



International Emigration in a Gender Perspective

Vidya A K

Research Scholar

Department of Economics

University of Calicut

Dr. John Matthai Centre, Thrissur, Kerala

Abstract: International emigration, is a process of exit from one place to another for better standard of living. Migration is considered as male oriented phenomenon during 1960's and 1970's. Since 1980's women become a part of international migration. Gender inequality in the labour market is one of the factor which increases the mobility pattern of people. Gender has an important role to determine the causes and consequences of international emigration. Traditionally our society has a male dominated migration process but, this picture got some changes. Women participation in migration process now become indicating an increasing trend. Emigration of both men and women now become a common phenomenon. So, this paper tries to examine the role of gender in international emigration from Kerala.

Keywords: Globalisation, Migration, Gender, Labour market,



Introduction

Globalisation is a process of international integration arising from exchange of goods and services, and ideas. Historically, the first wave of globalisation during the period between 1870 and 1913 involved free trade, free capital mobility and the gold standard, and also it was an age of mass migration. After that we had the de-globalisation period between 1914 and 1945, which was characterised by wars, high inflation in the 1920's, economic depression in the 1930's and political instability. In the late 20th century we had the second wave of globalisation saw a substantial increase in the level of capital mobility and international trade. The international markets are segmented, with international migration constrained for unskilled labour and poor (Andres Solimano, International Labour Organisation (ILO), 2004). So, international migration was the product or feature of globalisation process.

International migration is the process of movement of people from one place to another for achieving better standard of living. There are several push and pull factors behind the movement of people from home country to the destination country. A large number of migrants are motivated by the search for higher wages and better opportunities but many are move because of lack of better employment opportunity .It leads them to think about to exit from one place and join to another, what we called the process of emigration. Migration is considered as a male oriented phenomenon during 1960's and 1970's, with women and children as a part of family reunification, but in the 1980's and 1990's, women were migrating with both as family members and independently. So, gender is another factor links with the international migration process. Each year millions of men and women leave their homes and cross national borders. At the turn of 21st century, there were more than 200 million international migrants worldwide, nearly 90 million of them are workers. Services are the fastest growing component of global trade. Globalisation is leading to a growing international migration of jobs not only in manufacturing but also, increasingly in services (World Development Report, 2013 jobs).

In 20th century, we can see that rapid changes among labour market structure in both developed and developing countries. Our labour market have both male and female participation, but female workforce participation rate is comparatively lower than male workers. The traditional attitude of India expect that the role of women is mainly focused to the household activities



like upbringing of the children and kitchen work. The women are missing in employment sectors and they are segregated in the labour market (Zaveri and Nisarg).

In Kerala, women are highly educated than males. Educated women's preference for job is increasing, but their participation in labour market is stable. The participation of women in labour force depends upon her personal and family characteristics and other factors. They are mainly concentrated in service sectors (Lakshmi Devi, 2002). Labour market has different sectors, and each sectors are including both male and female workers. Comparing male workers, females have good qualification but our market providing certain type of jobs for females, most of them are engaged in informal sectors offering low wages and heavy workloads. But this picture has got some changes, at present more women are coming to the labour market and they wanted to do something for enhancing their living standards. Highly educated females are strongly preferring jobs. Changes in labour market structure, level of employment and job opportunities affect changes in population like fertility rate and migration. Traditionally migration considered as male oriented phenomenon, but educated women are actively participating in this sectors. Females are leaving the home country for getting better standard of living.

Statement of the Problem

Labour market is the place where workers and employees interact with each other. It consists of different sectors with different levels of occupations. Here we have to see that the participation of both male and female workers. The hierarchies of employment is emerged in the labour market and both males and females are segregated. Gender based segregation happening in the labour market sectors. Our society assign certain type of jobs for both the sexes, especially for women workers. In India, the labour force participation rate is declining. This decline is mostly seen among the women workers, because our society always consider women are vulnerable. Gender inequality in the labour market causes low labour force participation of women workers. In this case, international migration is one of the significant feature of globalization has an important role to change the life of women in the society and also in the family. So, this study tries to focus how migration can change the life of women migrants and also tries to focus on the gender wise pattern of international Emigration.



