acknowledge the diverse experiences of migrants. Voluntary migrants, seeking economic opportunities or family reunification, may face challenges associated with integration, discrimination, and exploitation in host countries, impacting their economic security and social well-being (Bakewell, 2020). Conversely, forced displacement, often a consequence of conflict, persecution, or environmental degradation, exposes individuals to heightened risks

of violence, physical harm, and psychological distress, jeopardizing their freedom from fear and freedom from want enshrined in the human security concept (Commission on Human Security, 1994).

However, the relationship between migration and human security transcends solely the vulnerabilities faced by migrants. Migration can also be a response to threats to human security. Individuals fleeing conflict or environmental disasters are exercising their right to seek safety and a dignified life, thereby seeking to secure their fundamental freedoms (Castles, 2010). Moreover, migration can contribute positively to the human security of both sending and receiving communities. Remittances sent by migrants can bolster the economic security of their families in origin countries, while migrants themselves can contribute to the social and cultural fabric of host communities through their skills and knowledge (IOM, 2019).

Furthermore, the securitization of migration adds another layer of complexity. Framing migration solely as a security threat can lead to restrictive border policies, increased surveillance, and even violence against migrants, further undermining their human security (Huysmans, 2006). It is crucial to recognize that migrants are not inherently a security threat, but rather individuals seeking a better life and deserving of protection and respect.

The relationship between migration and human security is dynamic and multifaceted. While migration can expose individuals to vulnerabilities and contribute to insecurities, it can also be a strategy for individuals to secure their fundamental rights and contribute positively to the human security of communities.

2.2 Concept of Human Security

The concept of human security has emerged as a crucial lens for understanding and addressing the complex challenges faced by individuals and communities in an increasingly interconnected world. While traditionally, security concerns focused primarily on the protection of states and their borders, human security shifts the focus to the safety, well-being, and fundamental freedoms of individuals, acknowledging the multifaceted nature of threats they encounter. The

Human Security Report, first published in 1994, defined human security as "freedom from pervasive threats and situations that jeopardize the vital needs of individuals: freedom from fear and freedom from want" (UNDP, 1994). This definition emphasizes two fundamental pillars:

1. Freedom from fear: This encompasses protection from physical violence, armed conflict, political repression, and other forms of coercion. It ensures that individuals can live their lives without the constant threat of harm or intimidation.
2. Freedom from want: This refers to the fulfillment of basic human needs such as food, shelter, healthcare, education, and livelihood opportunities. It ensures that individuals have the means to live with dignity and reach their full potential.

The UNDP framework further elaborates on seven core interdependent dimensions of human security:

1. Economic security: This encompasses access to resources and opportunities to meet basic needs and live a decent life.
2. Food security: This includes the availability, accessibility, and utilization of safe and nutritious food.
3. Health security: This refers to the prevention and treatment of diseases and the promotion of physical and mental well-being.
4. Environmental security: This involves protection from environmental degradation and natural disasters.
5. Personal security: This encompasses protection from physical violence, crime, and other forms of personal harm.
6. Community security: This refers to the security and well-being of entire communities, including protection from discrimination and violence.

7. Political security: This involves participation in decision-making and the rule of law.

It is crucial to acknowledge that human security is not state-centric, but rather people-centered. It emphasizes the responsibility of both states and the international community to create an environment where individuals and communities can thrive and exercise their fundamental rights. Furthermore, the human security framework is dynamic and evolving. As new threats and challenges emerge, such as climate change and pandemics, the understanding of human security needs to adapt and incorporate new dimensions.

Human security, as defined by established frameworks like the UNDP's Human Security Report, offers a comprehensive and multidimensional approach to understanding the challenges faced by individuals and communities in today's world. By focusing on freedom from fear and freedom from want, and encompassing various interconnected dimensions, human security serves as a valuable framework for analyzing threats, formulating policies, and creating a world where individuals can live in dignity and freedom.

The determinants of human security are diverse and interconnected, encompassing various social, economic, political, and environmental factors. Understanding these determinants is crucial for addressing human security challenges and developing effective policies and interventions. The key determinants of human security include:

1. Economic Factors: Economic stability and access to resources are fundamental to human security. Poverty, unemployment, and income inequality can undermine economic security and lead to social instability. Economic determinants include:
Employment: Secure and well-paying employment is essential for ensuring economic stability and reducing poverty. Economic policies that promote job creation and fair wages contribute to human security.

Migration and Human Security: Theoretical Framework

- Income Inequality: High levels of income inequality can lead to social fragmentation and undermine social cohesion. Addressing inequality through social safety nets and progressive taxation can enhance human security.
 - Access to Resources: Ensuring access to essential resources such as food, water, and housing is critical for addressing basic human needs and promoting security.
2. Political Factors: Political stability and effective governance play a crucial role in ensuring human security. Key political determinants include:
- Rule of Law: Strong legal institutions and the rule of law are essential for protecting individual rights and ensuring justice. Effective legal systems help prevent violence, corruption, and abuse of power.
 - Governance: Good governance practices, including transparency, accountability, and public participation, contribute to human security by promoting political stability and trust in institutions.
 - Human Rights: Protection of human rights is fundamental to human security. Ensuring that individuals are free from discrimination, abuse, and repression is crucial for safeguarding their well-being.
3. Social Factors: Social determinants of human security include factors related to community and interpersonal relationships, such as:
- Education: Access to quality education is a key determinant of human security, as it empowers individuals with knowledge and skills to improve their lives and contribute to society.
 - Healthcare: Access to healthcare services and protection from health hazards are essential for ensuring physical well-being and reducing vulnerability to diseases.

- Social Cohesion: Strong social networks and community support systems can enhance human security by providing individuals with social capital, emotional support, and assistance in times of need.
4. Environmental Factors: Environmental conditions and changes have significant implications for human security. Key environmental determinants include:
- Climate Change: Climate change poses a major threat to human security by increasing the frequency and severity of natural disasters, such as floods, droughts, and hurricanes. Addressing climate change through mitigation and adaptation measures is essential for protecting human security.
 - Environmental Degradation: Pollution, deforestation, and other forms of environmental degradation can undermine access to clean water, air, and natural resources, affecting health and livelihoods.
5. Migration Factors: Migration itself can influence human security, both for migrants and for the communities they leave and join. Key migration-related determinants include:
- Legal Status: The legal status of migrants affects their access to employment, social services, and protection from exploitation. Policies that ensure legal rights and protections for migrants contribute to human security.
 - Integration: Successful integration of migrants into host communities, including access to education, employment, and social services, is important for their well-being and social cohesion.
 - Displacement: Forced displacement due to conflict, persecution, or natural disasters can significantly impact human security, requiring humanitarian assistance and protection measures.

2.3 Human-Centered Approach to Security

The concept of security has traditionally been understood through a state-centric lens, focusing on protecting the territorial integrity and political sovereignty of nations. This narrow perspective, rooted in the realist paradigm of international relations, has been dominant for centuries, shaping diplomatic relations, military strategies, and national security policies (Schweller, 1992). However, in the face of an increasingly complex and interconnected world, the limitations of this traditional approach have become increasingly apparent, necessitating a shift towards a human-centered approach to security.

Traditional security focuses primarily on military threats and interstate conflict, overlooking a vast spectrum of non-military threats that directly impact individuals' lives. These include environmental degradation, pandemics, economic instability, human rights violations, and organized crime (Singer, 2009). For example, climate change is projected to displace millions due to rising sea levels, extreme weather events, and resource scarcity, posing a significant threat to human security that falls outside the traditional security framework.

By focusing on protecting states, traditional security often neglects the individual experiences of people within those states. It fails to address the diverse vulnerabilities faced by marginalized groups, including refugees, internally displaced persons, minorities, and individuals living in poverty, who are disproportionately affected by various threats (Tickner, 1992). For instance, focusing solely on securing national borders can neglect the human rights violations faced by refugees and asylum seekers seeking international protection. Traditional security often prioritizes military solutions to address threats, potentially escalating tensions and leading to unintended consequences. This approach can divert resources away from other crucial areas like education, healthcare, and social development, perpetuating vulnerabilities and hinder sustainable solutions.

Traditional security decision-making often employs a top-down approach, where governments formulate policies with limited or no participation from the

individuals directly affected. This can lead to policies that do not address the actual needs and concerns of communities, hindering their effectiveness and legitimacy.

In response to the limitations of the traditional approach, the concept of human security has emerged as a paradigm shift. It prioritizes the safety, well-being, and fundamental freedoms of individuals as the ultimate goal of security (UNDP, 1994). This shift emphasizes Broader Scope of Threats. Human security recognizes that individuals face diverse threats beyond the realm of interstate conflict. It encompasses a multidimensional approach to security, addressing various challenges such as economic insecurity, food insecurity, environmental degradation, and personal violence. Human security places the individual at the center of security concerns. It prioritizes protecting the rights and freedoms of all individuals, regardless of their nationality, ethnicity, religion, or other factors. This ensures that everyone has the opportunity to live a life free from fear and want, regardless of their location or circumstances.

Human security emphasizes the importance of inclusive and participatory solutions. It encourages collaboration between governments, civil society organizations, and individuals to develop and implement policies that address the diverse vulnerabilities faced by different groups. The human security approach focuses not just on responding to threats but also on preventing them. It encourages the promotion of human rights, sustainable development, and good governance as crucial elements for creating an environment where individuals can thrive and contribute to the well-being of their communities. The limitations of traditional state-centric security concepts have become increasingly evident in a world facing a multitude of non-military threats and complex challenges. Embracing a human-centered approach to security, as embodied in the human security framework, offers a more comprehensive and effective way to address the diverse vulnerabilities faced by individuals in today's world. By prioritizing the safety, well-being, and fundamental freedoms of all, we can create a world where individuals and communities can flourish in an environment of peace, dignity, and prosperity.

2.4 Theoretical Foundations of Migration and Human Security

The concept of human security, encompassing freedom from fear and freedom from want, forms a crucial lens for understanding the complex relationship between migration and its consequences. Within this framework, the concept of "freedom from fear" takes center stage when exploring how migration can be a direct consequence of threats like conflict, persecution, and violence. The human security framework, as outlined by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), emphasizes the protection of individuals from pervasive threats and situations that jeopardize their vital needs (UNDP, 1994). This includes freedom from fear, encompassing protection from physical violence, armed conflict, political repression, and other forms of coercion. When individuals face such threats in their home countries, migration becomes a strategy for survival, a desperate measure to escape violence and persecution, and to seek safety and security for themselves and their families.

Armed conflict disrupts entire societies, creating widespread insecurity and human rights violations. Individuals living in conflict zones face constant threats to their lives, well-being, and physical integrity. This can include exposure to violence, displacement, forced recruitment into armed groups, and various forms of abuse. In such situations, migration becomes a crucial coping mechanism, allowing individuals to escape immediate danger and seek refuge in safer locations. Persecution based on factors like race, religion, ethnicity, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group can also force individuals to flee their homes. This persecution may involve physical violence, discrimination, denial of basic rights, and threats to life and liberty. Faced with such targeted and systematic attacks, individuals often have no choice but to migrate to seek protection and rebuild their lives in environments where their fundamental rights are respected.

Secularization theory offers insights into how the traditional security paradigm, focused on defending state borders and interests, often overlooks the vulnerabilities faced by migrants. This theory highlights the inherent bias towards state security, potentially neglecting the human security needs of individuals who

navigate irregular migration routes or reside in precarious situations within host countries (Huysmans, 2006). For example, securitization narratives portraying migrants as security threats can lead to restrictive border policies and increased surveillance, further jeopardizing their human rights and well-being.

Humanitarian security framework, on the other hand, emphasizes the protection of vulnerable groups, including migrants caught in the web of conflict, natural disasters, or humanitarian crises. This framework encourages prioritizing basic needs such as food, shelter, and healthcare for individuals displaced from their homes, regardless of their migration status (Castles, 2010). It emphasizes the responsibility of both states and the international community to provide assistance and ensure the human dignity of displaced persons, fostering a more inclusive approach to security. Furthermore, cosmopolitanism and global justice theories offer a broader perspective on the relationship between migration and human security. These theories advocate for a global approach to security, emphasizing the equal rights and protection of all individuals, regardless of their nationality or migration status (Held, 2009). They argue for international cooperation towards addressing the root causes of displacement, promoting sustainable development, and upholding human rights, ultimately contributing to a more secure world for all.

However, securitization theory can be criticized for overlooking the positive contributions of migrants to host societies and focusing solely on threats. Humanitarian security may fall short in addressing the systemic factors that contribute to human insecurity, such as poverty, inequality, and environmental degradation. Cosmopolitanism and global justice theories, while offering an idealistic vision, may face challenges in implementation due to diverse national interests and varying levels of commitment from different actors in the international community. Therefore, it is crucial to recognize the strengths and limitations of each framework and consider intersectional and multidimensional approaches that move beyond the limitations of any single perspective. This necessitates exploring the gendered dimensions of migration and human security, considering how different

migrant groups experience vulnerability and risk based on their gender identities and social backgrounds (Kofman, 2014).

2.5 Human Security and Migration

While migration can offer a safe haven from immediate threats, the journey itself can be fraught with danger and hardship. Individuals fleeing conflict and persecution often undertake irregular migration journeys through treacherous routes, exposing them to various risks, including physical violence, human trafficking etc. Physical violence can include robbery, assault, kidnapping, and even sexual violence. Migrants are particularly vulnerable due to their lack of legal status, limited resources, and unfamiliarity with their surroundings. Traffickers exploit the vulnerabilities of migrants, forcing them into labor, sexual exploitation, or other forms of servitude. This further jeopardizes their physical and mental well-being and denies them basic human rights. Migrants often face extreme weather conditions, lack of access to food and water, and inadequate shelter during their journeys, putting their health and lives at risk.

Even when they reach their destination, migrants fleeing conflict and persecution may encounter significant challenges to their human security in host countries. These challenges include Limited access to basic necessities and Discrimination and xenophobia etc. Many host countries struggle to provide adequate resources like housing, food, and healthcare for newly arrived migrants, leading to basic needs insecurity. Migrants often face discrimination and hostility from local communities, hindering their integration and limiting their access to opportunities. Some states adopt restrictive policies that detain and deport migrants, further jeopardizing their safety and well-being, and potentially subjecting them to the very threats they fled from.

When individuals face threats like conflict, persecution, and violence, migration can be a necessary strategy for securing their "freedom from fear." However, the journey itself and the challenges encountered in host countries often jeopardize their human security in various ways. Understanding these dynamics within the framework of human security is crucial for developing effective policies

and interventions that address the root causes of forced migration, protect the rights and dignity of individuals fleeing such threats, and promote their access to safety and well-being throughout their migration journey and beyond.

2.6 Human Security and Freedom from Want

The concept of human security encompasses not only freedom from fear but also freedom from want, ensuring individuals have the basic necessities for a dignified life. Within this framework, migration emerges as a complex phenomenon driven by individuals seeking to fulfill their basic needs and escape the limitations imposed by economic hardship, poverty, and a lack of opportunities in their home countries. The human security framework, as defined by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), emphasizes the protection of individuals from pervasive threats and situations that jeopardize their vital needs (UNDP, 1994). This includes freedom from want, which encompasses access to essential resources such as food, water, shelter, healthcare, and education. When individuals face economic hardship, poverty, and lack of opportunities in their home countries, they may perceive migration as a strategy for improving their lives and attaining a level of well-being that allows them to fulfill their basic needs and aspirations.

The drivers of Economic Migration include many factors. Individuals living in poverty often struggle to afford basic necessities, leading them to seek opportunities in countries with better economic prospects and higher living standards. When employment opportunities are scarce and wages are low, individuals may choose to migrate to access better job markets and secure higher incomes to support themselves and their families. Lack of access to education, training, and resources can hinder individuals' economic mobility, pushing them to migrate to find opportunities that their home countries cannot offer. Economic inequality within a country can motivate individuals from disadvantaged regions or communities to seek better opportunities and access to resources in other locations.

While migration can offer a pathway to improved economic well-being, the journey itself and the integration process in host countries can expose individuals to various challenges that jeopardize their human security, including vulnerability to

exploitation and limited access to social security nets. Migrants, particularly undocumented or irregular migrants, are more vulnerable to exploitation in the labor market, facing lower wages, unsafe working conditions, and potential human trafficking. Many migrants struggle to access essential services like healthcare, education, and social security benefits in host countries, jeopardizing their well-being and stability. Migrants may face discrimination and social exclusion from local communities, hindering their integration and impacting their mental health and well-being. Migration often involves separation from family and loved ones, causing emotional distress and impacting mental health.

When individuals face economic hardship, poverty, and a lack of opportunities, migration can be a compelling strategy for securing their "freedom from want." However, the journey itself and the integration process in host countries can expose individuals to various challenges that jeopardize their well-being and security in several ways. Recognizing these dynamics within the human security framework is crucial for developing policies and interventions that promote sustainable development in origin countries, protect the rights of migrant workers in host countries, and foster social inclusion and access to essential services, ultimately contributing to a world where everyone has the opportunity to achieve a decent standard of living and a life free from want.

2.7 Human dignity and human security

The inherent dignity of every individual is a fundamental principle enshrined in numerous international human rights instruments. Yet, within the complex landscape of migration, this vital principle is often imperiled. Migration processes can expose individuals to profound violations of their human rights, including exploitation, discrimination, and abuses of power – assaults that directly undermine their dignity and well-being. At its core, human security advocates for "protecting the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and human fulfillment" (UNDP, 1994). This includes the right to live free from exploitation, discrimination, and inhumane treatment. When migration processes fail

to uphold these rights, the foundation of human security is eroded, and the fundamental dignity of migrants is placed at risk.

The vulnerability of migrants throughout their journeys makes them susceptible to various forms of exploitation. In sectors such as agriculture, construction, or domestic work, migrants may endure forced labor, debt bondage, wage theft, and unsafe working conditions. Such abuses strip individuals of their autonomy and violate their fundamental labor rights. Human traffickers exploit the desperation of migrants, forcing them into situations of labor or sexual exploitation, denying them their freedom and subjecting them to profound suffering. Trafficking networks thrive where there are limited protections for migrants and poor enforcement of labor laws. In some cases, state actors themselves contribute to the exploitation of migrants. Detention centers may subject migrants to inhumane conditions, forced labor, or extortion, further contributing to their degradation.

Discrimination against migrants, based on factors like their nationality, race, ethnicity, religion, or legal status, is a pervasive violation of human dignity. It can manifest in multiple ways. States may enact policies that deny migrants access to essential services like healthcare, education, or housing, creating further hardship and perpetuating their marginalization. Migrants often face discrimination in the labor market, restricting them to low-wage, precarious, and unsafe jobs, hindering their economic mobility and well-being. Societal prejudice against migrants can fuel xenophobic rhetoric and hate speech, further undermining their sense of belonging and safety, and damaging social cohesion.

These violations of human rights and dignity have profound consequences for the well-being and security of migrants. Exploitation, discrimination, and inhumane treatment can lead to both physical and psychological harm. Migrants may experience injuries, illness, trauma, and a diminished sense of self-worth. Marginalization and exclusionary practices can lead to significant social isolation, further eroding their support systems and hindering their ability to cope with challenges. Discrimination and limited access to opportunities create barriers to the

successful integration of migrants into host societies, fueling cycles of poverty and disadvantage.

The preservation of human dignity is a cornerstone of human security. Yet, for many migrants, the processes of migration become perilous journeys marked by exploitation, discrimination, and human rights abuses. Understanding these dynamics within the human security framework is crucial for developing policies and interventions that prioritize the protection, well-being, and dignity of migrants. This includes addressing the root causes of migration, upholding international human rights law, combating human trafficking, fostering social inclusion, and building more just and equitable societies where the inherent dignity of all is fully respected.

The traditional understanding of security, centered on protecting the territorial integrity and political sovereignty of states, often neglects the human element. The human security framework, as defined by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), offers a broader perspective, emphasizing the safety, well-being, and fundamental freedoms of individuals as the ultimate goal of security (UNDP, 1994). This framework encompasses various dimensions, including 1) Freedom from fear means protecting individuals from physical violence, armed conflict, political repression, and other forms of coercion, 2) Freedom from want means ensuring access to essential resources like food, water, shelter, healthcare, and education, 3) Personal security means protecting individuals from crime, violence, and other threats within their communities and 4) Humanitarian security means Protecting vulnerable groups, including migrants caught in the midst of conflict, natural disasters, or other humanitarian crises.

Migration, encompassing both voluntary movement and forced displacement, presents both challenges and opportunities for human security. Individuals fleeing conflict, persecution, and human rights violations often face severe risks to their well-being and security during their journeys and in host countries. This can include exposure to violence, exploitation, lack of access to basic needs, and social exclusion. While migration can offer individuals opportunities to

improve their economic well-being, the process itself can be fraught with risks, such as exploitation in the labor market, limited access to social security, and vulnerability to discrimination. Climate change and environmental degradation are forcing individuals to migrate due to rising sea levels, extreme weather events, and desertification, jeopardizing their access to basic resources and livelihoods, and impacting their human security.

It also provides some opportunities too. Migrants play a crucial role in host economies, contributing to labor markets, enriching cultures, and fostering innovation. Remittances sent by migrants back to their home countries can contribute to poverty reduction, investment in education and healthcare, and the overall development of origin countries. Migration can contribute to cultural exchange, fostering understanding and tolerance across societies, leading to a more diverse and vibrant world. Understanding the intricate nexus between migration and human security requires a comprehensive and multifaceted approach that goes beyond traditional security paradigms. This necessitates focusing on issues like conflict, persecution, poverty, and environmental degradation is crucial to prevent forced displacement and offer individuals safe and dignified alternatives to migration. Upholding human rights and investing in sustainable development in origin countries can provide individuals with opportunities to meet their basic needs and security, potentially reducing the need to migrate. Ensuring the protection of migrants during their journeys and in host countries, including combating exploitation, discrimination, and inhumane treatment, is crucial for upholding human security. Fostering integration and social inclusion of migrants in host societies is essential for ensuring their well-being, security, and full participation in society.

The migration and human security nexus presents a complex and dynamic challenge in the 21st century. By acknowledging the diverse ways migration both challenges and contributes to human security and by adopting comprehensive and multifaceted approaches, we can strive towards a world where individuals,

regardless of their migration status, can live free from fear, want, and violence, and thrive with dignity and opportunity.

2.8 Migration: Definitions, Forms, and Challenges

Migration, the movement of people across borders, is a profoundly human phenomenon that has shaped societies throughout history. It encompasses a diverse range of movements, driven by various motivations and presenting unique challenges and opportunities. At its core, migration is the movement of individuals across borders, be it within a country or internationally (Castles, 2010). It is a dynamic process that can be temporary, permanent, or cyclical, depending on individual circumstances and broader societal factors. While migration often involves crossing national borders, it can also encompass internal displacement, where individuals are forced to move within their own countries due to conflict, natural disasters, or other reasons (IOM, 2019).

Understanding the diverse forms of migration is crucial for comprehensive analysis and effective policy development. Some key categories of migration include;

1. **Voluntary Migration:** It is Motivated by individual choice and driven by factors such as a) Economic opportunities in which individuals seeking better employment prospects and higher wages may migrate to countries with more robust economies (Bakewell, 2020), b) Education means seeking access to quality education and pursuing academic opportunities can motivate individuals to migrate, c) Family reunification in which joining family members already residing in another country is a common reason for migration, particularly for spouses and children and d) Lifestyle changes in which individuals may choose to migrate for improved living conditions, seeking a different political or cultural environment, or for personal reasons.
2. **Forced Migration:** Individuals are compelled to move due to threats to their safety, well-being, or fundamental rights. It encompasses various categories, including a) Refugees and in this category individuals who have fled their

countries due to a well-founded fear of persecution based on race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group, and are seeking international protection (UNHCR, 2023), b) Asylum seekers means individuals who have crossed an international border and are seeking asylum, but whose refugee status has not yet been determined, c) Internally displaced persons (IDPs) means individuals who are forced to flee their homes but remain within their own country due to conflict, generalized violence, natural disasters, or human-made disasters (OHCHR, 2023) and d) Trafficking victims means individuals subjected to forced labor, exploitation, or slavery through deception, coercion, or violence.

3. Other Categories includes a) Skilled migration in which high-skilled individuals migrating for specific employment opportunities, often attracting them through specialized visa programs, b) Return migration in which individuals returning to their country of origin after a period of migration abroad and c) Climate migration means individuals forced to move due to the impacts of climate change, such as rising sea levels, extreme weather events, and desertification.

Understanding the diverse forms of migration is critical for several reasons. Distinctions between voluntary and forced migration are crucial for crafting appropriate policy responses. For instance, voluntary economic migrants may require different support systems than refugees fleeing persecution. Recognizing the diverse vulnerabilities faced by different migrant groups is crucial for ensuring their protection and well-being. For example, refugees and IDPs often need specific assistance related to trauma, access to basic necessities, and long-term solutions. Additionally, integrating migrants into their new communities effectively requires understanding their diverse backgrounds, motivations, and needs. Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge the complexities surrounding terminology and definitions within migration studies. Some categories can appear blurred, and classifications can be subjective or depend on specific legal frameworks.

Migration is a multifaceted phenomenon encompassing a variety of experiences and motivations. Recognizing the diverse forms of migration, understanding the challenges faced by different groups, and employing nuanced terminology are essential for addressing the complexities surrounding human mobility in a globalized world. This comprehensive understanding serves as a crucial foundation for conducting research, formulating effective policies, and promoting a world where the rights and well-being of all individuals, regardless of their migration status, are protected and upheld.

2.9 The Reasons Behind Migration

From the very beginning, the origin and destination locations have had a significant impact on human migration. The phenomena primarily focusses on the elements in the place of origin that drive people to relocate, as well as the elements at the destination that draw people there. All of these elements that contribute to migration cannot be explained by a single theory. Furthermore, there are a number of elements that significantly impact migration, making it a phenomenon that cannot be determined by a single factor.

Push and pull factors are two major categories into which the influencing elements can be divided. People may be encouraged to leave their native country by a variety of domestic influences, also referred to as push factors. At the same time, pull incentives may include better job possibilities, benefits packages, life insurance, better educational opportunities, recreational options, housing facilities, etc. Because some demographic experts believe that the confluence of certain migration factors alters periodically, several social scientists have looked at them in different ways. Certain circumstances will drive people to migrate before they leave, but if they are happy where they are from, they will never consider leaving, even if there are fantastic work opportunities where they are going. The decision to relocate might therefore be influenced by a variety of variables. Also, the experiences of migrants in the past serve as a guidance for those who may move in the future.

One could consider Rose's observations to be practical. He asserts that while some situations can facilitate migration, others can potentially hinder it. Numerous

studies on migration have noted the importance of economic reasons in migration. According to a number of academics, economic factors account for a significant portion of migration. According to Gulliver, the true issue of migration is essentially economic needs. The importance of personal conditions in migration has been stressed or underlined by numerous other social scientists. Chapin asserts that the foundation of migration is the role of human development. However, a wide range of causes other than economic and emotional ones still contribute to migration. These can include social, administrative, political, ethical, and religious aspects, among others. It is clear that these factors have an impact on migration, and numerous scholars have interpreted this. According to Davis, during the colonial era, the following factors encouraged migration: the development of transportation and communication systems, educational facilities, the decline of caste and class, the expansion of large-scale enterprises, the growth of towns and cities, the expansion of irrigation, the rise in security, and religious celebrations, trade fairs, terrible famines, and geographical circumstances.

Once more, a number of other factors have been mentioned by some researchers as being related to migration, such as the absence of cultivable land, family disputes, the presence of close relatives, a common element that makes it easier for vagrants to find employment or launch a business, the allure of metropolitan life, official transfers, political purposes, etc. Ganguli places a strong emphasis on the longer-term economic, political, and social factors that drive human migration. Social factors that influence migration inclination have also been highlighted by Das Gupta. Social researchers have also expressed opinions regarding push and pull or rural push and urban pull variables. Because to the processes of urbanisation and industrialisation, this push-pull dynamic has coincided quite noticeably in recent years. People move to cities from rural areas in quest of steady, better work, good health, and better education for their kids. Bruse, a renowned sociologist, has offered an impressive perspective in this regard. The push and pull elements are difficult to discern, he said. Evidence suggests that the driving factor for the current rural conditions is the idea that things can be better in the city. Similar findings have been made by Lakdawala, who claims that it is very difficult

to identify the main driving force because a pull from the town or the village may be sufficient. Other pertinent opinions have been presented by Balandier, Banton, Gulliver, Cohen, Hutton, Richard, Hart, Prothero, Skinner, and others regarding the causes of rural-urban migration in both developed and developing nations.

Close examinations of the causes of migration lead to the conclusion that, although the factors influencing migration can be broadly divided into economic and non-economic categories, migration decisions are actually mostly driven by economic considerations. Although other academics have offered a variety of theories and opinions about the factors that facilitate migration, Bogue's list is worth mentioning. He gave a list of twenty-five characteristics, of which ten were socioeconomic conditions that might either facilitate or impede population migration, and fifteen were elements related to destination preference. Education, marriage, divorce, migratory labour, specialised skills, employee transfers, business, farm loss, job termination, reduced pay, retirement, military service, political, ethnic, or religious reasons, natural disasters, social rejection, and forced relocation are some of the strong motivators for migration that Clarke lists. These factors include the cost of moving, living with family and friends, facilities, social amenities, awareness of the place of destination, grants, and schemes, special support, status, lack of alternative destination, etc. Therefore, the main determining factors can be listed as follows: (a) the choice of immigration destination; (b) the attitude of family members, especially spouses and coworkers, regarding migration plans; (c) the influence of parents or in-laws; (d) the status of employment at home; (e) knowledge about immigration destinations from a variety of sources; and (f) the desire for social status, better employment, a more stable future for children, meeting financial needs of loans and liabilities, keeping a good home, etc. All of the aforementioned elements can be categorised as physical, economic, social, demographic, political, etc.

2.9.1 Physical Factors

Physical qualities vary by time and location and are a major factor in human migration. When faced with natural disasters like earthquakes, landslides, volcanic

eruptions, soil erosion, climate fluctuations, etc., people decide to flee their own country. Early on, it was thought that diseases and plagues were a major factor in people moving from one area to another. However, these pressures have diminished in importance as medical facilities have advanced.

In order to improve their health, people from lowland tropical areas flock to health resort cities during the summer. Likewise, individuals from cold climates go to coastal areas in search of warmth. Although scientists can alter natural conditions, the function of physical variables has not diminished in importance in the modern day.

2.9.2 Economic Factors

The economic aspect is undoubtedly the most frequent driver of migration. In the pre-industrial era, the shortage of arable land caused people to shift from one location to another. As the population grew, the per capita land share decreased, making it difficult for rural residents to support their families on insufficient agricultural land. As a result, family members typically advise their relatives to obtain employment by relocating to an urban area. An important contributing element to migration is also considered to be industrialisation. Few people had access to employment options through village cottage businesses prior to industrialisation. However, the growth of urban centres was aided by the expansion of industry and the availability of sufficient employment possibilities. Rural life was similar in both developed and developing nations prior to industrialisation. At the same time, migration has been significantly influenced by the advancement of communication and transportation infrastructure. Thanks to transportation and communication, the flow of migration has risen. Because transportation was less developed in the past, individuals tended to limit their mobility to short distances. People are migrating more and farther away as a result of the advancement of transportation methods. Consequently, individuals began moving to even inaccessible regions of

Earlier. As transportation technology advanced, people began commuting daily rather than moving to a nearby location and settling down. A further factor

driving people to move from rural to urban centres is the desire to rise in economic standing. It is widely believed that businesses in industrial and urban areas are more profitable, and that moving there can improve one's financial situation. The upshot of this style of thinking was migration. Mining is another important economic element influencing migration in India. With a larger population density than other areas of Bihar, the coal mining fields of Dhanbad-Jharia provide the most appropriate illustration. Additionally, commerce and trade have had a big impact on migration. Early migrants were essentially focused on trade.

2.9.3 Social Factors

Since the dawn of human civilisation, a number of social elements have defined migration. The standard of living, social structure, and socialisation model are the outcomes of this. Social structure is seen as a fundamental framework for interpersonal connections. In addition to fixing the boundaries of action, it identifies the essential social ties that give society its basic models. Family, caste, class, marriage, and religion are important social combinations that make up social structure. Migration caused the dynamics of all these groupings to continuously change. People moving from the villages to the towns caused the traditional joint family to start disintegrating, which was indicative of a number of psychological, social, and economic problems. The urbanised composition and migration from rural to urban areas caused changes in family size. The various aspects of marriage, such as the ceremonies, age,

Caste, partner selection, and other factors are significantly influenced by migration. It is believed in rural areas that marriage is a mutual responsibility, and while the family will manage the funds together, the village residents and their surrounding relatives will share external obligations. In addition to traditional considerations, migrants have created new standards for choosing a partner.

2.10 Migration's Impact

- In terms of sending and receiving points, migration has been one of the main drivers of societal change. The community, the migrants, and their families

will be the phenomenon's first responders. All facets of the home country and the target region will be affected eventually. Migration can have the following beneficial benefits on a migrant's life:

- People are given better job opportunities and unemployment is decreased.
- The quality of life will improve, particularly for migrants who will gain knowledge of other cultures, customs, languages, and practices as well as better coping mechanisms to deal with a variety of people.
- The economic growth of the migrant family is increased by migration.

In the case of skilled migrants, this is more obvious.

- Children have greater access to higher education opportunities.
- Families of migrants will have an improvement in their socio-educational standing.

Some adverse effects of the phenomena include:

- The decline in rural workforces has an effect on rural areas' productivity and development.
- Competition for jobs, housing, educational facilities, and other resources increases as more people move into urban regions.

The rise in nuclear households, where children grow up without a larger family circle, is primarily due to migration.

Migration affects people's social relationships. Relationship intensity with family, friends, and relatives has decreased. The distance between them is the reason, not the fact that they do not wish to stay in contact. Additionally, social adjustment is a challenge for migrants in their new communities. Rural migrants encounter numerous challenges in adapting to urban society due to their lack of education and literacy. Language, traditions, housing, marriage, entertainment, and festivities are among the issues they face.

The cultural effects of migration are, in fact, a central theme in this conversation. The term "culture" describes how a person goes about their everyday life; it includes the specific routines and traditions that members of a society, whether it be a savage tribe or a civilised nation, follow. Customs are behaviour patterns that include things like etiquette and material object management systems. Conversely, social values, moral convictions, and practical expertise are all considered collective ideas. The process of changing different behaviours as a result of exposure to different cultural contexts is also known as acculturation. It may be desirable for an individual or group to alter their conduct and actions. People bring their own culture with them when they relocate and make an effort to preserve it in their new surroundings. Additionally, the destination's culture begins to shift during this entire process.

These changes can be observed in all aspects of culture, including clothes, language, values, customs, and manners. When we examine migration in India, we find that it has significantly contributed to a change in culture. The invasion of the Aryans and Muslims had a significant impact on the culture of the indigenous inhabitants. They adapted to their own beliefs and nearly destroyed the area's preexisting culture. Additionally, the colonial era saw the rise of Christianity, which introduced Christian characteristics into the preexisting culture. These significant changes also affected the art and architecture.

Urbanisation and migration are closely related processes. Migration, both internal and foreign, is a key component of urban dynamics. Although migrants in urban environments are initially inexperienced, they gradually develop the skills necessary for each job segment, allowing them to work in a variety of urban jobs. It comes to the conclusion that one of the key components of urbanisation is migration. The need for essential amenities like power, water, and sanitation as well as for transportation, healthcare, educational institutions, and recreational facilities rises when large numbers of migrants arrive.

2.11 Theories of Migration

In the academic field of migration, the conceptual framework of migration is crucial. A social phenomenon can be described analytically using a variety of theories and concepts in the social sciences. Migration theories offer a range of perspectives to examine the migration process, its effects, causes, and social changes from many theoretical angles.

These generalisations of the rules of migration can be examined as the forerunner of the field's technical explanations. Since then, a number of analytical models—both non-economic and economic—have been created in an effort to clarify the complexities of migration. Economic explanations have dominated systematic scholarly thinking on migration, despite the abundance of theoretical expositions as researchers from other social science fields go into the field of theoretical formulation. The goal of the economic theory of migration is to explain why individuals relocate to another country to live and work (Bodvarsson, 2009, p. 21). The first theoretical paradigm that provides a rationale for labour migration is neoclassical economic theory.

2.11.1 The Neoclassical Migration Theory

The first theoretical framework created to explain labour migration was this one. It considers migration to be the outcome of spatial disparities between the supply and demand for labour. The theory suggests that people migrate from areas with abundant labour in relation to capital stock and other resources, widespread unemployment, and low wages to areas with abundant capital stock, higher demand for workers, and consequently higher wages. These disparities can exist on an international or domestic level. The neoclassical macro migration theories explain migration as a component of economic development, and the migrant as an individual with rational thinking and decision-making skills is given primary priority in the theory. Geographical disparities in the supply and demand of workers, particularly between the urban modern manufacturing sector and the rural traditional agriculture sector, lead to internal migration. According to Harris and Todaro (1970), the choice to migrate should be voluntary and based on a personal, logical

judgement that considers employment prospects and anticipated income disparities. The individual compares the expected present and future costs and returns of migration with the current situation (Sjaastad, 1962). If migration is predicted to provide more revenue than expenses, then it would be reasonable. Return migration appears to be seen as the result of a failed migration experience that did not produce the anticipated benefits, and migration is conceptualised as a permanent change in one's place (Cassarino, 2004, p.255).

