Chapter 8

Society in Transition-I

The state of Kerala came into being in the first decade of the second half of the twentieth century, a period so spectacular in the developmental history of humanity. The period witnessed amazing changes- both negative and positive- in the economic, social, scientific, demographic and environmental spheres all over the world. These changes came about within a short span, for similar changes it took thousands of years before. For example, the world population reached 250 crores in 1950. It took thousands of years to reach this number. But to add an additional 250 crores it took only 37 years. To put it another way, the world population reached 500 crores in 1987. Developments in various branches of knowledge such as information technology and computer science, bio-technology, space research etc were surprising. The age witnessed the development of specialization of all branches of knowledge.

Migration to the Arabian Gulf from Kerala also took place during this period. Keralites began to go across the Arabian Sea in large numbers to the Persian Gulf following the oil price hike and the consequent boom in oil production in the early 1970’s. Since then, the region started to feel the affluence of external remittances, the impact of which is being observed in almost all sectors of people’s life. One of the great economists and the present Finance Minister of Kerala is of the opinion that the change that reflects in Kerala in the standard of consumption among the people and in the basic character of the state’s economy is because of the external remittances from the Gulf.¹ A scholar looks on the impact of Gulf boom like this, “The Gulf

¹ Dr.T.M.Thomas Isaac, ‘Kerala Vikasanam Annum Innum’ (Malayalam), Sastragathi Monthly; (Kozhikode, November 2005), p.16.
migrants make the same changes as made by the commercialization of agriculture in the social and educational sector in the 19th century. A Souvenir of an expatriate organisation based in Abu Dhabi and published in the early phase of the Gulf migration wrote, “In a society, whose evolution and development is unpredictable, what changes would effect the torrents of Gulf money are also unpredictable”. When the state started to enjoy a windfall external income for two decades, the impact started to be more evident. After 26 years, another souvenir of another expatriate organization wrote. “Gulf money paved the way for ideological and physical changes in the state. Our life was exposed to fundamental changes. Malayali walked ahead of all Indian states in the fields of education, health, food, communication, dress, residence etc”. Voice of Islam briefed the impact of migration in the following words, “The economic betterment and the latent optimisms opened the eyes to the facts of thatched buildings turning to terraced mansions, the hues and cries of starving children turning to the perennial music of radios and tape recorders, the nasty smell of unhygienic surroundings turning to the smoothing of fragrance of sprays”.

According to one study, in 1971, which was the early phase of Arabian migration, Kerala got Rs. 400 crores as external remittances. A study made in the Gulf pockets in 1970s shows that in the initial phase of the Gulf migration itself evidences of the bulging external remittances were visible everywhere in the state. The bank deposits in Malappuram district registered

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7 For instance, in Varkala, the deposits of Scheduled Commercial banks shot up from Rs. 74 lakhs in December 1972 to Rs.335 in December 1976. During the same period, in Thrivuvarla,
a threefold expansion compared to two-fold expansion for the state in the course of the period 1975-1980.\(^8\) It is a common sense matter that the migration and the consequent remittances would have its own role—both positive and negative—in all the changes that the state witnessed in the last quarter of the twentieth century. We would like to confess at the outset that Gulf boom is not the only cause behind all the social and cultural transformations that Kerala witnessed in the last quarter of the twentieth century. And since social change and cultural transformation are not simple processes, it involves the interaction of many factors and Gulf migration and the consequent remittances are only one among them. So, in all the below mentioned transformations Gulf boom is not the sole determinant but one among the many catalysts.

