CHAPTER X

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

There is a feminization of migration in the present century. In 2005 the international female migrants are more than that of male migrants in all regions of the World except in Asia and Africa. By 2000, 2 million Asian women were working outside their country of origin. By 2005, 65 percent of the Philippino migrants were women. In 2002 in SriLanka, the women migrants were twice than that of men; In Indonesia 79 percent of the migrants were females; in 1990, the immigrant women in Latin America were equal to men; in 2001, of the Central and South American women consisted 70 percent of women migrants. Since 1950, women migrants outnumbered males in Caribbean Islands (IOM, 2005). In Africa 25 out of 38 countries, men dominated. In America half the countries have men and women at equal a number. In developed countries women dominate in and in developing countries men dominate. In European countries women constitute half of the female migrants. In 2005, 17 million that is 47 percent of the immigrants from Africa were women. In Cape Verde women constitute 85 percent of the migrants. The stock of international migrants concentrated in a few countries – United States, Australia, Canada, France, Germany and United Kingdom (UNFPA, 2006). Poverty, unemployment, land degradation and disease are the reasons for migration from Asian and African countries. Women migrate to developed countries to take the advantage of economic opportunities and helps to widen their horizon. It makes people to become more mobile and puts them to destination countries. Migrants usually follow historical paths that are established by migrant networks. Family ties play an important role in international migration. The receiving countries allow family unification as a human consideration. Family linkage accounted for two thirds of all immigration in the United States, one-fourth in Canada and Australia. There are also labour brokers who arrange transport and accommodation facilities. Three factors have helped women in international migration. The demand or pull factors from destination
countries, the push factors from countries of origin and the network that linking supply with demand was discussed. The international migration of women has increased due to a number of supporting factors.

In this study an attempt was made to examine the trends and patterns of female international migration from Kottayam district of Kerala State for the period 1960 to 2006 based on the sample data; to study the push and pull factors behind migration decision of sample women emigrants; to assess the labour market experience of sample emigrant women of Kottayam district with regard to employment, wages and working conditions; to measure the economic and non-economic gains and losses from international migration of women and finally to study the status of women within the household and the children in the family.

The following hypotheses were tested in this study.

- Lack of employment opportunities with high salary is the main determinant of women’s international migration.
- Men follow women in international migration.
- Women earn more than men in foreign countries
- Benefits from international migration of women are greater than the costs of migration.
- The earnings of women emigrants of American countries are relatively higher than the earnings of women emigrants of European countries, Gulf countries and others

Highlights of macro level trends and pattern of international migration with reference to women:

- International migration is steadily increasing. In 2000, one in every 35 persons on earth is an international migrant from one in every 40 persons in 1960. The international migrants constitute 3 percent of the world population in 2000. In 1960 it was 2.5 percent.
U.S. is the major receiving country of international migrants in the world in 2000. The number of international migrants has increased from 75 million in 1960 to 175 million in 2000.

Female international migrants had increased from 3.5 crores in 1960 to 8.5 crores in 2000. In developed regions it increased from 1.5 crores to 5.6 crores. But in the case of less developed regions the change is very small, i.e., from 1.9 crores to 2.8 crores.

In 2000, the migrant women exceeded the number of migrant men in Latin America and the Caribbean, North America, Oceania, Europe and the former Soviet Union. In Africa and Asia migrant men were the majority.

Around 51 percent of the migrant women live in the developed world and 49 percent in the developing world.

The transition of Kerala from a net in migration to net out-migration state started during and after the Second World War. During Second World War a number of Malayalees were recruited for war related jobs. The war offered them an opportunity to become familiar with boundaries outside Kerala. The second factor was the independence of India in 1947, which opened up Malayalees to job opportunities in Delhi and other major cities. The third factor was the demographic expansion during 1940s and 1950s. The progress that Kerala made in education was another factor for out-migration.

A new trend of international migration started in the 1960’s. With the relaxation of restrictions in developed countries due to the shortage of labourers large number of professionals migrated to these countries as nurses, doctors, professors etc. Now there are a large number of Malayalees in North America and Western Europe. With the result of Oil boom in 1970s a new trend of migration had originated in Kerala – migration to the Middle East or Gulf countries.