The existence of free competition and the absolute market of production factors is the source of the neoclassical migration method, which is founded on important studies conducted in the second half of the 20th century. The hypothesis was initially created to explain labour mobility in the context of economic development. According to this notion, migration occurs both on both at the macro and local levels. Geographical disparities in the supply and demand for labour lead to migration. Differences in income (wages) between the regions of arrival and departure are an indication of migration. It should be mentioned that the wage level must be sufficient to cover the costs of transportation. The neoclassical theory states that studying migration is similar to solving the problem of efficient resource placement, which is why this approach has found practical application in many countries worldwide. However, given the wide variations in income, wages, and welfare levels among nations, this theory was unable to explain why so few people migrate, and it failed to predict the widespread temporary migration involving contract workers. Once more, the theory was unable to explain why certain structurally comparable countries had relatively substantial emigration flows while others do not (ibid, p. 20). These flaws clearly opened the door for the new economics of labour migration, which offered an alternative economic strategy.

At the micro level, this theory's provisions include several conceptual presumptions:

- The reason for the worldwide labour mobility is the disparity in wages between nations.

- Following the elimination of the worldwide pay gap, labour migrations will cease.
- Because different driving forces influence these processes, the human capital streams may occur in opposite directions for high- and low-qualified labour.
- The primary mechanism for international labour flows is the labour market. The impact of other types of markets is significantly less.
- The primary way that national governments can control migration flows is by affecting the labour market.

2.11.2 The New Labour Migration Economics

Oded Stark's study of the new economics of labour migration (Stark, 1991) outperforms the neoclassical theory in a number of ways (Joaquin, 2004, p. 23). One key component of this theory is the role of remittances, which is not included in the neoclassical theory. Migration decision-making, migrant remittance behaviour, and household remittance use might all be included in the theory. According to the argument, migrants leave the country with the intention of temporarily increasing their income before going back home. According to the notion, migrants have a reservation aim in mind, and after this target is met through working overseas for a predetermined amount of time, they eventually return to their home country. Because "the new economics of migration focusses on the household or family, rather than the individual, as relevant decision-making unit," there is an element of extensiveness (Massey et al., 2002, p. 53).

One of the most important components of the migrant household's risk-reduction plan is migration. Diversifying household resources, such as allowing one family member to pursue a high-level education while sending another overseas to work and return money home, is one way to reduce family risk, especially when it comes to the misuse of group and social insurance systems and credit schemes. The new economics of labour migration, according to some analysts, is merely a variation of the neoclassical theory, which it enhances and improves with a number of additions and modifications. The dramatic difference is that the return migration

to the country of origin is seen as "the logical outcome of a calculated strategy, defined at the level of the migrant's household, and resulting from the achievement of goals or targets" (Cassarino, 2004, p.255), and the actor who seeks to enhance its utility is more the family or the household than the individual migrant (Joaquin, 2004, p.22). The rational decision-making of households and individuals is the main focus of the theoretical frameworks of the new economics of labour migration and the neoclassical theory of migration, respectively. However, the movement of individuals from the starting point to the final destination cannot be caused by these supply-side forces alone. Any theoretical explanation must take into consideration the demand side drives since they are equally important. In this context, several justifications rely on the fact that destination nations that draw migrants have two markets.

2.11.3 The Theory of Migration Based on Dual Labour Markets

According to the dual labour market hypothesis, the economic structure of industrialised nations depends on the ongoing need for immigrant workers, which leads to international migration (Piore, 1979). According to the hypothesis, developed regions will have two labour markets. Both primary sector jobs—those with high salaries, good fringe benefits, job security, and opportunities for advancement—and secondary sector jobs—those with low salaries, fewer fringe benefits, insufficient security, and dead-end jobs—are produced by these economies (Briggs, 1993). Jobs in the secondary sector can be regarded as entry-level positions. In this situation, the need for foreign labour is a result of native-born workers' reluctance to accept lower-level positions. Native people's prestige and social standing prevent them from entering such low-paying occupations (Piore, 1979). Instead of increasing salaries, employers turn to low-wage immigrant workers who don't mind their status symbol in a foreign country because their low salary will be many times higher in their own country due to currency conversion. It is difficult for migrants to leave their identity as foreigners once they are in the secondary labour market. This has no bearing whatsoever on the desire of the prospective migrants to

work abroad. From a migrant's point of view, labour is usually asocial—it is only a means to an end.

The dual market theory of labour migration did not delve into the particular of migrant characteristics that would influence migration decisions, despite its considerable success in elucidating the demand-side drivers of movement. The human capital theory of migration, which was developed long before the dual market theory of labour movement and the new economics of labour migration, can somewhat mitigate this drawback.

2.11.4 The Migration Theory of Human Capital

The premise that productive functions depend on an individual's degree of education, skill, and physical capabilities forms the foundation of human capital theory. According to Sjaastad's 1962 human capital theory of migration, migration is an investment that entails present expenses with the expectation of future rewards. Based on his personal human capital—an unquestionable component of wealth—the migrant assesses the advantages and disadvantages. By investing in education, on-the-job training, and occupational and geographic mobility, he can enhance his wealth's future earning potential, even though he typically cannot sell it like he would a farm or machine he owns (Grubel & Scott, 1977).

According to the theory, each person determines the present worth of the anticipated earnings from work in various areas depending on his or her skill set. Without a doubt, migrants will relocate to a place if the anticipated net profits from that area are higher. The potential for job advancement is just as important as the expected revenues from moving to a new location when it comes to migration decisions (Hercog, 2008). Furthermore, a nation's appeal is influenced by its living conditions. If living conditions appear to be positively attractive, migration may occur even in countries with lower earnings (Massey et al., 1993). The inclusion of psychological costs resulting from being away from friends and family, as well as the financial costs of travel and opportunity costs of moving, is a crucial part of this theory. The human capital approach's main contribution is that it emphasises the significance of individual differences in migration decisions in addition to focussing

on aggregate labour market factors like wage and unemployment disparities (Bauer & Zimmermann, 1995). For example, young people and those with greater levels of education are more likely to migrate. Determinants including population densities and distance were also thought to have an impact on migration patterns (Skeldon, 1997). Since the costs and risks of the travel are predicted to increase with distance, the distance between the source and the target is thought to be a determining variable. According to the human capital approach, migrants' skill levels and motivations to engage in destination-specific human capital determine their chances of finding employment in the target nation (Bauer & Zimmermann, 1995).

2.11.5 The Theory of Relative Deprivation

According to the Relative Deprivation theory, people relocate in order to determine their place in relation to other suitable reference groups as well as to optimise their absolute earnings (e.g.a, Stark, 1984, 1991; Stark & Taylor, 1991). The new economics of the migration framework is where this theory of migration got its start (Stark, 1991; Stark & Bloom, 1985). The term "relative deprivation," which refers to lower incomes earned by individuals in comparison to their neighbours, is used in scholarly discourse within this paradigm. People from countries where there is a lot more economic inequality will be more inclined to leave their own country (Stark & Taylor, 1989). People migrate to improve their household's standing in relation to a certain reference group, not necessarily to raise their household's overall income (Bhandari, 2004, p.479). The welfare of the household is impacted by income remittances from migrant household members in two ways: first, they increase the household's absolute income; second, they improve its economic position in comparison to others (Stark & Taylor, 1991). When people in lower income strata see how some groups greatly increase their income through migration, they feel nearly deprived, which leads some of them to migrate. This exacerbates income inequality and makes non-migrants feel more deprived, which encourages more families to migrate (Massey et al., 1998).

There are some similarities between the idea of relative deprivation and the theory of James Duesen Berry used the concept of "relative income" (Duesenberry,

1949) to address the discrepancies in the empirical data regarding consumer behaviour. The idea that relative deprivation in the reference group is a major factor in people moving from one place, particularly rural, to another, most likely urban, is supported by empirical evidence (see Stark & Taylor, 1989). One of the main problems with the ideas that have been examined thus far is that they are unable to explain why people migrate in huge numbers to particular locations whereas areas that are similar in every way do not draw migrants. The "network" theory of migration offers only a limited validation of this phenomenon.

It is highly implausible to attribute the motivation behind migratory movements solely to human attributes such as age, education, and skill level, completely ignoring the expected or relative financial affluence of the potential movers. The relative economic standing of the people who make up the potential mass of migrants should be taken into account in theoretical debates aimed at adjusting for the beginning and maintenance of international migration. In an effort to explain migratory movements along this line, the relative deprivation theory aims to address this specific element.

2.11.6 The Migration Network Theory

Reduced social, economic, and emotional costs of migrating that are compatible with the development of migratory networks are the result of collective causation, according to the network theory of migration. Relationships of kinship, friendship, and common community origin bind migrants, former migrants, and non-migrants in their places of origin and destination (Massey et al., 1998).

According to Munshi (2003), network influences are frequently identified as one of the most significant factors influencing migration at the micro level. People can use the social capital created by network connections to access various financial resources, high-paying jobs abroad, the chance to save money, and the ability to send money home. Remittances help build financial capital and remove the constraints of poverty. If there is not enough money to cover the costs of migration, the desire to migrate does not motivate migration. Through remittances for travel and support at the destination, network influences may help to alleviate this poverty

limitation (Hatton & Williamson, 2009). Additionally, migration encourages the flow of information back from the place of destination to the origin, which makes it easier for subsequent migrants to pass (Lee, 1996).

Since some sort of information about the destination is necessary to attract migrants, the movement of people over odd distances is implausible. The choice of destination country is frequently influenced by the existence of a network of relatives and friends who have already moved to that area. The claim that "the majority of movers move along well-trodden paths which, even if they have not travelled them before themselves, have been traversed earlier by family members and friends" is supported by a number of foreign migration flows, both ancient and contemporary (Hugo, 1994, p.11). This suggests that the establishment of an organised migrant group at a certain location will raise the likelihood of further migration to that location (Appleyard, 1992). It is undeniable from the study of the intellectual underpinnings of migration practices that migration is unique and complex, making it impossible to characterise by a single theory or field.

CHAPTER 3

THE EVOLUTION, MECHANISM AND DYNAMICS OF NITAQAT

3.1 Introduction

Saudi Arabia, the heartland of Islam and a region of immense historical and geopolitical significance, has a rich history that predates the emergence of Islam¹. The historical evolution of Saudi Arabia can be divided into three major periods: Pre-Islamic Arabia and the emergence of Islam, the rise of the Saudi state, and the consolidation of power, as well as the key events and figures that have shaped its modern identity.

Pre-Islamic Arabia, known as the Jahiliyyah (age of ignorance), was characterized by a fragmented tribal society, diverse religious practices, and a flourishing oral culture². Geographically, the Arabian Peninsula was divided into distinct regions, such as the fertile southern areas of Yemen, the desert-dominated central region of Najd, and the prosperous trading centers of Hijaz, including Mecca and Medina. This division influenced the sociopolitical and economic dynamics of the region. (Hourani, 1991)

Economically, the Hijaz region, particularly Mecca, was a bustling hub for trade routes connecting the Mediterranean world with South Asia. Mecca's importance grew further with the establishment of the Kaaba as a religious sanctuary, which attracted pilgrims from across Arabia. Tribes such as the Quraysh held significant power, overseeing the Kaaba and controlling trade in the region.

¹ Located in the centre of the Middle East, Saudi Arabia covers the bulk of the Arabian Peninsula and has a land area of about 2,150,000 km² (830,000 sq mi), making it the fifth-largest country in Asia, the largest in the Middle East, and the 12th-largest in the world.

² Pre-Islamic Arabia, encompassing the Arabian Peninsula and its northern extension, refers to the period before the rise of Islam in the 7th century CE. This era saw a mix of nomadic and settled populations, with some settled communities developing into distinct civilizations. Religion was diverse, including polytheism, with influences from ancient Semitic traditions, and emerging monotheistic beliefs.

This dominance fostered rivalries and alliances among various tribes, which were critical in shaping Arabia's sociopolitical fabric. Religiously, pre-Islamic Arabia was a mosaic of beliefs. Polytheism dominated, with numerous tribal deities, but there were also significant communities of Christians, Jews, and Zoroastrians. This diverse religious landscape set the stage for the transformative emergence of Islam in the 7th century CE.

The rise of Islam began with the prophetic mission of Muhammad ibn Abdullah (c. 570–632 CE), born in Mecca. Raised in the Quraysh tribe, Muhammad's revelations, as recorded in the Quran, challenged the prevailing polytheistic norms and emphasized monotheism, social justice, and communal solidarity. His teachings were met with resistance from Meccan elites, leading to his migration, or Hijra, to Medina in 622 CE. This event marked the beginning of the Islamic calendar and the establishment of the first Islamic state.

Islam rapidly unified the fragmented tribes of Arabia under a shared religious and political identity. By the time of Muhammad's death in 632 CE, Islam had spread across the peninsula, laying the foundations for a global religious and cultural phenomenon. The subsequent caliphates, particularly the Rashidun (632–661 CE) and Umayyads (661–750 CE), extended Islam's reach and integrated Arabia into broader regional networks.

3.2 The Rise of the Saudi State and Its Consolidation of Power

The history of Saudi statehood begins in the 18th century with the alliance between Muhammad ibn Saud, a tribal leader in Diriyah³, and Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab, an Islamic reformer advocating a return to the fundamental tenets of Islam. This partnership, forged in 1744, established the First Saudi State and rooted it in a strict interpretation of Islam known as Wahhabism. The synergy between

³ Muhammad ibn Saud was the tribal leader and founder of the First Saudi State, which originated in the town of Diriyah, near modern-day Riyadh. He formed an alliance with the religious leader Muhammad ibn Abd-al-Wahhab, the founder of the Wahhabi movement, which provided the ideological basis for the expansion of the Saudi dynasty. This alliance, forged in the 18th century, played a crucial role in the establishment of the First Saudi State and the subsequent Saudi dynastic rule.

political ambition and religious ideology became a defining feature of Saudi Arabia's identity. (Lacey, 1981)

The First Saudi State expanded through military campaigns, bringing large swathes of the Arabian Peninsula under its control. However, it faced resistance from the Ottoman Empire, which viewed the Saudis as a threat to their authority. In 1818, the First Saudi State was defeated by Ottoman forces led by Ibrahim Pasha, marking its temporary collapse. The Second Saudi State emerged in 1824 under the leadership of Turki ibn Abdullah, based in Riyadh. Although smaller in scope, it maintained the legacy of Wahhabism and sought to consolidate power in central Arabia. Internal conflicts and external pressures, including rivalries with the Rashidi dynasty, ultimately led to its decline by the late 19th century.

The modern Saudi state, or the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, was founded by Abdulaziz ibn Saud in 1932⁴. Abdulaziz's campaigns united the central Najd region with the Hijaz, home to Islam's holiest cities, Mecca and Medina. This unification was critical in consolidating Saudi rule over a region historically fragmented by tribal loyalties. The discovery of oil in 1938 marked a turning point, transforming Saudi Arabia from a desert kingdom into a global economic powerhouse.

The history of Saudi Arabia has been shaped by pivotal events and influential figures that have defined its political, economic, and cultural trajectory. The alliance between Muhammad ibn Saud and Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab remains a cornerstone of Saudi identity, embedding the kingdom in a framework of Islamic conservatism and political pragmatism. (Bowen, 2008) The unification campaigns of Abdulaziz ibn Saud (known as Ibn Saud) are perhaps the most defining series of events in Saudi history. By employing a combination of military strategy, tribal alliances, and diplomacy, Abdulaziz established control over a diverse and often contentious region. His leadership laid the groundwork for the Saudi monarchy and established the House of Saud as the ruling family.

⁴ Abdulaziz bin Abdul Rahman Al Saud, known in the Western world as Ibn Saud was the founder and first king of Saudi Arabia, reigning from 23 September 1932 until his death in 1953. He had ruled parts of the kingdom since 1902, having previously been Emir, Sultan, and King of Nejd, and King of Hejaz.

The discovery of oil in the Dammam Dome in 1938 by the Arabian American Oil Company (ARAMCO) heralded a new era for Saudi Arabia⁵. The subsequent exploitation of oil reserves transformed the kingdom's economy and international standing. Saudi Arabia became a founding member of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)⁶ in 1960, asserting its influence in global energy markets. Another key figure is King Faisal (r. 1964–1975), who spearheaded modernization efforts while balancing the kingdom's Islamic traditions. Faisal's policies, including economic diversification, educational reform, and foreign policy initiatives, significantly shaped modern Saudi Arabia. His tenure also witnessed the 1973 oil embargo⁷, which underscored Saudi Arabia's strategic importance.

The late 20th and early 21st centuries brought challenges such as the Gulf Wars, the rise of Islamic extremism, and debates over political reform. The 2016 introduction of Vision 2030 under Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman⁸ reflects contemporary efforts to diversify the economy, reduce dependency on oil, and

⁵ Saudi Arabian oil was first discovered by the Americans and British in commercial quantities at Dammam oil well No. 7 in 1938 in what is now modern day Dhahran.

⁶ The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) refers to a group of 12 of the world's major oil-exporting nations. OPEC was founded in 1960 to coordinate the petroleum policies of its members and to provide member states with technical and economic aid. OPEC is a cartel that aims to manage the supply of oil in an effort to set the price of oil on the world market and avoid fluctuations that might affect the economies of both producing and purchasing countries. Countries that belong to OPEC include Algeria, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, and Venezuela.

⁷ The 1973 oil embargo was a significant event where Arab members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) imposed a ban on oil exports to the United States and other Western nations in response to their support for Israel during the Yom Kippur War. This action led to a sharp increase in oil prices and a major energy crisis, impacting global economies and politics

⁸ Vision 2030 is a blueprint that is diversifying the economy, empowering citizens, creating a vibrant environment for both local and international investors, and establishing Saudi Arabia as a global leader.

The Vision is designed to unfold in stages, each lasting five years and building on the last. The first phase set the foundation, implementing structural and comprehensive reforms in the public sector, the economy, and society. The second phase of Vision 2030 has accelerated efforts, providing an enhanced focus on strategies, as well as further investments in key sectors and ambitious projects. This has yielded tangible results across the country. The third phase will focus on sustaining the transformation's impact and leveraging new growth opportunities.

promote social changes while navigating the complex dynamics of tradition and modernity. (Al-Rasheed, 2010)

3.3 Oil Boom and Economic Transformation in Saudi Arabia

The discovery of oil in Saudi Arabia marked a pivotal turning point in the kingdom's history, fundamentally altering its economic landscape, government policies, and social fabric. This transformation from a largely agrarian and tribal society to a global economic powerhouse has been driven by strategic utilization of oil revenues, comprehensive government policies, and significant social and cultural changes. The discovery of oil in Saudi Arabia is a cornerstone event that reshaped not only the kingdom's economy but also its position on the global stage. The journey began in the early 20th century, with exploratory efforts led by the Standard Oil Company of California (SOCAL), later known as ARAMCO (Arabian American Oil Company).

Initially, oil exports were modest, but the geopolitical significance of oil surged during and after World War II. The United States and other Western nations recognized the strategic importance of Saudi oil, leading to increased investment and infrastructure development. By the 1950s, Saudi Arabia had become a key player in global oil markets, and oil revenues began to flow significantly into the kingdom's coffers⁹. (Lacey, 1981) The impact on the Saudi economy was profound. Oil revenues provided the financial foundation for rapid modernization and development. Infrastructure projects, such as roads, airports, and ports, were undertaken to support both domestic needs and international trade. The construction of the Trans-Arabian Pipeline (Tapline)¹⁰ in the 1950s facilitated the export of oil to

⁹ In 1950, Saudi Arabia's presence in the oil market was significant, marked by the signing of a 50/50 profit-sharing agreement with the Arabian American Oil Company (Aramco), increasing the government's share of oil revenues. The Trans-Arabian Pipeline (Tapline), transporting oil from Saudi Arabia to Lebanon, was also completed in 1950. By the 1950s, Saudi Arabia had become the world's largest oil exporter, surpassing Venezuela.

¹⁰ The Trans-Arabian Pipeline (Tapline), was an oil pipeline from Qaisumah in Saudi Arabia to Sidon in Lebanon, active 1950–1976. In its heyday, it was an important factor in the global trade of petroleum, as well as in American–Middle Eastern political relations, while locally helping with the economic development of Lebanon. Tapline was the second long distance oil pipeline built in the Middle East outside of Iran.

the Mediterranean, enhancing Saudi Arabia's role in the global energy supply chain. (Bowen, 2008)

Oil wealth also enabled substantial investments in the public sector. The government expanded its capacity in education, healthcare, and public services, aiming to improve the quality of life for its citizens. This period saw the establishment of universities, hospitals, and other critical institutions that laid the groundwork for a more educated and healthier population. Moreover, the oil boom spurred the growth of a robust private sector. While the public sector remained dominant, private enterprises in construction, manufacturing, and services began to emerge, driven by both domestic demand and export opportunities. This diversification, albeit limited initially, set the stage for more comprehensive economic reforms in subsequent decades.

The influx of oil revenues also had significant macroeconomic effects. It facilitated the accumulation of substantial foreign exchange reserves, providing a buffer against global economic fluctuations and enabling strategic investments abroad. Additionally, oil wealth contributed to the stabilization of the Saudi riyal, fostering economic stability and investor confidence. However, the reliance on oil also posed challenges. The economy became heavily dependent on volatile oil prices, making it susceptible to global market fluctuations. This dependency underscored the need for economic diversification, a goal that the Saudi leadership has pursued with varying degrees of success over the years. (Bowen, 2008)

3.4 Government Policies and Strategies for Oil Revenue Utilization

The effective utilization of oil revenues has been central to Saudi Arabia's economic strategy since the discovery of oil. The Saudi government has implemented a series of policies and strategies aimed at maximizing the benefits of oil wealth, ensuring sustainable development, and mitigating the risks associated with oil dependency. One of the earliest and most significant policies was the establishment of ARAMCO in 1933, a joint venture between Saudi Arabia and American oil companies. ARAMCO played a crucial role in managing oil production and revenues, ensuring that the kingdom could capitalize on its natural

resources effectively. The nationalization of ARAMCO began in the 1970s, culminating in full Saudi ownership by the early 1980s. This transition was pivotal in allowing the Saudi government greater control over oil revenues and investment decisions. (Lacey, 1981)

The 1973 oil embargo highlighted the strategic importance of oil and reinforced the necessity of robust management of oil resources. In response, the Saudi government implemented policies to increase domestic oil production and diversify export markets. This period also saw the establishment of the Saudi Arabian Oil Company (Saudi Aramco) as a fully state-owned entity, enhancing the government's capacity to manage and allocate oil revenues. (Bowen, 2008) To manage the substantial influx of oil revenues, Saudi Arabia created the Public Investment Fund (PIF)¹¹, which serves as the kingdom's sovereign wealth fund. The PIF is tasked with investing oil revenues both domestically and internationally, promoting economic diversification, and ensuring long-term financial stability. (Al-Rasheed, 2010) The PIF has funded major infrastructure projects, invested in global markets, and supported strategic industries such as technology and renewable energy. (PIF, 2024)

The government also pursued economic diversification through the implementation of the Five-Year Plans, beginning in the 1970s. These plans aimed to reduce the kingdom's dependence on oil by developing other sectors, including manufacturing, tourism, and finance. Investments in education and workforce development were prioritized to create a skilled labour force capable of supporting a diversified economy. In the 21st century, Vision 2030, launched by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in 2016, represents the most ambitious and comprehensive strategy for oil revenue utilization. Vision 2030 focuses on diversifying the economy, reducing oil dependency, and fostering sustainable growth. Key initiatives under Vision 2030 include the development of NEOM, a futuristic city aimed at

¹¹ The Public Investment Fund is the sovereign wealth fund of Saudi Arabia. It is among the largest sovereign wealth funds in the world with total estimated assets of US\$925 billion. It was created in 1971 for the purpose of investing funds on behalf of the Government of Saudi Arabia. The wealth fund is controlled by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, Saudi Arabia's de facto ruler since 2015.

attracting global investment and innovation, and the expansion of the Privatization Program, which seeks to privatize various state-owned enterprises to stimulate economic efficiency and growth. (Vision 2030, 2024)

Another critical aspect of Saudi government policy has been the management of oil prices and production levels. As a leading member of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), Saudi Arabia has leveraged its position to influence global oil prices and stabilize the market. The kingdom's strategic reserves and production adjustments have been instrumental in responding to global supply and demand fluctuations, ensuring steady revenue streams. (OPEC, 2024) Additionally, the Saudi government has focused on developing infrastructure to support economic growth. Investments in transportation, telecommunications, and energy infrastructure have facilitated both domestic development and international trade. The expansion of the King Abdullah Economic City (KAEC)¹² and the Red Sea Project are examples of large-scale initiatives designed to boost economic activity and attract foreign investment. (Lacey, 1981)

Fiscal policies have also been tailored to manage oil revenues prudently. The establishment of sovereign wealth funds, fiscal stabilization mechanisms, and investment in non-oil sectors are part of a comprehensive approach to ensuring economic resilience. These policies aim to create a balanced and sustainable economic framework that can withstand oil price volatility and support long-term growth. (Al-Rasheed, 2010)

3.5 Social and Cultural Changes

The rapid economic growth fuelled by oil wealth has precipitated significant social and cultural transformations in Saudi Arabia. These changes have affected various aspects of Saudi society, including education, gender roles, urbanization, and cultural expression. One of the most notable changes has been the dramatic improvement in education and healthcare. Oil revenues enabled the establishment of

¹² With a total development area of 173 km² (66.8 sq mi), the city is located along the coast of the Red Sea, around 40 km south of Rabigh city and 100 km north of Jeddah, the commercial hub of Saudi Arabia. The total cost of the city is around SR 207 billion.

a comprehensive education system, with investments in primary, secondary, and higher education institutions. The creation of universities such as King Saud University¹³ and King Abdulaziz University¹⁴ has produced a more educated populace, fostering a skilled workforce necessary for economic diversification. Scholarships and educational exchanges have also facilitated the acquisition of international expertise, contributing to the development of various professional fields within Saudi Arabia. (Bowen, 2008)

Healthcare has similarly benefited from oil wealth, with the construction of modern hospitals and clinics, the training of medical professionals, and the implementation of public health programs. The establishment of the Ministry of Health and the expansion of healthcare infrastructure have significantly improved public health outcomes and life expectancy. Economic prosperity has also driven substantial urbanization. Cities like Riyadh, Jeddah, and Dammam have expanded rapidly, transforming from small towns into sprawling metropolitan centers. Urbanization has led to the development of modern infrastructure, including highways, public transportation systems, and high-rise buildings. This shift has attracted a diverse population from different parts of the country and abroad, fostering a more cosmopolitan urban culture. (Hourani, 1991)

With urbanization, traditional lifestyles have been juxtaposed with modernity, creating a dynamic and sometimes contentious cultural environment. The influx of expatriate workers has introduced new cultural influences, contributing to a more diverse and interconnected society. However, this has also sparked debates over cultural preservation and the balance between modernization and maintaining traditional values. Gender roles have undergone significant evolution in response to

¹³ King Saud University is a public university in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Established in 1957 by King Saud bin Abdulaziz to address the country's skilled worker shortage, it is the first university in Saudi Arabia. It was converted into an independent non-profit academic institution in 2023. The student body of KSU today consists of 40,000 students, 7% of which are international.

¹⁴ King Abdulaziz University (KAU) is a public research university in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Established in 1967 as a private university by a group of businessmen. It was converted into a public university by King Faisal in 1974. With over 117,096 students in 2022, it is the largest university in the country. Located in south Jeddah, the university is the center of teaching and research of the city.

economic growth. The modernization of the economy has created new opportunities for women in education and the workforce. Initiatives to increase female participation in various sectors have been implemented, although progress has been gradual and remains subject to cultural and societal constraints. Recent reforms, such as lifting the ban on women driving and increasing female representation in the workforce, reflect ongoing changes in gender dynamics. (Vision 2030, 2024)

The oil boom has also influenced cultural expression and media. Increased wealth has funded the arts, cinema, and literature, allowing for a flourishing of cultural activities. However, cultural expression is often regulated to align with Islamic and national values, leading to a unique blend of modern and traditional influences. The expansion of media outlets, including television, radio, and digital platforms, has played a significant role in shaping public opinion and cultural norms. Religious and social institutions have adapted to the changing economic landscape. The role of Islam remains central to Saudi identity, and religious authorities have sought to address contemporary issues through religious discourse. The interplay between religious conservatism and the pressures of modernization creates a complex social dynamic, influencing everything from dress codes to public behaviour. (Al-Rasheed, 2010)

Economic growth has also led to increased social mobility. The rise of a wealthy elite, coupled with the expansion of the middle class, has created new social hierarchies and opportunities. Access to luxury goods, international travel, and higher education abroad has become more widespread, contributing to a consumer-oriented society. However, the rapid pace of change has also introduced social challenges. Income inequality, unemployment among youth, and the pressure to balance modern aspirations with traditional values are ongoing issues. The government's efforts to address these challenges through social policies and economic reforms are crucial in managing the societal impacts of economic transformation. (Vision 2030, 2024)

3.6 Labour Migration and Dependency in Saudi Arabia

Labour migration has been a cornerstone of Saudi Arabia's socio-economic development since the discovery of oil. The rapid transformation of the kingdom from a tribal, agrarian society to a global economic powerhouse necessitated an extensive labour force beyond the capacity of its domestic population. Saudi Arabia's need for foreign labour arose from the kingdom's rapid economic growth, primarily fuelled by the oil boom of the mid-20th century. The discovery of oil in 1938 and the subsequent expansion of the energy sector created unprecedented economic opportunities, but the country's sparse population and underdeveloped infrastructure posed significant challenges. The influx of oil revenues during the 1950s and 1960s enabled large-scale industrial and infrastructural projects, including the construction of roads, ports, and oil refineries. However, Saudi Arabia's native population was predominantly engaged in agriculture and lacked the technical skills and expertise required for these projects. This skill gap created an urgent need for foreign workers. (Lacey, 1981)

Government-led modernization initiatives further amplified the demand for labour. Ambitious programs such as the Five-Year Development Plans, introduced in 1970, prioritized industrialization, urbanization, and social development. These initiatives required not only skilled professionals to manage complex industries but also unskilled labourers to carry out construction and maintenance work. The limited domestic workforce was insufficient to meet these demands, compelling the government to look beyond its borders. Additionally, Saudi Arabia's labour market dynamics underscored the necessity for foreign labour. The kingdom's relatively small working-age population could not sustain the labour needs of a rapidly growing economy. Furthermore, cultural norms and societal expectations limited the participation of certain demographic groups, such as women, in the workforce. (Al-Rasheed, 2010)

The growing oil industry also created opportunities for Saudis in higher-paying managerial and administrative roles, leading to a preference among the local population for white-collar jobs. This phenomenon, known as "Saudi preference,"

further emphasized the need for foreign workers to fill manual and technical positions. The geopolitical context of the 20th century played a role in shaping Saudi Arabia's labour migration policies. The kingdom's strategic partnerships with Western nations, particularly the United States, facilitated the recruitment of expatriate labour, including skilled engineers and technicians from Europe and North America. (Bowen, 2008) However, as demand outpaced supply, Saudi Arabia increasingly turned to regional and global labour markets, particularly in Asia and Africa.

The recruitment of foreign labour has been a deliberate and structured process in Saudi Arabia, facilitated by both governmental policies and private enterprises. The kingdom's reliance on migrant workers spans multiple sectors, with a significant proportion hailing from South Asia. Saudi Arabia's labour migration strategy initially focused on neighboring Arab countries. Workers from Yemen, Egypt, and Sudan formed the bulk of the early migrant labour force due to cultural and linguistic similarities. However, as the demand for labour intensified during the 1970s and 1980s, Saudi Arabia expanded its recruitment efforts to include workers from South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Africa.

South Asia quickly became a critical source of labour for Saudi Arabia. Countries such as India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka provided a steady supply of workers across various skill levels. The preference for South Asian workers was driven by several factors, including their willingness to accept lower wages, adaptability to harsh working conditions, and relatively easy integration into Saudi Arabia's hierarchical labour system. The recruitment process was facilitated by formal agreements between Saudi Arabia and labour-sending countries. These agreements often outlined the terms of employment, including wages, working hours, and living conditions. Private recruitment agencies played a crucial role in mediating between employers and workers, although their practices have sometimes been criticized for exploitative behaviour. (ILO, 2017)

Saudi Arabia's kafala system, a sponsorship-based employment framework, governs the recruitment and employment of foreign workers. Under this system,

migrant workers are tied to their employers, who control their legal status and mobility within the country. While the kafala system has enabled large-scale labour migration, it has also been criticized for perpetuating dependency and limiting workers' rights. The sectors employing South Asian workers are diverse, ranging from construction and domestic work to healthcare and engineering. Construction projects, in particular, have heavily relied on South Asian labour, with workers employed on mega-projects such as the King Fahd Causeway and the expansion of the Grand Mosque in Mecca. Domestic work is another significant area, with women from South Asia often employed as housemaids and caregivers. (ILO, 2017)

The contributions of South Asian workers to Saudi Arabia's economy are substantial. They have played a key role in building the kingdom's infrastructure, supporting its households, and sustaining its industries. Their remittances also contribute significantly to the economies of their home countries, creating a mutually beneficial economic relationship. (World Bank, 2020) Despite their critical role, South Asian workers often face challenges, including exploitative working conditions, low wages, and limited access to legal protection. These issues have prompted calls for labour reforms and greater oversight of recruitment practices. (Human Rights Watch, 2008)

3.7 Reliance on Foreign Labour

Saudi Arabia's increasing reliance on foreign labour stems from persistent labour shortages and the growing complexity of its economy. As the kingdom continues to diversify its economy and implement large-scale projects under Vision 2030, the demand for foreign labour remains critical. The labour shortages in Saudi Arabia are partly demographic. With a young population and a high unemployment rate among nationals, particularly women, the kingdom faces challenges in aligning its labour market with its development needs. Additionally, many Saudis prefer employment in the public sector, which offers higher wages and job security, leaving private sector roles largely unfilled. (Al-Rasheed, 2010)

Foreign workers have become indispensable in addressing these shortages. They constitute a significant portion of the workforce in sectors such as

construction, healthcare, and retail. For instance, the healthcare sector relies heavily on expatriate doctors, nurses, and technicians, with foreign professionals forming the backbone of the kingdom's medical services. The increasing reliance on foreign labour has also been driven by the scale and ambition of Saudi Arabia's development projects. Initiatives such as NEOM, a futuristic city, and the Red Sea Project require specialized expertise and a vast workforce, much of which is sourced internationally. (Vision 2030, 2024) These projects highlight the kingdom's dependency on foreign labour for achieving its economic diversification goals.

However, this reliance on foreign labour has economic and social implications. The remittance outflows to labour-sending countries represent a significant economic cost, while the demographic imbalance between nationals and expatriates raises questions about social cohesion and cultural integration. The Saudi government has sought to address these challenges through initiatives such as Saudization (Nitaqat), which aims to increase the employment of nationals in the private sector. While Saudization has had some success, its implementation has been uneven, and many sectors continue to rely heavily on foreign labour.

3.8 The Process of Saudization

Saudization, known as *Nitaqat* in Arabic, is a strategic initiative launched by the Saudi government to address the kingdom's dependency on foreign labour and promote the integration of Saudi nationals into the workforce. This policy reflects the broader objectives of achieving economic sustainability, reducing unemployment, and preparing Saudi citizens for an increasingly competitive global economy. Since the discovery of oil, Saudi Arabia has experienced rapid economic transformation, heavily reliant on an expatriate workforce. Recognizing the socio-economic risks of such dependency, the government initiated Saudization in the 1990s as a policy framework to promote employment opportunities for Saudi citizens. (Hertog, 2010) These initiatives gained significant momentum under Vision 2030, a comprehensive strategy for economic diversification and modernization.

Key among the initiatives was the introduction of the *Nitaqat* system in 2011, which categorized companies based on the percentage of Saudi employees

they hired. (MHRSD, 2020) Under this system, businesses were classified into four bands: Platinum (highest compliance), Green (acceptable compliance), Yellow, and Red (non-compliance). Companies in the lower bands faced restrictions on hiring expatriates and renewing work permits, incentivizing the employment of Saudi nationals. To prepare Saudis for the labour market, the government established training and educational programs. The Human Resources Development Fund (HRDF), founded in 2000, provided financial support to companies hiring Saudi workers and offered training initiatives tailored to industry needs. Similarly, institutions like the Technical and Vocational Training Corporation (TVTC) have played a pivotal role in equipping Saudi youth with technical skills demanded in the private sector. Another critical initiative was the *Hafiz* program, introduced in 2011, which offered unemployment benefits and career training to job-seeking Saudis. This program aimed to reduce the financial barriers preventing Saudis from entering the workforce. Additionally, the government established online platforms, such as *Taqat*, to connect job seekers with employers, facilitating transparency and accessibility in the labour market. (Al-Rasheed, 2010)

In sectors with historically low Saudi participation, such as retail and hospitality, the government introduced localized Saudization policies. For instance, restrictions were placed on expatriates working in specific jobs, reserving them exclusively for Saudi citizens. These sectoral initiatives were complemented by wage subsidies and other incentives to make private-sector jobs more attractive to Saudi nationals. Despite these efforts, challenges persisted, including cultural attitudes toward certain professions, a preference for public-sector employment, and resistance from businesses concerned about productivity and costs. Nonetheless, government initiatives have laid the groundwork for a gradual shift in workforce dynamics, highlighting the long-term commitment to integrating Saudis into the private sector.

The objectives of Saudization align closely with Saudi Arabia's socio-economic priorities, particularly as articulated in Vision 2030. These goals include reducing unemployment, enhancing productivity, and fostering economic

diversification. Reducing unemployment among Saudi nationals has been a primary driver of Saudization. By the late 20th century, unemployment rates among Saudis had become a pressing concern, particularly among youth and women. (Hertog, 2010) The private sector, dominated by expatriate workers, offered limited opportunities for Saudis, contributing to economic inequality and social dissatisfaction. Saudization aims to bridge this gap by mandating employment quotas and creating pathways for Saudis to enter the private-sector workforce.