Migration to the Gulf and the consequent remittances has been the base of subsistence for thousands of households in the state since its inception in 1970s. How, do the migrants and their families back home use the considerable sums of remittances which flow back to the country of origin, and what are the impacts of these capital flows on individual, household and community development? According to one scholar, “Since mid-1970s, the factor which had the greatest impact on regional economy, especially on labour market, consumption, savings, investment, poverty, income distribution and economic growth has been the Gulf migration and migrant remittances”.\(^9\) Studies made on the developmental aspects of Kerala have revealed the comparative progress that the state made in various fields. The Central Statistical Organisation used 22 parameters including a) railway (within 5 kilometres) b) metalled roads (within 2 kilometres) 3) Post office (within 2 kilometres) etc to assess the development of rural areas in various

\(^8\) I.S.Gulati and Ashok Modi, ‘Remittances of Indian Migrants to the Middle East: Assessment with Special Reference to Kerala’, Working Paper 182 (Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram, November 1993), pp.32.

states of India. According to their reports in 16 items Kerala is ahead of other states.10

Social Structure

Migration to West Asia opened the doors of modern world towards the caste based and hence closed society of Kerala. In Kerala, where birth decided the social status of a person, even certain dresses, food items, houses, occupations etc were prerogatives of the high castes. For example, those who were lower to Nayars, were proscribed sandals, umbrellas and some types of jewellery.11 In southern parts of the state, the right to cover the breast was limited to high caste women and the low caste women who violate this unwritten rule were punished. The distinguishing features in appearance and dress were sufficient to identify the individual by his caste.12 That is, until recently, the social status of a person in the state was determined by caste. Afterwards, we noticed education and the consequent profession also becoming the measuring scales of one’s social status. Today, one can hardly identify a person by his external appearance alone, to which caste or community he belongs. In this transformation, the social reform movements and western education had played great roles. The closing decades of the 20th century witnessed the consumption also becoming the yardstick to gauge one’s social status.

The perception that the economic development will accelerate the change in social dignity accelerated the migration.13 Before the Beginning of Gulf Migration, the government employees were the section who enjoyed

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10 See M.A.Oommen, ‘Keralathinte Purogathi: Oru Thirinju Nottam’ (Malayalam), Mathrubhumi Weekly (Kozhikode, 14 June 1987), p.34.
13 N.P.Hafiz Mohammed, ‘Vibhava Seshi Vikasathinte Parinamangal’ (Malayalam) Thelicham Varshikappatippu (Tirurangadi, 2001), p.76.
high status in the society. By the mid-seventies, this section lost prestige and the new Gulf migrants gained high status. Malabar Malayali got an international outlook and insight. Gulf money resulted in the emergence of new social groups. The emergence of a new elite section played a great role in the reconstruction of the Kerala society and advent of new social and economic problems. The persons lived in the lower strata rose to the high strata of the society. The traditional elites could not adapt it. It led to many social tensions. “Money brought power with it. The lure for power developed. It was a necessary result of the migration.”\textsuperscript{14} Not only in the state politics but it is vivid in the regional politics and religious organisations. Several villages in Kerala where a number of migrants concentrated, started to show the break of the old caste based social hierarchy and the migrant house holds have started to receive more attention from political and religious functionaries. People generally move to improve their social and economic standing. In this sense, migration can be considered as a means of human resource development. According to P.R.Gopinathan Nair, “Such an atmosphere is producing ripples of change in an otherwise relatively stagnant economy and highly structured society. The outlook of the emigrants’ families is one of optimism and supreme unconcern about the inflationary tendencies unleashed by their spending sprees. Because of their large incomes can they are confident, meet any increase in price levels, they leave other level sections of the population deeply disturbed. Landlords and cultivators are disturbed that the new rich are toppling the established order, and that their own economic importance in society is eroded. The worst hit are the fixed income earners and the poor, who find it increasingly difficult to meet both ends meet”.\textsuperscript{15} According to one scholar, “Even culturally and socially, this new found wealth will not mean any substantial social improvement. The ostensibly

\textsuperscript{14} P.Suresh, ‘Keraaleeyar Puram Nadukalil Paniyedukkumbol Samhavikkunnath’ (Malayalam) Sasthragathi Monthly (Kozhikode, November 2006).