1981-1991 was a transitory period in Kerala’s inter-state migratory situations. During this period Kerala’s external migration was more than its internal
migration. The net migration from Kerala should be equal to net internal migration plus net external migration

- In Kerala women constitute nearly 14 percent of the international migrants in 2007.
- There was a slight decline of female international migrants during the period 2003-2007.
- There is a difference of destination among male and female emigrants. In the case of male emigrants the highest percentage migrated to Saudi Arabia, but in the case of females it is UAE.
- From Kottayam district there seems to be highest proportion of emigration of women. Ernakulam and Pathanamthitta are the other important areas of female migration.
- Migration has reduced the working age population in the State and consequently increased the proportion of children and elderly. Return migrants at the age of 60 has also contributed to this. The elderly population in Kerala is large and is growing at a very rapid rate. Among the elderly, females out number males.
- Lonely women are increasing in Kerala and the proportions of female-headed households to total households are 22.6 percent: 22.5 percent in rural area and 22.8 percent in urban area. Divorce, desertion, death, migration etc are the basic reasons for the formulation of female-headed households.
- The cash remittances constitute 9.32 percent of the state domestic product.
- The proportion of female return emigrants constitutes 11 percent of the total number of return emigrants.
- The likely demand for nurses in UK, USA and Japan is predicted to be around 10,00,000 in the next five to ten years. The demand for nurses and caretakers abroad has resulted in an expansion of nursing education in Kerala.
- While considering the impact of migration on local economy the positive effects outweigh the negative effects.
In female literacy Kerala stands first in Indian states with a literacy rate of 91.98 percent.

The percentage of illiterate is minimum in Kottayam district (2.43 percent)

Districts that account for higher rates of emigration (men and women) show low levels of women’s participation in the labour market.

Three fourths of the unemployed women remained unemployed because of their preferences for skilled white collar jobs.

Kerala is also ranked at the top in the gender-related development index (GDI) among major States in India. Kottayam district stands in 4th place in GDI Kerala ranks first among States in India in the Human development index 2001 (0.773). Kottayam district ranks 2nd in HDI.

Kerala reached the final stage of demographic transition with low fertility and mortality rate.TFR for Kottayam district (1.6).

The following inferences are drawn based on a sample survey of about 446 women who had emigrated from five taluks of Kottayam district (viz. Kottayam, Changanacherry, Kanjirappally, Meenachil and Vaikom) in Kerala state of India.

- More than 90 percent of women are in the age group of 20 – 30 years at the time of first migration. There seems to be a negative correlation between age and migration. The value of correlation coefficient, r = -0.16, t= -3.48 is significant statistically at 1 percent level. As age increases migration decreases. In other words it may be stated that the tendency to emigrate is found largely among younger women than older women.

- Female emigrants have higher levels of education than male emigrants. Nearly 72 percent of men have technical or skilled education. The corresponding figure for women is 88 percent (inclusive of nursing considered as skilled education). Hence the primary data of this study highlights that women are more technically qualified than men.
• About 78 percent of the women emigrants are married and the rest are single woman.

• Nearly 81 percent of the married women and husbands are working in the same country.

• Around 17 percent of the husbands are staying in India.

• International migration of women is showing an increasing trend.

• Single women are more migratory than married women. At the time of first migration, nearly 80 percent of the emigrant women were single and about 20 percent were married.

• Migration tendency seems to be more among rural than urban women.

• More than 82 percent of female emigration has taken place after 1990.

• Maximum emigration was during the decade 2000-2006.

• 1990-2000 was a period of return emigration due to the Gulf war. After the war there seems to be a spurt in the international migration of women.

• Lack of employment opportunities in the home country and the demand for female labour in foreign countries offered with high salary are the main push and pull factors of international migration of women. Thus the empirical evidence proves the hypothesis of this study. The multiple regression results also suggest that age, marital status, lack of employment opportunities in the native country and the development of social networks are the key factors that determine the international migration of women in the sample region.

• The direction of emigration has changed in recent years. The emigration is largely towards European countries since 2001 in the case of both male and female emigrants. There is a tendency for single women to migrate largely to European and American countries. Nearly 36 percent of married women’s emigration is largely to Gulf countries followed by American
and European countries. Married women’s emigration is mainly for family unification.

- Emigration decisions were largely taken by women themselves in about 75 percent of the cases. Single women have relatively better decision making power than the married women.