Enhancing productivity is another critical objective. Historically, many expatriate workers in Saudi Arabia have been employed in low-skill, labour-intensive roles, limiting opportunities for technological advancement and innovation. By integrating a skilled Saudi workforce into key industries, the government seeks to raise productivity levels and foster a culture of innovation. Initiatives such as the *Tamheer* program, which provides on-the-job training for Saudi graduates, reflect this focus on capacity building. Promoting economic diversification is a cornerstone of Vision 2030 and a fundamental goal of Saudization. Saudi Arabia's overreliance on oil revenues has long been identified as a structural weakness in its economy. Saudization policies aim to redirect labour resources toward emerging sectors such as tourism, renewable energy, and technology, reducing dependence on oil and building a more resilient economy. Despite these ambitious goals, the implementation of Saudization faces several challenges, including resistance from businesses concerned about cost implications, mismatches between skills and job requirements, and societal attitudes toward certain professions. Nonetheless, the government's commitment to these objectives underscores its vision for a sustainable and inclusive economy. (Hertog, 2010)

3.9 Challenges in Implementing Early Saudization Policies

Quotas and regulations for foreign workers form the backbone of Saudization policies. By mandating specific employment targets for Saudi nationals across industries, these regulations aim to create opportunities for local workers while reducing the kingdom's dependency on expatriates. However, the implementation of these policies has faced significant challenges. The *Nitaqat*

system, introduced in 2011, set clear quotas for Saudi employment based on company size and sector. For example, small businesses in the retail sector were required to employ at least 20% Saudis, while larger corporations faced higher quotas. Non-compliance resulted in penalties, including restrictions on renewing work permits for expatriates. (Al-Asfour, 2014) While effective in enforcing participation, these regulations often placed a financial burden on businesses, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

The kafala system, which ties expatriates to their employers, has also influenced Saudization efforts. While designed to regulate foreign labour, it has been criticized for limiting worker mobility and fostering exploitative practices. Reforms to the kafala system, initiated in 2021, aim to address these issues by granting expatriates greater flexibility, but challenges persist. One of the most significant challenges in early Saudization policies was the mismatch between the skills of Saudi job seekers and the demands of the private sector. Many employers expressed concerns about the productivity and preparedness of Saudi workers, citing gaps in technical expertise and work ethic. (Hertog, 2010) This skills gap has led to reliance on expatriates in critical roles, even as Saudization quotas remain in place.

Cultural attitudes toward certain professions also posed barriers to early Saudization. Jobs in fields such as construction, retail, and domestic work were often viewed as unsuitable for Saudi nationals, limiting their participation in these sectors. (Lacey, 1981) Additionally, the preference for public-sector employment, which offered higher wages and greater job security, further hindered the success of private-sector Saudization efforts. Economic considerations also shaped the implementation of early Saudization policies. Businesses often found it more cost-effective to hire expatriates, who accepted lower wages and fewer benefits than Saudi workers. This created resistance to hiring quotas, particularly among SMEs operating on tight budgets.

The successful implementation of Saudization policies has been pivotal in reducing Saudi Arabia's reliance on foreign labour and integrating Saudi nationals into the workforce. While the government has launched numerous initiatives and

programs to encourage Saudization, the process has encountered significant challenges. To address the challenges of high unemployment and dependency on expatriate labour, the Saudi government has implemented various initiatives and programs aimed at encouraging Saudization. These measures are designed to promote the hiring of Saudi nationals across various industries while equipping them with the necessary skills for the private-sector workforce. (MHRSD, 2020)

The Nitaqat program, launched in 2011, is one of the most significant government initiatives aimed at promoting Saudization. Under this system, businesses are categorized into Platinum, Green, Yellow, or Red bands based on the percentage of Saudi nationals in their workforce. Companies in the Platinum and Green bands are incentivized through benefits such as expedited visa processing and greater flexibility in hiring foreign workers, while those in the Yellow and Red bands face restrictions on hiring and renewing work permits for expatriates. Educational and vocational training programs are another cornerstone of Saudization. The Technical and Vocational Training Corporation (TVTC) has been instrumental in preparing Saudi workers for technical roles in industries such as manufacturing, construction, and information technology. Similarly, the Human Resources Development Fund (HRDF) supports businesses by subsidizing the wages of Saudi employees and offering specialized training programs. These initiatives aim to bridge the skills gap that has historically hindered the employment of Saudis in the private sector. (Hertog, 2010)

Sector-specific Saudization initiatives have also been implemented to target industries with high reliance on expatriates. For example, in retail, hospitality, and telecommunications, certain job categories have been restricted to Saudi nationals. This approach ensures that sectors with significant employment potential are accessible to local workers. (Vision 2030, 2024) Additionally, the government has introduced financial incentives to encourage private-sector employers to hire Saudis. These include tax rebates, wage subsidies, and grants for companies that exceed Saudization targets. Programs such as Tamheer, which offers on-the-job training to

Saudi graduates, further incentivize private-sector participation by addressing concerns about worker readiness. (HRDF, 2021)

Despite its well-structured initiatives, the Saudization policy has encountered significant hurdles. These challenges stem from resistance among employers, societal attitudes toward certain professions, and the lack of skilled Saudi workers prepared for private-sector employment. One of the primary challenges is resistance from employers in the private sector, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Many employers prefer hiring expatriates due to their lower wage demands, perceived higher productivity, and fewer benefits compared to Saudi workers. Additionally, the costs associated with training Saudi workers and adapting to Saudization quotas have created financial strain for businesses operating on tight margins. (Hertog, 2010)

The skills mismatch between Saudi workers and the demands of the private sector has further complicated the implementation of Saudization. While the Saudi education system has made strides in producing a skilled workforce, many employers still cite deficiencies in technical expertise and soft skills among Saudi graduates. This gap has limited the ability of Saudis to fill roles traditionally occupied by expatriates, particularly in technical and specialized fields. (World Bank, 2020) Cultural attitudes have also played a role in hindering Saudization efforts. Historically, certain professions, such as construction, retail, and domestic work, have been viewed as unsuitable for Saudi nationals, limiting their participation in these sectors. (Al-Asfour, 2014) Furthermore, the societal preference for public-sector employment, which offers higher wages and greater job security, has discouraged Saudis from pursuing opportunities in the private sector. Gender dynamics in the Saudi labour market have presented additional challenges. While there has been significant progress in integrating women into the workforce, societal norms and limited access to certain professions have restricted their full participation. Addressing these barriers remains a critical component of achieving comprehensive Saudization.

Quotas and regulations for foreign workers serve as a fundamental aspect of Saudization, ensuring that Saudi nationals are prioritized in hiring decisions. However, implementing these quotas and ensuring compliance have posed significant challenges. The Nitaqat system has been the primary mechanism for enforcing employment quotas. By mandating specific percentages of Saudi nationals across industries, the system has incentivized private-sector employers to hire locally. However, strict enforcement has occasionally led to unintended consequences, such as businesses outsourcing certain operations to avoid compliance costs. (Hertog, 2010)

Monitoring compliance with Saudization quotas has been a complex task, given the large number of private-sector businesses in Saudi Arabia. Some companies have resorted to fraudulent practices, such as hiring Saudi nationals on paper to meet quotas while continuing to employ expatriates. Strengthening monitoring mechanisms remains critical to addressing these loopholes. The Saudi government has implemented various enforcement measures to ensure compliance with Saudization policies. These include financial penalties for non-compliant businesses, restrictions on renewing work permits for expatriates, and incentives for companies that exceed Saudization targets. Additionally, online platforms such as Taqat have improved transparency by connecting job seekers with employers and tracking hiring patterns. (Al-Rasheed, 2010)

Recent reforms, such as the easing of the kafala system, aim to address long-standing issues related to expatriate worker rights while ensuring that Saudization objectives are met. These measures reflect the government's commitment to balancing the needs of the labour market with the goal of creating a sustainable workforce. The implementation of Saudization policies has had profound implications for the labour market in Saudi Arabia. Designed to increase employment opportunities for Saudi nationals and reduce the country's reliance on expatriate labour, these policies have reshaped employment patterns, influenced wage structures, and altered the composition of the workforce. One of the primary objectives of Saudization is to create employment opportunities for Saudi nationals,

particularly in the private sector. Historically, Saudi workers have favored public-sector jobs due to their higher wages, greater job security, and attractive benefits. However, as the public sector reached saturation, the government redirected its focus to increasing Saudi participation in the private sector. (ILO, 2017)

The introduction of the *Nitaqat* program in 2011 marked a significant turning point in increasing Saudi employment in the private sector. By categorizing companies based on their compliance with Saudization quotas and providing incentives for those meeting or exceeding targets, the program has led to notable improvements in private-sector employment rates for Saudi workers. Data from the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development (MHRSD) show a steady rise in Saudi employment rates across industries such as retail, telecommunications, and banking since the implementation of *Nitaqat*. (MHRSD, 2020) Certain sectors have seen a significant influx of Saudi workers due to sector-specific Saudization policies. For instance, jobs in retail and telecommunications have been reserved exclusively for Saudi nationals. (Al-Asfour, 2014) Similarly, industries like tourism, bolstered by the government's Vision 2030 goals, have emerged as key employers for Saudi workers. Saudization has had a pronounced impact on youth employment, with programs like *Tamheer* offering job training for young graduates to prepare them for private-sector roles. Additionally, the inclusion of women in the workforce has been a critical development. Reforms aimed at empowering women through education, training, and relaxed workplace regulations have led to a significant increase in female participation in the labour market. (World Bank, 2020)

3.10 Impact on Wages and Working Conditions

The implementation of Saudization has had a profound effect on wage structures and working conditions in Saudi Arabia, with mixed outcomes for Saudi and expatriate workers. The enforcement of Saudization quotas has resulted in rising wages for Saudi workers in the private sector. Employers seeking to comply with Saudization policies have offered competitive salaries and benefits to attract Saudi talent. This trend is particularly evident in industries such as banking and

telecommunications, where Saudis hold a significant proportion of middle- and upper-management roles. (Hertog, 2010)

While Saudization has improved wages for Saudi workers, it has also widened the wage gap between Saudis and expatriates. Expatriates, who often occupy lower-tier jobs, are generally paid less and receive fewer benefits compared to their Saudi counterparts. This disparity has fuelled debates about the equity of labour market practices and the social implications of such wage differentials. Saudization has also led to improvements in working conditions, as the government has mandated stricter labour regulations to protect Saudi workers. (Human Rights Watch, 2008) These include measures to ensure fair treatment, timely payment of wages, and provisions for health and safety standards. The policies have, however, adversely affected some expatriates, particularly those in lower-skilled roles. Many expatriates have faced job losses due to stricter enforcement of Saudization quotas and higher fees for work permits. (World Bank, 2020) These measures, while beneficial for Saudi workers, have added to the financial burden on expatriates and their employers.

Saudization has led to a significant transformation in the composition of the Saudi workforce, characterized by increased participation of Saudi nationals, reduced dependency on expatriates, and greater diversity in labour market demographics. The implementation of Saudization policies has substantially increased the number of Saudi nationals in the workforce, particularly in the private sector. This shift has been most evident in urban centers, where job opportunities in retail, hospitality, and banking have grown significantly. The enforcement of stricter regulations on foreign workers has resulted in a notable decline in the expatriate workforce. While this aligns with the goals of Saudization, it has also created labour shortages in industries traditionally reliant on expatriates, such as construction and domestic services. Saudization has contributed to greater gender diversity in the workforce, with increasing numbers of women entering traditionally male-dominated fields. This trend reflects broader societal changes and the government's efforts to empower women through initiatives under Vision 2030. Despite these

changes, the process of restructuring the workforce has faced challenges. Skill gaps among Saudi workers, employer reluctance to hire Saudis for certain roles, and the social stigma associated with specific professions have limited the effectiveness of Saudization in achieving a balanced labour market. (Lacey, 1981)

3.11 Evolution, Mechanism, and Dynamics of Nitaqat

The Nitaqat program is a cornerstone initiative in Saudi Arabia's labour reform policies, designed to address challenges associated with Saudization and foster greater participation of Saudi nationals in the workforce. Introduced in 2011, Nitaqat represented a significant evolution in the government's approach to workforce localization, combining incentives, enforcement mechanisms, and quotas to achieve its objectives. The push for Saudization emerged in the late 20th century as the Kingdom sought to reduce its dependence on expatriate labour. By the early 2000s, the labour market in Saudi Arabia was characterized by a significant imbalance: while Saudis predominantly occupied public-sector roles, the private sector remained heavily reliant on low-cost expatriate labour. Despite earlier Saudization policies, such as job reservations and financial incentives for hiring Saudis, these measures failed to produce substantial results due to employer resistance and a lack of skilled Saudi workers. (Al-Asfour, 2014)

Several factors necessitated a more robust policy framework. First, rising unemployment among Saudi nationals, particularly among youth, created social and economic pressures. Second, economic diversification under Vision 2030 called for a private sector that could integrate Saudi talent across diverse industries. Finally, public-sector budget constraints limited the government's ability to continue absorbing new workers, necessitating a shift in focus toward private-sector employment. In response to these challenges, the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development (MHRSD) launched the Nitaqat program in 2011. Unlike earlier policies, Nitaqat introduced a comprehensive, data-driven approach to workforce localization, aiming to systematically increase Saudi participation in the private sector while addressing employer concerns through flexible compliance mechanisms.

The Nitaqat program was designed to achieve several interconnected goals, the primary being to increase the proportion of Saudi employees in private-sector roles. It aimed to balance workforce localization with economic growth, ensuring that Saudization did not impose excessive burdens on businesses. Additionally, Nitaqat sought to diversify employment opportunities for Saudi nationals, targeting industries traditionally dominated by expatriates. (Al-Rasheed, 2010) Nitaqat divides companies into categories based on their compliance with Saudization quotas, such as Platinum, Green, Yellow, and Red. Companies in the Platinum and Green categories are recognized for meeting or exceeding quotas, while those in the Yellow and Red categories face penalties. The program assigns Saudization targets based on industry and company size, recognizing that different sectors have varying capacities for workforce localization. For instance, quotas for sectors like telecommunications and retail are higher than those for construction, reflecting the differing skill levels and job roles. (HRDF, 2021)

Compliant companies receive benefits such as expedited government services and access to expatriate visas, while non-compliant companies face restrictions on renewing work permits for expatriates. Nitaqat employs a sophisticated data system to track compliance and provide real-time feedback to employers. This monitoring mechanism ensures transparency and accountability in implementation. Complementary initiatives, such as job training and wage subsidies, are integral to Nitaqat. Programs like *Tamheer* offer young Saudis skill development opportunities to enhance their employability.

Nitaqat has significantly altered the composition of the Saudi workforce by encouraging the hiring of Saudis across diverse industries. Sectors such as retail, banking, and telecommunications have seen increased Saudi representation due to sector-specific Saudization targets. The program has also influenced the distribution of Saudi workers across job categories. While earlier Saudization efforts focused on administrative roles, Nitaqat expanded its scope to include technical and vocational positions. For instance, job roles in sales, customer service, and IT have seen significant Saudi participation. Nitaqat's quota system is flexible, allowing for

periodic adjustments based on market conditions and feedback from employers. This adaptability ensures that the program remains relevant and effective in achieving its goals. Despite its successes, Nitaqat has faced challenges in restructuring the workforce. Skill gaps among Saudi workers and employer resistance to hiring Saudis for certain roles remain significant obstacles. Additionally, the preference for public-sector jobs continues to limit the private sector's ability to attract Saudi talent. (Lacey, 1981)

The Nitaqat program uses a dynamic point system to categorize businesses based on their compliance with Saudization quotas. Companies are grouped into categories—Platinum, Green, Yellow, and Red—reflecting their performance in hiring Saudi nationals relative to specific industry benchmarks. These categories are based on company size, sector, and historical performance, ensuring equitable and tailored compliance expectations. (MHRSD, 2020)

Businesses in Platinum and Green Categories meet or exceed their Saudization quotas. They enjoy benefits such as expedited visa processing, priority access to government services, and enhanced mobility in hiring foreign workers. Non-compliant businesses fall into Yellow and Red categories and face restrictions, including bans on new visa issuance, limitations on renewing existing work permits, and potential fines. The point system has had profound implications for businesses. Many companies have had to restructure their hiring practices to meet quotas, including diversifying job roles for Saudi nationals and investing in workforce training. Compliance often increases labour costs, as hiring Saudis entails higher wages and benefits compared to expatriates. However, government incentives partially offset these expenses for compliant firms. (Al-Asfour, 2014) Nitaqat has driven firms to innovate in human resource practices, such as adopting flexible working arrangements to attract Saudi talent, especially women. The point system's impact varies across sectors. For instance, the retail and banking sectors have shown significant progress in Saudization due to the availability of qualified Saudi workers. Conversely, construction and manufacturing industries face persistent challenges due to reliance on expatriates for physically demanding and technical roles.

3.12 Enforcement Mechanisms

The MHRSD has established comprehensive enforcement mechanisms to ensure compliance with Nitaqat's regulations. These include Digital Monitoring Systems, Audits and Inspections and Sanctions and Incentives. Advanced databases track employment statistics in real time, comparing company records with national labour market data to identify non-compliance. Regular audits and site inspections are conducted to verify the accuracy of company-reported data. Violations, such as falsifying Saudization figures, incur strict penalties. Non-compliant firms face penalties such as restrictions on expatriate hiring, fines, and potential closure. Compliant firms benefit from access to government support, including subsidized training programs and wage supplements for Saudi workers. (World Bank, 2020) While enforcement has ensured accountability, it has also led to resistance from some employers, particularly in sectors struggling with skill gaps. For example, companies in the construction sector argue that the lack of skilled Saudi labour impedes their ability to meet quotas.

The Saudization Office, under the MHRSD, plays a central role in implementing Nitaqat. The office collects and analyses labour market data, issuing periodic reports on program performance. It provides guidance to businesses on meeting Saudization targets and navigating compliance requirements. The office mediates conflicts arising from Nitaqat's implementation, such as employer-employee disputes over wages and working conditions. The retail sector has witnessed significant success in Saudization, with companies exceeding their quotas by hiring Saudi women in customer-facing roles. For instance, the introduction of dedicated training programs for female workers has enabled retailers to tap into a previously underutilized labour pool. In contrast, the construction sector continues to struggle with compliance due to its dependence on expatriates for labour-intensive jobs. However, some firms have adopted innovative solutions, such as collaborating with technical training institutes to upskill Saudi workers. The IT sector exemplifies how targeted interventions can drive success. The Saudization Office partnered with major IT firms to establish training centers, resulting in a dramatic increase in Saudi

employment in technical roles. (MCIT, 2020) The case studies underscore the importance of tailoring Nitaqat's implementation to sector-specific challenges. While certain industries have thrived under the program, others require additional support, such as enhanced training initiatives and financial incentives.

3.13 The Dynamics of Nitaqat

The Nitaqat program has evolved significantly since its inception, shaped by domestic labour market needs, global economic factors, and advancements in technology. Initially introduced in 2011 to address the challenges of workforce localization in Saudi Arabia, the program has undergone multiple iterations to remain relevant in a rapidly changing economic and technological landscape. The original Nitaqat framework categorized companies into four bands—Platinum, Green, Yellow, and Red—based on their compliance with Saudization targets. The program used a sector- and size-specific approach, assigning different quotas depending on the nature of the industry and company size. While this approach incentivized businesses to hire Saudi nationals, it also posed challenges for sectors heavily reliant on expatriate labour, such as construction and hospitality. (MHRSD, 2020)

Recognizing the limitations of the initial framework, the Saudi government introduced several amendments. The Saudization quotas were made dynamic, adjusting periodically based on labour market needs and economic conditions. This flexibility helped address disparities across industries and regions. Over time, Nitaqat expanded its scope to include more job categories, mandating Saudization in previously exempt roles such as retail cashiers and logistics coordinators. New regulations required companies to report detailed employment data, enabling better monitoring of compliance. The introduction of electronic systems streamlined reporting and reduced opportunities for fraud. Nitaqat's evolution also included sector-specific strategies. Strict quotas were imposed on high-paying managerial roles, compelling firms to train and promote Saudi employees into leadership positions. The sectors of retail and hospitality saw targeted campaigns to attract Saudi women, significantly increasing their labour force participation. To address

skills gaps in manufacturing and construction sectors received government subsidies for vocational training programs aimed at preparing Saudi workers for technical roles. (HRDF, 2021).

Recent updates to Nitaqat emphasize digital integration and long-term planning. The Vision 2030 initiative has aligned the program with broader economic diversification goals, ensuring that workforce localization complements industrial and technological advancements.

3.14 Impact of Global Economic Factors and Oil Price Fluctuations on Nitaqat

Saudi Arabia's economy is heavily reliant on oil revenues, which account for a significant portion of its GDP. Fluctuations in global oil prices have directly impacted the implementation and outcomes of Nitaqat. During oil booms, increased government revenues allowed for greater investment in workforce development and job creation programs under Nitaqat. This led to a surge in public sector employment opportunities, often outpacing private sector Saudization efforts. Oil price slumps, such as those experienced in 2014 and 2020, prompted austerity measures, including a renewed focus on private sector employment for Saudi nationals. These periods emphasized the critical role of Nitaqat in reducing dependency on expatriates and fostering economic resilience.

Nitaqat has also been shaped by broader global economic trends. The pandemic disrupted global labour markets, leading to a reduction in expatriate workers in Saudi Arabia. This created opportunities for Saudization but also highlighted gaps in workforce readiness. Automation and digitization have reduced reliance on manual labour, necessitating a shift in Nitaqat's focus toward high-skill job categories. In response to these challenges, the Saudi government introduced countercyclical measures, such as wage subsidies and job retention schemes, to support Nitaqat during economic downturns.

The integration of technology has transformed Nitaqat's implementation mechanisms. Advanced digital systems allow real-time monitoring of compliance, reducing administrative inefficiencies and enhancing transparency. AI-powered

analytics provide insights into labour market trends, enabling data-driven policy adjustments under Nitaqat. (MHRSD, 2021) While automation has streamlined business operations, it has also created challenges for Saudization. The automation of routine tasks has reduced demand for low-skilled labour, a segment traditionally filled by expatriates. Automation has increased the need for skilled workers in areas such as robotics, data analysis, and IT, pushing Nitaqat to focus on equipping Saudi nationals with these capabilities.

The government has launched initiatives to align Nitaqat with technological advancements. Partnerships with tech companies provide specialized training to Saudi workers, preparing them for emerging job roles. Nitaqat now includes incentives for companies that create automation-resilient jobs for Saudi nationals. Vision 2030 outlines a roadmap for transitioning to a knowledge-based economy, ensuring that Nitaqat remains relevant in a technology-driven future. (MHRSD, 2022) The dynamics of Nitaqat reflect its adaptability to changing economic, social, and technological conditions. From its evolving point system to its responses to global economic shifts and integration of technology, Nitaqat continues to play a pivotal role in shaping Saudi Arabia's labour market.

3.15 Socio-Economic Impacts of Nitaqat

The Nitaqat program, introduced in Saudi Arabia in 2011, was designed to address the country's over-reliance on foreign labour and increase the employment of Saudi nationals across various sectors of the economy. While the program has had significant success in boosting Saudi employment, it has also brought several socio-economic challenges. One of the primary objectives of Nitaqat was to reduce unemployment among Saudi citizens by creating a regulatory framework that incentivized employers to hire local workers. Since the implementation of the program, there has been a notable increase in the number of Saudi nationals employed in the private sector. The program's tiered structure, which categorizes businesses based on their Saudization efforts, has encouraged companies to meet specific quotas for employing Saudi workers. Industries that were traditionally dominated by expatriates, such as retail, hospitality, and services, have seen a rise in

Saudi participation. This shift has been particularly noticeable among Saudi women, as many job categories previously closed to them, such as retail cashier positions, were now accessible due to Nitaqat's quotas for female employment. Additionally, the Nitaqat program has led to the establishment of training programs aimed at enhancing the employability of Saudi nationals. Through collaboration with the Human Resources Development Fund (HRDF) and other governmental agencies, many Saudi citizens, particularly youth, have gained access to vocational training and internships, making them more competitive in the labour market. (HRDF, 2018)

Despite the positive outcomes, Saudi nationals have faced difficulties in finding suitable jobs, particularly in the private sector. A critical challenge lies in the skills gap between the qualifications of Saudi job seekers and the needs of employers. Many Saudi nationals entering the labour market do not possess the technical skills required for certain jobs, especially in industries like construction, IT, and engineering, which traditionally relied on foreign labour with specialized expertise. The mismatch between the education system and market needs has exacerbated this issue, creating a situation where young Saudis struggle to meet the demands of the workforce. (Al-Dosary, 2019) Moreover, the rapid implementation of Saudization policies under Nitaqat has led some businesses to adopt a more cautious approach to hiring Saudi nationals. Employers, particularly in industries where the labour force was traditionally foreign, have often found it challenging to fill positions with adequately skilled locals, resulting in delays in the full implementation of Saudization quotas. The emphasis on quantity over quality in Saudization policies has also led to instances where companies hire underqualified workers just to comply with the regulations, rather than investing in long-term career development for Saudi employees.

The implementation of Nitaqat also brought challenges for career advancement among Saudi workers. While the program increased entry-level job opportunities for Saudis, career progression within companies has been slow for many. Due to the relatively small pool of highly skilled Saudi workers in some industries, many companies face difficulties in filling higher-level positions with

qualified locals. This creates stagnation in career progression, as employees may struggle to move beyond entry-level roles. Furthermore, some sectors have seen a phenomenon referred to as "Saudization at the top," where companies hire Saudis for senior positions without providing the necessary training and mentoring that would allow them to effectively lead teams. This has led to frustration among younger Saudi workers who feel that career advancement is often hindered by a lack of preparation and resources.

Nitaqat's impact on wages for Saudi nationals has been multifaceted. On one hand, the demand for local labour, particularly in industries that were previously dominated by foreign workers, has increased the bargaining power of Saudi workers, leading to wage improvements in some sectors. The labour shortages created by the shifting demographics of the workforce have pushed businesses to offer higher wages to attract and retain qualified Saudi employees, particularly in areas like retail, telecommunications, and hospitality.

However, the increase in wages has not been uniform across all sectors. While some sectors have seen wage hikes, particularly in managerial and technical roles, other sectors have witnessed only modest changes. Industries that are heavily reliant on expatriates, such as construction and transportation, have faced challenges in raising wages for Saudi employees, as the companies' ability to pay higher wages is constrained by the competitive nature of the market and ongoing economic pressures. Moreover, the imposition of quotas has led some companies to hire Saudi nationals at lower wages, leading to an imbalance where some Saudi workers may be paid less than their foreign counterparts who were previously in the same roles. (Al-Obaid, 2020) Nitaqat has also influenced working conditions for Saudi nationals. With the increase in Saudi workers in previously foreign-dominated sectors, many employers have had to adjust their working conditions to accommodate local labour preferences. In industries like retail and hospitality, this has led to improved work environments, with better facilities, working hours, and benefits for Saudi employees. Moreover, the program's focus on female workforce participation has pushed companies to create more family-friendly workplaces, with

benefits such as maternity leave, flexible hours, and childcare facilities being introduced in sectors that had previously been male-dominated.

However, the influx of Saudi workers into the private sector has also exposed the lack of adequate workplace protection laws, particularly in lower-wage sectors. In some cases, Saudi nationals are being employed in jobs with poor working conditions, especially in manual labour roles, due to the relatively low skill levels and lack of labour rights enforcement. Additionally, as companies adjust to Saudization, there has been concern that some businesses may offer lower-skilled Saudi workers poor job security, fewer benefits, and limited career growth opportunities.

One of the most profound social impacts of Nitaqat has been the shift in attitudes towards work among Saudi nationals. Historically, many Saudi citizens viewed employment in the private sector, especially in lower-wage and service-oriented jobs, as undesirable. The government's push for Saudization, particularly through Nitaqat, has helped alter this perception to some degree. Nitaqat has contributed to a broader cultural shift, encouraging Saudi nationals to engage in sectors that were once considered "below" their social standing, such as retail, hospitality, and manufacturing. There has been a noticeable increase in the acceptance of private sector employment among Saudis, especially among women, who were previously discouraged from entering the workforce. The program's quotas for female employment have led to increased participation of women in the workforce, contributing to a redefinition of gender roles in Saudi society.

However, Nitaqat's impact on social attitudes has been mixed. While there has been an increased acceptance of private sector work, some segments of the Saudi population still view certain types of employment as socially inferior, particularly in low-wage and service sectors. This cultural barrier, coupled with the stigma surrounding certain job roles, continues to limit the program's effectiveness in fully integrating Saudi nationals into the labour market. (Al-Ansari, 2021)

The program has also influenced the broader Saudi social structure. As Saudi nationals increasingly enter sectors traditionally dominated by foreign workers, there

has been a strengthening of the national identity in the workplace. The widespread hiring of Saudi citizens in both low-wage and professional roles has created a more homogeneous labour force, contributing to a stronger sense of national pride and unity. However, this shift also brings challenges related to the balance between maintaining traditional societal structures and encouraging a more diverse, dynamic workforce. Furthermore, Nitaqat has encouraged the growth of a new middle class in Saudi Arabia. As more Saudis enter managerial and skilled roles, there is the potential for economic empowerment, especially among young people and women. This demographic shift is gradually contributing to changes in social hierarchies, although it is still constrained by the pace of change in deeply ingrained societal norms.

3.16 Impact of Nitaqat on Foreign Workers

The Nitaqat program fundamentally altered the demographic composition of the foreign workforce in Saudi Arabia. Prior to its introduction, the kingdom had a significant reliance on migrant labour, with expatriates making up a substantial portion of the workforce. Foreign workers, particularly from South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Africa, dominated key sectors such as construction, domestic work, retail, and hospitality. Nitaqat's push for Saudization, which mandated that a certain percentage of employees in businesses be Saudi nationals, has led to a reconfiguration of this labour market.

As a result of the Nitaqat program's enforcement mechanisms, many businesses that previously depended on foreign workers had to reduce their reliance on expatriates to comply with Saudization quotas. This shift has led to a notable decline in the number of foreign workers in many industries. Employers have been forced to either scale back their operations or replace expatriates with Saudi workers. Consequently, a large number of foreign workers found themselves displaced, and their positions were often filled by local nationals. This shift in the workforce has been particularly impactful in sectors where foreign workers had been entrenched for decades. The composition of the foreign workforce has also changed in terms of job categories. Migrant workers, particularly from countries such as

India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and the Philippines, who traditionally held low-skilled and semi-skilled roles, have seen their opportunities reduced. On the other hand, there has been an increase in the number of foreign nationals employed in more technical and specialized roles that are difficult for Saudi workers to fill, due to the lack of local technical expertise and experience in these sectors. (Al-Dosary, 2020)

One of the most immediate impacts of Nitaqat on foreign workers was the reduction in job opportunities. Businesses that failed to meet Saudization targets faced penalties, including restrictions on the renewal of work permits for foreign employees. Many foreign workers found themselves without employment as companies reduced their expatriate workforce to avoid these penalties. Some workers were also subjected to job cuts as employers chose to hire Saudi nationals to meet the program's quotas. As a result, many migrant workers were either forced to accept lower-paying, less desirable jobs or face the threat of deportation if they were unable to find alternative employment. The prospect of deportation became a real concern for many foreign workers who were unable to secure new employment in the face of increasing competition from Saudi nationals. This has led to a sense of insecurity and instability for migrant labourers, as they have to navigate the complexities of the Nitaqat system, which places an additional burden on them in terms of job mobility and work permits. Deportation, particularly in the wake of the global economic downturn, has left many workers stranded and financially vulnerable. This situation has led to significant social and economic consequences for both the foreign workers and their home countries, which rely heavily on remittances from their citizens working in Saudi Arabia. (World Bank, 2018)

The implementation of Nitaqat significantly impacted the wages and working conditions of foreign workers in Saudi Arabia. As businesses complied with the Saudization quotas and reduced their reliance on expatriates, the remaining foreign workers found themselves in a more competitive labour market. The decrease in the number of available jobs for foreign nationals meant that employers no longer had the same bargaining power over wages. In some cases, employers used Nitaqat as an opportunity to cut wages for foreign workers, knowing that their

options were limited. Moreover, many foreign workers, particularly those in low-wage sectors, reported worsening working conditions as businesses sought to retain only the most essential expatriate labour force. These workers often faced longer hours, lower job security, and fewer benefits compared to their Saudi counterparts, who were given more favourable conditions due to the government's preference for local employment. In addition, foreign workers in industries like construction, domestic work, and cleaning have often experienced poor living conditions, lack of adequate healthcare, and limited access to legal protection or labour rights. The Nitaqat program has exacerbated these issues for some foreign nationals, as employers were less likely to invest in improving conditions for a smaller, more expendable foreign labour pool. (Al-Obaid, 2019)

The impact of Nitaqat on the foreign workforce also had a significant effect on remittances, which are a crucial source of income for many countries in South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Africa. Remittances sent by foreign workers form a substantial part of the economies of these countries. As the number of foreign workers in Saudi Arabia decreased and wages stagnated or declined, the amount of money being sent home also dropped. This has had significant implications for the economies of countries like India, Pakistan, the Philippines, and Bangladesh, which depend heavily on remittances to sustain their economic growth.

For Saudi Arabia, the reduction in the foreign workforce has both positive and negative implications. On the one hand, reducing dependence on foreign labour aligns with the country's long-term economic goals of increasing Saudization and promoting national employment. However, the decline in the number of foreign workers has had an adverse impact on industries that are heavily dependent on low-cost labour, such as construction, retail, and hospitality. These industries contribute significantly to the Saudi economy, and the reduction in the labour force could lead to higher costs, delayed projects, and a slowdown in economic growth. Additionally, as foreign workers send fewer remittances home, the economic interdependence between Saudi Arabia and its labour-exporting neighbours weakens.

3.17 Human Rights Concerns

One of the most critical aspects of Nitaqat's impact on foreign workers is the human rights concerns associated with labour exploitation. Many foreign workers, particularly those employed in low-wage sectors such as domestic work, construction, and retail, have long faced exploitation, mistreatment, and inadequate living conditions. The Nitaqat program has not fully addressed these systemic issues, and in some cases, the reduced foreign workforce and the pressure to meet Saudization quotas have exacerbated the vulnerability of migrant workers. Foreign workers often find themselves trapped in exploitative work environments due to the restrictive nature of the sponsorship system, also known as the kafala system. This system ties workers to their employers, limiting their ability to change jobs or leave the country without employer consent. As companies faced pressure to comply with Nitaqat's quotas, some used this system to further restrict the mobility of foreign workers, subjecting them to long hours, substandard living conditions, and abuse without the ability to seek legal redress. Moreover, many workers who were laid off due to Nitaqat's implementation were left with no recourse for finding new employment or addressing their grievances, making them highly vulnerable to exploitation. (ILO, 2020)

The reduction in the foreign workforce has had significant ramifications for remittance flows, which are a key source of foreign exchange for many migrant-sending countries. Countries like the Philippines, India, and Bangladesh rely heavily on remittances from workers in the Gulf region, particularly Saudi Arabia. As foreign workers leave or face lower-paying jobs due to Nitaqat, the total remittance income has decreased, impacting the economic development of these countries. In many cases, families in migrant-sending countries depend on these remittances for daily survival, education, healthcare, and other essential needs. The decrease in remittance flows has, therefore, led to increased economic hardship for these families and reduced economic stability in source countries.

For Saudi Arabia, the decrease in remittance flows may result in strained diplomatic relations with labour-exporting countries, which rely on the revenue

generated by their citizens working in the Kingdom. Moreover, the failure to address labour rights issues adequately in the Nitaqat framework could lead to international criticism, particularly from human rights organizations, which might affect Saudi Arabia's international standing and relations with its labour-exporting partners. (World Bank, 2021)

3.18 Impact of Nitaqat on the Saudi Economy

By mandating a certain quota of Saudi nationals in each business, Nitaqat aimed to reduce the kingdom's reliance on foreign labour and address unemployment among the local workforce. However, while the program has succeeded in increasing employment for Saudi nationals, it has also created various challenges and opportunities that have shaped the broader Saudi economy.

The introduction of Nitaqat had an immediate effect on the cost structure of businesses operating in Saudi Arabia. One of the primary reasons for the program's introduction was to reduce the reliance on foreign labour, which had become a mainstay in many sectors, particularly low-skilled and semi-skilled jobs. As businesses were required to replace foreign workers with Saudi nationals to meet the quotas set under Nitaqat, many companies faced an increase in labour costs. This shift was most pronounced in industries like construction, retail, and hospitality, where foreign workers had been employed at relatively lower wages.

To meet the Saudization requirements, businesses were often forced to hire local workers who, in many cases, were either inexperienced or lacked the necessary skills for the job. This discrepancy in skills meant that businesses had to invest in training and development for Saudi workers, thereby raising operational expenses. Additionally, the limited pool of Saudi nationals available for low-skilled positions often led to higher wages for the same positions, as employers needed to incentivize local workers to take up jobs traditionally held by foreign labour. The higher wages demanded by Saudi workers, combined with the training and integration costs, resulted in significant increases in overall business costs, especially for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) that had previously relied on low-cost foreign labour. (Al-Munir, 2019)

Moreover, the introduction of Nitaqat led to a restructuring of employment contracts, where many companies had to offer more attractive benefits and salaries to comply with the program. These higher employment costs added a financial burden on businesses that were already struggling with economic challenges, especially those that depended heavily on the availability of cheap foreign labour. The overall impact was a rise in operating costs for companies, which had to either absorb these costs or pass them on to consumers in the form of higher prices for goods and services.

The change in the composition of the workforce under Nitaqat also affected productivity levels in various sectors. The replacement of experienced foreign workers with relatively less skilled Saudi workers led to challenges in maintaining the same levels of productivity, especially in industries where speed and efficiency were critical, such as construction and manufacturing. In some cases, businesses reported a decline in productivity as Saudi workers required more time to adjust to the job and learn the necessary skills. This was particularly evident in low-skilled and manual labour sectors, where foreign workers had been entrenched for years and developed specialized knowledge.