Objectives of the Study

The present study just try to examine that the role of migration in Kerala and also look into the international migration in gender standpoint.

Data and Methodology

The present study use secondary data for examine the international emigration of both men and women from Kerala. For this, Pravasi Malayalee census data was conducted by Directorate of Economics and Statistics department (DES), KMS survey conducted by Centre for Development Studies (CDS) and also the findings of International Labour Organisation (ILO) is used.

Results

The economic growth increased by 3.6 % in 2017, compared with 3.2 % in 2016, but the global labour market remains weak with progress in reducing vulnerable employment and working poverty (World Employment Social Outlook, 2018, ILO).The factors like less labour force participation, unemployment, sectoral and occupational segregation assessing the gender gaps in the labour market. Men and women treated differently in labour markets. The participation of women in labour market is low compared with men. Globally, the labour force participation of women at 49.9 percent is 26.7 percent points lower than the rate for men in 2017.And also the unemployment rate is high among them. When women have jobs, they have to face certain differences or gaps in the sectors and occupation (ILO). India's female employment and labour force participation have been declining since the mid-2000.In Kerala, female employment rate improved minimally during the long-term period from 1993-94 & 2011-12 (ILO).This is because of high education level of women in Kerala than India. Globally, a wide range of gap between male and female labour force participation. In the world, female labour force participation is just 49 percent. When we look into the South Asia the picture is same, male labour force participation rate is high compared with females. In Kerala, women are highly educated related with males, but their involvement in the employment sector is lower.

Gender inequality is the one of the important factor that leads to the high level of segregation in the market. Lack of employment opportunities leads people to think about to leave the home country. In this situation here we have to bring the concept of migration. International



migration is now become a common phenomenon. Both male and female are participated in this process. Feminisation of migration is the new phenomenon that existed in our society. Large number of females are cross the national border for achieving better standard of living. Kerala one of the state famous by international migration process and large percentage of labour contributions are happening from this state at every year. In this situation discussing the role of migration in a gender way is very relevant today because of large number of participation come from the side of women workers. Table 1.1 shows the gender wise number of emigration from Kerala. This data was given by Kerala Migration Survey done by Centre for Development studies.

Table 1.1

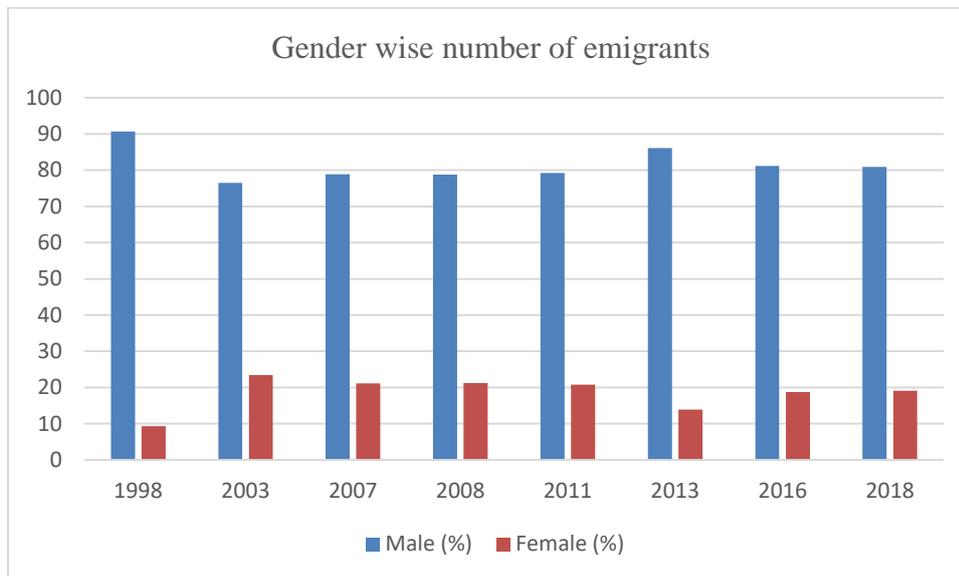
Gender Wise Number of Emigrants

Year	Male (%)	Female (%)
1998	90.7	9.3
2003	76.5	23.4
2007	78.9	21.1
2008	78.8	21.2
2011	79.2	20.8
2013	86.1	13.9
2016	81.2	18.8
2018	80.9	19.1