- Around 17 percent of women had moved to various countries before reaching the destination country. Among the step migrants, majority of them (88 percent) had one step migration. Maximum step migration of three was observed among only four sample women emigrants.

- Host country Government (36 percent) and relatives (32 percent) constitute an important source of getting visa by women emigrants of the study area.

- Men follow women in international migration. The important channel for emigration of men seems to be their wives. This supports the second hypothesis of the study.

- Both in the case of male and female emigrants about 25 percent have got citizenship and the rest do not have the citizenship. Among the destination countries, Gulf countries do not give citizenship whereas American and European countries to some extent give citizenship to the emigrants.

- Though none of the sample female emigrant household was below poverty line in terms of monthly per capita expenditure norms before emigration, majority of the households fall under the middle income category. In other words the emigration tendency is found to be relatively higher among the middle income group in the study area.

- The occupational pattern has changed after emigration. After emigration the proportion of women employed in the Government service has increased to 48 percent. In the case of private sector, women’s employment has declined from 52 percent before emigration to 48 percent after emigration.
• Though the average annual incomes of female migrants are more than that of male migrants, the difference is not significant statistically.

• Even though women are earning more income, the proportion of female migrants who have savings is less than that of male migrants.

• Women’s international migration decisions are determined by :- Women’s age, women’s marital status, lack of employment opportunities in the place of origin and existence of social networks.

• The correlation coefficient between the variables, viz, international migration decision of women and lack of employment in the home country exhibit, the expected negative correlation and is statistically significant at one percent level.

• The correlation between international migration decision of women and the degree of social networks exhibit the desired sign of correlation i.e. positive and is also significant statistically, which means stronger the social networks, larger the volume of women’s international migration.

• Based on Z test the following inferences are drawn with regard to differential earnings.
  - There is no significant difference in the annual income of female emigrants of American and European countries.
  - There is significant difference in the annual income of female emigrants of American and Gulf countries at one percent level.
  - There seems to significant difference in the annual income of female emigrants of American and other countries at one percent level.
  - There is significant difference in the annual income of female emigrants of European and Gulf countries at one percent level.
  - There is significant difference in the annual income of female emigrants of European and other countries at 5 percent level.
There is no significant difference in the annual income of female emigrants of Gulf and other countries.

Z test is used to find out the significant difference in the annual income of male and female emigrants in the destination counties. It shows that there is no significant difference in the annual income of female and male emigrants in destination countries.

Gains and losses of migration:

Economic gains:

- More economic gain within a short period of time.
- Many opportunities are available abroad to earn money and a better living.
- Economic stability and financial security.
- Increase in asset holdings.
- Increase in savings.
- Ability to extend financial help to own family and relatives.
- High standard of living.

Gains related to employment:

- Very high salary.
- No sex discrimination in wages - same salary given for both men and women for same job.
- Availability of job opportunities and facilities.
- Advanced techniques help in discharging their duties promptly and lower the work burden.
- Able to work in more advanced fields
- Timely payment of salary.
- Job satisfaction and peace of mind.
• Up-to-date technology makes women competent.

**Educational gains:**

• Advanced and better educational facilities for emigrants and their children.
• Opportunities available to upgrade knowledge and skills.
• On the job training – firm specific and general.
• Opportunities available to go in for higher studies with paid work.

**Social gains:**

• Help to self-living and to stand on one’s own feet.
• Upward shift in social status.
• Able to adapt with different culture.
• Helped relatives to migrate.
• Better quality of life.
• Better medical facilities.
• Latest technology is seen in all aspects of day to day life.
• Able to learn new language.
• Open society and advantageous of a developed country.
• Facilities available in developed countries cannot be compared with the host country.
• Personal freedom.