\textsuperscript{15} Raju Kurien and Dilip Thakkore, n.6, p.25
positive effects of the inflow of Gulf money are only temporary because money alone cannot solve our problems. To put the money that is received to proper use, the recipients of the money should have the required education and skill, both of which are terribly lacking in the case of most of the emigrants. Moreover, one whole generation of the adolescent population of the state is being “spoilt” by the influx of Gulf money. On the one hand, the lower class people if they emigrate can now aspire for many of the luxuries that in previous days used to be the exclusive prerogative of the upper class. Because of this many youths are setting their hearts upon going abroad neglecting their education. On the other hand, those who stay on here and continue with their studies feel frustrated when they find that it is difficult to get job here, or that the jobs that they get do not fetch as much money thus making them skeptical about the use of education. As a result in many localities the relations between these two groups of people are strained and often emigrant households are isolated”.\textsuperscript{16} “A vast majority of the migrants to the Gulf are under-educated or semi-literate. They are now subject to demonstration effect and follow the consumption habits of the rich”.\textsuperscript{17} Migration is disruptive in many ways and a major disruption involves the flow of large sums of money into economies that were previously monetised only slightly if at all. The resulting changes in financial status and perhaps class structure can lead to the demise of traditional mutual assistance patterns. Gulf money became the milestone in the social transformation in Kerala where existed a social system based on land ownership and caste system. The labourers and working group had to prostrate before the landlord. The migration and the Gulf money ended this dependence and the value of labour was approved by the society.\textsuperscript{18}

\textsuperscript{16} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{17} P.V.Rajeev, ‘Impact of the Gulf money on the Kerala Econmy’, \textit{Yojana} (New Delhi, 1 June 1980), p.19.
“Gulf money has played a major role in restructuring the Kerala society, at a rate never before experienced in the state. From the bottom five percent of the income ladder, some of the Gulf NRKs have gone up all the way to the top five percent, transcending family background, caste or creed.”

In Kerala, several villages sprang up with concentration of Gulf migrants. A state where caste determined the social status of a person now changed its concept of social hierarchy. The state witnessed the change of social power structure from the high castes to the new-born Gulf migrants. In several Gulf pockets, the remittance-receiving community started to receive more attention from political and religious heads. “Unlike other types, Gulf migration offered to some the chance of rapid and vast accumulation of wealth by village standards. Gulf migrants cannot settle away but must, sooner or later return home where their new found wealth and access to consumption may dramatically alter their status and their relationships with others, and offer them the chance to forge new identities”.

Consumption

Kerala, which stands unique in many socio-economic, demographic and geographic characteristics among other Indian states, has started to show manifestations of some new trends in the social scenario especially after 1970s. Firstly, new consumption pattern among different sections of the society. The following remarks made by a study is significant. “As a result of migration, the change from irregular daily cash income to a steady flow of income for defined period, howsoever temporary, seem to make a major impact on the household economic status. The regularity of the flow and the

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quantity of the cash income that accrues to the family change the consumption and spending pattern of the household.”

Various micro-level studies conducted in the early phase of the Gulf migration revealed that the remittances had helped to improve the food consumption. See the findings of a study conducted in 1987. “We have seen that majority of the emigrant households were poor before emigration. Lower income groups that achieved new levels of affluence naturally engaged themselves in conspicuous consumption. Emigrants’ exposure to the living habits of other nationals in the immigrant country also accelerated the process of acquiring different varieties of consumer durables. The leading firms engaged in the production of consumer items resorted to sales promotion by advertising even in local Malayalam media for influencing the members of the emigrant family.”

A study conducted in the beginning of 1980s revealed that Malappuram whose per capita domestic product was 19 percent below the state average had better position with regard to consumption. Malappuram, which ranked lowest among all in terms of per capita domestic product showed its per capita expenditure on food is slightly higher than the state average. “Therefore, remittances can be considered to have helped raise the standard of food consumption from what would have prevailed in their absence in a poor district”.

But the following years witnessed the appearance of some new trends in the consumption behaviour of the people. Various rounds of consumer expenditure data collected and published by National Sample Survey Organisation and most of the consumer studies based on this data show that the new consumption pattern that grew in Kerala is similar to that of the

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23 I.S. Gulati and Ashok Modi, n.8, pp.32-33.
24 Ibid. p.33.
consumption pattern of the developed nations. It has been found that Keralites spend a large share of their income to the consumption of consumer durables and luxuries. A still interesting thing is that this consumption is not to satisfy any basic human needs but to quench some of the hidden social needs. “In the changed socio-economic scenario, consumption achieved new dimensions both in the quantity of things consumed and the kind of consumption resulted. Consumption largely meant for secondary household needs gained popularity”.  