(Source: Kerala Migration Survey, CDS)

The labour outflows from Kerala includes both men and women, over the years the number has indicate an increasing trend. The major percentage of international migration rest with the side of male workers. Comparing male and female international migration, female number is much lower than that of the male. The year 2003 shows better percentage of women migration from Kerala. But in 2018, women participation reflected as declining trend.

Figure 1.1



(Source: Kerala Migration Survey, CDS)

Both men and women make a movement for achieving better life. In 2013, 232 million people or 3.2% of the world's population were international migrants. According to international organisation of migrations, world migration report 2013, India is among the top four migrant sending and receiving countries. Contemporary flows from India are of two kinds: the first is the emigration of highly skilled professionals, workers and students with tertiary and higher educational qualifications migrating to developed countries, particularly to the USA, UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. This flow started after independence and gathered momentum with the emigration of IT professional in the 1990's. The second is the flow of unskilled and semi-skilled workers going mostly to the Gulf countries and Malaysia. Flowing the oil boom in Gulf countries, mainly from Kerala and other South Indian states (Annual report 2014-15, MOIA).

Table 1.2

Country Wise Analysis of Employed Emigrants by Gender from Kerala (Percentage)

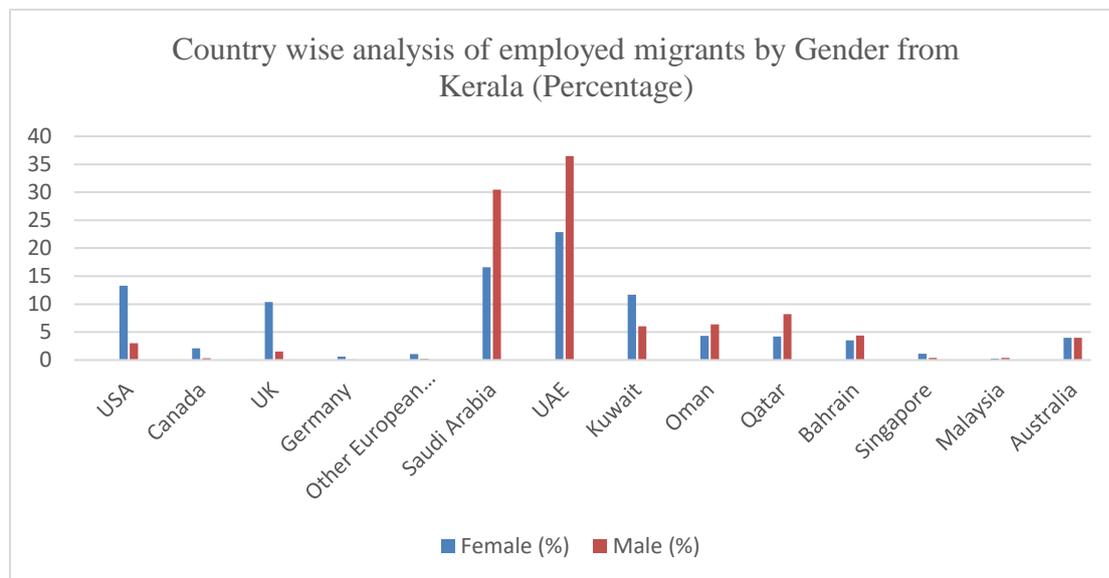
Country	Female (%)	Male (%)
USA	13.3	3.03
Canada	2.11	0.32
UK	10.4	1.50
Germany	0.59	0.09
Other European countries	1.09	0.20
Saudi Arabia	16.6	30.49
UAE	22.9	36.47
Kuwait	11.7	6.03
Oman	4.34	6.39
Qatar	4.22	8.22
Bahrain	3.55	4.36
Singapore	1.14	0.36
Malaysia	0.25	0.39