In addition, the high turnover rates among Saudi employees in certain sectors added to the challenge of maintaining consistent productivity. Many Saudi nationals, especially younger workers, have been reported to be less inclined to stay in these jobs for the long term, preferring instead to seek employment in government positions or other more attractive opportunities. This contributed to a situation where businesses faced frequent disruptions in their workforce, resulting in a decrease in overall productivity and a reduction in the efficiency of operations. (Al-Dosary, 2021) Despite these challenges, there were some positive effects as well. As businesses adapted to the Nitaqat program, some industries began to invest more heavily in automation and technology to mitigate the impact of reduced labour productivity. In sectors like retail, the increased reliance on technology and digital platforms helped businesses reduce their dependence on manual labour and enhanced overall productivity.

In the short term, the Nitaqat program's focus on increasing employment for Saudi nationals has had a mixed impact on Saudi Arabia's economic growth. On the one hand, the increased employment of Saudi nationals in the private sector has contributed to a reduction in the unemployment rate, especially among younger Saudis. This has been in line with the government's efforts to achieve the broader goal of diversifying the economy away from its dependence on oil and creating more job opportunities for the local population. The program's implementation has also contributed to an increase in household income for many Saudi families, which has had a stimulating effect on domestic demand for goods and services.

However, the short-term economic growth generated by Nitaqat has been somewhat constrained by the rise in business costs and the challenges businesses face in adapting to the new labour market conditions. As mentioned earlier, the shift from a foreign to a Saudi workforce has led to increased operational costs, which could stifle business expansion and reduce profitability in the private sector. Additionally, many businesses have found it difficult to retain Saudi workers in low-skilled jobs, leading to high turnover rates and further inefficiencies. These challenges have undermined the potential for Nitaqat to fully stimulate private sector growth in the short term.

The long-term aim of the Nitaqat program was to support the diversification of the Saudi economy. The Saudi Vision 2030 plan emphasizes reducing the country's reliance on oil and expanding other sectors such as tourism, entertainment, technology, and manufacturing. By creating more job opportunities for Saudi nationals in the private sector, the Nitaqat program was intended to serve as a stepping stone toward achieving this goal. However, the success of this strategy has been mixed. In some sectors, such as technology and finance, the increase in the number of skilled Saudi workers has contributed to growth and expansion. Saudi nationals are increasingly filling positions in high-value-added industries, which has helped foster the growth of these sectors and reduce the country's reliance on foreign expertise. Moreover, the emphasis on Saudization has led to a boost in the

education and training sectors, as the government has invested in programs to upskill the local workforce.

On the other hand, the program has faced challenges in certain sectors that are essential for economic diversification. For example, in labour-intensive industries like construction, retail, and hospitality, the replacement of foreign workers with Saudi nationals has led to slower growth and reduced productivity. These industries, which have traditionally relied on cheap labour, are crucial for the expansion of the non-oil economy. The difficulties faced by businesses in these sectors have, therefore, slowed down the pace of economic diversification and may hinder the country's ability to transition to a more diversified economy in the short term. (SMEP, 2020)

While the Nitaqat program has contributed to some positive changes in the Saudi labour market, its long-term implications for the country's economic sustainability remain uncertain. One of the key challenges lies in the balance between reducing unemployment among Saudi nationals and ensuring that businesses remain competitive and productive. In the long term, if businesses continue to face high labour costs and inefficiencies due to the limited availability of skilled Saudi workers, the country could face a decline in overall economic growth.

The dependency on a highly subsidized national workforce may lead to systemic inefficiencies, particularly in sectors that require large numbers of low-skilled workers. For instance, in industries like construction and agriculture, where the cost of labour is a significant portion of operational expenses, the shift toward a Saudi workforce could drive up production costs and reduce the international competitiveness of Saudi exports. This could be detrimental to the broader goal of economic diversification, which requires a competitive and efficient private sector. Moreover, as the government continues to prioritize the employment of Saudi nationals, the long-term sustainability of this approach could be compromised by the skills gap that exists between the local workforce and the needs of the modern economy. Many Saudi nationals, particularly young graduates, continue to prefer government jobs with higher salaries and job security, rather than working in the

private sector. Without addressing the mismatch between the skills of the local workforce and the requirements of the labour market, the Nitaqat program could inadvertently lead to a less productive, less competitive economy in the long run.

Despite these challenges, the long-term sustainability of the Saudi economy could benefit from a more diversified and skilled local workforce. The Nitaqat program's emphasis on training and education for Saudi nationals, along with efforts to attract investment in non-oil sectors, could provide the foundation for more sustainable economic growth. As the labour force becomes more skilled and businesses adapt to the changing economic environment, the country could achieve a more balanced and resilient economy. To ensure the long-term sustainability of Nitaqat, the government will need to continue investing in education, vocational training, and the development of industries that are not dependent on low-cost labour. By focusing on innovation, technology, and high-value sectors, Saudi Arabia could create a more sustainable and competitive economy in the long term.

3.19 Nitaqat's Influence on Domestic and International Politics

The Nitaqat program, introduced by the Saudi government in 2011, has not only reshaped the Saudi labour market but also had far-reaching domestic political implications. As Saudi Arabia faced increasing pressure to address the rising unemployment rate among its nationals, particularly among youth, the Nitaqat program became a central tool in the government's efforts to manage both economic and social dynamics. The Nitaqat program was primarily designed to promote employment among Saudi nationals in the private sector, aiming to reduce the country's over-reliance on foreign labour. This has had significant social and political consequences, particularly in terms of national identity and social stability. For decades, Saudi Arabia's labour market had been heavily dependent on foreign workers, with expatriates comprising a substantial portion of the workforce in both skilled and unskilled labour sectors. As foreign workers dominated many industries, a sense of economic inequality and social tension had begun to simmer within the local population, particularly among the youth.

By introducing Nitaqat, the Saudi government sought to address these concerns by offering more job opportunities to Saudis and, in doing so, enhancing the sense of national pride and belonging. The employment of Saudi nationals in private businesses was seen as a critical step toward reinforcing social cohesion and stability, particularly in the face of growing demands for reform and economic change from the younger generation. There was a concerted effort to foster a sense of shared economic destiny and reduce perceptions of foreign dominance in the labour market.

However, the social impact of Nitaqat has been somewhat mixed. While the program created new job opportunities for Saudi nationals, it also highlighted the gap between the skills of the local workforce and the demands of the private sector. Many Saudi workers, particularly younger Saudis, were ill-prepared to take up the roles left vacant by departing foreign workers. This mismatch led to dissatisfaction among certain sections of the population who felt that Nitaqat had not sufficiently addressed their employment aspirations. The frustration among the unemployed youth was evident in the increased calls for better job training and educational reform to prepare the local workforce for the demands of the labour market. Moreover, the rise in unemployment among foreign workers led to social unrest, particularly among low-skilled migrant workers who found themselves laid off or deported due to the program's quotas.

From a political stability perspective, Nitaqat's impact has been a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it alleviated public discontent by providing new opportunities for Saudi citizens and signaling the government's commitment to reform. On the other hand, it sparked tensions between the government, businesses, and expatriate communities, as companies struggled to adapt to the changing labour market conditions. In the long run, the success of Nitaqat in contributing to social stability largely depends on the government's ability to balance these competing interests and ensure that the local workforce is adequately prepared for the challenges of the labour market.

Another aspect of Nitaqat's impact on social and political stability is its role in fostering resistance to change. As the government attempted to implement such a sweeping reform to the labour market, various sectors, especially businesses and foreign workers, expressed resistance. Business owners who had relied heavily on the cheap labour provided by expatriates often viewed Nitaqat as a direct threat to their operational efficiency and profitability. These resistance movements, both within the private sector and among foreign workers, were often politically sensitive. In particular, Nitaqat led to a public debate over the nature of economic reforms in Saudi Arabia and their alignment with traditional cultural values. While many segments of the population embraced the vision of a more self-reliant and diversified Saudi economy, there was resistance among others who feared that too rapid a shift toward national employment could disrupt long-established social and economic norms. The government's management of these divergent interests was crucial in maintaining political stability.

One of the most immediate international political consequences of Nitaqat has been its impact on Saudi Arabia's diplomatic relations with labour-sending countries, particularly those in South Asia and Southeast Asia. These countries, which supply a large portion of the migrant labour force in Saudi Arabia, have been significantly affected by the changes brought about by the Nitaqat program, which sought to limit the number of foreign workers in the kingdom and prioritize the employment of Saudi nationals. The shift has led to tensions between the Saudi government and labour-sending countries, as both sides navigate the challenges of managing the demand for Saudi labour and the supply of workers from abroad. (Al-Rasheed, 2010)

Countries such as India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, the Philippines, and Indonesia have long had a significant number of their citizens working in Saudi Arabia, particularly in low-wage and unskilled sectors such as construction, hospitality, and domestic work. The implementation of Nitaqat, by placing stricter quotas on the employment of foreign workers, resulted in reduced job opportunities for these migrant workers. The policy forced many foreign workers to leave Saudi Arabia or

seek employment in other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. This mass exodus has been a source of diplomatic tension, as labour-sending countries sought to protect their citizens' rights to work in Saudi Arabia and maintain the remittance flows that were crucial to their economies.

The effects on labour-sending countries' economies have been particularly profound in countries like India and the Philippines, where remittances from migrant workers in Saudi Arabia play a vital role in national income. According to the World Bank, remittances from Saudi Arabia to India alone amounted to billions of dollars annually. A reduction in the number of workers migrating to Saudi Arabia, driven by Nitaqat policies, has thus affected the financial stability of these countries, leading to diplomatic appeals for the kingdom to reconsider its labour policies or offer alternative solutions, such as facilitating migration to other regions or providing compensation for affected workers. (Lacey, 1981)

In response to these diplomatic challenges, Saudi Arabia has engaged in several efforts to manage its relationship with labour-sending countries. The kingdom has been keen to ensure that its diplomatic ties remain strong, particularly with nations that are significant sources of labour. This has involved adjusting certain aspects of Nitaqat, such as extending the timeline for compliance or creating pathways for skilled workers to remain in the kingdom. Additionally, Saudi Arabia has promoted greater cooperation with labour-sending countries through bilateral agreements, which aim to regulate the movement of workers, provide protections for migrant workers, and ensure that both sides benefit from the arrangement. (Human Rights Watch, 2008) However, despite these efforts, labour-sending countries have continued to express dissatisfaction with the program's effects on their citizens. In some cases, diplomatic tensions have risen over reports of migrant worker exploitation and human rights violations, exacerbated by Nitaqat's quota system and its associated enforcement mechanisms. These tensions have, at times, led to calls for international oversight of Saudi labour practices and further scrutiny of the treatment of migrant workers.

3.20 Balancing Economic Development and Social Concerns

The implementation of Nitaqat reflects the Saudi government's delicate balancing act between economic development and social welfare. On one hand, the government recognized the pressing need to diversify the economy away from its reliance on oil and create sustainable growth opportunities. The private sector, which had traditionally relied on a large pool of foreign labour, was seen as central to this goal. By increasing the number of Saudi nationals employed in the private sector, Nitaqat was positioned as an important instrument in achieving the broader vision of economic diversification.

On the other hand, the government also had to address the social concerns raised by a rising youth population, which had been struggling with high unemployment rates. In 2011, when Nitaqat was introduced, Saudi youth unemployment was a pressing issue, with rates hovering around 40%. The government was keenly aware that failure to address these social issues could result in political instability, social unrest, and growing dissatisfaction with the ruling regime. By making national employment a policy priority, the government sought to provide the younger population with meaningful opportunities and reduce the potential for dissatisfaction that could escalate into public unrest.

However, the government's balancing act has been complicated by the challenges of implementing Nitaqat. The demand for Saudi workers, especially in low-skilled and entry-level positions, often outstripped the supply of suitably qualified candidates. This led to pressure on the education system to quickly adapt and provide the necessary skills to Saudi nationals. At the same time, businesses faced increased operational costs as they were forced to hire more expensive Saudi workers or invest in training programs for them. Thus, while the program aimed to meet both economic and social goals, it has proven difficult to fully reconcile these two priorities without encountering trade-offs. (Hourani, 1991)

The Nitaqat program's primary aim was to address the chronic issue of unemployment among Saudi nationals. By setting quotas for Saudi workers in different sectors, the government sought to increase the participation of Saudi

nationals in the workforce and reduce the reliance on foreign labour. This had a direct impact on the unemployment rate, particularly among younger Saudis. Before the introduction of Nitaqat, the Saudi labour market was characterized by a high level of foreign labour, which crowded out local workers from the private sector. The government recognized that the local workforce, particularly the youth, was facing significant challenges in securing stable and well-paying jobs. The Nitaqat program aimed to remedy this by ensuring that private companies adhered to Saudization quotas, thereby increasing the number of jobs available to Saudi nationals. (Lacey, 1981)

While the program had some immediate success in reducing unemployment rates, its long-term effectiveness has been mixed. On the one hand, it increased the number of Saudis employed in the private sector, particularly in higher-paying and more skilled jobs. On the other hand, many sectors that had relied heavily on foreign labour found it difficult to adapt, leading to higher unemployment among foreign workers and continued dissatisfaction with the available employment opportunities among young Saudis. In addition to reducing unemployment, Nitaqat was also seen as a tool for addressing poverty and promoting social welfare. By creating more jobs for Saudi nationals, particularly in the private sector, the government hoped to reduce income inequality and improve the living standards of Saudi families. Employment in higher-paying private sector jobs provided a means for many Saudis to escape poverty and contribute to the overall economic stability of the country.

However, there are concerns about the effectiveness of Nitaqat in addressing poverty in the long term. While the program has created new job opportunities, the mismatch between the skills of the Saudi workforce and the needs of the private sector has meant that many newly employed Saudis are in lower-skilled, lower-paying jobs. Moreover, the higher costs associated with employing Saudi workers in certain industries may make it more difficult for businesses to absorb low-skilled workers, thereby limiting the ability of Nitaqat to significantly reduce poverty levels in the country. (PIF, 2024)

On a global scale, Nitaqat has affected the perception of the GCC region as a destination for migrant workers. While Saudi Arabia remains a significant player in the global labour market, other countries have increasingly become attractive alternatives for migrant workers, particularly those from Asia. Countries such as Malaysia, Singapore, and even emerging markets in Africa have capitalized on the shifting labour dynamics created by Nitaqat to attract foreign workers. The global competition for skilled labour has intensified, as countries in the Middle East and beyond vie for the services of qualified workers. (Al-Asfour, 2017)

3.21 Conclusion

The Nitaqat program, introduced by Saudi Arabia in 2011, has been a pivotal component of the kingdom's labour market reforms aimed at addressing the long-standing issue of high unemployment among Saudi nationals. The program's evolution, from its inception to the current phase, reflects a strategic shift towards reducing the country's dependency on foreign labour, prioritizing the employment of Saudi citizens, and aligning with broader economic diversification objectives set forth under Vision 2030. Understanding the mechanisms behind Nitaqat, its dynamics, and its implications is essential for evaluating its success and limitations in reshaping Saudi Arabia's labour market and economy.

Nitaqat's evolution has been marked by gradual adjustments to its point-based system, designed to incentivize private sector companies to hire Saudi workers. Initially, the program created a stark division between companies that complied with the quotas for Saudi employment and those that did not, leading to varying consequences for businesses. Over time, the Saudi government refined the program, introducing more nuanced regulations, including sector-specific quotas and a graduated penalty system. These changes reflect the kingdom's efforts to balance the immediate need for Saudization with the realities of private sector operations and the broader economic context. However, the success of Nitaqat has been limited by the lack of skilled Saudi workers, resistance from employers, and the challenges of integrating a largely foreign workforce into an economy that had been historically reliant on migrant labour.

The mechanism of Nitaqat revolves around a point system that categorizes businesses into different levels of compliance based on the percentage of Saudi nationals employed. Companies that meet or exceed the quotas benefit from various incentives, including preferential treatment in government contracts, while those failing to meet the requirements face penalties such as restrictions on hiring foreign workers. This approach has encouraged companies to adopt Saudization policies, albeit with varying degrees of success. While some industries, particularly in the public sector, have seen more immediate gains in Saudi employment, others have struggled to meet the requirements due to a lack of suitably skilled candidates in the local labour market. This imbalance between the demand for skilled labour and the supply of qualified Saudi workers has been one of the primary challenges in the implementation of Nitaqat. (Human Rights Watch, 2008)

The dynamics of Nitaqat have been shaped by both domestic and international factors. Domestically, the program has spurred debates about its social, economic, and political implications. On the one hand, Nitaqat has contributed to a reduction in unemployment rates among Saudis and has played a role in advancing the goals of Vision 2030, particularly in diversifying the economy away from oil dependence. On the other hand, the program has also led to increased costs for businesses, with some companies resorting to creative solutions, such as hiring Saudis in name only or outsourcing certain functions to circumvent the restrictions. Additionally, the impact of Nitaqat has been felt in Saudi Arabia's foreign relations, particularly with countries that supply migrant labour. Diplomatic tensions have arisen as a result of reduced job opportunities for foreign workers, with labour-sending countries advocating for more flexible labour policies.

The role of Nitaqat in shaping Saudi Arabia's future cannot be understated. The program is integral to the kingdom's long-term strategy of economic diversification, but it also poses significant challenges in terms of implementation and sustainability. While Nitaqat has made strides in increasing the participation of Saudi nationals in the workforce, the program's long-term success will depend on the kingdom's ability to address the structural challenges within the labour market,

including the development of a skilled workforce, the enhancement of vocational education, and the need for greater integration of Saudi workers into the private sector. Furthermore, the international political ramifications of Nitaqat will continue to influence the kingdom's foreign relations, particularly with its regional neighbours and labour-exporting countries. (HRDF, 2021)

The reduction in foreign workers in Saudi Arabia due to Nitaqat has also led to a rethinking of the role of migrant labour in the global economy. As Saudi Arabia's labour market becomes more restrictive, companies and multinational corporations that rely on foreign labour have begun to explore alternative solutions, such as automation, offshore production, and outsourcing. These shifts in business strategy have further affected the global labour market, particularly in industries like construction, retail, and hospitality, where migrant labour has traditionally been a cornerstone.

CHAPTER 4

KERALA DIASPORA IN GULF: THE HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL CONNECTIONS

4.1 Introduction

Kerala, one of India's most beautiful states, is located in the southwest of the country, at the base of the Western Ghats (Powel 2005, 23). It shares borders with Karnataka to the north, Tamil Nadu to the east and south, and the Arabian Sea to the west. The state is located between latitudes 8°18' and 12°48' north and 74°52' and 77°24' east. Currently, 3.1 percent of the population of the Indian Union (31838619 people) resides inside this small coastal strip, which is 39, 863 square kilometers in size and makes up approximately 1.18 of the overall area of the country¹. The current state of Kerala was created formally on November 1, 1956, as part of the decision to divide the states according to linguistic groups. Since the bulk of the population speaks Malayalam, the area is linguistically homogeneous. Some of the unique characteristics of the country can be credited to the state. The Kerala Model of Development² has received praise from a variety of sources, both domestic and foreign. Kerala is not only ahead of all other Indian states in terms of physical quality metrics like literacy, life expectancy, infant mortality, sex ratio, fertility rate, etc., but is also comparable to the majority of developed nations.

Kerala has a long history dating back several centuries. The phrase "Kerala" first appeared in writing on a rock inscribed by Ashoka in the third century BC (274–237 BC). The Keralaputra was one of the five sovereign kingdoms in south India at the time of Ashoka, and the "Chera" dynasty dominated the area. Following

¹ The data pertains to Government of India Census data 2011. Due to covid-19 pandemic the census in 2021 was delayed

² The Kerala Model of Development refers to the state's unique approach to human development, emphasizing high levels of education, healthcare, and social welfare, leading to improved human indicators despite relatively low economic growth. It focuses on equitable distribution of resources, social justice, and active government intervention in promoting welfare and reducing poverty.

repeated attacks from the nearby Chola kingdom, the Chera monarchy was overthrown. Many foreign expeditions were conducted to Kerala because of its reputation as the home of spices. In the middle centuries, it enjoyed commercial relations with Arabs, Babylonians, and Egyptians. With Vasco Da Gama's arrival at the Malabar Coast in 1498 from Portugal, Europeans began to challenge the dominance of Middle Eastern nations.

In the years that followed, Kerala was also colonised by the Dutch, Latin, and British people. Native people in Kerala were irritated by European control, which sparked ongoing conflicts between them. Since the start of colonial rule in 1921, the state has had several uprisings³. Following India's declaration of independence in 1947, the two separate kingdoms of Travancore and Cochin joined the Union of India under the name Travancore-Cochin, which was later acknowledged as a state in 1950. The previous state of Travancore-Cochin, the Malabar district of the Madras state, and the Kasargod taluk of Dakshina Kannada were combined to establish the Kerala state in the month of November 1956 as a result of the States Reorganization Act.

Historically, individuals from Kerala have migrated for commerce and other reasons to locations all over the world. Since the beginning of time, Kerala has been one of the major international centers for the trade of spices. The state's extensive coastline, which is surrounded by the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean, led to trade links with other Arab nations. A large number of traders and tourists from the Arab world have arrived in Kerala, and many residents of Kerala have migrated to these regions. Both Syrian Christians and Kerala's Mappila Muslims assert a tenuous racial affinity with West Asian nations (Joseph 2000). Even after the advent of European rule in the Indian subcontinent, the bonds of trade connections with the Gulf were maintained. Indian Hajj pilgrims used to assemble in the Arab world.

³ Since the onset of colonial rule in 1921, Kerala witnessed several uprisings, such as the Moplah Rebellion and the Punnappra-Vayalar Uprising, which were fueled by resistance against oppressive colonial policies and social injustice. These movements played a crucial role in shaping Kerala's socio-political landscape.

Muslims from the state travel to the Gulf to work and to undertake the Hajj. They regard it as a significant life achievement.

The state's economic and social life has been impacted in every way by the migration of Keralites to various regions of the world. Five stages can be used to summarise the history of emigration from Kerala, which spans several centuries: First, many left to work on plantations in British colonies like Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand. Keralites moved to other British colonies as a result of constraints placed on these destinations by the Indian Government's prohibition on labour migration during the 1930s and the nationalisation policies of newly established foreign countries. In the second wave of emigration, college and high school teachers mostly went to countries in Africa. Due to a labour crisis in the 1960s, the industrialised nations of North America and Western Europe loosened their visa requirements, which helped the third wave of emigration to emerge. The fourth phase of emigration, which started in the 1970s with the Gulf oil boom⁴, brought about the most noticeable and extensive upheaval to Kerala's economy. Every aspect of Kerala's social life has been affected by the Gulf migration. The majority of Indians that emigrate to the Gulf do so from Kerala (Joseph 2000).

4.2 History of Gulf migration from Kerala

The 1930s saw the opening of the first oil corporations, which marked the beginning of modern migration⁵ to Gulf regions, albeit on a modest scale. The Middle East's oil exploration started out very slowly and picked up steam by the 1970s. People from Kerala were drawn to the Gulf region during the 1970s boom brought on by the discovery of crude oil, and the ensuing migration ushered in a period of extreme affluence and social change for the state. Currently, more than 5%

⁴ The Gulf Oil Boom of the 1970s, triggered by a surge in global oil prices, led to rapid economic growth and infrastructure development in Gulf countries. The resulting demand for labor transformed the region, attracting a large influx of migrant workers and reshaping its social and economic landscape.

⁵ Migration is the movement of people from one place to another, often driven by factors such as economic opportunities, political instability, or environmental conditions. It can be temporary or permanent and may occur within a country or across national borders, significantly impacting both the origin and destination areas.

of Kerala's population resides outside of the state in other regions of India and foreign nations. 2.12 million people from Kerala had left the country as of 2020, making up 17–18% of the state's labour force. In addition, 89.4% of all Keralites who emigrate are concentrated in the six Gulf nations of the Arabian Peninsula (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and UAE). Kerala has been a significant supplier of labour to the Middle East since the very beginning of Gulf migration. Although just 3.43 percent of the nation's population lived in the state in 1990 (Prakash, 1994: 43), between 35 and 50 percent of Indian immigrants came from this state (Gulati and Modi, 1983; Nair, 1989; Prakash, 1998).

Table 4.1

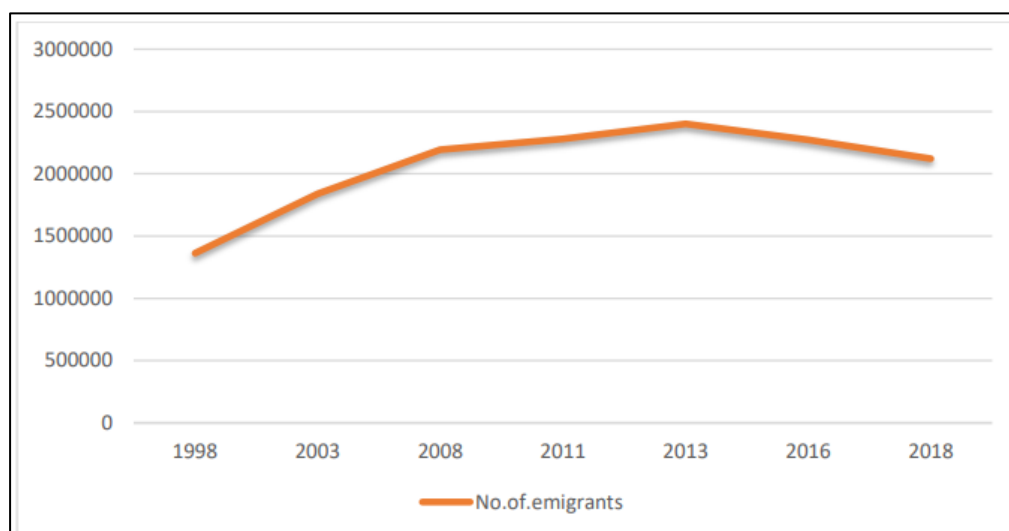
Trend in emigration from Kerala

Year	No. of. Emigrants	Inter-survey difference	Percentage increase/decrease
1998	1361919	-	-
2003	1838478	476559	25.9
2008	2193412	354934	16.2
2011	2280543	87131	3.8
2013	2400375	119832	5.0
2016	2271725	-128650	-5.7
2018	2121887	-149838	-7.1

Source: Kerala Migration Survey, 2018

According to the Kerala Migration Survey (KMS), 2018 carried out by the Centre for Development Studies, 21,21,887 Keralites have left the state. In terms of total emigration, 2018 saw 1.28 lakh fewer than 2013 and 1.49 lakh fewer than the KMS for 2016. Despite a positive trend from 1998 to 2013, emigration growth has been slowing since 2008 (see graph). The results of the last two surveys indicate that emigration has declined over the previous decade and is currently on a declining trend.

Figure 4.1. Emigration trend (1998-2018)



Source: Kerala Migration Survey, 1998-2018

The figure clearly shows the emigration tendency. Since 2013, there has been a discernible decline in emigration, which was trending upward until that point.

Table 4.2

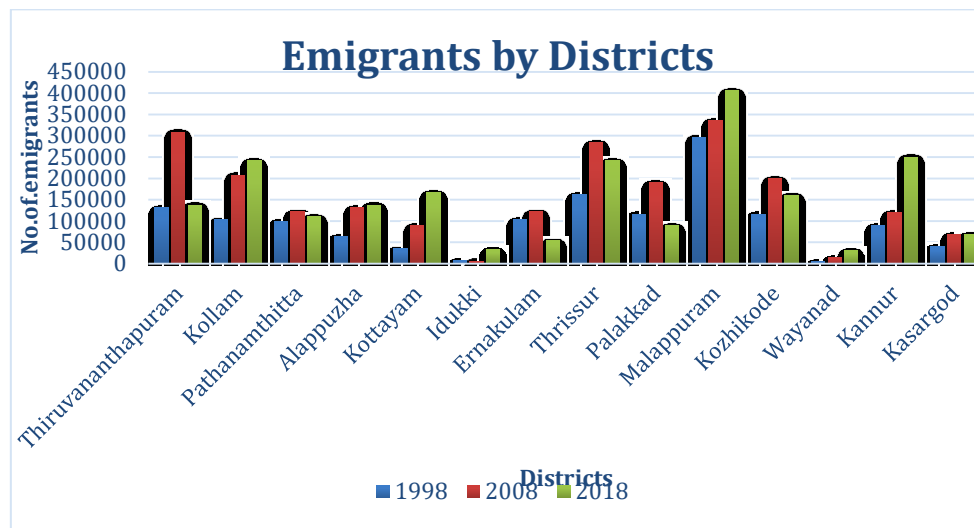
Countries of destination of Kerala emigrants

Destination countries	No. of emigrants	Percentage of Emigrants
UAE	830254	39.1
Saudi Arabia	487484	23
Oman	182168	8.6
Kuwait	127120	6.0
Bahrain	81153	3.8
Qatar	185573	8.7
Sub-Total	1893752	89.2
USA	46535	2.2
Canada	15323	0.7
UK	38023	1.8
Africa	5657	0.3
Singapore	12485	0.6
Maldives	6243	0.3
Malaysia	11350	0.5
Australia/New Zealand	30078	1.4
Other countries	62441	3.0
Total	2121887	100

Source: Kerala Migration Survey, 2018

According to the data, 1.89 million migrants from Kerala have emigrated, with a concentration of 90 percent in Gulf nations. With 39.1% of Keralites moving there, UAE is the main immigration destination for them. Next on their list of favoured GCC nations is Saudi Arabia, which is home to many Keralites. The other 10% of expatriates are dispersed throughout various nations including the USA, UK, and Australia.

Figure: 4.2. The Decadal growth rate of emigrants from Kerala



Source: Kerala Migration Survey

The above data shows the district-by-district share of emigrants over the past 20 years. With the exception of Idukki and Kannur, every district had greater decadal growth during the initial period. The reduction in overall emigration from Kerala was caused by the negative growth rate of seven districts in the second decade.

There are much more male migrants than female migrants, and the educational distribution is also different. While more than half of the men have only completed higher secondary education, more than half of the women who immigrate from Kerala have at least a bachelor's degree.

Table.4.3

Education qualification of migrants

Education Level	Male	Female	Total
Less Than Primary	2.8	8.8	3.7
Primary to Secondary	13.6	10.7	13.1
Secondary to Higher Secondary	42.8	11.2	37.8
Degree and Above	24.6	53.1	29.1
Others	14.4	7.1	13.2
Illiterate	0.2	0.8	0.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Kerala Migration Survey, 2018

4.3 Reasons for migration

The economic advantages are the main driver of migration from Kerala. According to Irudaya Rajan et al. (2002), migration can lead to an improvement in the economic standing of households, which is reflected in their altered way of life. According to Nair and Pillai (1994), Kerala's dearth of work prospects is the primary driver of migration. Many travellers to the Gulf in the late 1960s and early 1970s saw the Arabian Gulf as a potential destination. Greater numbers of people flooded into the Gulf during the early stages of the Arab oil boom, and it is still evident that people boarded ships there (Lanchi).

People are often forced to leave their hometowns for a variety of reasons. Certain unique unfavourable indices of Kerala's economy, such as the state's high population density⁶, decline in agriculture, and withering industrial sector, among others, have caused the state's residents to migrate. There are enough data points to demonstrate that a sizable portion of migrants were jobless before they migrated.

⁶ As of the 2021 Census, Kerala's population is approximately 34 million, with a population density of about 860 people per square kilometer, significantly higher than the national average of 464 people per square kilometer. The state's high population density is a result of its relatively small land area of around 38,863 square kilometers and its status as one of the most densely populated states in India.

Due to the flood of foreign money caused by the Gulf migration, unemployment decreased and poverty decreased.

Remittances stimulated spending and the purchase of assets, which led to a general decline in Kerala's poverty and led to a thriving business environment. (Prakash 1998: 209-213). Additionally, migrants' communities of origin and themselves frequently benefit from migration. People may move from places with low wages and little possibilities to regions with economic growth and innovation because those places offer them new opportunities. In some cases, regular remittances, technology, and ideas might result in good changes in the regions of origin.

4.4 Push-Pull Factors of the Gulf Migration from Kerala

The causes of migration from Kerala are a subject on which academics virtually ever agree. Push-pull theory of migration can, in general, explain the essence of Kerala's temporary labour mobility to the Gulf. The two variables listed above have accelerated the phenomenon of migration from Kerala to the Gulf. Many 'push' forces existed in the home state to drive the people elsewhere in search of greater economic opportunities. Oil prices increased, which in turn enabled the Arabian Gulf to develop more buildings, roads, and other infrastructure. A wide variety of job opportunities with better working conditions were also created. Numerous unemployed young people from Kerala were drawn to the Gulf by its "pull" elements. People from Kerala were pushed and pulled towards the vast opportunities of the Gulf by several conditions.

4.5 Push factors

Many studies have put out many hypotheses regarding the phenomena of labour migration from Kerala. The development model used in Kerala, which consists of a thriving social sector coexisting with a stagnating productive sector (Zacharia 1999: 27), takes full responsibility for migration and the advancement made, according to the different studies conducted by the Centre for Development

Studies Thiruvananthapuram. The Kerala model of development can be used to identify four key push factors driving migration by analysing the migration process.

First of, there is the quickening of the population growth, and then there is the agricultural standstill. The failure of the state's economic structure to increase employment in the secondary and tertiary sectors is the third factor, according to Zacharia (1999: 27), followed by the acceleration of development in higher education.

According to a study conducted by the Agro-Research Centre in Chavakkad Village, Thrissur, the large emigration to the Arabian Gulf was caused by a combination of factors including the state's high population density, declining agricultural labour absorption, slow industrial growth, and a high percentage of educated people with insufficient employment (AERC1982: 451).

Studies revealed yet another convincing argument that is said to have encouraged travellers to head to Gulf regions. The main contributing cause was India's highest ever man-to-land ratio of 7.36 people per hectare of land in 1971. Second, the state's population was unable to benefit significantly from employment opportunities due to a weak industrial sector. The third cause is the high level of education and literacy and the ensuing massive backlog of educated unemployed (Kurian 2001:02).

4.6 Pull factors

There has never been another place that attracted as many Keralites as the Gulf. People were drawn to the Gulf regions because they offered many potential prospects for better living conditions. In the Arab nations, wealth and the oil boom went hand in hand. Youth in Kerala perceived the Gulf as a strange country full of promises to meet their wants when visas were up for grabs. They were the main attracting elements that drove Keralites to move to Gulf nations. Numerous employment options, greater salary, prospects for savings, etc. are some of the alluring aspects that draw thousands of fortune seekers to the Arab world. The primary factor driving an Indian worker to relocate to the Gulf region is almost

invariably the significant wage gap that exists between the two labour markets for the same occupation⁷. The surge in oil prices in the 1970s and the ensuing employment prospects in the Gulf led to an increase in demand for workers across a variety of disciplines, including skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled positions. Aside from the economic considerations mentioned above, a bridge between the Arab world and Kerala was constructed before the migration of recent decades. This further had a significant role in the migration of people from Kerala to the Gulf.

Numerous causes of migration are currently being analysed in studies to determine what drives men to relocate internationally. As a result, various research explore various causes of migration. An objective analysis demonstrates that the emergence of the Kerala model was driven mostly by economic considerations. Push pull variables also play a significant part in determining the trend of emigration, as is commonly said. In addition, it's important to look at other social factors from the time before migration as well as cultural aspects of the community that participated in migration (Jaleel 2009: 18). In conclusion, Kerala's socio-political climate and the favorable employment prospects in the Gulf nations were the two main drivers of the large number of people who moved to the oil-rich Arab countries from Kerala.

4.7 Remittances to Kerala

The top receiving state for remittances in the nation is Kerala, which has never been surpassed⁸. An important portion of the state's overall inbound remittances comes from NRKs in the Gulf nations. According to the data of world bank, with 11,715 million USD in 2018, the UAE was India's top recipient of remittances, followed by the US. A portion of these remittances to Kerala go to

⁷ The wage gap between India and Gulf countries is substantial, with Indian workers in the Gulf often earning 3 to 5 times more than their counterparts in India for similar jobs. For example, a construction worker in the Gulf may earn around \$300 to \$500 per month, while the same worker in India might earn only \$100 to \$150 per month, highlighting the significant economic incentive for migration.

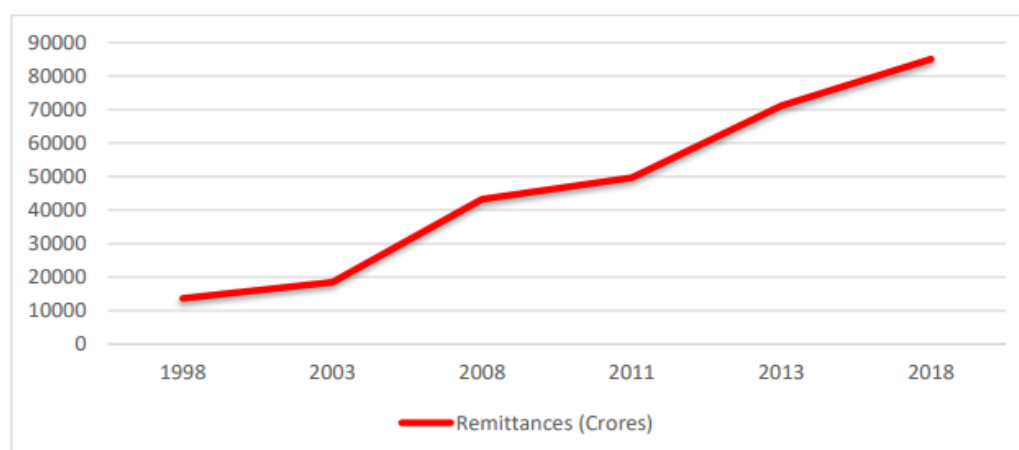
⁸ Kerala has consistently been the top receiving state for remittances in India, accounting for about 20% of the nation's total remittance inflows. In 2020, Kerala received approximately \$13.1 billion in remittances, driven by its large diaspora in the Gulf countries, which has significantly contributed to the state's economy by funding consumption, education, healthcare, and development projects.

homes and are utilised for living expenditures and other household costs, while the remainder is used for business purposes. Numerous expats from Kerala, both blue-collar and white-collar, live in middle-eastern nations, where they and their families are heavily reliant on remittances for basic needs including food, clothing, health care, medications, education, and a better standard of living.