A sort of consumption that shows a tendency of shifting from essential needs to the satisfaction of secondary needs for a better standard of living and as a means of vertical social mobility is observed in the state. People spend more for the purchase of cosmetics, expensive footwear, superfine clothing, electronic gadgets, sophisticated housing materials and others.

The descending pattern in the consumption expenditure incurred on aggregate food items and the rising level in the case of non-food aggregate further strengthens the perception that Kerala is becoming a consumer society exhibiting true consumerist characteristics. The index of consumer expenditure in Kerala, which was similar to the national level in 1973-74 rose to 25 percent above the national average by the year 1986-87. Again Kerala’s rank in the consumption level hierarchy among other Indian states has reached the second position from the tenth in the said period. According to the report of 60th round of National Sample Survey Organisation that relates to the period January-June 2004, Kerala had the highest monthly Per capita Consumer Expenditure (MPCE). The average consumer expenditure in

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26 Ibid. p.16.
28 Ibid.
29 A special feature of this survey by NSSO is that they used the conventional method of 30 days recall reporting and 7 days recall reporting in respect of certain food items viz. edible oil, egg, fish and meat, vegetables, fruits and spices, beverages and processed foods, pan, tobacco

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Kerala and all India were very close during the early 70s. However, from the late 70s, the average consumer expenditure of Kerala gradually surpassed the all India level both in urban and rural sectors. The percentage variation while in the urban sector stood at 8.4 percent compared to all India level in 1983-84, it was 29.5% in rural sector. The rising trend continued in all the following rounds and reached a peak level of 77 percent in the rural sector during 2003 (59th round) and 32% in urban sector during 2000-01 (56th round).30 Another interesting trend is the decline in the share of food in total expenditure over the past several rounds. The share of expenditure on food items exceeded non-food items in the rural sector of Kerala till 55th round. In 1983 (38th round) MPFE (monthly per capita food expenditure) was 59.4 and MPNFE (monthly per capita non-food expenditure) was 40.6. In 1993/94 (50th round) MPFE was 56.8 and MPNFE was 43.2. In 1999/00 (55th round) MPFE was 51.1 and MPNFE was 48.9.31 However in all other rounds excepting the 58th round (where the difference is very little i.e. 50.23 and 49.77 respectively) nonfood items has shown a higher share. Whereas, at all India level share of expenditure on food items exceeded nonfood item in all rounds in rural sector. In urban sector in Kerala, the share on nonfood item exceeded food item much earlier than in the rural sector i.e. from 46th round. But at all India level the trend changed only after 55th round.32 According to Engels, any noticeable rise in consumption can be due to an analogous rise in income. But the...
statistical figures of Kerala do not conform to this. The per capita income of the state was Rs.3,054 as against Rs. 3,835 of India.

Since Kerala stands behind the national average in terms of per capita income, the reason for this consumerist tendencies is to be sought somewhere else. This new consumption pattern that developed in the state since 1970s corroborates the years of Gulf migration. According to a latest study conducted by Centre for Development Studies, the annual external remittances to Kerala for 2006-2007 was estimated as Rs. 24525 crores. Almost all the micro-level studies conducted among the Gulf migrants have revealed the consumerist tendencies of the Gulf migrants. A study has found out that the expenditure on consumer durables of the migrant households is three times higher than the non-migrant households. Another study conducted in 1979 revealed that about three-fourth of the remittances were spent on consumer items. Commerce Research Bureau, a Bombay based ‘Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy’ made an elaborate study in different districts where migrants’ concentration is large. The findings of this study also revealed the consumerist tendencies of the migrants. A detailed study made by an eminent scholar on various aspects of migration revealed that bulk of the remittances was utilized on consumer items. A state wise study conducted by Centre for Development Studies has also pointed to the consumerist tendencies of the migrants. “Conspicuous consumption is a hall
mark of an emigrant, especially a Kerala emigrant. Emigrants become accustomed to the use of many new durable consumer goods while abroad. Since many of these goods used to be unavailable locally they brought them on return home. Most of these goods are now locally available, and the higher purchasing power of migrant households enables them to acquire these goods more frequently and effortlessly than non-migrants could. The items to live luxuriously like television, refrigerator, Video set, washing machine, motor pumps, cars etc are sold comparatively more in Kerala. Of the total cars sold in India, 5.4% are in Kerala.