Australia	3.96	3.96
Total	100.0	100.0

[Source: Directorate of Economics and Statistics, 2013]

Table 1.2 shows the gender wise percentage of emigrants from Kerala into different countries of the globe. From total international migrants from Kerala, both male and female labour outflows mainly into the side of West Asian countries. Gulf countries are the major destination of number of migrant workers from Kerala.

Figure 1.2



[Source: Directorate of Economics and Statistics, 2013]

Here, the major male emigration happens into the GCC countries. Among them UAE and Saudi Arabia are having great position in containing majority of labour power from Kerala. In the case of women migrants, Gulf having better percentage but other developed countries like USA and UK having well fraction of women migrant workers from Kerala. One of the difference among male and female migration flows from Kerala is that females are much more idea about destination places. The other European countries were highly select by the female migrant categories from Kerala state than men.

Traditionally Kerala has wide range of migration activity into the West Asian countries. In gender wise analysis, both male and female migrant numbers are highest in West Asian countries of the globe. Table 1.3 explains the movement of migrant workers from Kerala into the different GCC countries in the year of 2013.

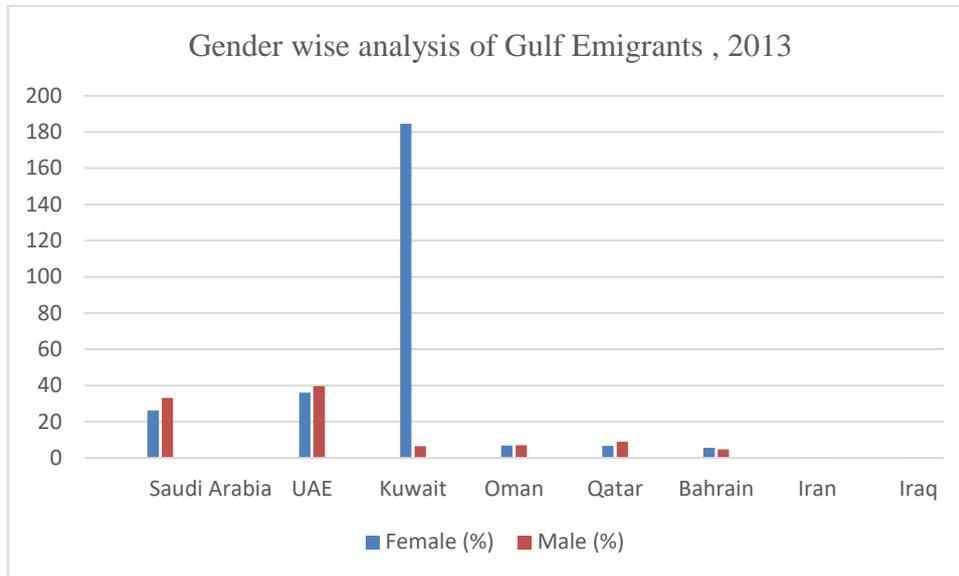
Table 1.3

Gender Wise Analysis of Employed Gulf Emigrants (Percentage)

Country	Female (%)	Male (%)
Saudi Arabia	26.17	33.11
UAE	36.13	39.61
Kuwait	184.59	6.55
Oman	6.83	6.94
Qatar	6.63	8.93
Bahrain	5.55	4.73
Iran	0.13	0.05
Iraq	0.07	0.03
Total	100.0	100.0

[Source: Directorate of Economics and Statistics (DES), 2013]

Figure 1.3



[Source: Directorate of Economics and Statistics (DES), 2013]

The major outflow of labours from Kerala happens to the Gulf countries like UAE, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, and Bahrain. Among them majority of male and female emigrants moved into UAE, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Kuwait has better percentage of female workers than male. UAE and Saudi Arabia having almost equal proportion of migrant workers in both the genders. Gulf is the real hub of migrant workers from Kerala.