4.8 Household remittances

According to estimates, Kerala received remittances totaling Rs. 85092 crores in 2018, a 20 percent increase from 2013. Despite the fact that emigration has decreased since 2013, remittances to the state have been increasing over the past 20 years. This might be a result of skilled labour' massive remittances and recent increase in migration to western nations.

Figure 4.3. Trend in remittances to Kerala (1998-2018)



Source: Kerala Migration Survey 1998-2018

Household remittances are money transfers that household members receive from family members who reside overseas. While household remittances only increased by 26% from 2013 to 2018, they increased by 60% between 2011 and 2013. Additionally, fewer people have left the country throughout time than before.

Table 4.4.

Household Remittances

Year	Remittance (Crores)	Inter-survey difference
1998	3,530	-
2003	7,965	125.6
2008	12,511	57.1
2011	15,129	20.9
2013	24,374	61.1
2018	20,717	26.0

Source: Kerala Migration Survey, 2018

Malappuram districts continued to receive the most remittances, totaling Rs. 6326 crores in 2018, as in previous Kerala migration surveys. Comparing Malappuram to KMS 2013, there has been a growth of 80%. The other districts that got significant remittances were Kozhikode (2662 crores), Thrissur (3350 crores), Kollam (4602 crores), and Thiruvananthapuram (2904 crores). Between 2013 and 2018, Ernakulam experienced the biggest fall in remittances, while Kollam saw the highest growth. Kerala's population increased by 26% overall between 2013 and 2018.

Table 4.5

Household remittances district-wise

	2018 in crores	2013 in crores	Per cent increase	Percent 2013	Percent 2018
Thiruvananthapuram	2904	1847	57.2	9.5	7.6
Kollam	2168	21.68	112.3	15.0	8.9
Pathanamthitta	2220	1478	50.0	7.2	6.2
Alappuzha	1795	2065	13.1	5.8	8.5
Kottayam	1062	699	52.0	3.5	2.9
Idukki	277	228	21.7	0.9	0.9
Ernakulam	435	3210	86.5	1.4	13.2
Thrissur	3350	2527	32.6	10.9	10.4
Palakkad	1270	1009	25.9	4.1	4.2
Malappuram	6326	3510	80.2	20.6	14.4
Kozhikode	2662	1967	35.3	8.7	8.2
Wayanad	432	303	42.7	1.4	1.2
Kannur	2320	1976	17.4	7.6	8.2
Kasaragod	1061	1294	18.0	3.5	5.3
KERALA	30717	24374	26.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Kerala Migration Survey, 2018

All religions saw a significant increase in household remittances between 2013 and 2018, but Muslims specifically had a 33% increase and Hindus a 31% increase. Undoubtedly, the Muslim community received the highest percentage, at 42.4 percent. With 37.2%, the Hindu group comes in second, and Christians are in last place with 20.4%.

Table 4.6

House hold remittances by religion

	2018	2013	Percent Increase	Percent	
				2018	2013
Hindus	11431	8745	30.7	37.2	35.9
Christians	6252	5806	7.7	20.4	23.8
Muslims	13034	9823	32.7	42.5	40.3
Total	30717	24374	26.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Kerala Migration Survey, 2018

4.9 Return migration

A difficult and intricate aspect of migration is return migration. At the same time that it is no longer a singular occurrence, modern migration is also the most dynamic and interconnected ever. Return migration can occur at any stage of the migration cycle, including immediately after arriving in the destination country or years after beginning a life of migration. Depending on each immigrant's preferences and personal circumstances, the timing of their return and decision to do so differs.

Return migration is a common event that occurs during the migrating process. However, studies on migration frequently imply that it is a one-way process with no possibility of reversal (Ghosh, 2001). Prior to the 1960s, "return migration" was hardly ever utilised in international literature or migration studies. In his fundamental papers on the "laws of migration," Ravenstein, the pioneer of migration studies, mentioned "counter streams" (King, 1986). Since 2000, however, more studies have been conducted that look at return migration from a variety of angles (Kushminder, 2011).

Scholars have made numerous attempts to define return migration. According to Gmelch (1980), return migration refers to emigrants' journeys back to their original countries to dwell there. According to his concept, returning permanently means resettling in the native community. Throughout the literature, the words counter stream migration, reflex migration, retro-migration, back migration, and U-turn migration are frequently used interchangeably to describe return movement (King, 2000). The majority of the time, return migrants do not include those who travel overseas and then return for a vacation with no plans to stay in their home country.

The large-scale return migration started in the 1980s, and it was during the Gulf Crisis, according to the history of repatriation in India. Numerous thousands of Indians lost their jobs as a result of the dispute that broke out among the Gulf states. Around 131,900 persons, according to Nayyar (1994), are thought to have left the Gulf between 1983 and 1986. According to Zachariah et al. (2002), between 1988 and 1992, a total of 1,47,000 Keralite migrants returned. In Kerala, the process of emigration and repatriation is nothing new. In the previous two decades, return migration has grown in significance. It now has a significant impact on returnees and their families, as well as on the demography and economy of the State.

4.10 Reasons for return migration

International migrants are shown a rising propensity to return to their home country after arriving in their new homeland. The motivations behind these returns might vary from immigrant to immigrant and can include sentimental attachments to one's native country, familial relationships, the current economic crisis, the development of human capital, attainment of expected financial status, expiration of a work contract, crisis scenarios, etc. Many authors have tried to group all of these causes under certain ideas.

Many researchers have looked into the causes of return migration, and some of them have produced similar findings. Numerous academics have examined the causes of Middle Eastern, particularly Gulf, return migration. The Gulf migration is very common in Kerala, so it is important to evaluate the causes of the large-scale

return from the Gulf in detail in order to fully comprehend the research issue. Some academics claim that Kerala had a previously unheard-before wave of return migration during the 1991 Gulf War.⁹ They discovered that the migratory movement experienced a halt during this time. According to Zachariah's (2006) study, migrants' contracts expiring and the unfavourable working circumstances in the host nation were the main causes of their repatriation from the Gulf. He noted that while men and women returnees have different motivations, women frequently do so for reasons related to their families, such as providing care for ageing parents, raising young children, and setting up marriages for relatives.

The primary drivers of return migration, according to Rajan's (2013) analysis, were poor work satisfaction, contract expirations, and health-related difficulties. He further said that about 15% of the respondents left their jobs owing to issues including verbal, physical, and sexual abuse as well as unpaid wages. According to Prakash's (2013) research, which supports this conclusion, return migration is mostly a result of labour issues faced by migrants, such as forced repatriation, low pay, non-payment of wages, harsh treatment by the employer, and unfavourable working conditions. In his study, more than 27% of respondents returned because of labour issues, he noted.

In order to understand why Keralite migrants from the Gulf were returning, Zachariah and Rajan (2011) looked at some additional new job rivalry issues. They discovered that the demand for Keralite migrants in the Gulf has decreased due to fair competition and the availability of cheap labour from other Indian states such as Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Tamil Nadu, and West Bengal. The percentage of Kerala residents with ECR passports decreased from 21.3 percent to 16.1 percent between 2008 and 2010, and it is anticipated that this trend will continue in the years to come. Additionally, they looked at how salary differences between Gulf and Kerala for unskilled labour have significantly decreased over the past ten years.

⁹ The 1991 Gulf War, also known as the Persian Gulf War, began when Iraq, led by Saddam Hussein, invaded Kuwait in August 1990, aiming to seize control of its oil reserves. In response, a U.S.-led coalition of forces launched Operation Desert Storm in January 1991, swiftly defeating Iraqi forces and liberating Kuwait by February 1991.

However, the structural reasons that have surfaced in the Gulf in recent years have had a significant impact on the migrant labour. The Gulf states actively implemented labour regulations to guarantee and secure job opportunities for its local citizens while also lowering the unemployment rate. The Saudi government has regularly changed the country's employment laws to benefit young Saudis. The Middle East has recently been a less certain place to find work for Indian labour migrants. Due to a substantial surplus of outside foreign labour supply compared to local demand, the market situation in the Gulf has changed.

4.11 Types of return migration

Generally, Return Migration can be divided into two categories: forced and voluntary returns. Returning voluntarily is making an assisted or unassisted trip back to one's own country, a country of transit, or another nation. There are two sorts of voluntary returns. Assisted Voluntary Return and Spontaneous Return. Spontaneous return refers to the voluntary return of migrants that takes place without any help from the government, the country, or the international community. Assisted voluntary return refers to the voluntary return of stranded migrants that receives administrative, financial, and logistical support. The reverse of voluntary return, forced return includes forcing or compelling migrants to return for a variety of reasons.

As the motives for returning vary, there are various types of return migration. Cerase suggests the typology that has been used the most frequently out of those mentioned by many authors. He divided the four forms of return migration into those caused by failure, conservatism, retirement, and innovation (Cerese, 1974). According to the timing of the return and the decision to make it, Batistella (2018) recently distinguished four categories of returns. Return of Crisis, Return of Setback, Return of Achievement, Return of Completion.

- a) Return of achievement: At the conclusion of the migration project (or contract), the immigrant returns willingly after having fulfilled the reason they travelled overseas.

- b) Return of completion: After the contract is finished, the migrant returns, but it is not a voluntary return because the migrant would have preferred to stay abroad for an additional period or to travel abroad once again, but it is not possible.
- c) Return of setback: The migrant leaves freely but before the immigration process is complete for a variety of reasons, such as dissatisfaction with the working environment, familial obligations, personal or professional abuse, or involvement in trafficking.
- d) Return of crisis: generated by events such as political unrest or environmental catastrophe. The repatriation of unauthorised immigrants is also a part of the involuntary return (Batistella, 2018).

Table 4.7

Trend of return emigration in Kerala (1998-2018)

Year	REM	Increase	Percent Increase
1998	739245	---	---
2003	893942	154697	17.3
2008	1157127	263185	22.7
2011	1150347	6780	---
2013	1252471	102124	7.6
2018	1294796	42325	3.3

Source: Kerala Migration Survey, 2018

KMS 2018 estimates that 1.3 million people have emigrated back to Kerala, which is around 60% of all emigrants from Kerala. The information demonstrates a declining rate of return migration growth over the previous two decades.

Table 4.8. Return emigration, district -wise 1998-2018

District	Number					Increase/decrease in return-Migration with five-year interval			
	2018	2013	2008	2003	1998	2018-2013	2013-2008	2008-2003	2003-1998
Thiruvananthapuram	93662	218945	215280	103059	118878	-125283	3665	112221	-15819
Kollam	165504	127978	124066	69314	74106	37526	3912	54752	-4792
Pathanamthitta	54506	36285	60554	83502	54537	18221	-24269	-22948	28965
Alappuzha	99929	70104	51024	43109	34572	29825	19080	7915	8537
Kottayam	41775	33898	26448	28368	18164	7877	7450	-1920	10204
Idukki	6137	3242	3213	3766	5017	2895	29	-553	-1251
Ernakulam	23929	69545	68860	74435	45028	-45616	685	-5575	29407
Thrissur	94279	103803	174655	86029	116788	-9524	-70852	88626	-30759
Palakkad	57664	12383	85318	55008	39238	45281	-72935	30310	15770
Malappuram	309881	299857	219736	141537	123750	10024	80121	78199	17787
Kozhikode	151417	107491	72405	109101	60910	43926	35086	-36696	48191
Wayanad	12046	12581	1930	3852	3327	-535	10651	-1922	525
Kannur	94457	109145	26416	45394	28263	-14688	82729	-18978	17131
Kasaragod	89610	47212	27222	47468	16667	42398	19990	-20246	30801
KERALA	1294796	1252471	1157127	893942	739245	42325	95344	263185	154697

Source: (Kerala Migration Survey, 2018)

According to Kerala migration survey (2018) Malappuram, with 309881, is leading the way in terms of return migrants, followed by Kollam (165504) and Kozhikode (151417). The largest emigrant loss during the past five years has been in Palakkad, with 45281, followed by Kozhikode, with 43926, and Kasaragod, with 42398. Idukki (42398) has the lowest reported return-migration rate.

Table: 4.9.
Reasons for return

Reasons	Percent
To retire	7.2
Lost job/laid off	29.4
Family issues	11.8
Illness	14.4
To care for elderly	3.0
Accomplished goals for migration	3.9
Prefer to work in Kerala	7.3
Visa expired	1.1
Low salary	7.6
Financial crisis	0.9
Over burden of Job	0.3
No salary	0.7
Others	12.3
Total	100.0

Source: (Kerala Migration Survey, 2018)

The primary cause for Keralites to return to their native country is job loss or being laid off in the destination nations, according to the Kerala Migration Survey (2018), which found that this is the main factor in 29.4% of cases. The drop in oil prices and the ensuing financial crisis in the host nations have resulted in a large-scale return migration to the state, particularly from the Gulf countries, which has resulted in the loss of employment for many NRKs. 14.4% of migrants had to return because of health issues brought on by accidents and illness. About 12% of emigrants returned because of personal reasons like family funerals, the education of their children, fertility issues, and other things.

4.12 Impact of return migration

As it has a significant impact on the economy, the return of migrants from the host country to their country of origin has recently attracted more attention. The return migration has a significant socioeconomic influence on all the nations

involved in the migration as the origin, transit, and destination. In addition, if immigrants return to their home countries after spending many years working abroad, they frequently experience difficulties reintegrating. Acute uncertainty may be experienced by some due to a number of structural and individual problems. The difficulties that the returnees encountered can be summarized up follows:

Figure: 4.4. Challenges faced by returnees



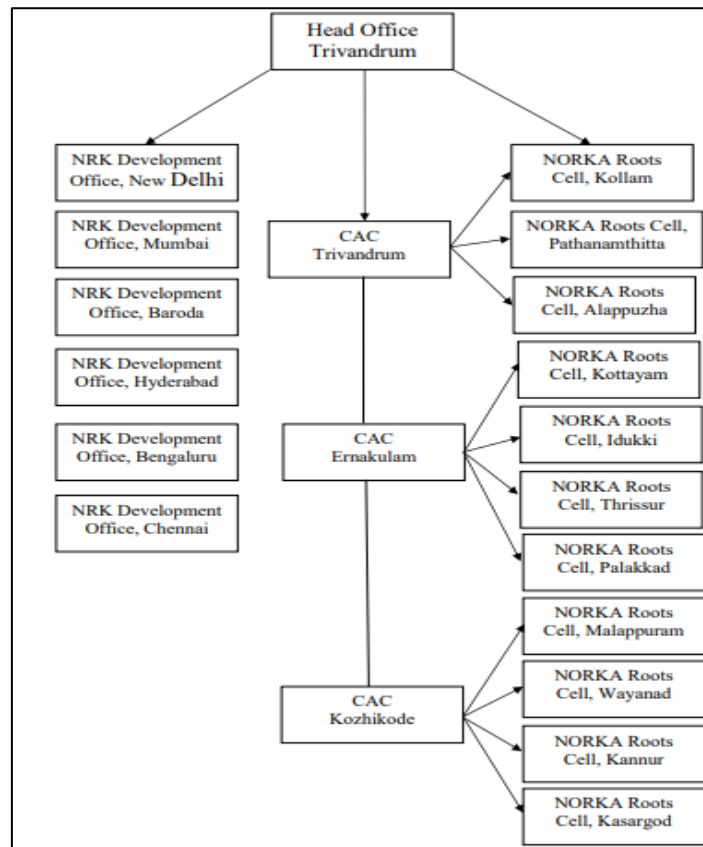
Indebtedness and a poor financial status are seen as the main challenges faced by migrants after their return. It shows that migrants who attempted to improve their financial situation by emigrating failed. Due to a lack of employment prospects after returning, the state's current unemployment rate exacerbates returnees' concerns. The number of workers migrating from other states is rising, which increases unemployment in Kerala and makes it difficult for the government to reintegrate returnees.

4.13 WELFARE OF MIGRANTS

NORKA ROOTS

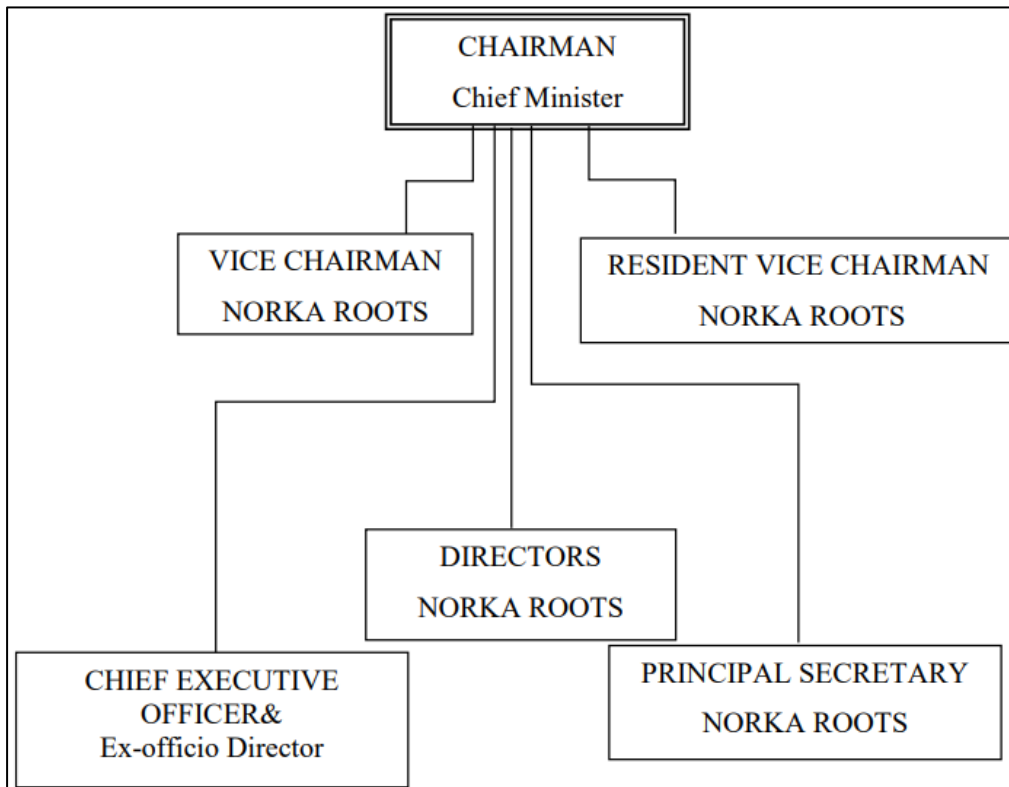
In 2002, NORKA ROOTS was established as a transformed version of NORKWA (Non-Resident Keralites Welfare Agency). Its duties include addressing the complaints of NRKs, defending their rights, rehabilitating returnee migrants, and enable people to take advantage of the opportunities in the state, channelling their resources, talents, and expertise. As a private limited company operating under the NORKA Department, NORKA ROOTS was created in accordance with section 25 of the Companies Act, 1956. Later, in 2008, it was converted to a public limited corporation. It serves as a conduit between Keralan expatriates and the Keralan government and offers social security to them and their families. NORKA ROOTS serves as a central hub and single point of contact for all matters pertaining to Kerala emigrants.

Figure 4.5 Organizational structure of NORKA ROOTS



NORKA ROOTS is a government implementation organisation that falls under the NORKA department and was created specifically for the welfare of non-resident Keralites. Due to a variety of factors, NORKWA was unable to achieve its goals; In order to ensure efficient operation, NORKA ROOTS was incorporated as a company under Section 25 of the Companies Act 1956. It was anticipated that NORKA ROOTS would operate with greater financial and operational independence, perform its tasks more effectively and with greater accountability, and have more freedom to raise outside capital on the open market and develop new revenue streams.

Figure 4.6 Board structure of NORKA ROOTS



Since NORKA ROOTS is a government-owned business, the chief minister serves as the board's chairman, with NORKA Minister serving as vice chairman. The government also proposes candidates for Chief Executive Officer and Secretary of the company. The regular operations and other duties of NORKA ROOTS are governed by formalities and processes involving an effective administrative

framework. As a result, executing functions and putting plans and policies into effect require time. Permanent, contract, and daily wage workers are all part of the crew at NORKA ROOTS.

4.14 Schemes & Services

Millions of non-residents Keralites across the world have access to NORKA ROOTS' numerous programmes and services for their welfare. It is also taking steps to carry out innovative plans in order to address the changing needs of current migrants, potential migrants, and returning citizens. Following are the programmes and services offered by NORKA ROOTS.

1. Certificate Attestation

The Keralites must go through a lot of processes in order to travel abroad and explore the opportunities there by broadening their horizons of opportunity. One of them is the attestation of their academic credentials, which is required for employment and advanced studies. According to the rules set forth by the Ministry of Human Resources Development (MHRD), NORKA ROOTS is the state's preeminent agency and has been authorised by the Government of India to provide attestation of educational diplomas issued in Kerala. Since 2004, NORKA ROOTS has been attesting certificates. There are three different types of attestations available: Human Resource Development (HRD), Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Government of India, and Embassy. Only educational documents certified by the Kerala Government (UGC/AICTE/NCERT) are subject to HRD authentication. The educational certificates are authenticated by Authentication Officers from the General Education Department in accordance with MHRD regulations. At first, attestation of certificates was done through the three authentication centres run by NORKA ROOTS in the districts of Thiruvananthapuram, Ernakulam, and Kozhikode. Later, attestation was done through NORKA Cells, and if necessary, Collectorate offices in every district of Kerala.

Apostille attestation services are also offered by NORKA ROOTS for personal papers such birth certificates, death certificates, affidavits, powers of attorney, marriage certificates, and academic credentials for secondary level study, diplomas, and degrees. The requirement for legalising foreign public papers was eliminated by the Hague Convention, which had 104 signatories and took place on October 5, 1961. As a result, authentication of certificates and documents by these member nations' embassies or high commissions is not required, and they accept apostille attestation instead. Since India is a signatory to the Hague Convention, Patiala House, a branch of the Ministry of External Affairs, began apostille attestation on August 29, 2007. The apostille of certificates for usage in member nations is the sole responsibility of MEA, and the 104 Hague Convention members recognise this apostille.

The relevant agencies in the state where the document was issued must certify the validity of all personal and educational documents. The state's official agency for personal document authentication is the home department. The Regional Authentication Centres of NORKA ROOTS are offering the service of authentication for the educational documents. These documents should be delivered to MEA for the apostille after initial authentication. The validated certificates are forwarded to the Ministry of External Affairs via NORKA ROOTS, who serves as a facilitator.

2. NRK ID Card/ Pravasi ID Card

Since its introduction in August 2008, the NRK identity card has served as NRKs' primary point of contact with the state government. Every NRK is entitled to use all of NORKA ROOTS' programmes and services with the use of the Pravasi ID card, which serves many purposes. The ID card has a maximum of Rs. 2 Lakhs for permanent/partial disability and a Personal Accident insurance coverage of up to Rs. 4 Lakh. Permanent or partial disability insurance is provided without a premium being paid. The ID card is available to NRKs who have been living or working outside of Norway for at least six months with a current passport and visa and who are between the ages of 18 and 70. The card can be renewed after three years of use.

The New India Insurance Company handles the insurance coverage, and each card has a different master policy number. The NRK ID card is given to all NRKs living or working abroad, and it also serves as a foundation for the Kerala government's long-term policy development. In order to receive applications from the NRKs in the three zones of the state—the Southern zone, Central zone, and Northern Zone—NRK ID card cells have been established in the regional centres of NORKA ROOTS in Thiruvananthapuram, Ernakulam, and Kozhikode districts. Subject to meeting all other qualifying requirements, the ID card of NRKs who are currently employed or residing abroad may be renewed three months before the card's expiration date with a renewal cost.

Table 4.10 Number of beneficiaries of NRK ID cards

NRK ID CARDS	
2008-11 (Old Scheme)	133632
2011-12	7341
2012-13	20354
2013-14	19888
2014-15	10247
2015-16	11504
2016-17	44141
2017-18	223844
2018-19	70764
2019-20	42440
2020-21	6504
2021-22	11433
2022-23	7799
2023-24	8365

Source: official records of NORKA ROOTS

The table displays the data regarding the number of ID cards issued each year from 2008 to 2024. The issuance varies significantly over the years without showing any pattern. The highest number of ID cards (2,23,844) were issued in 2017-18 while only 7341 ID cards were issued in 2011-12. The recent years exhibits a decline in the issuance of ID cards as compared to the year 2017-18.

3.Student ID CARD

The NRK ID card, which is designed for all students studying abroad, is comparable to the student ID card. Additionally, NORKA ROOTS demands that students who have been admitted to pursue higher education abroad register for a variety of courses. The student ID card provides the same insurance protection that NRK ID card holders are entitled to.

4. NRK Insurance Card

For persons who have been working or living in another state of India for at least two years and who fall between the age range of 18 to 70, the NRK Insurance card was launched in June 2012. It provides out-migrants with an identification so they can use NORKA ROOTS' services. The insurance is administered by New India Assurance Company and gives a maximum of Rs. 2 lakhs for permanent, total, and partial disability coverage and a maximum of Rs. 4 lakhs for personal accident insurance coverage. Similar to the NRK ID card, the NRK Insurance card has a three-year expiration date and may be renewed at any time.

5. NORKA Pravasi Raksha Insurance Policy (NPRI)

A new health insurance programme called Pravasi Raksha Insurance Policy has been launched by NORKA ROOTS for the benefit of expatriates and their families who have made foreign residences. The initiative, which was started in collaboration with the New India Assurance firm, intends to give the NRKs who need it access to critical illness treatment. The critical sickness treatment allowance from NORKA ROOTS is Rs. 1 lakh, and the accident insurance coverage includes Rs. 2 lakhs for life and up to Rs. 1 lakh for total or permanent disability. All NRKs and members of their families who are between the ages of 18 and 60 and have a valid passport and visa for at least six months and are living or working abroad are eligible for the insurance. The NPRI provides coverage for 13 serious conditions, including cancer, renal failure, major organ transplants, multiple sclerosis, primary pulmonary arterial hypertension, coronary artery by-pass grafts, aorta graft surgery, heart valve replacement, stroke, myocardial infarction, coma, total blindness, and paralysis.

6. SANTHWANA

In the year 2002, the Government of Kerala established the "SANTHWANA" NORKA Distress Relief Fund for Return Emigrants. With this programme, the NRK returnees who were unemployed prior to their return but had worked abroad for at least two years are intended to get financial aid. If someone worked overseas for less than 10 years, his post-return period should not be longer than the time he spent working there. This is a one-time programme offered from Government Plan Fund to NRKs with a family income of less than Rs.100,000.

It is given to cover the returned NRK's medical costs or those of his or her dependant family members. Up to Rs. 50000 is granted by NORKA ROOTS for the treatment of major medical problems such cancer, heart surgery, chronic or significant kidney disease, brain hemorrhage, paralysis, and severe disability caused by numerous accidents. Up to Rs. 20,000 is provided for the treatment of other types of disorders.

Table 4.11

Participation of fund utilization under Santhwana scheme

Financial Year	Fund Utilisation(Rs)	No, of Beneficiaries
2004-05	691077	50
2005-06	1322255	103
2006-07	5370000	52
2007-08	592935	70
2008-09	1505000	179
2009-10	3541500	394
2010-11	5598000	741
2011-12	5459500	636
2012-13	15684344	1011
2013-14	62444557	1925
2015-16	112873419	1689
2016-17	127089479	2200
2017-18	63000000	1053
2018-19	250000000	4156
2019-20	242500000	4102
2020-21	270000000	4445
2021-22	300000000	4614
2022-23	261873414	4016
2023-24	261464286	2076

Source: official records of NORKA ROOTS

The above table provides the data regarding the number of beneficiaries and fund utilization under Santhwana scheme from the year 2004 to 2024. The fund utilisation saw a massive increase from the year 2012-13, peaking in 2021-22 at Rs.30 crores. The number of beneficiaries also exhibits an increasing trend from 50 in 2004-05 to 4614 in 2021-22. Even though the subsequent years witnessed a decline in both the fund utilisation and the number of beneficiaries, 2023-24 shows a significant drop in beneficiaries despite high fund utilisation.

7. Chairman Fund

In 2009, the board of directors of NORKA ROOTS decided to launch a brand-new programme named the Chairman Fund in order to improve the company's welfare services. The programme aims to support all NRKs, both those who live and/or work overseas and in other Indian states. The 20% of money from Certificate attestation that goes into the fund's core is. With the approval of the board of directors, this fund offers financial support to eligible NRKs and their dependant family members. NRKs can apply for help if they have lived abroad for at least two years and their yearly household income is less than Rs.100,000. Based on the NRKs' circumstances, financial support is given in the event of death as well as for medical treatments. Details of the Chairman fund scheme's revenue and expenses are shown below.

Table 4.12
\ Participation of fund utilization under Chairman fund scheme

Year	Utilisation (Rs)	No. of Beneficiaries
2009-10	661000	121
2010-11	975000	134
2011-12	1668000	166
2012-13	7482652	347
2013-14	3272500	110
2014-15	2447500	85
2015-16	2425000	24
2016-17	500000	5
2017-18	0	0
2018-19	0	0
2019-20	100000	2
2020-21	0	0
2021-22	140000	3
2022-23	300000	4
2023-24	1305000	53

Source: officical records of NORKA ROOTS

The data indicates that fund utilization and number of beneficiaries under Chairman fund experienced a period of steady growth from 2009–10 to a peak in 2012–13, when both fund utilisation (₹ 74.8 lakh) and the number of beneficiaries (347) reached their highest levels. However, from 2013–14 onwards, both the data shows a sharp decline may be due to restructuring of the program.

8. KARUNYAM

In order to help with the cost of repatriating the mortal remains of expatriates, NORKA ROOTS established the Karunyam fund in 2009. The support is given to the NRKs' legitimate heirs as payment for expenditures. Road, train, or air transportation may be used for repatriation from other states or from other countries, depending on whatever method is most practical and affordable. Only rare circumstances, such as when the deceased NRK or his relatives are in severe financial straits, are intended to be covered by this plan. The deceased NRK had to be legally employed or residing abroad with a current Indian passport, or in any Indian state other than Kerala, in order to be eligible for aid. The heirs of the NRKs have already covered the costs of repatriation, thus our help is a one-time grant. The Government Plan Fund would only provide a maximum of Rs. 50000 in cases of death overseas and Rs. 15000 in cases of death within India but outside Kerala.

Table 4.13.

Participation of Fund Utilization under Karunya scheme

Year	Utilisation (Rs)	No of Beneficiaries
2010-11	105000	4
2011-12	60000	3
2012-13	157200	6
2013-14	685000	15
2014-15	275000	8
2015-16	360800	11

Source: official records of NORKA ROOTS

The data shows that the highest fund utilisation was done in the year 2013-14 for 15 beneficiaries and the lowest in the year 2011-12. Under this scheme, fund utilisation increases with the number of beneficiaries and vice versa.

9. NDPREM

A programme named the NORKA Department Project for Return Emigrants (NDPREM) has been launched by the Keralan government to assist NRK returnees in finding ways to secure a reliable source of income and a respectable lifestyle. By providing rapid training and support in addition to the subsidies, the programme aims to encourage the NRKs' entrepreneurial abilities. By doing this, NORKA ROOTS seeks to create a long-term business model that will be sustainable for the support of Returnees. The major nationalised banks, cooperative banks, scheduled banks, and other financial institutions in the state have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with NORKA ROOTS to implement the scheme, and they will approve the Loan to start new business ventures in the desired regions of the returned emigrants subject to the terms. For the first four years of the programme, NORKA ROOTS is offering a seed capital of up to Rs. 30 lakhs in exchange for prompt repayment, as well as a 15% capital subsidy and a 3% interest rate refund.

Prior to the screening and selection processes, NORKA ROOTS also offers a training and orientation camp for the applicants under this programme in order to boost their confidence as well as their managerial and entrepreneurship skills. In addition, the Centre for Management Development (CMD) is assisting the programme by giving project reports to the entrepreneurs and helping them during the first six months of starting their commercial ventures. The programme is open to returned NRKs who have lived or worked abroad for at least two years. This rehabilitation package is also available to Societies, Trusts, Companies, MSMEs, Agricultural, Industrial, and Commercial entities established by a group of returned immigrants.

10. NORKA Business Facilitation Centre (NBFC)

The state government came up with the idea for the NORKA Business Facilitation Centre (NBFC) as a new programme to help NRKs and NRK returnees invest in Kerala by starting new business enterprises. In order to help potential NRK investors realise their investing dreams without incurring significant processing costs and with minimal risk, NBFC works with the International Advisory Council (IAC). The Center's project consultants give accurate information and raise awareness about the many investment prospects in Kerala as well as about the current legal prerequisites, license requirements, and other guidelines for different investment outlets. The project consultants build a new project proposal or modify an already existing project that is stored in the NBFC's repository based on the project idea and the specifics of the resources and inputs with the investors. The Centre also serves as a conduit for securing different necessary approvals and facilitating infrastructure projects, such as industrial parks and estates. Public/scheduled banks, agricultural, industrial, and other government ministries, as well as SIDCO, KINFRA, KFC, and KSIDC, all support NBFC's work as independent project consultants.

11. Pravasi Legal Aid Cell (PLAC)

The Pravasi Legal Aid Cell, also known as PLAC, was created primarily to support NRKs who are dealing with legal challenges at home or in other Indian states. This programme also covers challenges with work, immigration, and other social issues as well as problems with passports and visas. The goal of PLAC is to offer legal aid to NRKs who are detained overseas for minor charges or through no fault of their own. Additionally, it provides the women NRKs who are in need of shelter travel aid so they may get to the Embassy. Additionally, PLAC runs legal education campaigns in all of Kerala's districts as well as in India's largest cities.

12. Swapnasaphalyam

Many of the emigrants from Kerala are semi-skilled or unskilled, and they are unaware of the laws, customs, and languages of other nations. As a result, they

endure numerous hardships and are sent to prison for insignificant and inadvertent infractions. Even after being freed from prison, they continue to struggle for a job, a place to live, and food. The Swapnasaphalyam programme, launched by NORKA ROOTS, aims to offer free plane tickets to bring back those prisoners who have been released but are in need and unable to buy the air tickets. The holders of visit, umrah, and haj visas are not covered by this programme. The applicant for this aid may be the incumbent himself, a close relative, an NRI association, or a non-governmental organisation.

13. Pre-Departure Orientation Programme (PDOP)

The Pre-Departure Orientation Programme, often known as PDOP, was started by NORKA ROOTS in 2006. It tries to educate potential immigrants on the general employment landscape abroad. Aside from that, PDOP is used to convey all important information pertaining to passport, visa, employment contract, emigration rules, illegal recruitment agencies, language and customs overseas, travel procedures, etc. As a result, this comprehensive training programme is periodically held throughout the state and covers all laws and regulations in other nations. PDOP is now delivered by the Centre for Management Development (CMD) and is a one-day programme.

Table 4.14.

Number of beneficiaries of PDOP

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
No. of Programmes	20	15	26
No. of Participants	975	905	2207
Fund utilisation	3627336	6500000	4488028

Source: official records of NORKA ROOTS

The above table exhibits the number of programmes offered under PDOP from 2021-22 to 2023-24, number of participants and the amount of fund utilised under these programmes. During 2021-23, 20 programmes were conducted for which an amount of Rs.36,27,336 was spent. Even though the number of

programmes and participants decreased to 15 and 905 respectively in the next year 2022-23 the fund utilisation shows a dramatic increase to 65,00,000. Despite the increase in the number of programmes and beneficiaries in 2023-24, the expenditure significantly decreased to 44,88,028.

14. Job Portal

As an online platform to bridge the gap between foreign companies and job seekers in Kerala, Job Portal was developed by NORKA ROOTS. Through this platform, international companies can post information about open positions and job seekers can submit online applications for the positions that suit them, facilitating efficient information interchange. By lowering relocation costs, the job portal makes safe migration possible. The details of the returned NRKs can also be registered in the site, which will create the NRK data bank. NORKA ROOTS continually assesses the needs of the NRKs in order to come up with solutions and make successful job searching and recruitment easier.

15. Skill Upgradation Training Programme (SUP)

The Skill Upgradation Programme, which was established in 2008, closes this knowledge gap by offering the training in cutting-edge technologies and skills required to compete on the global labour market. By teaching technical coaching, communication skills, computer skills, and soft skills, the training curriculum aims to improve the talents of young Keralites. In addition, SUP includes information on job contracts, visas, recruitment processes, and other topics. The training plan is carried out in cooperation with reputable private technical institutes as well as Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) under the Directorate of Industrial Training, Government of Kerala. Technical training facilities located throughout Kerala are implementing these programs. Below are the specifics on the number of programs and participants.

Table 4.15.

Number of beneficiaries of SUP

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
No. programmes	25	13	27	11	1
No of Participants	1083	433	1040	441	55
Fund utilisation	3915800	20000000	17252281	15747192	9500000

Source: official records of NORKA ROOTS

This table presents the number of courses offered, number of participants and fund utilisation under Skill upgradation program. The number of courses and correspondingly the number of participants of SUP has significantly reduced from 2019-20 to 2023-24 despite the rise in 2021-22. However, the fund utilization was in its peak (Rs.2,00,00,000) in 2020-21 where there were only 13 programs and 433 participants.

16. NORKA ROOTS Global Contact Centre

On September 2, 2011, NORKA ROOTS launched its contact centre service to offer information and guidance about its numerous services, programmes, and activities, as well as the NORKA Department offices, Kerala Pravasi Welfare Board, NRI Commission, etc. There are separate toll-free numbers offered for NRKs who live in India and abroad. Every day the phone centre is open at the NORKA ROOTS head office in Trivandrum.