This consumerist behaviour among the migrants has its reflections in the society. The non-migrants who possess not much income as the migrants try to imitate the migrants. Hence the ownership and possession of certain consumer items became a symbol of social dignity and honour. Inevitably consumers got themselves exposed to new consumables. Durables of various kinds gained some social appeal and consumers began to display a fancy for them. When the consumer goods industries have not developed in Kerala, things were imported from other states. More than 85 percent of the commodities consumed in Kerala were imported from other states. High levels of per capita consumption coupled with lack of entrepreneurship within has made Kerala the happy hunting ground of multi-nationals and manufacturers from other parts of the country. As per the latest finding arrived at by the NSSO, Kerala topped in per capita consumer expenditure at Rs.9,843.55 in

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38 The study made a comparative analysis among migrants and non-migrants on the basis of the possession of consumer durables. Possession of 23 different household consumer durables (HCDs) was analysed to see where the migrant households stand vis-à-vis non-migrants households. For easy comparison, an index of the possession of HCDs was calculated for each migrant group and for the emigrants by duration of emigration. The index was 32 for migrants and return emigrants. For the non-migrant households, the index was only 15 (K.C.Zacahariah et al, ‘Impact of Migration on Kerala’s Economy and Society’, Working Paper No. 297 (Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram, October 1999), p.21.

39 Dr.K.V.Joseph, ‘Gulf Panam Keralthinte Vikasanathinu Uthakanam’ (Malayalam), Malayala Manorama Daily (Kozhikode, 15 August 2000); See also, N.S.Biju Raj, ‘Nilakkunna Ennappanam Nilavidunna Keralam’ (Malayalam), Mathrubhumi Daily (Kozhikode, 15 May 2000).

40 R.Surya Murthy, n.25, p.31.
1999-2000, improving from the eighth position in 1972-73 and second position in 1993-1994. Unofficial estimates also show that Keralites who form nearly 3.5% of the country’s population, consume almost 10 percent of the goods produced in the country.\textsuperscript{41}

According to a paper brought out by a scholar of the Institute of Enterprise Culture and Entrepreneurship Development, Kochi, the state is increasingly depending on products imported from neighbouring states and also abroad. The mushrooming growth of shops that are exclusively meant for foreign articles are a common sight even in the remote villages of Malabar. Among the goods imported from outside the state, ready made garments with a share of Rs.412.31 crore tops the chart, followed by medicines with Rs.405.73 crores. The share of some other goods are sarees (Rs.365.09 core), washing soap and other washing products (Rs.355.87 core), toilet soap (Rs.269.91 croe), cloth for shirt, pyjama, salwar etc (Rs.224.86 croe), hair oil, shampoo and hair cream (Rs.174.46 croe) and tooth brush and paste (Rs.149.66 core). He also states that the reason for the growing consumption is the remittances flowing into the state and not the income generated within. Kerala benefits by remittances from NRKs amounting to Rs.30,000 crores a year, forming 25% of GDP of Kerala. Every resident Keralite gets about Rs.10,000 per year. This enormous amount is being spent on conspicuous consumption. Kerala’s consumption items like liquor, meat, cosmetics, jewellery etc is more than three times the average of comparable communities in India.\textsuperscript{42}