The contribution of Kerala state into the process of international migration got special range from the labour market. The state have fourteen districts, each district having better role in labour migration process. Here the each districts providing major workers into the different parts of the globe. One of the important note is that women workers are coming from all the districts of state and major economic support into the state also coming from the side of women working classes of the society. So, then here have to make a look into district wise analysis of emigration from Kerala by gender.

Table 1.4

District Wise Percentage of Emigrants by Gender

Districts	2003		2013		2016	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Thiruvananthapuram	84.88	15.11	83.12	16.87	80.39	19.60
Kollam	82.98	17.01	84.24	15.75	79.64	20.35
Pathanamthitta	64.67	35.32	76.73	23.26	70.96	29.03
Alappuzha	73.64	26.35	85.64	14.35	72.56	27.43
Kottayam	51.07	48.92	69.23	30.76	61.11	38.88
Idukki	61.53	38.46	70.90	29.09	69.56	30.43
Ernakulam	67.18	32.81	72.33	27.66	70.35	29.64
Thrissur	82.00	18.00	84.32	15.67	85.39	14.60
Palakkad	70.08	29.91	93.75	6.25	73.52	26.47
Malappuram	89.10	10.89	97.87	2.12	94.97	5.02
Kozhikode	80.89	19.10	94.55	5.44	85.96	14.03
Wayanad	78.57	21.42	94.93	5.06	86.48	13.51
Kannur	80.35	19.64	88.51	11.48	85.09	14.90
Kasarakode	87.41	12.58	89.48	10.51	89.29	10.70
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(Source: Kerala Migration Survey, CDS)

Table 1.4 shows district level of emigration by gender in the years of 2003, 2013 and 2016. This is the data given by Kerala migration Survey. In the case of male migration, the districts like Malappuram and Kozhikode having highest position. The Malabar regions are always famous by providing great number of migrant workers into different corners of the world labour market. Then women emigration from Kerala, the districts like Kottayam, Pathanamthitta and Ernakulum are comes main stations. There are geographical differences in the case of gender wise international emigration from Kerala. The Southern parts of Kerala is provide major women working powers into the migration line. But Malabar regions are always stand as major migrants deliver districts especially in male labour outmigration.



Conclusion

International emigration is now become a common phenomenon. Both male and female are actively participating in this process for achieving better standard of living. It is actually a gendered phenomenon. There are several reasons behind their movement, important one among them is lack of employment opportunities in the home country. When we look into the labour market, there are different sectors having both male and female participation, but market has certain type of inequality for assigning jobs for both the gender. The labour force participation rate is low for females comparing with males in India. Marriage, motherhood and labour market segregation may be the reasons for this. In this situation, the migration plays an important role to change the life of females. At present both men and women moved into the different parts of the world. Among developed countries, Gulf Countries are their first choices of destination. Female number among international migrants is not bad, but their percentage rate is lower than the opposite gender. But their active participation in migration process has great importance from the society. So, this paper concluded that the both male and female involvement in the international migration process from Kerala indicating as an increasing trend today.

References

- Annual Report-2014-2015.Government of India Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA).
- Pravasi Malayalee Census report- Volume I, Directorate of Economics and Statistics (DES) & NORKA Department, Kerala Government, 2013.
- Rajan S Irudaya.2010.'Governance and labour migration', India migration report, Rout ledge 912-915 Tolstoy House, 15-17 Tolstoy Marg, New Delhi.
- Kerala Migration Survey (KMS/1998-2018), Centre For Development Studies (CDS), Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala
- Sharma Rashmi 2011,'Gender and International Migration: The Profile of Female Migrants from India', Social Scientist, Vol .39,No.3/4,PP.37-63.