17. Recruitment

As directed by the Ministry of External Affairs, NORKA ROOTS is an authorised recruitment agency with a current recruitment licence under the Emigration Act 1983. It was established in 2006 with the goal of assisting those looking to emigrate find suitable career possibilities overseas in a totally secure, legal, transparent, and ethical way. In order to staff numerous hospitals in the Gulf States and other international nations, NORKA ROOTS has been recruiting nurses, doctors, and technicians. Through NORKA ROOTS, domestic helpers are also hired

in 18 countries where emigration checks are necessary. The state government is making a significant effort to combat visa fraud and unlawful recruitment.

NORKA ROOTS has established an e-migrate system through which international companies can make job demands in order to facilitate secure offshore recruiting from Kerala. Following receipt of the request, NORKA ROOTS carefully considers the specifics of the foreign company, including their job description, remuneration, and other employee incentives, etc., and publishes the results on its official website. Job searchers can apply for appropriate positions online, and following an interview, the selected individuals will receive an offer letter. Before leaving the country, candidates must go through a number of processes, including visa processing, medical examinations, and emigration clearance.

18. NORKA Emergency Ambulance Service

In order to assist the financially struggling NRKs, NORKA ROOTS has launched a new programme called the NORKA Emergency Ambulance Service. Free ambulance transportation is organised to take sick NRKs to their homes or to the hospitals, as well as to transfer their deadly remains. As a result, the long-standing request of NRKs has been met, and they are no longer dependent on the goodwill of NRK associations or others to cover their travel costs. At Kerala's four airports, this service is offered.

19. NORKA ROOTS Directors Scholarship

For the children of non-resident Keralites who fall under the Emigration Check Required (ECR) category, NORKA ROOTS has developed a new programme called the Directors Scholarship Scheme. People who work or have worked as unskilled labourers, house drivers, housemaids, etc. are included in the ECR group. A maximum of two children of NRKs or returnees with annual incomes under Rs. 1.5 lakh are eligible for scholarships. The scholarship is awarded based on the percent of the required grade. To qualify for a scholarship for postgraduate study, students must receive a minimum grade of 75% in science courses and 60%

in arts courses. A qualifying exam pass rate of at least 75% is required for graduate courses.

20. NORKA Fare

Among the other outstanding difficulties, the NRKs highlight the seasonal increase in the cost of airline tickets as a key issue. The ticket prices typically increase by a factor of two, three, or even more. Therefore, NORKA ROOTS decided to help the NRKs by offering travel discounts for those who have NORKA ID cards and their families. For this reason, NORKA ROOTS reached an agreement with Kuwait Airlines and Oman Airlines, two renowned airlines. According to this arrangement, passengers from the NRKs who fly with the Airlines will receive a flat discount of 7% off base airfare. The NORKA ID card bearer, their spouse, and any children under the age of 18 are all eligible for this benefit, which is known as the NORKA Fare. The website of the airline and sales offices in India both offer this service.

21. Pravasi Thanal Scheme

A brand-new financial aid programme called the Pravasi Thanal plan has been introduced by NORKA ROOTS for the unmarried daughters of NRKs who have passed away domestically or overseas as a result of Covid 19. For girls under the age of 18, Rs. 25000 will be given as a fixed deposit, while for girls beyond 18, it would be given as financial aid. Applications for this one-time grant may be filed online. The applicant's Aadhaar card, a copy of the applicant's SSLC diploma or relationship certificate, bank account information, and a certificate from the village official attesting to the applicant's single status are all required documents for unmarried daughters of expatriates in order to receive assistance.

22. NORKA Pravasi Bhadratha Schemes

For the repatriated NRKs who lost their jobs and were stranded in the state owing to the Covid 19 outbreak, subsequent lockdowns, flight suspensions, and entrance restrictions in the countries of employment, the NORKA Department has created two rehabilitation plans. For the state economy to recover, it was also

necessary to provide the crisis-affected returnees with a stable means of subsistence. A coordinated reintegration programme, which consists of two programmes, was developed in attempt to reintegrate the repatriated NRKs back into society.

4.15 Lok Kerala Sabha (LKS)

As a democratic forum for Keralites who live all over the world, the government of Kerala established the Lok Kerala Sabha. It serves as a common platform for non-resident Keralites to integrate into the economy, society, politics, and culture while ensuring a global community. Synergy in Kerala. LKS is a brand-new democratic initiative in Kerala's history because it tackles all of the NRKs' issues and ensures that their views are heard. The first LKS, took place on January 12 and 13, 2018. It has 351 members, including legislative assembly members, foreign and other state representatives, and particular foreigners who have returned to their home countries. Prospective members also include the distinguished NRKs who have made outstanding contributions to their disciplines. To thoroughly discuss the problems brought up in the LKS and create reports with the help of experts, standing committees have been constituted. LKS seeks to advance the state by properly utilising NRKs' knowledge and experience. It also covers NRK topics like safe migration, finding new job markets, welfare, investment opportunities, etc. and seeks to spread awareness of Kerala's distinctive culture and heritage across the huge diaspora.

4.16 Impact of Remittance economy

Remittances from migrant workers in Gulf nations drove Kerala's housing revolution in the years after the 1970s. One important resource for comprehending the mechanics of this transition is the Kerala Migration Study, which was carried out by the Centre for Development Studies in Thiruvananthapuram. The study found that emigrant-owned homes had a value index of 7.05, which was much higher than the 4.3 index for non-migrant-owned homes (Zachariah et al., 2002). Additionally, a remarkable 87 percent of migrant homes were electrified, surpassing the non-migrant homes' 66 percent electrification rate.

However, the effects of this housing boom go beyond its advantages. The cost of building materials, labour, and land all grew in response to the growing housing demand. However, these effects have not been consistent and have primarily impacted low-income households, which has led to worries about socioeconomic inequality in the state.

Three international airports that have been built in Kerala—Calicut, Cochin, and Kannur—are outstanding instances of how the Gulf migration has left its mark on the state's infrastructure development. These airports were made possible by Gulf migrants' initiative and affiliation, proving their real contribution to the state's overall growth and connectedness.

Kerala's business community saw a notable boom in the 1980s and 1990s, marked by a rise in shopping centres, jewellery stores, lodging facilities, and hospitals that met worldwide standards. This growth is directly related to the influx of remittances from Gulf migrants, which creates an atmosphere that is favourable to business endeavours and financial success. The state's economic growth and diversification were significantly impacted by Gulf migration, as evidenced by the commercial landscape.

Kerala's borders are not the only places where Gulf migration has had a profoundly positive impact on growth. With so many Gulf migrants passing through the Bombay airport in the 1980s and 1990s, there was a demand for lodging and other amenities in Bombay city. Approximately 2/3 of migrants passed through the airport in Bombay, and 1/7 passed through Delhi, according to Nair (1998). There are now a lot of work prospects in the home nation thanks to this influx, which has sparked the formation of several manpower consulting organisations in cities like Bombay.

Every year, Indians who migrate to the Gulf get four lakh jobs. Paul and Subash (2005) state that the labour market's primary effect is the decrease of unemployment through worker movement. 37 percent of the migrants had no job at the beginning, according to a research based on sample surveys (Nair 1986). Indian workers with varying degrees of competence were drawn to the Middle East by the

alluring pay and high quality of life offered by the Gulf countries. In certain areas of India, this tendency resulted in a decrease in the unemployment rate. As to the findings of the 1998 Kerala Migration Survey, migration has led to a roughly 3 percent decrease in the unemployment rates in Kerala state (Zakaria et al., 2002). But in comparison to the jobless rate in India, this decrease in unemployment is negligible. The Middle Eastern population as a whole makes up just 1% of India's labour force. However, in some regions of the nation, it also has a significant impact on the employment market. The migration has led to some challenges in Kerala's labour market. The need for several worker categories in Kerala has increased due to the migration of unskilled and semiskilled labourers. Semi-skilled labourers like carpenters, welders, plumbers, drivers, electricians, motor mechanics, and other craftsmen were in high demand on Kerala's labour market (Nair 1986). This shift has three causes (Prakash, 1998): First off, the bulk of immigrants that came to the Gulf were employed in the construction industry, including electricians, carpenters, masons, and other tradespeople. Second, the primary purposes of migrant remittances are home improvement, house construction, house maintenance, and new home construction, all of which increase the need for construction workers. Third, a lack of desire among young people to perform manual labour as a result of higher educational attainment or a rise in living standards brought about by parents who work in Gulf countries. Workers from Tamil Nadu and Karnataka moved to Kerala as a result of the state's labour crisis in the building industry.

A further effect of gulf migration on the labour market has been a rise in vocational training and education. Kerala has seen the opening of several institutions to offer Gulf migrants need-based training. This covers training on building, welding, computer education, machine and motor operations, catering, technician, paramedical courses, etc. (Paul and Subah 2005). A further characteristic of gulf migration is the return migration. The migrants are compelled by their poor pay and short-term work contracts to return home and look for work on the domestic labour market. A large number of returning immigrants decline low-paying positions in the home market. Because of this, a large number of return migrants founded their own businesses, which helped unemployed young people in the domestic labour market

find employment. Additionally, return migrants move to neighbouring Indian states in quest of fresh business possibilities.

4.17 Conclusion

In Indian history, migration has played a significant role in human activities. Indians have been freely moving around the world or being forced to do so by various circumstances. Following the Middle East's oil boom, there was a significant change in the migration trend. A few areas of India have seen changes in their economic circumstances due to remittances from Gulf countries. Kerala accounts for about half of all Indian migrants and remittances to the Gulf countries. Kerala's economy is mostly reliant on remittances from the Gulf countries. The Kerala government launched the Norka Roots programme to support Non-Resident Keralites (NRKs). It offers NRKs a range of services, including financial assistance, job support, and document authentication. The mission of Norka Roots is to serve the needs and worries of Keralites residing overseas.

Employment prospects in numerous fields have been made possible in large part by the remittances to the state. Numerous sectors, including housing, transit, town planning, educational and religious institutions, amenities, and other infrastructure facilities, are affected by migration and the remittances it provided to the state. In comparison to non-migrants, migrants enjoy more opulent dwelling arrangements. The commercial sector, which includes shopping centres, jewellery stores, hotels, malls, medical facilities, and educational institutions, is another area where the development is evident. In conclusion, the socioeconomic circumstances in several areas of Kerala were completely altered by the emigration to Gulf countries.

Gulf migration has been a major factor in Kerala's development, especially as a large percentage of Indian contract workers come from this state. According to Nair (1998) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO, 1988), Kerala accounts for around half of India's contract workers in the Gulf. The present study offers a comprehensive analysis of the many effects of Gulf migration on different facets of Kerala's development, including housing, transit, town planning, utilities, educational and religious institutions, and other infrastructure services.

CHAPTER 5

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

5.1 Introduction

The current chapter is focusing on the analysis and interpretation of the collected data for the study titled “Socio-Economic Impacts of Nitaqat in Kerala: A Study in Malappuram District”. The major aim of this chapter is to conduct a systematic examination of the collected data in order to understand the socio-economic consequences faced by the return migrants from Saudi Arabia by way of the Nitaqat policy implementation.

The data collection was administered in Malappuram district which is consisting of seven taluks. Three panchayats were selected which covers a wide range of geographical and socio-economic status within the district. In this line, a total of 21 panchayats were selected and included in the study. From each panchayat identified, 15 respondents who were affected by the Nitaqat policy were identified and selected. This resulted in a sample size of 315 respondents. The sampling techniques were employed in order to confirm that the sample is able to accurately represent the diverse characteristics of the returnee population.

The data collection was spread over a period of three months. In order to gather the comprehensive information from the respondents, structured questionnaires and unstructured interviews were used in combination. The questionnaire was prepared and designed in a way to capture the different dimensions such as the employment status, income changes, reintegration challenges, social security issues, and access to government welfare measures. The additional qualitative insights derived from the unstructured interviews with the returnees, helped in getting a deeper understanding into the personal experiences and challenges faced by them.

The analysis conducted in this chapter is intended to provide a better and deeper understanding of the socio-economic impacts of the Nitaqat policy on the

return migrants in Malappuram district in order to suggest evidence-driven conclusions and recommendations.

Table 5.1.

Gender wise distribution of respondent

Gender	Respondents	Percentage
Male	315	100
Female	-	-
Total	315	100

Source: survey

The data reveals that all the respondents are the males (100%)

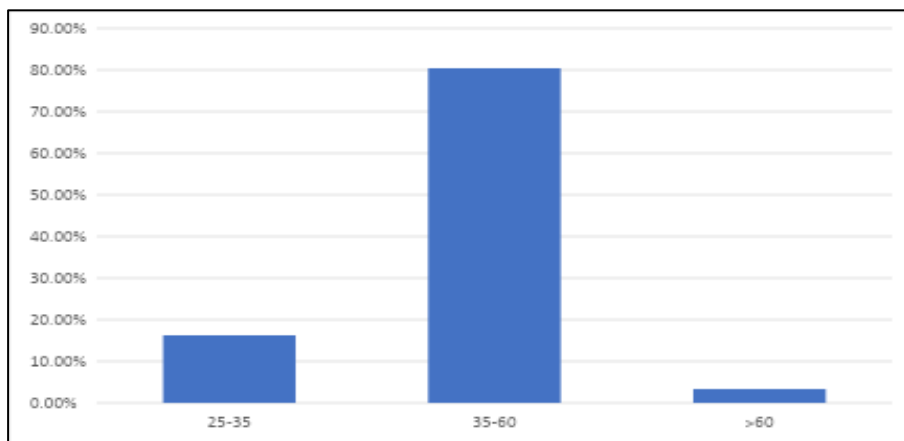
Table 5.2.

Age wise Distribution of Respondents

Age Group	Respondents	Percentage
18-25	-	-
25-35	49	15.6
35-60	285	81
Above 60	11	3.5
Total	315	100

source: survey

Figure 5.1 Age wise Distribution of Respondents



The bulk of responders, (81%), are between the ages of 35 and 60, according to the above table. The age range of 25 to 35 years old is the second largest group, with 15.6% of the total. Just (3.5%) are older than 60, which is a smaller percentage of the sample. Interestingly, no one in the 18–25 age range responded. With little representation from younger and older age groups, the data indicates that the sample is primarily made up of middle-aged people.

Table 5.3.
Religion wise Distribution of Respondents

Religion	Respondents	Percentage
Islam	315	100
Hindu	-	-
Christian	-	-
Others	-	-
Total	315	100

Source: survey

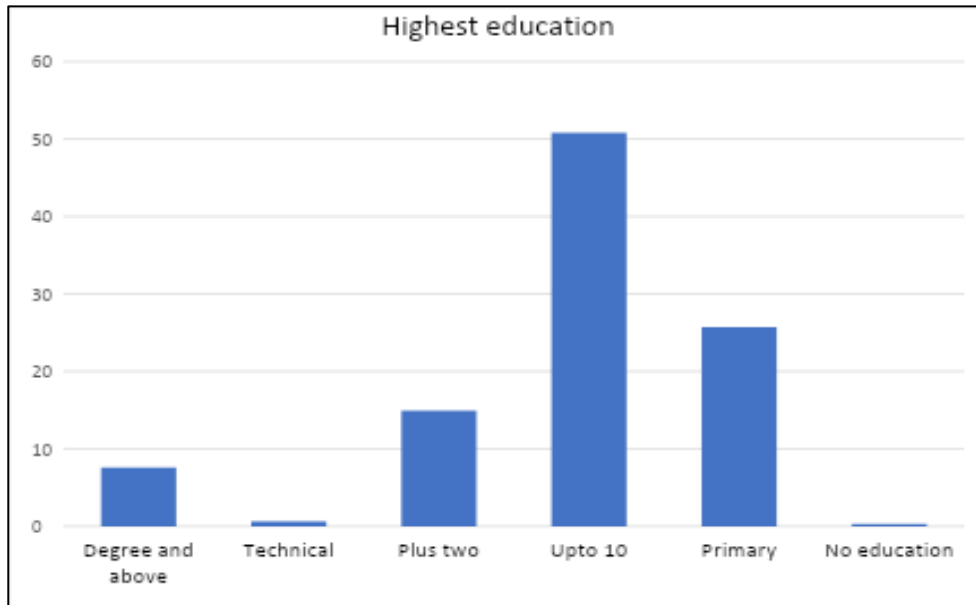
It was found that all the respondents (100%) belong to the Muslim community

Table 5.4.
Distribution of Respondents according to their educational status

Qualification	Respondents	Percentage
No education	1	.3
Primary	81	25.7
Up to 10	160	50.8
Plus two	47	16.9
Degree and above	24	7.6
Technical	2	.6
Total	315	100

Source: survey

Figure 5.2 Distribution of Respondents according to their educational status



According to the table and figure above , the majority of participants—50.8%—have only completed the tenth grade. Those who have finished primary school come in second at 25.7%. Just 16.9% of them have finished their schooling up to the "plus two" level. Only 0.6% have technical qualifications, compared to 7.6% who have a degree or above. Remarkably, only 0.3% of respondents said they had no formal schooling. This distribution demonstrates that although a sizable portion of the respondents have completed at least the tenth grade, higher education levels are less prevalent

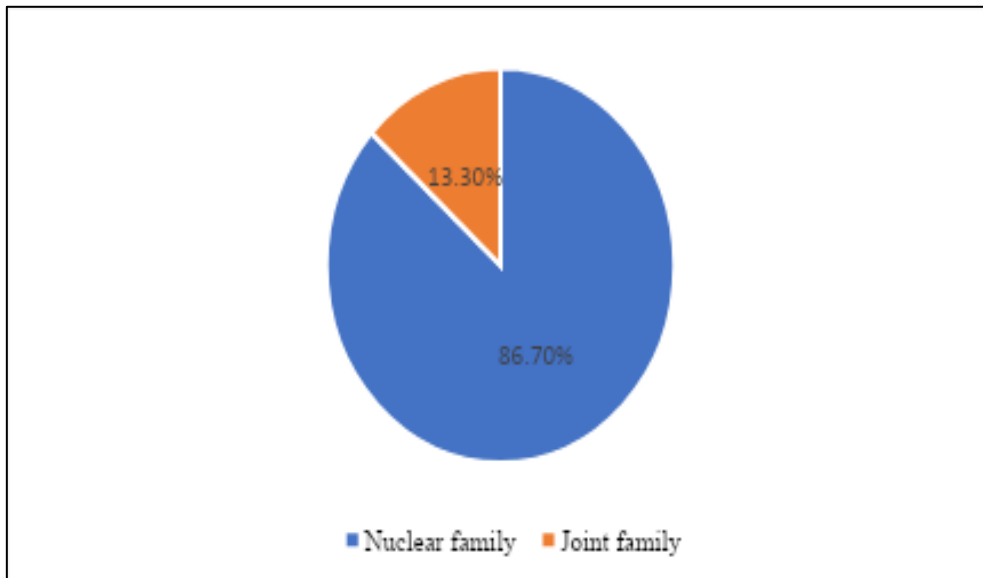
Table 5.5.

Distribution of Respondents according to their family status

Family Status	Respondents	Percentage
Nuclear	273	86.6
Joint family	42	13.3
Total	315	100

Source: survey

Figure 5.3 Distribution of Respondents according to their family status



Majority of the respondents (86.6%) were from nuclear families where around 13.3% were from joint families.

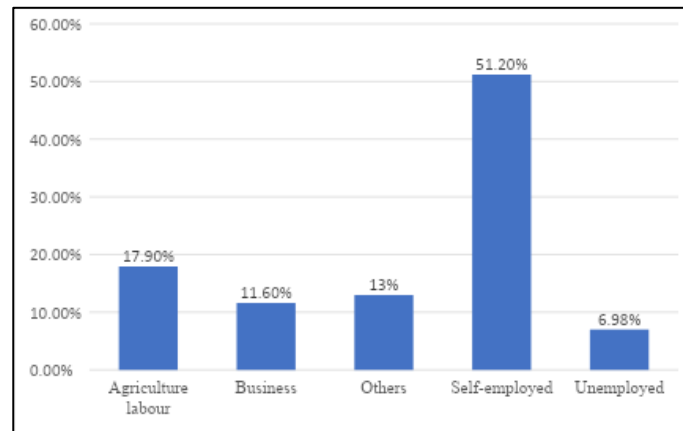
Table 5.6.

Distribution of Respondents according to current occupation

Occupation	Respondents	Percentage
Unemployed	22	6.98
Self employed	160	51.1
Agriculture	56	17.9
Government	-	-
Business	37	11.8
Others	40	12.8
Total	315	100

Source: survey

Figure 5.4 Distribution of Respondents according to current occupation



The data indicates that 51.1% of the respondents are self-employed. Those involved in agriculture come next, making up 17.9%. 'Others' comprise 12.8%, while business activities make up 11.8%. The unemployment rate is lower at 6.98%. Remarkably, the government sector is not represented because the percentage and quantity of responders are both zero. Overall, the table provides a comprehensive summary of the employment sectors covered by the survey, emphasizing that self-employment was the most common occupation among the participants.

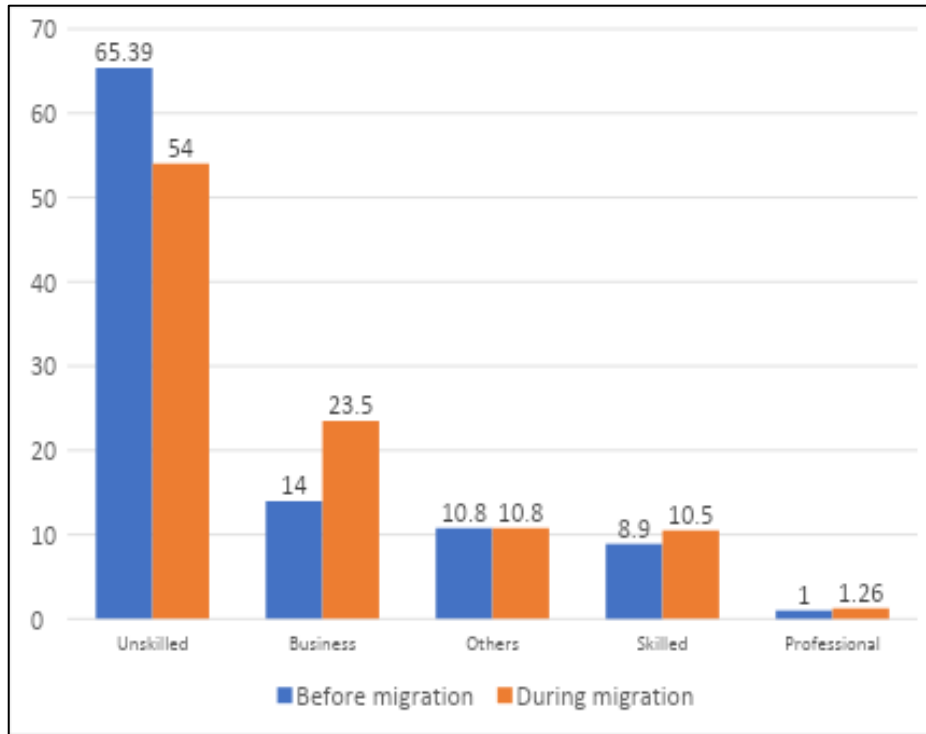
Table 5.7.

Occupation of Respondents before and during migration

Occupation	Before migration		During migration	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Unskilled	206	65.39	170	54
Business	44	14	74	23.5
Others	34	10.8	34	10.8
Skilled	28	8.9	33	10.5
Professional	3	1.0	4	1.26
Total	315	100	315	100

Source: survey

Figure 5.5 Occupation of Respondents before and during migration



The table and figure above displays the bulk of respondents (65.39%) worked in unskilled occupations prior to migration. During migration, this percentage dropped to 54%, suggesting a change in occupational engagement. Before the migration, the business sector accounted for 14% of the total, but following the migration, it grew to 23.5%. The 'Others' group maintained a steady percentage of 10.8%, with no change in frequency. From 8.9% prior to migration to 10.5% during migration, the skilled occupation category had a little increase. In a similar vein, the proportion of professionals rose little from 3 (1.0%) to 1.26 percent. All things considered, the data points to a significant occupational shift during migration, especially a shift from unskilled labor to commercial and skilled jobs.

Table 5.8

Distribution of Respondents according to their current monthly income

Current monthly Income	Respondents	Percentage
Below 5000	20	6.3
5000-10000	62	19.7
10000-30000	222	70.5
30000-50000	9	2.9
Above 5000	2	0.6
Total	315	100

Source: survey

The above table shows that the bulk of participants (70.5%) make between ₹10,000 and ₹30,000. 19.7% of the second-largest group earn between ₹5,000 and ₹10,000. The smallest group (6.3%) makes less than ₹5,000. Only 2.9% said they make between ₹30,000 and ₹50,000 a month. Additionally, only 0.6% of people make more than ₹50,000 a month. The data indicates that the majority of respondents make a moderate income; very few fall into either the lower or higher income ranges.

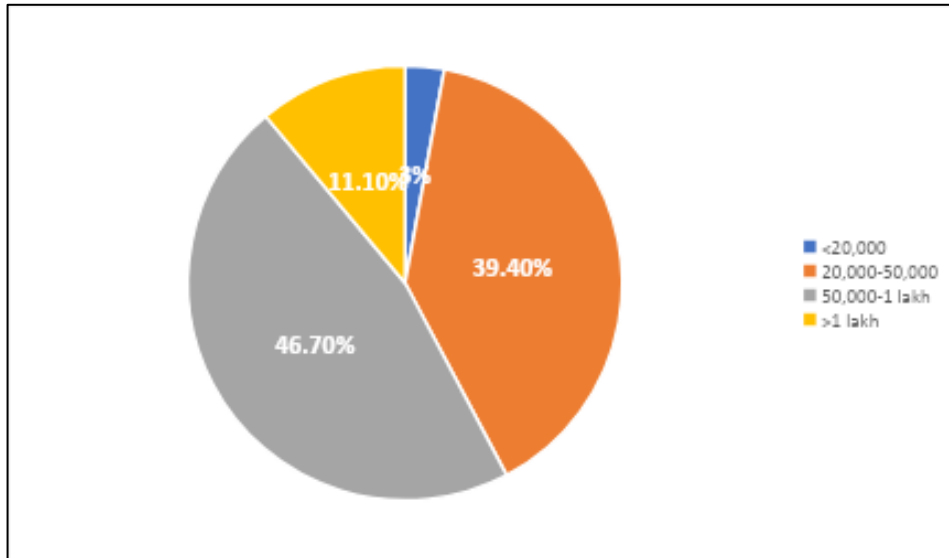
Table 5.9.

Monthly income of Respondents during migration

Income (Rs)	Frequency	Percentage
Below 20000	9	2.9
20000-50000	124	39.4
50000-1 lakh	147	46.7
Above 1 lakh	35	11.1
Total	315	100

source: survey

Figure 5.6 Monthly income of Respondents during migration



The above table and figure indicates Most of the respondents (46.7%) earn between Rs. 50,000 and Rs. 1 lakh per month. The next highest percentage (39.4%) is earning between Rs. 20,000 and Rs. 50,000. A lesser percentage (11.1%) make more than Rs. 1 lakh a month. At 2.9%, the smallest percentage of people earn less than Rs. 20,000. According to the data, a sizable percentage of the questioned population earns between Rs. 20,000 and Rs. 1 lakh, placing them primarily in the middle-income range.

5.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF MIGRATION

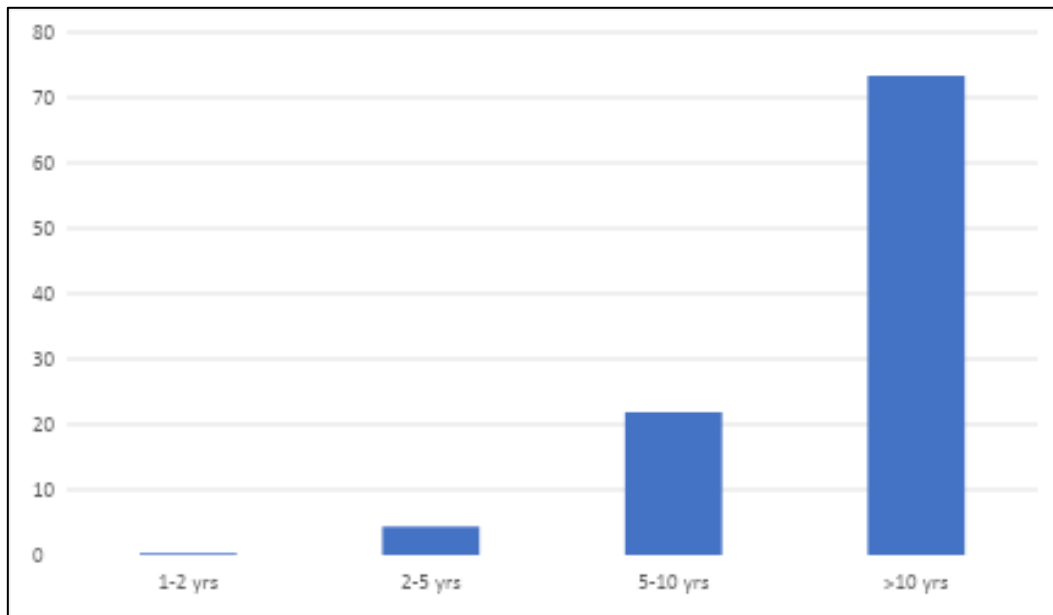
Table 5.10.

Duration of migration of Respondents

No of years	Frequency	Percent
1-2 years	1	.3
2-5 years	14	4.4
5-10 years	69	21.9
Above 10 years	231	73.3
Total	315	100.0

source: survey

Figure 5.7 Duration of migration of Respondents



The majority, 73.3%, have more than ten years of experience, according to the table. There is a smaller group of those with 5–10 years of experience (21.9%). Just 4.4% of respondents have between two and five years of experience, and only 0.3% have between one and two hours. Over 95% of the population polled have more than five years of experience in their respective industries, according to the data, indicating that they make up the majority of the population.

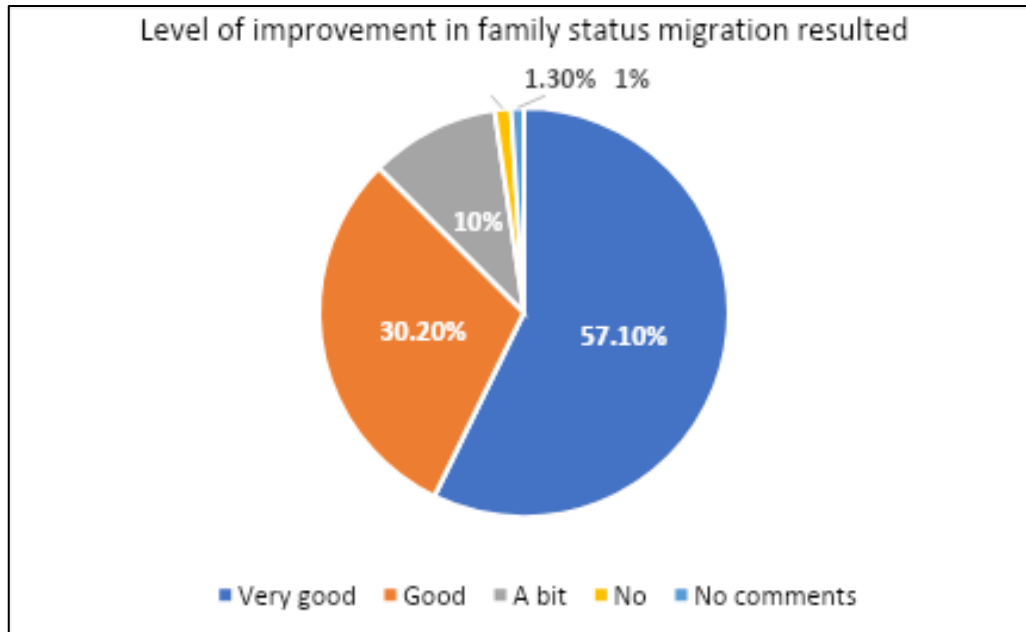
Table 5.11

Level of improvement in family status during the period of migration

Level of Improvement	Frequency	Percentage
Very good improvement	180	57.1
Good improvement	95	30.2
Bit improvement	32	10.2
No improvement	4	1.3
No comments	4	1.3
Total	315	100

source: survey

Figure 5.8 Level of improvement in family status during the period of migration



The table and figure above displays “Very Good improvement,” as expressed by the majority of responders (57.1%), indicates a very good response. 30.2% of respondents then reported a "Good improvement." Just 10.2% of respondents reported a "Bit improvement." At the same time, only 1.3% of respondents said "No improvement" and "No comments." These findings indicate a generally positive outcome, with the vast majority (87.3%) observing at least a good degree of improvement.

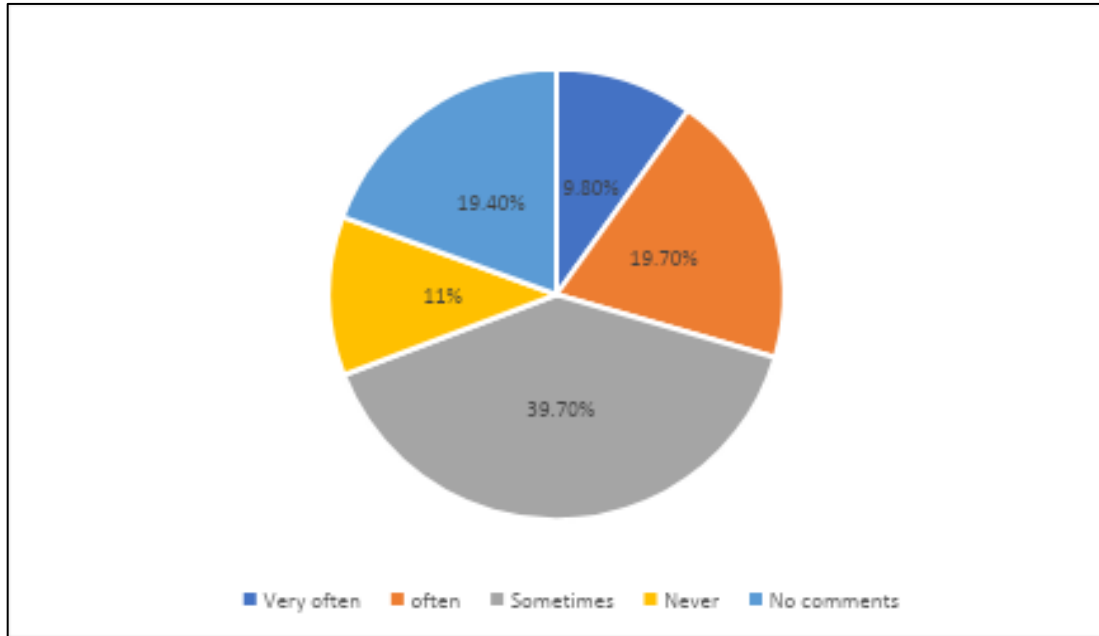
Table 5.12.

Participant’s response to the question ‘Before Exit from Host Country Had you ever thought of a return to Home land?’

Level of improvement	Frequency	Percentage
Very often	31	9.8
Often	62	19.7
Sometimes	125	39.7
Never	36	11.4
No comments	61	19.4
Total	315	100

source: survey

Figure 5.9 Participant’s response to the question ‘Before Exit from Host Country Had you ever thought of a return to Home land?’



The table and figure above exhibit a significant portion of respondents (39.7%), indicating that they had sometimes thought about returning home. Following this, (19.7%) said they often thought about returning, and (9.8%) stated they very often considered it, showing that nearly 30% of the participants had frequent thoughts of returning.

On the other hand, (11.4%) reported that they never thought about returning to their homeland, Additionally, (19.4%) gave no comments. Overall, the data reveals that a majority of respondents had at least occasionally contemplated returning to their homeland before leaving the host country.

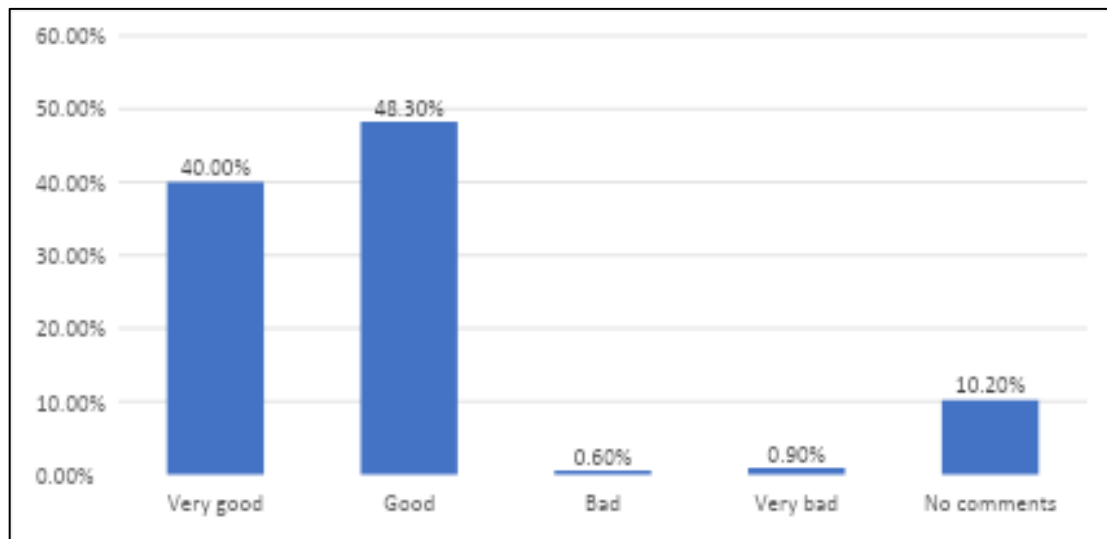
Table 5.13

Participants response to the evaluation of migrant days

Evaluation of migrant days	Frequency	Percentage
Very good	126	40
Good	152	48.3
Bad	2	.6
Very bad	3	.9
No comments	32	10.2
Total	315	100

source: survey

Figure 5.10 Participants response to the evaluation of migrant days



The table and figure above indicate the majority of respondents gave their experience a positive evaluation, with 48.3% calling it "Good" and 40% calling it "Very good." Just 0.6% and 0.9% of respondents, respectively, classified their experiences as "Bad" and "Very bad." 10.2%, however, decided not to respond. This distribution implies that the majority of migrants had positive opinions about their time as migrants, with very few voicing discontents.