\textsuperscript{42} Ibid. The statement made by the South Asian Migration Study is also significant. “Kerala has emerged as the hottest place to sell new products from all over India and even from abroad. There is hardly a day when one is not woken up from one’s seists by a smart looking sales person to sell/demonstrate a ‘new product. Some of the Keralites, especially house wives fall easy prey to these smart guys. In the course of few years, Kerala households have ended up possessing all the necessary and even unnecessary wares, much of which are not products of the state. Not only are the goods made in other states; they are transported to Kerala in trucks belonging to non-Keralites and by non-Keralite drivers” (K.C.Zachariah and S.Irudaya Rajan, n.19, p.53).
This typical consumption behaviour, that grew and developed in modern advanced countries and which got the name consumerism is said to be the product of industrialization. But in Kerala, the development is not as a result of industrialization. Life in West Asia and the consequent remittances has its role in the changing pattern of consumption and the transformation of the caste-ridden society into a modern one. A Malayali working in the cosmopolitan cities of the Gulf is always in touch with the lifestyles of almost all nationalities and is getting sufficient knowledge about the new tastes and trends. Life abroad, where new consumer items are marketed make the Keralites to modify their current tastes and preferences. Along remittances, migrants bring these new trends in lifestyle to their families and villages.43

A related development in the state that has been acquiring new dimensions is the growth of advertisements in the medias especially after 1970s. The audio – visual as well as the Newspaper medias in the state is filled with advertisements of various commodities, especially consumer durables. It was by 1970s that Japan started to advertise its products in the newspapers and magazines of Kerala. These advertisements created a longing for multinational products among the people of the state who were not familiar with those goods before. Thus the medias became the catalysts of the consumerist tendencies that developed in Kerala with the advent of external remittances from the Gulf.44

The increasing rate of advertisements is related with the growing consumerist culture among the people. It may be argued that advertisement is doing its duty of boosting the distribution of goods and services. It is only

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43 In the mid seventies and eighties, or more clearly before the introduction of New Economic Policy by the Indian Government and by the globalisation, migrants used to bring with them all the foreign made consumer items with them (See, N.M.Navas, ‘Malayaliyude Pettikalil Nirayunnath’ (Malayalam), (Kozhikode, Arabiayile Sulthan, August 2000), p.7

People of Malabar with unprecedented material affluence, is on the path of seeking maximum physical pleasures. This mentality is carefully exploited by the marketing forces. A distinct feature of consumerism is the presence of secondary and false needs. Advertisements through its various symbols has been creating these artificial needs and stretching its hands into the thoughts and discretionary power of human beings, there by creating a society which is outer – controlled. The ethics of people of Malabar, especially in Gulf pockets, has transferred from production ethic to consumption ethic.

Kerala is the most globalised state in India. Five percent of the Keralites live abroad. In no other state in India this much bigger expatriate community can be seen. Naturally their global touch will surely reflect in their life here. The magnitude of the migratory stream and the windfall remittances are such that they create their imprint and impact on the prevailing culture. An important change visible in the field of consumption is the substitution of “global” for the “local” even in the remote corners of the state. Started in the early 1990s and termed as New Economic Policy, the economic liberalization, reduction of tariffs and duties on imported goods, privatization of many industries etc opened the era of globalization of the Indian economy, in the realms of both production and consumption. But even before that the Gulf pockets of Kerala had started to disclose the manifestations of a global culture. A short hand way to show the advent of globalisation is the presence of a group especially in the Gulf pockets imitating a global culture or more accurately the western culture. The remarks made by a study is significant. “With the increase in remittances and the consequent increase in disposable income at the hose hold level, consumerist

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46 C.Sarath Chandran, ‘Videsathu Parkkunna Midukkan Malayali’ (Malayalam), Malayala Manorama Daily (Kozhikode, 27 August 2004).
tendencies have reached alarming proportions in Kerala. People back home have no qualms, to spend money earned by their relatives abroad on festivals and celebrations on ornaments and jewelleries on costly apparels and various other items of conspicuous consumption. Rabid spending was reflected most in housing, acquisition of modern house-hold gadgets and fancy house-hold durables”. \[47\] The most important change is in the value sense of the people. Little by little the society is moving to a western life style. The remarks made by a study conducted in Malappuram is significant. “The study area once showed its resentment to western culture and the education system they introduced. But the constant contact with the outside world and different cultures broadened their outlook and made their mindset totally changed so as to embrace the new atmosphere”. \[48\]