**Losses of migration:**

• Away from the family mainly children and husband. This is the major non economic loss of married women whose family is left behind their home country.
• Away from the familiar surroundings.
• Cost of living is very high.
• Nearly 40-50 percent of the income should be spent on day to day maintenance.
• Work adds to tension and makes them very busy.
• Have to work very hard. Migrants, have to do so much of work within a short period of time.
• Women do not have supportive services in the destination countries for the upbringing of their children. This is one of the non-economic cost of women’s emigration. In homeland grandparents and relatives are available. The care of children is the most important problem for the married employed women emigrants (48 percent). Payment to the day care centers (crèche) is exorbitant costing about Rs. 45000/month.
• No religious freedom in certain countries.
• Sometimes-racial discrimination and prejudices.
• Live in entirely different culture.
• The climate is very severe that is, extreme hot or extreme cold.
• Feeling lonely.
• Less contact with relatives and in emergency cannot go to the native country.
• Tax rate is very high.
• Husbands are not getting good employment.
• Problem of language, restlessness and strain from work situations.
• Feeling of being foreigner in the destination country.
• More tax has to be paid to the government for performing over time work.
• Husbands usually drink at parties.
• The medical treatment is very costly.
• Sickness and pain due to hard work and strain.
• Lack of citizenship.
• In Gulf countries strict rules and regulations.
• Care of aged parents neglected.
• People have colour complex.
• No open litigation, but prejudices are there in the heart.
• No time for recreation.
• Had to perform dual role - house work and paid work.
• Life style abroad not suited to their own culture.
• Deviation of the children from Kerala culture and tradition is an important non economic costs of women’s international migration.

Children:

Status

• Majority of children (44 percent) are in the age group of less than five years. Sex wise composition of children reveals that females outnumber males by two percent.
• Of the total children 24 percent of them are staying India and 76 percent are staying abroad.
• The highest proportion of children who are staying in India are from Gulf countries (71 percent).
• 40 percent of the children are in the age group 5-18 years.
• The care of children is the most important problem for the married employed women emigrants (48 percent).
Benefits:

- Too much care is given to children.
- Children can grow freely.
- The future of the children is secure.
- Advanced education and health facilities available for children.

Costs:

- Children adopt the culture of the host country very easily.
- No respect to elders and parents
- Nobody to look after children at the time of sickness.
- Baby sitting problem
- All children are not interested in religious ceremonies.
- 52 percent of children want to return to Kerala.
- Loss of next generation by Kerala State.

Suggestions:

- Though the Indian economy especially the Kerala economy is highly indebted to the efforts, toil and tears of the emigrant women, the Government of Kerala has very scanty and fragmented information about the whereabouts of the migrants. It is high time that the Government of Kerala should periodically collect statistics on women’s emigration in the State.
- Efforts should be taken by the Indian Government particularly Kerala state Government, to encourage the return of women emigrants so that they can share the skill, knowledge and experience with the source country.
- Host countries should provide child care facilities at concessional cost to the emigrant women.
- Both the source and host countries should give priority for family unification and help the women emigrants in this regard.
• One major area where migrant women face crisis is the family. In order to earn more money for purposes of investment on assets, marriage expenses and to help the economically backward relatives in the homeland women perform over time work. This means keeping oneself away from the family and spending more time outside the home. This has far reaching emotional repercussions upon a family life. Women should give preference for family peace and harmony and therefore try to spend more time with the family.

• The emigrant women should find some leisure time for recreation to reduce stress and tension.

• Children should be familiar with native land and the women migrants should take efforts to take their children to Kerala for holidays. This will help them to know the people and culture of their homeland.

• Counselling may be given by the Kerala Association functioning in the host country to women emigrants to discontinue the consumption of alcohol and narcotics. Awareness should be generated among women emigrants that a high standard of living can be attained without sacrificing the moral values.

• Cultural crisis and cultural shocks are major threats to the Indian community in the Western world. Religion is the axis upon which the socio-cultural and economic, political and individual lives rotate in India. To overcome the cultural shocks emigrants from Kerala must learn their native language and through it try to imbibe the rich cultural and religious values of their land. Every Indian who lives abroad must find time to inculcate the minds of their young ones, the rich values of Indian culture.

• One major strain of the emigrant women is upbringing of their children. Children in the Western world are pulled between two worlds- the traditional Indian and the non-traditional Western. Parents should give counselling to their children and help them to understand the values of Indian culture and tradition.
• NORKA (Non – Resident Kerala Affairs) should be made more active. Remittances from the emigrants should be used more productively. This Association can take the initiative to mobilize the remittances and start industries that have local advantage and create employment opportunities in the State.

• Academic standard of the Western peer groups to whom the Indian migrant women have to compete are very high. Therefore it is the urgent need of all the Indian Universities to recognize, restructure and update the syllabi/curriculum of their respective Universities. Otherwise Indian women emigrant may find themselves out-dated and under qualified.