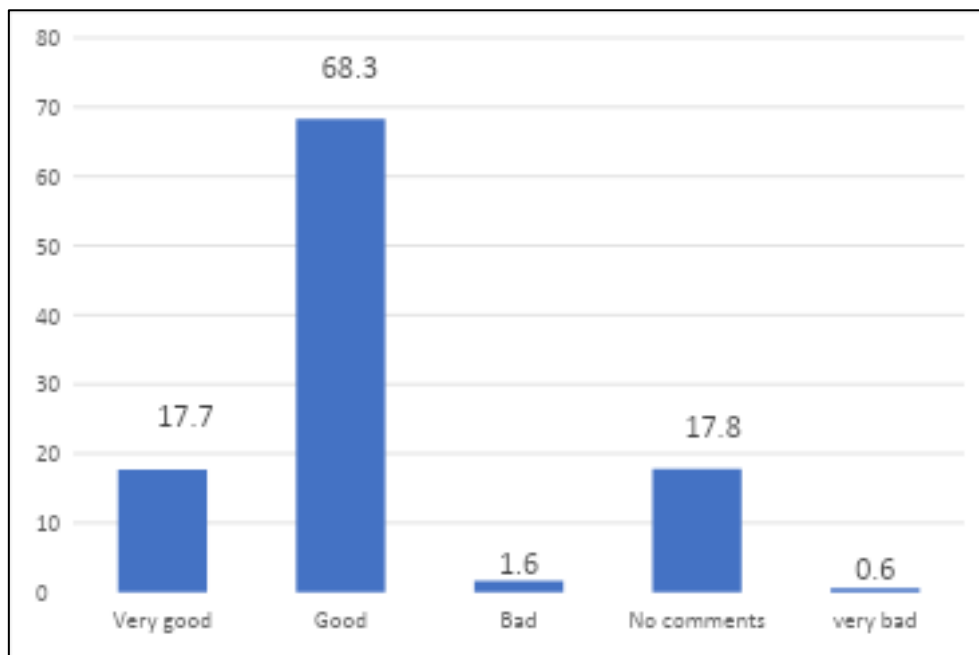
Table 5.14

Participants health condition during Migrant days

Health condition during migrant days	Frequency	Percentage
Very good	37	11.7
Good	215	68.3
Bad	5	1.6
Very bad	2	17.8
No comments	56	.6
Total	315	100

source: survey

Figure 5.11 Participants health condition during Migrant days



According to the data most of the respondent (68.3%), reported having "Good" health during that time. A smaller portion (11.7%), described their health as "Very good." Only (1.6%) reported "Bad" health, indicating a relatively low incidence of poor health. Meanwhile, (17.8%) chose not to comment on their health condition. Overall, the data suggests that most migrants experienced positive health conditions during their migrant period.

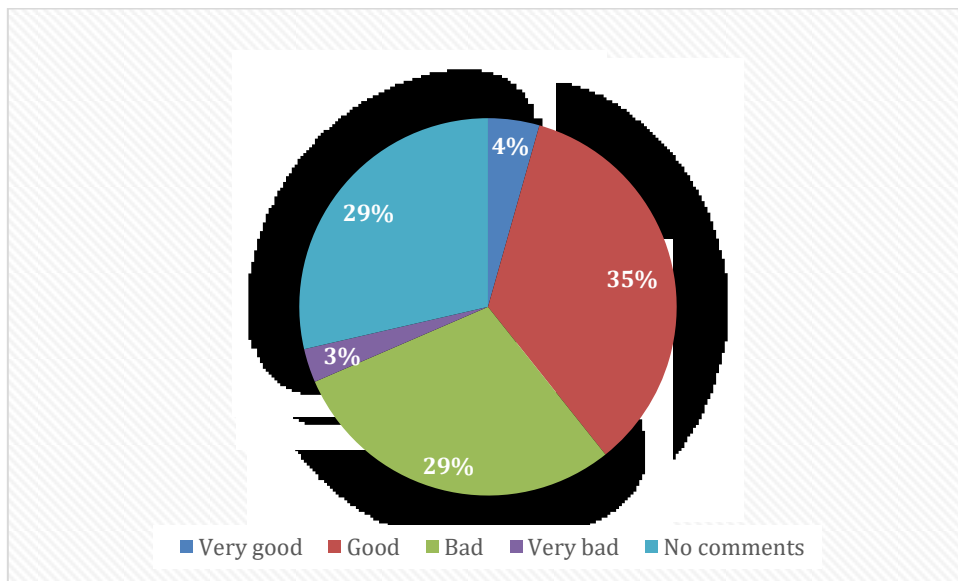
Table 5.15

Participants response to the current health condition

Current Health Condition	Frequency	Percentage
Very good	14	4.4
Good	110	34.9
Bad	92	29.2
Very bad	9	2.9
No comments	90	28.6
Total	315	100

source: survey

Figure 5.12 Participants response to the current health condition



The table and figure above displays the majority of respondents (34.9%) rated the current health condition as "Good", followed by 29.2% who considered them "Bad". A significant portion, 28.6%, chose not to comment. Only 4.4% of respondents evaluated the current health as "Very good", and a small minority of 2.9% rated them as "Very bad". This distribution suggests a generally mixed perception, with a lean towards positive views, although a notable number of respondents either had negative experiences or preferred not to share their opinion.

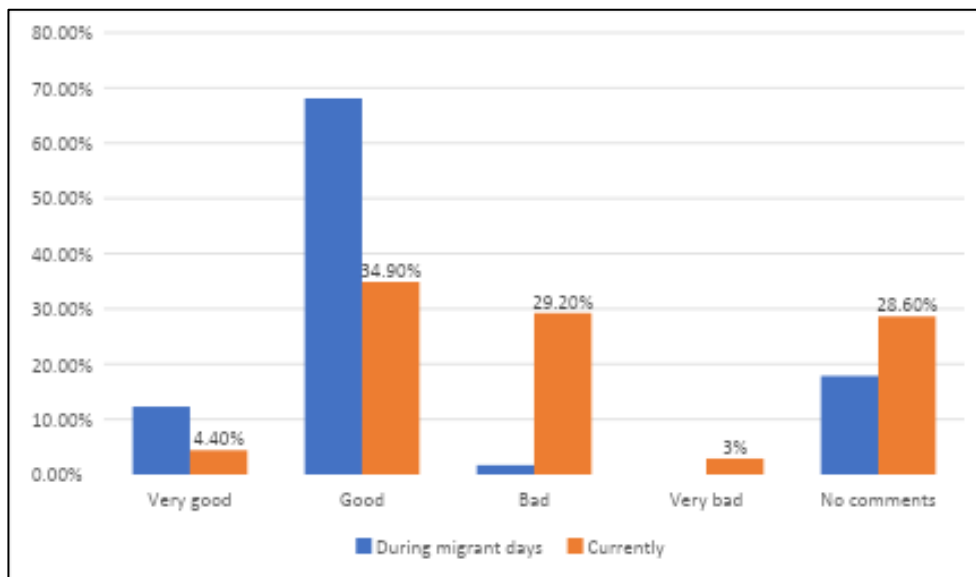
Table 5.16

Comparison of respondents’ health condition currently and during migration

Health condition	During Migration		Current health condition	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Very good	37	11.7	14	4.4
Good	215	68.3	110	34.9
Bad	5	1.6	92	29.2
Very bad	2	.6	9	2.9
No comments	56	17.5	90	28.6
Total	315	100	315	100

source: survey

Figure 5.13 Comparison of respondents’ health condition currently and during migration



The table and figure above show a significant shift in perceived health status over time. During migration, the majority of respondents (approximately 70%) rated their health as “Good,” with an additional 14% indicating it was “Very good.” However, in the current period, these percentages have dropped, with only about 49% reporting “Good” health and just 4% describing their health as “Very good.” In contrast, negative health assessments have increased. Only a small percentage of respondents rated their health as “Bad” or “Very bad” during

migration, but currently, about 29.2% describe their health as “Bad” and 3% as “Very bad.” Additionally, the proportion of respondents who chose not to comment has also risen from around 15% to 28.6%. This shift suggests a general decline in perceived health status from the migration period to the present, possibly indicating challenges faced after resettlement

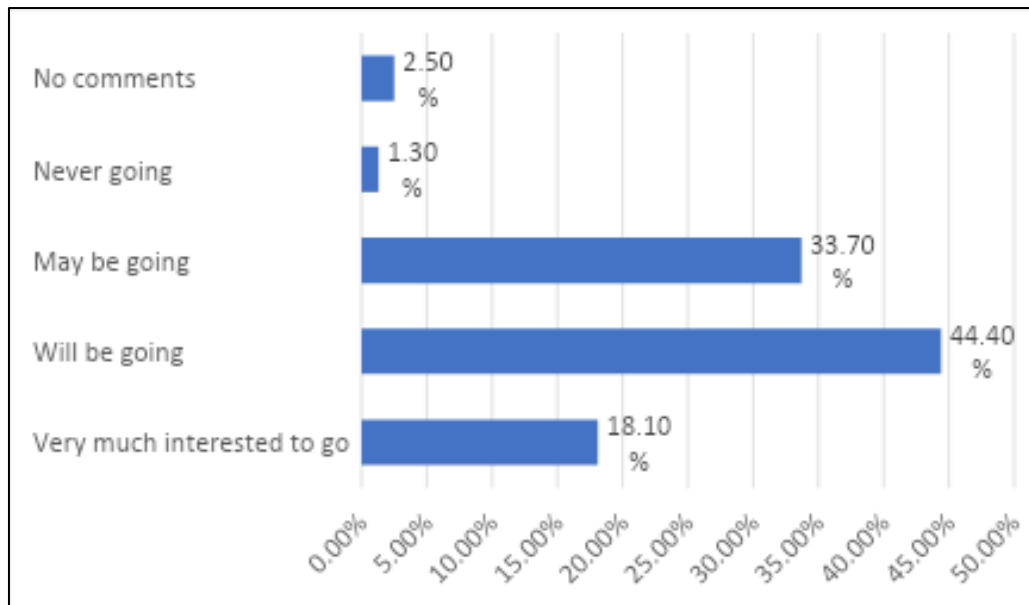
Table 5.17

Participants response to the question ‘If you are given a chance to Go back for migration What will be your choice?’

Responds	Respondents	Percentage
Will be going	140	44.4
Very much interested to go	57	18.1
May be going	106	33.7
Never going	4	1.3
No comments	8	2.5
Total	315	100

source: survey

Figure 5.14 Participants response to the question ‘If you are given a chance to Go back for migration What will be your choice?’



The data exhibits a significant proportion of respondents 44.4% indicated that they will be going back, showing a strong interest in remigration. Additionally, 18.1% expressed that they are very much interested to go, suggesting a high level of enthusiasm for returning. Another 33.7% reported that they may be going, reflecting a level of uncertainty or conditional interest in migrating again. Only a small minority, 1.3%, stated that they are never going back, indicating strong reluctance. Meanwhile, 2.5% provided no comments, possibly reflecting unwillingness.

Overall, the data reveals that the majority of respondents are either willing or open to the idea of migrating again, highlighting the continued appeal or necessity of overseas employment despite previous setbacks.

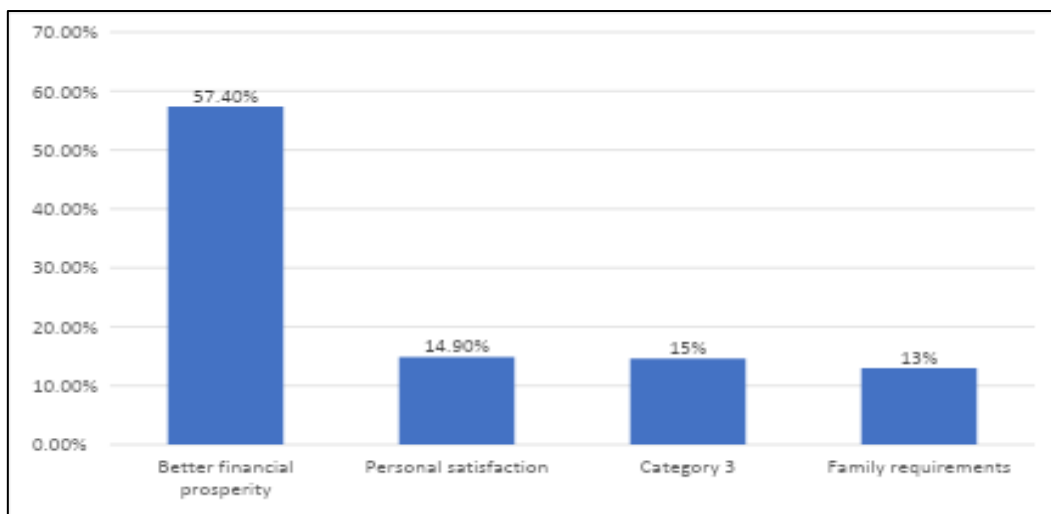
Table 5.18.

Participants reason for the remigration

Reason	Frequency	Percentage
Better financial prosperity	181	57.4
Personal satisfaction	47	14.9
No opportunity in Kerala	46	14.6
Family requirements	41	13.0
Total	315	100

source: survey

Figure 5.15 Participants reason for the remigration



The table and figure above clearly indicates the majority of respondents (57.4%) indicated that better financial prosperity would motivate them to migrate again. This suggests that economic factors remain the primary driving force behind migration decisions. Personal satisfaction was the next most common reason, cited by 14.9% of respondents, followed closely by the lack of opportunities in Kerala (14.6%). Lastly, 13% of the returnees pointed to family requirements as their main reason for considering re-migration. Overall, the data highlights that despite their prior job loss, a considerable number of returnees are still willing to migrate again.

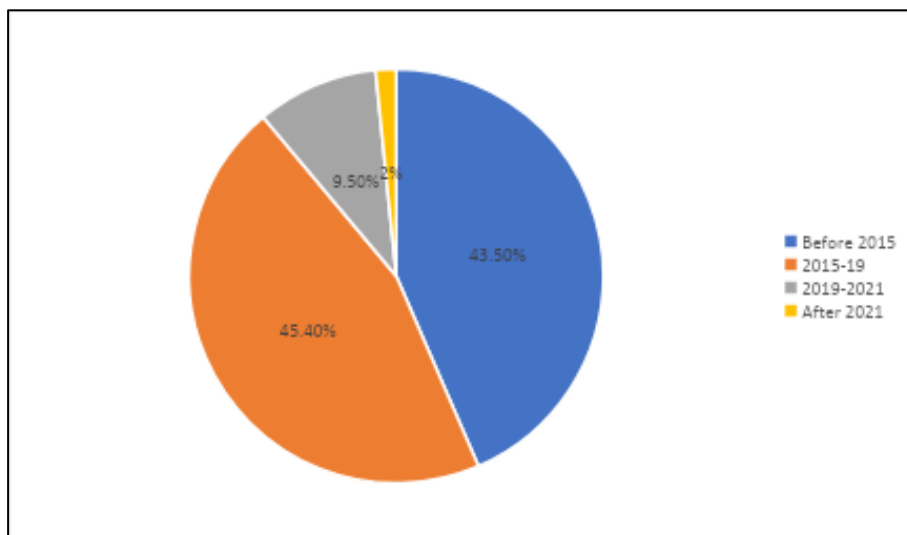
Table 5.19.

Year in which respondents came back to India

Period	Frequency	Percentage
2015-19	143	45.4
2019-21 (covid period)	30	9.5
After 2021	5	1.6
Before 2015	137	43.5
Total	315	100

Source: survey

Figure 5.16. Year in which respondents came back to India



The table and figure above indicate Most of the incidents occurred between 2015 and 2019 (143 cases, 45.4% of all cases). With 137 instances, or 43.5%, the

second-highest frequency occurred prior to 2015. Just 30 cases, or 9.5%, occurred throughout the COVID-19 era (2019–2021). After 2021, the frequency decreased even more to only 5 occurrences, making up a pitiful 1.6% of the total. A total of 315 documented incidents comprises 100% of the data. This distribution implies that the activity peaked prior to and during 2019, and then had a notable downturn during and during the COVID-19 pandemic.

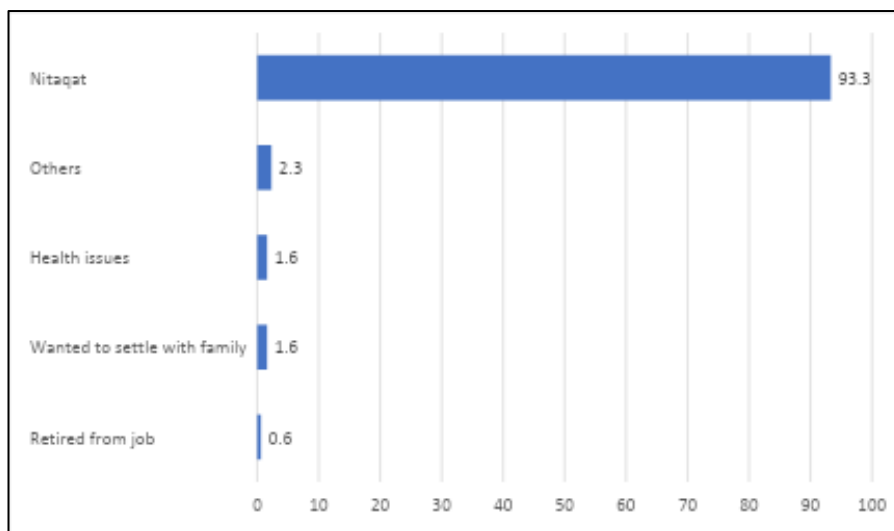
Table 5.20

The major reasons for coming back

Reasons	Frequency	Percentage
Nitaqat	294	93.3
Others	9	2.9
Health issues	5	1.6
Wanted to settle with family	5	1.6
Retired from job	2	.6
Total	315	100

source: survey

Figure 5.17 The major reasons for coming back



The table and figure display the most prevalent factor, as indicated by the majority of respondents (93.3%), who gave "Nitaqat" as the main reason. Only

2.9% of those surveyed chose "Others" as their reason. Minor sections describe health problems and they wish to live with relatives, which each accounted for 1.6% of the total. Finally, the single explanation given was retirement from employment (0.6%). Totally, the evidence shows that the Nitaqat was the main reason for their return.

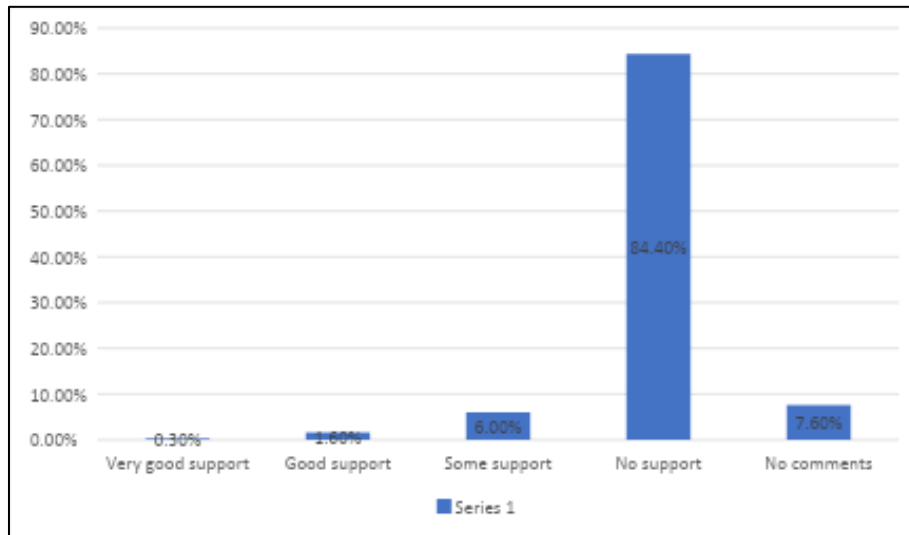
Table 5.21.

Government support received after return

Government support	Frequency	Percentage
Very good support	1	.3
Good support	5	1.6
Some support	19	6
No support	266	84.4
No comments	24	7.6
Total	315	100

. source: survey

Figure 5.18. Government support received after return



The majority of respondents (84.4%) said they did not receive any assistance from the government, according to the data. Six percent of respondents said they were getting some support. Just 1.6% of respondents said they got decent support,

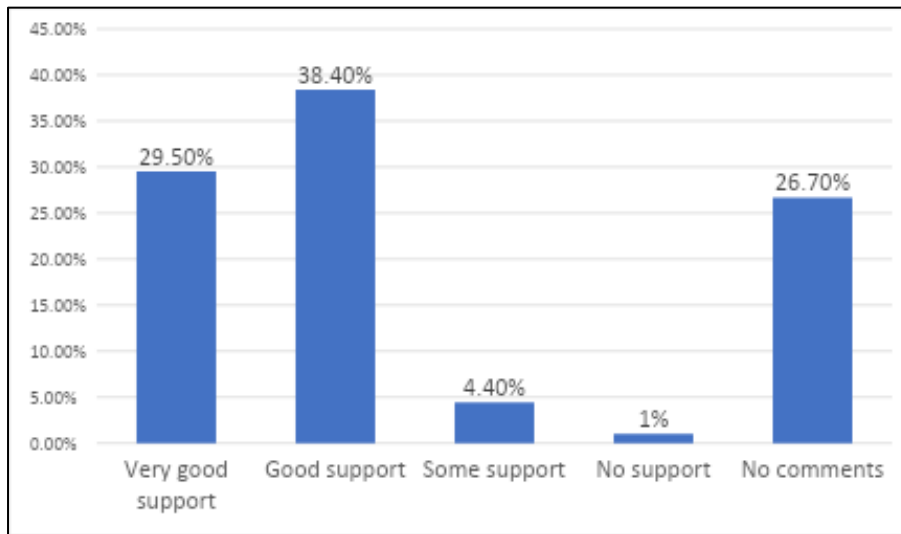
and only 0.3% said they got very good support. 7.6% also decided not to remark on the issue. According to the findings, the respondents appear to be generally unhappy or unsupported by the government.

Table 5.22
Response of family on return

Family support	Frequency	Percentage
Very good support	93	29.5
Good support	121	38.4
Some support	14	4.4
No support	3	1
No comments	84	26.7
Total	315	100

source: survey

Figure 5.19 Response of family on return



The table and figure above shows 38.4% of participants, a sizable portion, said their families provided them with "Good support." 29.5% of respondents then said they had "Very good support." 4.4%, responded they had received "Some support," while only 1.0% responded they received "No support" at all. Regarding their family support. 26.7% were not ready to respond to the question. Overall, the data shows that most respondents felt their family supported them to a satisfactory degree

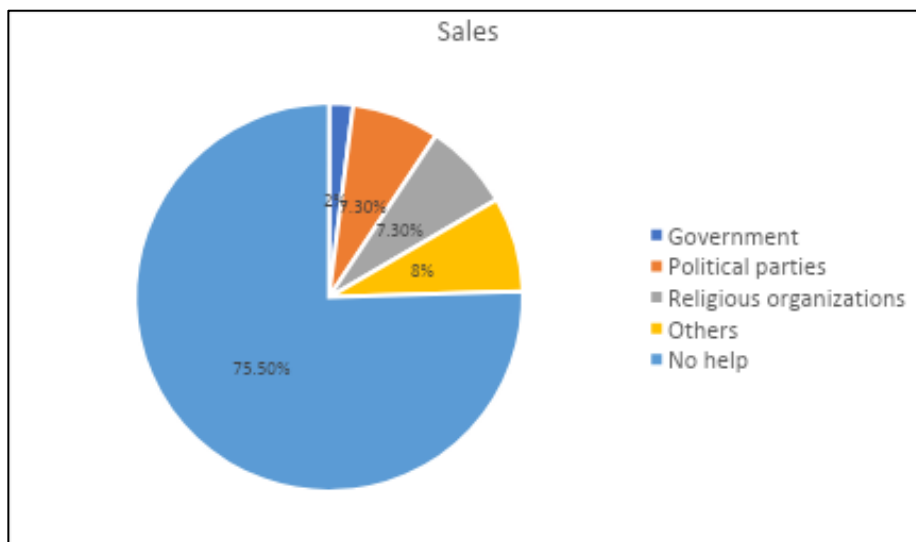
Table 5.23.

Source of support received after returning

Supporting Agency	Frequency	Percentage
No help received	238	75.5
Political parties	23	7.3
Religion	23	7.3
Government	6	1.9
others	25	7.9
Total	315	100

Source: survey

Figure 5.20 Source of support received after returning



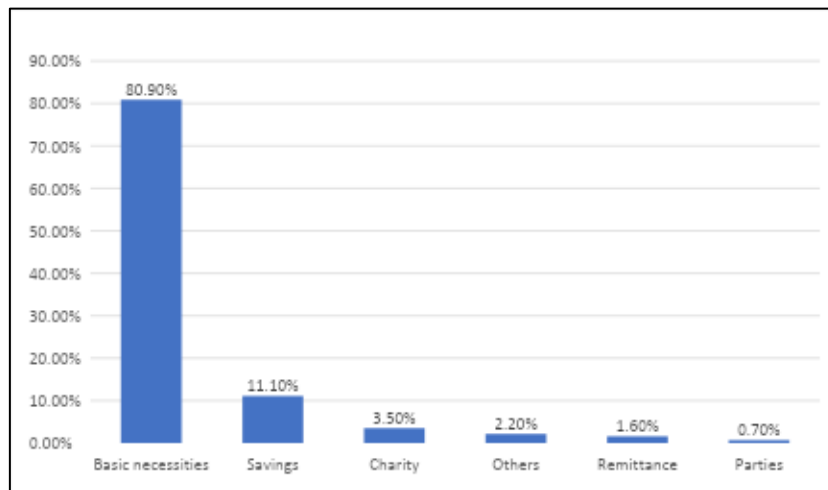
The table and figure above says that, a significant portion of respondents (75.5%) said they did not any assistance. Only 1.9% got help from the government, 7.9% from "Others," and 7.3% from political parties and religious groups, respectively. The vast majority of respondents did not receive any support from the official sources, while a few got some assistance from the official side, this clearly indicate lack of govt support in this regard.

Table 5.24
Nature of spending during migration

Expenditure	Frequency	Percentage
Basic necessities	255	80.9
Saving	35	11.1
Charity	11	3.5
Others	7	2.2
Remittances	5	1.6
Parties	2	.6
Total	315	100

source: survey

Figure 5.21 Nature of spending during migration



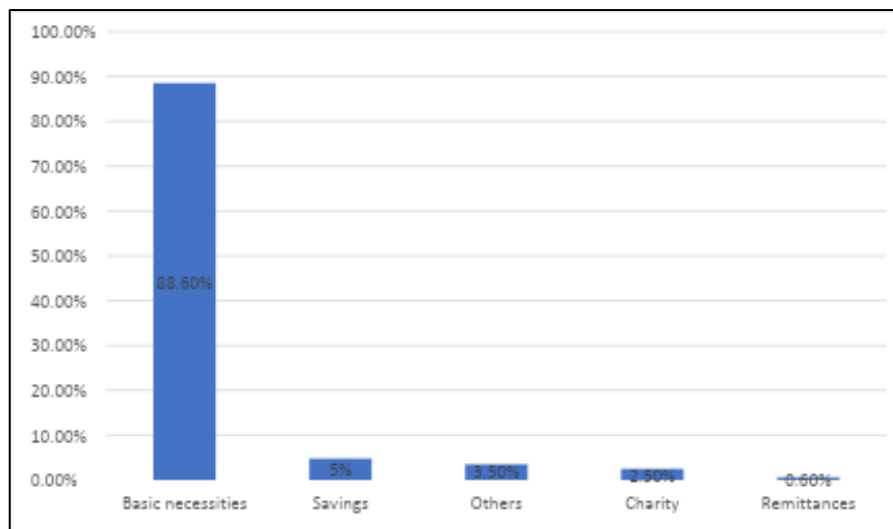
The majority of respondents (80.9%) reported spending most of their money on basic needs, according to the statistics, showing that meeting basic needs. The second most important category was savings, with 11.1%. 3.5% of donations went to charities. Party and remittance proportions were the lowest, at 0.6% and 1.6%, respectively, while the "Others" category made up 2.2%. This data depicts that the majority of respondent utilised their money on savings and basic necessities.

Table 5.25
Nature of current spending

Expenditure	Frequency	Percentage
Basic necessities	279	88.6
Savings	15	4.8
Charity	8	2.5
Others	11	3.5
remittances	2	.6
Total	315	100

source: survey

Figure 5.22 Nature of current spending



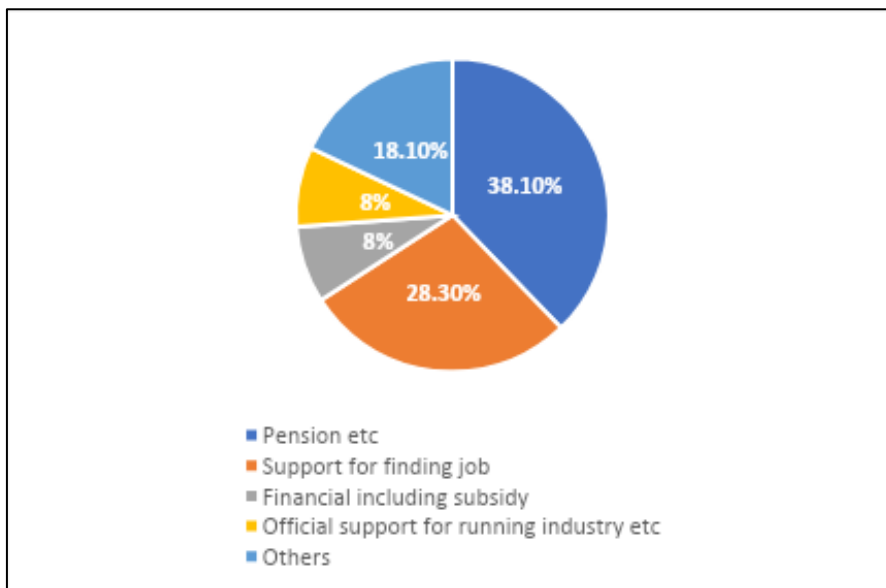
It reveals that a vast majority of respondents (88.6%) spend most of their money on necessities. With 4.8% of total spending, savings come in second. 3.5 % said spending on other categories, while charity comes in second with 2.5 percent. Just 0.6% of spending go for remittances. Overall, this shows that the majority of people place a higher priority on necessities than on other kinds of spending.

Table 5.26
Type of support expected from government

Support	Frequency	Percentage
Pension etc	120	38.1
Support for finding job	89	28.3
Others	57	18.1
Financial including subsidy	25	7.9
Official support for running industry etc	24	7.6
Total	315	100

source: survey

Figure 5.23 Type of support expected from government



The table and figure above depict a large number of respondents (38.1%) indicated a need for pension-related support, The second most common need is support for finding job, highlighted by 28.3% of respondents. Additionally, 18.1% of returnees expressed the need for other unspecified forms of support, reflecting a variety of personal challenges. Financial aid, including subsidies, was requested by 7.9%, while 7.6% sought official backing to engage in industrial or economic

activities. This shows that returnees have diverse support needs, with a strong emphasis on financial security and employment.

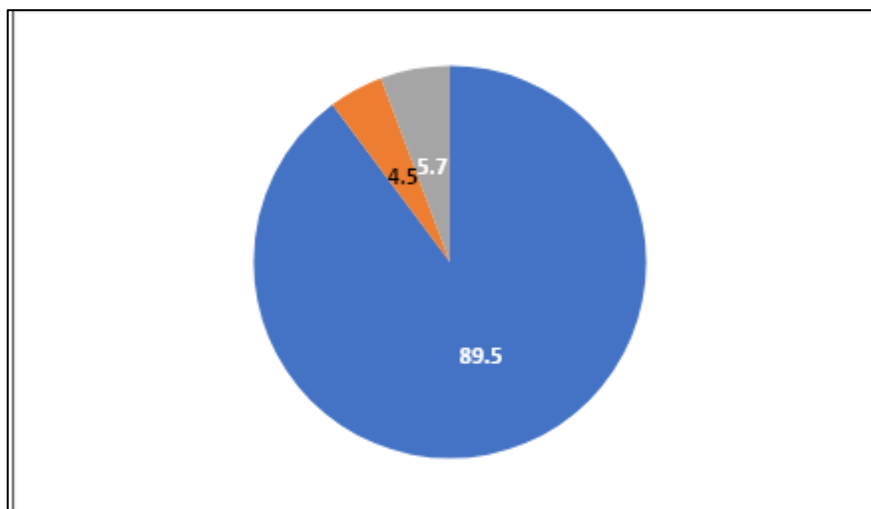
Table 5.27.

Support received from LSG

Support from LSG	Frequency	Percentage
No support	282	89.5
Some support	15	4.8
No comments	18	5.7
Total	315	100

source: survey

Figure 5.24 Support received from LSG



A vast majority of respondents—89.5%—reported not receiving any assistance from LSG, according to the data. A mere 4.8% of respondents said they were given some kind of assistance. Furthermore, 5.7% of the total did not remark on LSG's support. This data shows that respondents generally felt that LSG did not support them

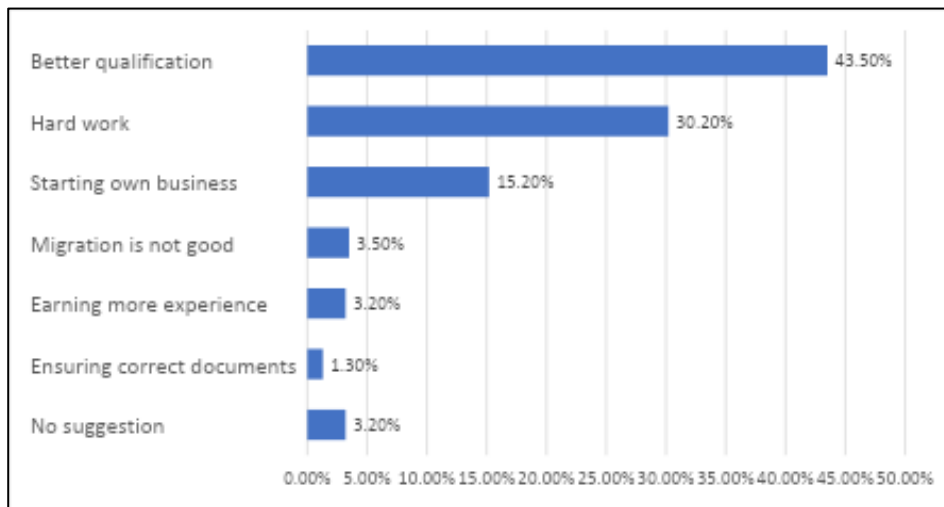
Table 5.28.

Suggestions to the people trying for migration

Suggestion	Frequency	Percentage
Better qualification	137	43.5
Hard work	95	30.2
Starting own business	48	15.2
Migration is not good	11	3.5
Earning more experience	10	3.2
Ensuring correct documents	4	1.3
No suggestion	10	3.2
Total	315	100

source: survey

Figure 5.25 Suggestions to the people trying for migration



According to the data, the most often mentioned recommendation—cited by 43.5% of the total—was the need for improved qualification. Hard work came next (30.2%), followed by launching one's own business (15.2%). The opinions that migrating is bad (3.5%), gaining more experience (3.2%), and making sure the paperwork is accurate (1.3%) are less often given recommendations. Moreover, 3.2% made no recommendations at all. Overall, the data suggests that the studied

group views increasing one's qualifications and putting in more effort as the most important progression tactics.

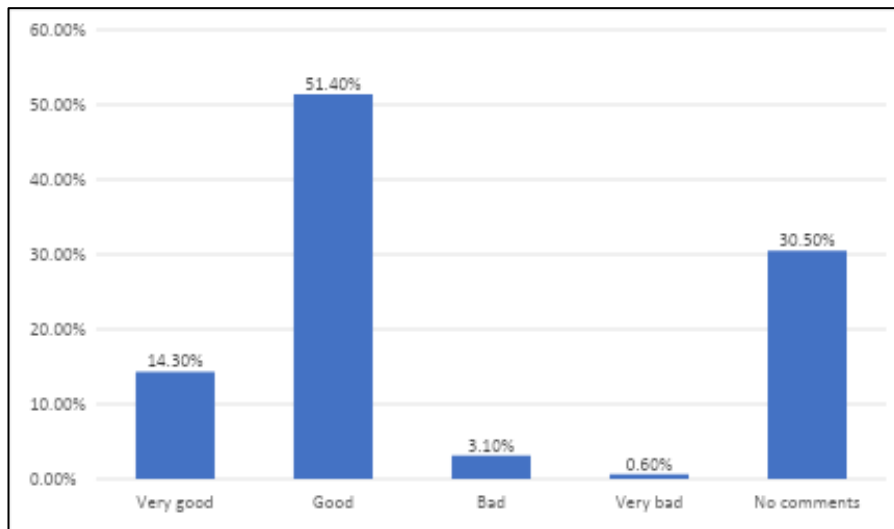
Table 5.29.

Opinion about government interventions in host country

Opinion about Govt. interventions	Frequency	Percentage
Very good	45	14.3
Good	162	51.4
Bad	10	3.1
Very bad	2	.6
No comments	96	30.5
Total	315	100

source: survey

Figure 5.26 Opinion about government interventions in host country



The table and figure above indicate the majority of respondents (51.4%) rated the government's interventions as "good," while 14.3% considered them "very good." This indicates a generally positive perception among most participants, with about 65.7% expressing favorable views. On the other hand, a small proportion of the respondents expressed negative views: 3.1% rated the interventions as "bad" and 0.6% as "very bad," totalling just 3.7% with unfavorable opinions. Additionally,

30.5% of the respondents chose not to comment on the matter. Overall, the data suggests that a significant portion of the population supports or appreciates the government's interventions, while a relatively small fraction is critical or undecided.