The goods that are purchased by the people are more for showing the social status than for satisfying the basic needs. This is true in every article that the Keralites use today. \[49\] Keralites began to cross the Arabian Sea in large numbers to the Persian Gulf following the boom in oil production in the early 1970’s. Through this mass movement to the Gulf and its modern amenities, the people of Kerala have been incorporated to its, social, cultural and material vicissitudes. “Huge, upscale flat complexes now pepper the landscape, marketed as fashionable housing for Gulf returnees and for others who can afford them, leading to dire predictions about the consequences of a new “flat culture”. In villages, televisions, refrigerators, motorcycles, and new houses proclaim a family’s Gulf connections. This incorporation into the transnational traffic of labour and money has produced a cultural politics of


globalization within Kerala”⁵⁰ The storm has also started to blow over the food vessels of each and every middle class Malayali. When a univocal food culture turns the taste and food systems upside down, we lose our old tastes, our indigenous kitchen and the taste of the ammi (grinding stone). Now the local food culture is alienated and the multi-national corporates dominate the kitchens of our state.⁵¹ Now the items in the food that the Keralites consume daily are not of the surrounding areas; they are coming from far and wide travelling thousands of kilometers. According to a study conducted in America, the food items that an average American uses daily must have traveled 2500 kilometres.⁵² Social scientists call this ‘food distance’ – the distance between dining table and food articles. The same trend is developing in Kerala especially in the Gulf pockets.

The destruction of regional food system creates far-reaching consequences in the society. It destroys the taste of food. As in other areas, different places in the state contribute different taste to the world of food. Any food prepared in different parts of the state is in different tastes and styles. The evolution of the regional food system to a centralised one increases the price of food articles and the frozen food leads to serious health and moral problems. When the products of an area and the food there are in correlation, people can avail food at reasonable rate that also from walkable distance. When the food is prepared by machines instead of kitchens, possibility for contamination is more. The fast food culture is slowly leading to food imperialism. Through this fast food, people eats without knowing even the situation of its preparation and the ingredients used.

⁵² Ibid. p.22.
According to K. Sivaraman, Vice President, World Gold Council, the annual use of gold in India is 825 tons. Of this 38-40 percent is flowing to south India. According to another report, the country consumes an estimated amount of 800 tonnes of gold every year and its total market value is worth around US$ 10 billion. The demand for this yellow metal is so much so that in 1925 the value of 10 grams was eighteen rupees. In 2003 it became 6,235 rupees. In the per capita consumption, Kerala stands in the first position among all Indian states. According to the estimate of World Gold Council, the annual use of gold by Keralites is 50-60 tons. The annual growth of gold consumption is 10 – 12 percent. Multi-national gold merchants have their shops even in the small towns of Kerala. Out of the three lakhs jewelleries in India, 8000-10,000 are in Kerala. In Koduvally, a small town in Malabar, which is only the head quarters of an Assembly Constituency there are about 150 Jewelleries. The annual growth of jewelleries in Kerala is 3-5 percent. According to the market rate of January 2006, people of Kerala possess gold worth Rs.3.5 lakh crores. Fraudulence of various types is common in the gold business. The circular issued by the Kerala Gold and Silver Merchants Association to its members testifies this. The mentality of the Keralites are

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55 “Gold is the most saleable commodity in the state after food and cloth”, Says Rafi Antony, President, Jewellery Manufacturers Association (K.M.Bbasheer, ‘Ella Ponnum Ponnano’ (Malayalam), Siraj Daily (Kozhikode, 18 July 2006-23 July 2006).
56 Radha Krishnan Narippatta, n.53.
57 Radha Krishnan Narippatta, n.53.
60 The circular reads, “Greediness is the worst emotion that mislead people. Many actions of the people are aimed at appropriating the whole world. These types of people who are living in the world of illusion would listen only to the words of flatterers. They won’t listen to the wise. This is a strange disease. Some gold merchants have got this disease. The merchant community has to gain strength to defend this terrific danger”. According to P.Tcheriyan Palathara, Association President, in the jewellery business field cheating and fraudulence is more that necessitated this circular (K.M.Bbasheer, n.53).
clear in these words, “When price decreases demand for that commodity will be less. But this theory is not applicable to the people of Kerala in the case of gold”.\textsuperscript{61} This craze for this yellow metal has serious socio-economic implications in the Kerala society.\textsuperscript{62} Micro level studies have connected this increasing growth of jewelleries with the Gulf migration. Jewelleries are growing in the state like mushrooms. Making of ornaments which was the job of certain castes is the story of the past. Jewelleries are being opened in the Gulf pockets the migrants being the owners.\textsuperscript{63}