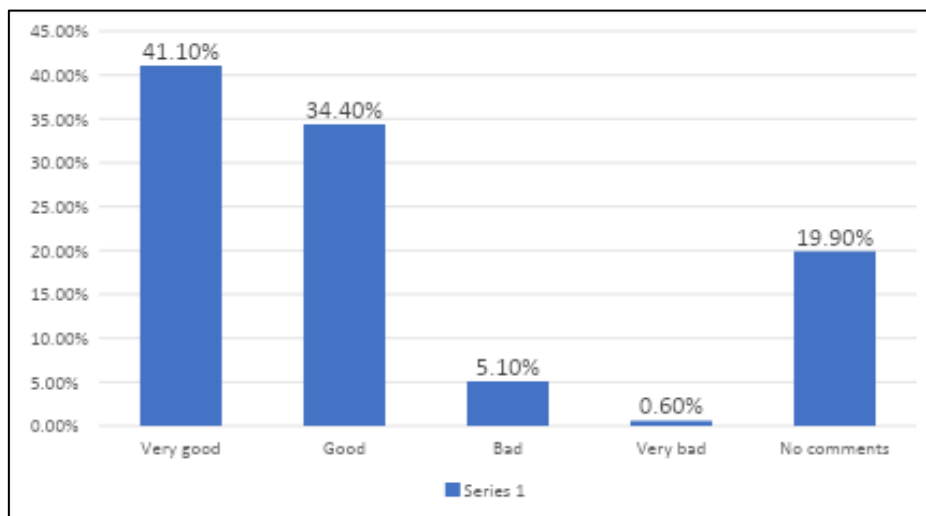
Table 5.30.

Opinion about previous employer

Opinion about previous employer	Frequency	Percentage
Very good	128	41.1
Good	107	34.4
Bad	16	5.1
Very bad	2	.6
No comments	62	19.9
Total	315	100

source: survey

Figure 5.27 Opinion about previous employer



The table and figure above indicate the majority of respondents (41.1%) rated their previous employer as "Very good," while (34.4%) considered them simply "Good." A smaller proportion expressed negative opinions (5.1%) labelled their former employer as "Bad," and only (0.6%) rated them as "Very bad." Additionally, (19.9%) chose not to comment. Overall, the data reflects a generally positive perception of previous employers, with over 75% of the respondents giving favourable feedback.

CHAPTER 6

FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to give the major findings drawn from the twin procedures of data collection and analysis of the current study. The chapter also highlights suggestions and recommendations for returning migrants' well-being. The data obtained from the respondents through survey method was analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The study was conducted by selecting three panchayats from each taluk of Malappuram district, the northern district in Kerala where the largest number of expatriates have returned. Many return migrants from the Malappuram district, saw significant changes in their life as a result of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's implementation of the Nitaqat policy. People from this area have relied on migration to Gulf nations, especially Saudi Arabia, for work for many years. Through remittances, migration not only helped thousands of families meet their financial needs but also made a substantial economic contribution to Kerala. However, the migrant community was severely shocked by the abrupt implementation of the Nitaqat program, which sought to expand employment prospects for Saudi locals by lowering the number of foreign workers.

In this study, the socioeconomic circumstances of returning migrants and their families in Malappuram were examined. Many people who had been living and working in Saudi Arabia for years returned to Kerala after losing their jobs due to the Nitaqat policy. These returnees encountered numerous issues, including income loss, unemployment, and challenges with social reintegration. It had an effect on more than just individuals. Financial hardship was placed on families who had become reliant on Gulf revenue, and the local economy that had developed around Gulf money also started to feel the effects.

The results that reveal some significant facets of the living challenges and coping mechanisms of returning migrants are presented in this chapter. There are two sections to the chapter. The study's major findings are presented in Part I, and suggestions for the welfare of Kerala's returning migrants are included in Part II. A presentation of the researcher's futuristic thoughts related to the research topic is also included.

6.2 Major Findings

1. The survey sample is predominantly composed of middle-aged individuals, with 81% of respondents between the ages of 35 and 60. There is minimal participation from both younger (18–25) and older (60+) age groups, indicating a limited representation outside the middle-age demographic.
2. The majority of participants have completed at least the SSLC, with 50.8% reaching this level of education. However, the data reveals a significant drop in the proportion of respondents with higher education, indicating that while basic education is common, access to or attainment of advanced qualifications remains limited among the participants.
3. The survey indicates that self-employment is the predominant form of occupation among respondents currently, accounting for over half (51.1%) of the participants.
4. The comparison between pre- and during-migration occupations reveals a significant shift in employment patterns. The percentage of respondents in unskilled jobs declined from 65.39% to 54% (a drop of 11.39 percentage points), while participation in the business sector increased from 14% to 23.5% (a rise of 9.5 percentage points). Skilled occupations saw a slight increase from 8.9% to 10.5% (1.6 percentage points), and professional roles rose from 1.0% to 1.26% (0.26 percentage points). The 'Others' category remained unchanged at 10.8%. This indicates a trend of upward occupational mobility during migration, with a notable shift from unskilled to skilled and business-related jobs.

5. The majority of participants (70.5%) earn a moderate current monthly income between ₹ 10,000 and ₹ 30,000, while only a small percentage fall into lower (less than ₹ 10,000) or higher (more than ₹ 30,000) income brackets, indicating a concentration of earnings in the mid-range.
6. The majority of respondents fall within the middle-income bracket, with a significant 86.1% earning between Rs. 20,000 and Rs. 1 lakh per month during migrant days. This indicates that most of the surveyed population belongs to the middle-income group, while only a small proportion earn either below Rs. 20,000 or above Rs. 1 lakh monthly.
7. The data reveals that the vast majority of respondents (over 95%) have more than five years of experience in their host country, with 73.3% having over ten years of experience. This indicates a highly experienced population base.
8. The data reveals a predominantly positive response, with 87.3% of participants reporting at least a good level of improvement during migrant days. The majority (57.1%) indicated a "Very Good improvement," highlighting a strong overall satisfaction, while only a small fraction (2.6%) observed little to no improvement or provided no comments.
9. When asked 'Had you ever thought of a return to Home land before exit' significant portion of respondents had at least occasionally thought about returning to their homeland, with nearly 30% frequently considering it. In contrast, only a small portion reported never having such thoughts, while a notable minority chose not to comment.
10. The vast majority of respondents had a positive perception of their migration experience, with nearly 90% rating it as "Good" or "Very good," while only a minimal percentage reported negative experiences.
11. It is found that around (68.3%) respondents reported having "Good" health during their migrant period, with only a small percentage indicating poor health (1.6%). This suggests that most migrants experienced generally positive health conditions at that time.

12. There is a clear decline in the perceived health status of return migrants when compared to their health during the migration period. While the majority previously rated their health as "Good" or "Very good," these positive assessments have significantly decreased in the present. At the same time, negative health ratings ("Bad" and "Very bad") and the number of respondents who refrained from commenting have notably increased. This is a serious concern for the state. The health status post migration period is to be subjected to further study and steps are to be taken to address the issue.
13. With regard to remigration also, majority of respondents demonstrate a strong inclination for going back, with 96.2% either expressing definite interest, strong enthusiasm, or conditional willingness to return overseas. This suggests that despite previous experiences, overseas employment continues to hold significant appeal or is perceived as a necessary opportunity.
14. It is also found that economic factors, particularly the pursuit of better financial prosperity, are the primary motivators for re-migration among returnees, with over half (57.4%) indicating this as their main reason. Despite previous job loss, a significant portion remains open to migrating again, underscoring the persistent influence of economic necessity on migration decisions.
15. The majority of migrants came back to India between 2015 and 2019, accounting for the peak in activity during that period. A significant number of incidents also took place prior to 2015, suggesting a sustained level of activity before the peak. However, there was a sharp decline in incidents during the COVID-19 era (2019–2021), which continued to drop further after 2021. This trend indicates a notable downturn in incidents coinciding with and following the pandemic.
16. The data reveals that the Nitaqat program was the most significant factor influencing respondents' decisions, with 93.3% citing it as the primary reason. Other factors, including health issues, desire to live with relatives,

and retirement, played only minor roles, indicating the dominant impact of the Nitaqat policy on the outcome under study.

17. The data indicates that a significant majority of respondents (84.4%) did not receive any government assistance, and only a very small portion (1.9%) reported they received very good support. This suggests lack of support from the government among the respondents.
18. About 67.9% of participants said they received "Good" or "Very good support," whereas just a small percentage said they received little to no help from their families.
19. When asked to name the agencies that rendered support in the post migrant period the large majority 75.5% of respondents said they received no support. It is evident that there is a general lack of official aid, since only a small percentage received assistance from the government (1.9%), political parties (7.3%), religious organizations (7.3%), or other sources (7.9%).
20. It is found that the vast majority of people around 81% prioritize spending on basic essentials during migration period and savings (11.9), with significantly less allocated to discretionary expenses such as parties, remittances, and charitable donations.
21. Most respondents now spend 88.6% of their income on basic necessities, which is a much higher percentage than any other category, including savings (4.8%), miscellaneous expenses (3.5%), charity (2.5%), and remittances (0.6%).
22. The majority of returnees primarily seek pension-related support 38.1% and support for finding a job 28.3, highlighting a strong need for financial security and job opportunities from government side. Other notable needs include financial aid, support for economic activities, and various personal forms of assistance.

23. The vast majority of respondents (89.5%) said they had not received any help from LSG, suggesting that the LSG was not very supportive. Only 4.8% reported that they received some support from LSG.
24. When asked for some advice for those who want to go to the Gulf, the majority of returnees said the importance of better qualifications (43.5%) and working hard (30.2%) as key strategies for those considering migration, indicating a strong belief that personal development and effort are crucial for successful migration experiences.
25. The majority of respondents (65.7%) reported a favorable view of the government's interventions in host country, with 51.4% rating them as "good" and 14.3% as "very good." In contrast, only a small section of respondents (3.7%) said negative opinions, and 30.5% remained neutral to comment. This suggests a generally positive public perception of the government's actions.
26. It is also found that most of the respondents had a positive opinion of their former employers; more than 75% of them rated them as "Very good" or "Good," suggesting that they had a generally positive opinion of them.
27. Majority of the respondents (86.7%) were from nuclear families where around 13% were from joint families.
28. The Nitaqat has badly affected the Solo-economic development in Malappuram district.
29. The human security condition of return migrants have weakened following the implementation of Nitaqat
30. The welfare measures implemented by government has low impact on return migrants

6.3 Suggestions and Recommendations

Here are some recommendations for actions to help Kerala's return migrants get back on their feet. These recommendations are based on the interviews with respondents and conversations with officials, public representatives, NGOs, social workers, and other professionals involved in the study region.

1. As part of the study an attempt was made to gather necessary information from the Non-Resident Keralites Affairs (NORKA) department in order to conduct this study on the socioeconomic effects of the Nitaqat policy in Kerala, specifically in the Malappuram area. The Right to Information (RTI) Act was specifically used to obtain information about the number of returnees who returned to Kerala after Nitaqat was implemented, as well as information about the use of funds and the number of recipients under the various welfare programs provided by NORKA. But the information that was given was sparse and ambiguous, making the answer insufficient. It was extremely difficult to evaluate the success of government initiatives meant to rehabilitate returning migrants because of the lack of openness and accessibility to vital data from a crucial institution. The study suggest that there should be better information dissemination mechanisms, systematic data collection, and enhanced institutional accountability to support return migration research and policymaking
2. Even though there are migrant representatives in the NORKA like policy making bodies, it is not sufficient. There is a need to involve more returnees or migrant experts in the committee. Also, there is a need to involve members in different capacities. So, there is a need to get voices of all the sections of the migrants. There is a need of both entrepreneurs, business people, employees, NGO representatives in the committee.
3. From the study it was found that many respondents are interested in re migrating. There is a need of re-migrating the returnees into other countries considering the legal aspects of the migration. There is a need for coordinated efforts with the central government also in this regard. There is a

need to tie up with the migrant associations in the prospective countries and connect with them. It can help in getting more opportunities and jobs through it. Also, there is a need to develop a portal or an online platform which can display the prospective opportunities and the current openings. It can facilitate the Re-migration through safer channels. So, there is an increasing need of Creating state-supported mechanisms to help skilled returnees re-migrate to other countries where opportunities exist, ensuring safe, legal, and ethical migration.

4. During the study it was found that there is an acute shortage of emergency response and preparedness. Preparedness is very important for the governmental system in order to deal with the sudden changes or emergencies in relation to migration. Migration is always an issue which is tied up with uncertainties. Considering the scenario, there is a need for a proactive system in order to deal with the uncertainties raised by migration. Also, it should ensure effective coordination with the migrants in the countries. In this regard, a well-managed database of the migrants containing the basic and necessary contact information needs to be developed. Also, creating helpline desks or contacts in case of emergency is essential. So, in a nutshell, there is a necessity of developing a Crisis Response Framework in order to manage a mass return in case of an emergency. Along with that, there is a need to educate the migrants of the system is also equally essential in this regard. For example, State and central governments should be prepared for sudden large-scale returns (like those triggered by Nitaqat or pandemics) with a dedicated response mechanism for emergency support and reintegration.
5. Migration is a never-ending scenario and there is a need of passing the concept of migration plights to younger generations. In this regard, there is a need to inculcate migration issues in an educational context. It can help in nurturing a younger generation understanding the challenges along with the opportunities of migration. This can Include migration studies in school and

college curricula, especially in migration-intensive districts like Malappuram, to promote awareness of rights, risks, and opportunities abroad. While implementing the curricula, there is a need for more activities and discussions in order to ensure the effectiveness of the content. Along with the classroom activities, the programs like inviting the returnees in order to share the views on migration will be highly productive. The idea is that while promoting the opportunities and success stories, there is a need to make people aware of the challenges from the people who face them. It can help the younger generation understand both the sides and views on migration. As of now there is a large flow of younger generation to different parts of the world and evidently they face social integration and cultural assimilation issues. This can be addressed with an earlier training on migration.

6. Currently the government has no proper and comprehensive data of migration. This was evidenced during the study. Different agencies has different datas and they are not disclosing the same in public domain. CDS conducts a migration survey in Kerala in every two or five years. This is the only reliable data on migration available to the public. It is suggested that the government should initiate a survey. While implementing there is a necessity to ensure that survey is effectively carried out at the ground level. There is a need to create an effective mechanism to monitor the survey activities. Along with it, the survey needs to be time bound and there is a need for timely completion of the survey and tabulating the results.
7. A vigilant and literate community is important in reaping the best benefits of the migration. People need to be well informed about their rights and duties as a migrant and they need to be informed about the things that need to be undertaken in case of return. So, there is a need to ensure the migrants trust in the system. At the institutional level, the government can come up with more stringent rules and regulations. A mass awareness program can educate people on safe migration practices, Gulf labour laws, contract verification,

and rights abroad. So, the literacy programs need to be framed while taking the suggestions from multiple levels and to be implemented with the help of local bodies and NGOs.

8. Another important suggestion is that there is a need to recognise the returnees who returned involuntarily as a vulnerable social category. It can help in designing more policies in helping them with maintaining welfare and future prospects. It can help in inviting more attention into this category and this helps them get more help from the governments. There is a need to develop a commission into checking the prospects of bringing the returnees under the umbrella of vulnerable social categories. It can help in getting more social consciousness into the matters of returnees.
9. A structured policy addressing economic reintegration, welfare, and rehabilitation of returnees should be prioritized, especially in high-return areas like Malappuram. So, this needs to be considered as a subset of the overall migrant policy. This policy needs to be framed after discussions and consultations with the returnees, returnees, migrants, academicians, migrant experts and the government officials. There is a need to conduct case studies and analysis of the other countries in this regard.
10. With regard to the migrant issues NORKA was constituted to address the various issues regarding migration from Kerala. This was supposed to be a one stop shop for all requirements of the migrant population. Initially this organisation offered a big list of projects and programmes to serve the beneficiaries. But the study found that the performance of NORKA is very poor and the beneficiaries of the projects comes to single digit. There is an urgent need to expand and strengthen the NORKA programs in order to benefit the returnees. These schemes need to be developed in line with the aspirations of the migrants and the returnees. Enhancing NORKA schemes like NDPREM with increased funding, simplified procedures, and outreach to ensure effective support to returnees. Also, along with the development of programs, there is a need to communicate to this program effectively.

11. The study suggests the creation of a Returnee Resettlement Package. The state should introduce a comprehensive package including unemployment benefits, livelihood assistance, and temporary financial aid for returnees affected by policies like Nitaqat. Along with the compensatory benefits, there is a need to include the benefits for starting MSMEs, entrepreneurs and other employment opportunities. So, these packages need to be in two directions, first as a compensatory lump sum, then there is a need of converting them into better utilisation.
12. Considering that the majority of participants (50.8%) had just finished the tenth grade, the study suggests that there should be more technical/skill training for the return migrants to equip them to reintegrate or re migrate with better terms. Taking advantage of distance education learning or vocational training programs can help participants develop their abilities and increase their employment prospects both domestically and internationally.
13. The vast majority of respondents (89.5%) said they had not received any help from LSG, suggesting that the LSG was not very supportive. Only 4.8% reported that they received some support from LSG. The involvement of local self government institutions in the issues of migrants seems to be very low. It is suggested that the concerned institutions should come up with projects and policies for addressing the migrant concerns. They can easily handle the issues of return migrants locally if necessary instructions and fund allocations is given to local self government institutions.

6.4 Scope for Further Research

The study on the socioeconomic effects of return migration from Saudi Arabia to Kerala offers important new perspectives on the difficulties faced by returnees as they reintegrate back into society. Nevertheless, additional research might be done in a number of areas to better understand the phenomenon. Here are a few possible directions for future study:

1. The current study concentrates on the socioeconomic effects of the Nitaqat policy on return migrants in the Malappuram area. Future research can examine the psychosocial aspects of abrupt return migration. Examining the psychological and emotional repercussions that returnees and their families experience, such as stress, anxiety, identity crises, and changes in family relations, can be a part of this study. A more thorough understanding of the difficulties faced by returning migrants and the development of more extensive rehabilitation and assistance plans can result from an awareness of these factors.
2. This study focuses on the socioeconomic effects of the Nitaqat policy in the Malappuram district, however there is a lot of scope for more research by comparing it to other areas in Kerala that depend on migration, such as Kozhikode , Kannur and Kasrgod. Examining the effects in these areas can offer more profound understandings of regional differences in recovery outcomes and coping mechanisms. Comparative research like this would improve knowledge of return migration in Kerala generally and help create more inclusive and successful returnee welfare programs.
3. Future studies on returning migrants from other Gulf nations including the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, and Oman that have comparable labor naturalization laws, however, have room. Comparative research between nations or regions may provide a more profound understanding of the wider effects of such actions. The long-term reintegration experiences of returnees, such as their economic activity, access to welfare programs, and social well-being, can also be investigated in detail.

6.5 Conclusion

The current study examined the socioeconomic effects of the Nitaqat policy on Kerala, concentrating on the district of Malappuram. Many Malayali migrants returned as a result of the Saudi government's nationalization program on its workforce. Wide-ranging effects on families, communities, and the Malappuram local economy resulted from this return movement. Reintegration was difficult for

many returnees, who faced social difficulties, financial instability, and unemployment. The study also evaluated the Kerala government's response mechanisms, specifically those offered by NORKA and its welfare schemes. Despite providing some assistance, these programs' narrow scope and lack of long-term planning exposed significant implementation flaws in the policy. Thus, the study highlights the pressing need for a more planned and long-term strategy for local economic resilience and migrant reintegration. Essentially, the results urge proactive, development-focused, and humanistic approaches to migration management.

Kerala's remittance-based economy is struggling to survive without a steady supply of money from the Gulf, and the effects of return inflows are starting to show in the state. Furthermore, return migration has a depressing effect on the life of the households of migrants. Despite this dire situation, the state has been responding slowly in terms of its welfare prerogatives, and the lack of any meaningful return migration policy initiatives for the reintegration and rehabilitation of the returned migrants is glaring. As a result, the problems and obstacles faced by returning migrants throughout their post-return phase went unnoticed and continued. These issues are to be taken care as a high priority agenda by the state government and other stakeholders. The institutional mechanisms like NORKA should also be fine-tuned to catch up with the issues and concerns.

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APPENDIX

A SURVEY ON SOCIO ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF NITAQAT IN KERALA: A STUDY OF MALAPPURAM DISTRICT

1. Age (വയസ്സ്)

Mark only one oval.

- 18-25 (18 വയസ്സിനും 25 വയസ്സിനും ഇടയിൽ)
- 25-35 (25 വയസ്സിനും 35 വയസ്സിനും ഇടയിൽ)
- 35-60 (35 വയസ്സിനും 60 വയസ്സിനും ഇടയിൽ)
- Above 60 (60 വയസ്സിന് മുകളിൽ)

2. Gender

Mark only one oval.

- Male (പുരുഷൻ)
- Female (സ്ത്രീ)
- Others

3. Religion (മതം)

Mark only one oval.

- Muslim (മുസ്ലിം)
- Hindu (ഹിന്ദു)
- Christian (ക്രിസ്ത്യൻ)
- Others

4. Educational status (വിദ്യാഭ്യാസ നില)

Mark only one oval.

- No education (വിദ്യാഭ്യാസമില്ല)
- Primary (പ്രാഥമിക വിദ്യാഭ്യാസം)
- Upto 10 (പത്താം ക്ലാസ് വരെ)
- +2 (+2 വരെ)
- Degree and above
- Technical

5. Family status (കുടുംബനില)

Mark only one oval.

- Nuclear family (അണു കുടുംബം)
- Joint family (കൂട്ടുകുടുംബം)

6. Current occupation (ഇപ്പോഴത്തെ തൊഴിൽ)

Mark only one oval.

- Unemployed (തൊഴിൽ ഇല്ല)
- Self-employed (സ്വയം തൊഴിൽ)
- Agriculture labour (കർഷക തൊഴിലാളി)
- Government
- Business (ബിസിനസ്)
- Others

7. Occupation before migration (ഗൾഫിൽ പോകുന്നതിനു മുമ്പുള്ള തൊഴിൽ)

Mark only one oval.

- Skilled (നല്ല പരിശീലനം ലഭിച്ച തൊഴിൽ)
- Unskilled (നാട്ടിലെ സാധാരണ പണികൾ)
- Business (ബിസിനസ്)
- Professional
- Others (മറ്റുള്ള തൊഴിൽ)

8. Occupation During Migration (ഗൾഫിലായിരുന്ന സമയത്തുള്ള തൊഴിൽ)

Mark only one oval.

- Skilled (നല്ല പരിശീലനം ലഭിച്ച തൊഴിൽ)
- Unskilled (നാട്ടിൽ ചെയ്തിരുന്ന പോലെയുള്ള സാധാരണ പണികൾ)
- Business (ബിസിനസ്)
- Professional
- Others (മറ്റുള്ള തൊഴിൽ)

9. Current Monthly Family Income (ഇപ്പോൾ നിങ്ങളുടെ മാസ വരുമാനം എത്ര)

Mark only one oval.

- Below 5000 (5000 ന് താഴെ)
- 5000-10000 (5000 നും 10000 നും ഇടയിൽ)
- 10000-30000 (10000 നും 30000 നും ഇടയിൽ)
- 30000-50000 (30000 നും 50000 ഇടയിൽ)
- Above 50000 (50000ത്തിനു മുകളിൽ)

10. Monthly Income During Migration (ഗൾഫിലായിരുന്ന സമയത്തെ മാസ വരുമാനം)

Mark only one oval.

- Below 20000 (20000 ന് താഴെ)
- 20000-50000 (20000നും 50000 നും ഇടയിൽ)
- 50000-1 lakh (50000 നും ഒരു ലക്ഷത്തിനും ഇടയിൽ)
- Above 1 lakh (ഒരു ലക്ഷത്തിനു മുകളിൽ)

11. Duration of migration (എത്രകാലം ഗൾഫിൽ ജോലി ചെയ്തു)

Mark only one oval.

- Below 1 year (ഒരു വർഷത്തിനു താഴെ)
- 1-2 years (ഒരു വർഷം മുതൽ രണ്ടു വർഷം വരെ)
- 2-5 years (2 വർഷം മുതൽ 5 വർഷം വരെ
- 5-10 years (5 വർഷം മുതൽ 10 വർഷം വരെ)
- Above 10 years (10 വർഷത്തിനു മുകളിൽ)

12. Have migration improved your family status? (ഗൾഫിൽ പോയ ശേഷം നിങ്ങളുടെ കുടുംബനിലവാരം മെച്ചപ്പെട്ടിട്ടുണ്ടോ ?)

Mark only one oval.

- No improvement (മെച്ചപ്പെട്ടിട്ടില്ല)
- Bit improvement (കുറച്ചു മെച്ചപ്പെട്ടിട്ടുണ്ട്)
- No comments (അഭിപ്രായം പറയുന്നില്ല)
- Good improvement (നല്ല പുരോഗതി ഉണ്ടായിട്ടുണ്ട്)
- Very Good improvement (വളരെ നല്ല പുരോഗതി ഉണ്ടായിട്ടുണ്ട്)

13. Before Exit from Host Country Had you ever thought of a return to Home land?
(ഗൾഫിൽ നിന്നും തൊഴിൽ നഷ്ടമായി നാട്ടിലേക്ക്
മടങ്ങുന്നതിനെ കുറിച്ച് നിങ്ങൾ എപ്പോഴെങ്കിലും ചിന്തിച്ചിരു
ന്നോ?)

Mark only one oval.

- Never (ഒരിക്കലുമില്ല)
- Sometimes (ചിലപ്പോഴൊക്കെ)
- No comments (അഭിപ്രായം പറയുന്നില്ല)
- Often (പലപ്പോഴും ചിന്തിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്)
- Very often

14. How do you evaluate your migrant days? (നിങ്ങൾ ഗൾഫിലായിരുന്ന
ആ സമയം എങ്ങനെ വിലയിരുത്തുന്നു?)

Mark only one oval.

- Very bad (വളരെ മോശമായിരുന്നു)
- Bad (മോശമായിരുന്നു)
- No comments (അഭിപ്രായം പറയുന്നില്ല)
- Good (നല്ലതായിരുന്നു)
- Very good (വളരെ നല്ലതായിരുന്നു)

15. How was your health condition during Migrant days? (നിങ്ങൾ ഗൾഫിൽ
ആയിരുന്ന സമയത്ത് നിങ്ങളുടെ ആരോഗ്യ അവസ്ഥ
എങ്ങനെയായിരുന്നു?)

Mark only one oval.

- Very bad (വളരെ മോശമായിരുന്നു)
- Bad (മോശമായിരുന്നു)
- No comments (അഭിപ്രായം പറയുന്നില്ല)
- Good (നല്ലതായിരുന്നു)
- Very good (വളരെ നല്ലതായിരുന്നു)

16. How is s your health condition Now? (ഇപ്പോൾ നിങ്ങളുടെ ആരോഗ്യ അവസ്ഥ എങ്ങനെയാണ്?)

Mark only one oval.

- Very bad (വളരെ മോശമാണ്)
- Bad (മോശം)
- No comments (അഭിപ്രായം പറയുന്നില്ല)
- Good (നല്ല ആരോഗ്യമുണ്ട്)
- Very good (വളരെ നല്ലതാണ്)

17. If you are given a chance to Go back for migration What will be your choice? (ഇനിയും നിങ്ങൾക്ക് ഗൾഫിലേക്ക് തിരിച്ചു പോകാൻ അവസരം കിട്ടിയാൽ നിങ്ങൾ എന്തായിരിക്കും തെരഞ്ഞെടുക്കുക?

Mark only one oval.

- Never going (ഒരിക്കലും പോകില്ല)
- May be going (ചിലപ്പോൾ പോകുമായിരിക്കും)
- No comments (അഭിപ്രായം പറയുന്നില്ല)
- Will be going (പോയിരിക്കും)
- Very much interested to go (പോകാൻ വളരെയധികം താല്പര്യമുണ്ട്)

18. If your answer to Q-17 is Yes what is the reason? (പതിനേഴാമത്തെ ചോദ്യത്തിനുള്ള നിങ്ങളുടെ ഉത്തരം 'അതെ' എന്നാണെങ്കിൽ എന്താകുന്നു അതിന്റെ കാരണം?)

Mark only one oval.

- Better financial prosperity (നല്ല സാമ്പത്തിക അഭിവൃദ്ധി ഉണ്ടാവും)
- Personal satisfaction (വ്യക്തിപരമായ സംതൃപ്തി)
- Family requirements (കുടുംബാവശ്യങ്ങൾ)
- No opportunity in Kerala (കേരളത്തിൽ തൊഴിലിന്തൊഴിലിന് അവസരം ഇല്ല)

19. In which year you came back to India? (ഏതു വർഷമാണ് നിങ്ങൾ ഗൾഫിൽ നിന്നും തിരിച്ചു വന്നത്)

Mark only one oval.

- Before 2015 (2015 നു മുമ്പ് 2015 നു മുമ്പ്)
- 2015-2019 (2015 2019 നും ഇടയിൽ)
- 2019-2021 covid period (2019 ഇനും 2021 നും ഇടയിൽ)
- After 2021 (2021 നു ശേഷം)

20. What was your major reason for coming back? (നിങ്ങൾ ഗൾഫിൽ നിന്നും തിരിച്ചു വരാനുള്ള പ്രധാനപ്പെട്ട കാരണമെന്തായിരുന്നു)

Mark only one oval.

- Nitaqat (നിതാവത്)
- Family pressure (കുടുംബത്തിൽ നിന്നും ഉള്ള സമ്മർദ്ദം)
- Health issues (ആരോഗ്യ പ്രശ്നങ്ങൾ)
- Retired from job (ജോലിയിൽ നിന്നും വിരമിച്ചതിനാൽ)
- Wanted to settle with family (കുടുംബത്തോടൊപ്പം താമസിക്കാൻ തീരുമാനിച്ചു)
- Others (മറ്റുള്ളവ)

21. During your return from migration did you received any government support (ഗൾഫിൽ നിന്നും തൊഴിൽ നഷ്ടപ്പെട്ട് നാട്ടിൽ വന്ന ശേഷം നിങ്ങൾക്ക് ഗവൺമെന്റിന്റെ അടുത്ത് നിന്നും എന്തെങ്കിലും സപ്പോർട്ട് ലഭിച്ചിരുന്നോ?)

Mark only one oval.

- No support (സപ്പോർട്ട് കിട്ടിയിട്ടില്ല)
- Some support (കുറച്ചു സപ്പോർട്ട് കിട്ടിയിട്ടുണ്ട്)
- No comments (അഭിപ്രായം പറയുന്നില്ല)
- Good support (നല്ല സപ്പോർട്ട് കിട്ടിയിട്ടുണ്ട്)
- Very good support (വളരെ നല്ല സപ്പോർട്ട് കിട്ടിയിട്ടുണ്ട്)

22. Evaluate the response of your family on your return? (ഗൾഫിൽ നിന്നും തൊഴിൽ നഷ്ടപ്പെട്ട് നിങ്ങൾ നാട്ടിലെത്തിയ ശേഷം നിങ്ങളുടെ കുടുംബത്തിൽ നിന്നും ഉള്ള സപ്പോർട്ട് എങ്ങനെയായിരുന്നു?)

Mark only one oval.

- No support (സപ്പോർട്ട് ഇല്ല)
- Some support (കുറച്ചു സപ്പോർട്ട് കിട്ടിയിട്ടുണ്ട്)
- No comments (അഭിപ്രായം പറയുന്നില്ല)
- Good support (നല്ല സപ്പോർട്ട് കിട്ടിയിട്ടുണ്ട്)
- Very good support (വളരെ നല്ല സപ്പോർട്ട് കിട്ടിയിട്ടുണ്ട്)

23. After return from which agency you received much support? (ഗൾഫിൽ നിന്നും നിങ്ങൾ മടങ്ങിയെത്തിയശേഷം ഏത് ഏജൻസിയിൽ നിന്നും ആണ് നിങ്ങൾക്ക് കൂടുതൽ സപ്പോർട്ട് കിട്ടിയിട്ടുള്ളത്?)

Mark only one oval.

- Government (ഗവണ്മെന്റ്)
- Religion (മതസംഘടനയിൽ നിന്നും)
- Political parties (രാഷ്ട്രീയപാർട്ടികളിൽ നിന്നും)
- No help received (ഒരു സഹായവും കിട്ടിയിട്ടില്ല)
- NGO
- Others (മറ്റുള്ളവ)

24. Nature of Your spending during migration?(ഗൾഫിലായിരുന്ന സമയം നിങ്ങൾ ഏറ്റവും കൂടുതൽ പണം ചെലവഴിച്ചത് എന്തിനായിരുന്നു)

Mark only one oval.

- Basic necessities (അടിസ്ഥാന ആവശ്യങ്ങൾക്ക് വേണ്ടി)
- Charity (ദാനധർമ്മങ്ങൾക്ക് വേണ്ടി)
- Parties (സൽക്കാരം വിരുന്ന് മുതലായവക്ക് വേണ്ടി)
- Remittances
- Savings (സമ്പാദ്യത്തിനു വേണ്ടി)
- Others (മറ്റുള്ളവ)

25. Nature of Your spending Current (നിങ്ങൾ ഇപ്പോൾ പണം എന്തിനുവേണ്ടിയാണ് കൂടുതൽ ചെലവഴിക്കുന്നത്)

Mark only one oval.

- Basic necessities (അടിസ്ഥാന ആവശ്യങ്ങൾക്ക് വേണ്ടി)
- Charity (ദാനധർമ്മങ്ങൾക്ക് വേണ്ടി)
- Patties etc (സൽക്കാരം, വിരുന്ന് മുതലായവക്ക് വേണ്ടി)
- Remittances
- Savings (സമ്പാദ്യത്തിനുവേണ്ടി)
- Others (മറ്റുള്ളവ)

26. What type of support you expect from government (ഏതുതരത്തിലുള്ള സപ്പോർട്ട് ആണ് നിങ്ങൾ ഗവൺമെന്റിൽ നിന്നും പ്രതീക്ഷിക്കുന്നത്)

Mark only one oval.

- Financial including subsidy (സബ്സിഡി ഉൾപ്പെടെയുള്ള സാമ്പത്തിക സപ്പോർട്ട്)
- Mental including counselling (കൗൺസിലിംഗ് ഉൾപ്പെടെയുള്ള മാനസികമായിട്ടുള്ള സപ്പോർട്ട്)
- Official support for running industry etc (വ്യവസായം മുതലായവ നടത്തുന്നതിന് വേണ്ടിയുള്ള ഔദ്യോഗികമായിട്ടുള്ള സപ്പോർട്ട്)
- Support for finding job (ഒരു തൊഴിൽ കണ്ടെത്തുന്നതിന് വേണ്ടിയുള്ള സപ്പോർട്ട്)
- Pension etc (പെൻഷൻ മുതലായവക്ക് വേണ്ടിയുള്ള സപ്പോർട്ട്)
- Others (മറ്റുള്ളവ)

27. Did you received any support from LSG (തദ്ദേശ സ്വയംഭരണ സ്ഥാപനങ്ങളിൽ നിന്നും നിങ്ങൾക്ക് എന്തെങ്കിലും തരത്തിലുള്ള സപ്പോർട്ട് ലഭിച്ചിരുന്നോ?)

Mark only one oval.

- No support (ഒരു സപ്പോർട്ടും കിട്ടിയിട്ടില്ല)
- Some support (കുറച്ചു സപ്പോർട്ട് കിട്ടിയിട്ടുണ്ട്)
- No comments (അഭിപ്രായം പറയുന്നില്ല)
- Good support (നല്ല സപ്പോർട്ട് കിട്ടിയിട്ടുണ്ട്)
- Very good support (വളരെ നല്ല സപ്പോർട്ട് കിട്ടിയിട്ടുണ്ട്)

28. What are your suggestions for people trying for migration? (ഗൾഫിൽ പോവാൻ ശ്രമിക്കുന്ന ആളുകൾക്ക് എന്ത് നിർദ്ദേശമാണ് നിങ്ങൾക്ക് നൽകാൻ ഉള്ളത്)

Mark only one oval.

- No suggestion (ഒരു നിർദ്ദേശവും നൽകാനില്ല)
- Better qualification (നല്ല യോഗ്യതകൾ വേണം)
- Ensuring correct documents (ശരിയായിട്ടുള്ള രേഖകൾ ഉണ്ടെന്ന് ഉറപ്പുവരുത്തുക)
- Hard work (കഠിനപ്രയത്നം വേണം)
- Earning more experience (കൂടുതൽ പരിചയസമ്പത്ത് നേടുക)
- Starting own business (സ്വന്തമായി ബിസിനസ് തുടങ്ങുക)
- Migration is not good (ഗൾഫിൽ ജോലിക്ക് പോകുന്നത് നല്ലതല്ല)

29. What is your opinion about government interventions in your host country? (സൗദി അറേബ്യയിൽ ഗവൺമെന്റ് ഇടപെടലിനെ കുറിച്ച് എന്താണ് നിങ്ങളുടെ അഭിപ്രായം?)

Mark only one oval.

- Very bad (വളരെ മോശമായിരുന്നു)
- Bad (മോശമായിരുന്നു)
- No comments (അഭിപ്രായം പറയുന്നില്ല)
- good (നല്ലതായിരുന്നു)
- Very good (വളരെ നല്ലതായിരുന്നു)

30. What is your opinion about Previous employer? (ഗൾഫിലെ നിങ്ങളുടെ ഖമീരിനെ കുറിച്ച് എന്താണ് നിങ്ങളുടെ അഭിപ്രായം?)

Mark only one oval.

- Very bad (വളരെ മോശം)
- Bad (മോശം)
- No comments (അഭിപ്രായം പറയുന്നില്ല)
- Good (നല്ലത്)
- Very good (വളരെ നല്ലത്)