In short, Gulf boom seemed to have produced dangerous consequences on Kerala society. Those who peruse the socio-cultural transformation in the state will definitely notice the evolution that has been taking place in the Gulf pockets especially after 1970s. The young generation in Malabar has taken ‘pleasure at any cost’ as the motto of their life. The community is passing through a phase of dynamic cultural transformation marked by clear agenda of hedonism and non-concern and non-involvement in social problems. Various sections of the society – politicians, religious leaders, media persons etc are not exceptions to this consumerist trend. The increasing number of crimes, sex scandals, aggressive activities of quotation gangs, demonstrative tendencies in social customs like marriages, increasing use of liquor and drugs, the high handedness of middle men in any type of dealings etc give death knell to the age-old cultural traditions of Kerala which are well rooted in high social value of moral ethics and mutual co-operation. A social atmosphere is being created in Malabar and also in the whole state which is characterised by a pseudo material affluence. In creating such a society, the demonstrative tendency imported by the Gulf migrants has a great role. What

\textsuperscript{61} Ardra.A, ‘Pollunna Manha Loham’ (Malayalam), Desabhimani Daily (Kozhikode, 27 May 2006).

\textsuperscript{62} K.C.Varghese, ‘Pongachathinte Thongalukal’ (Malayalam), Varadya Madyamam (Kozhikode, 30 April, 1995).

\textsuperscript{63} K.K.N.Kurup and E.Ismail, Pravasikalude Oru Vamozhi Charithram (Malabar Institute for Research and Development, Kozhikode, 2005), p.64.
we see in Malabar is a tendency of emulation. The non-migrants and the low income people emulate the life style and consumption habits of the migrants and the rich for which they resort to various undesirable means and ways.

**Morality**

A very pitiable development in the state for the last few years is the strange craze that the people exhibit towards the consumption of liquor. One or two decades back, the long queues that the usual sights in Kerala were before the ration shops and Maveli stores. Today their place was taken over by the outlets of Kerala State Beverages Corporation. Even the small towns of Kerala suffer from road jam on special days like New Year, Onam, X’mas etc by the wild hustles of drunkards. The medias of the state are full of news on this development of the state. Though the use of alcohol and drugs is one of the important problems the whole world faces today, the trend that the state showing in this sector is alarming. Kerala has become the number one state in the per capita consumption of liquor at 8.3 litres. Punjab stands second with 7.9 litres. The newly released alcohol map by the then Union Health minister claims that the people in Kerala drink the most liquor per capita in the country. The minister’s statement unveils the real situation, “Earlier, only villains used to drink alcohol. Now the heroes are drinking all the times”. India is one of the 13 countries that use more liquor in the world and Kerala stands first in the per capita consumption of alcohol among all Indian states.

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65 The observation made by a Malayalam Daily is significant. “Liquor consumption and drug has an history that dates back to human history. But alcoholic items could not get a gentle colour before as it is today” (C.KAbdurahiman, ‘Lahari Aasakthi: Keralathinu Kalidarunnu’ (Malayalam), Varthamanam Daily (Kozhikode, 22 December 2006).

66 The statement is by Ambumani Ramdas (See, IBN Live, 29 April 2008).

67 Jaleel Edavarad, ‘Madyapanamarude Keralam’ (Malayalam), Chandrika Daily (Kozhikode, 07 November 2006).
The annual increase of drunkards in Kerala is 20%. According to one estimate, before 20 years, the drinking habit among the children of the state started at the age of 19. In 1990, it became 17. In 1994 it became 14. Now it is 10 years.⁶⁸ Kerala stands first in the use of drugs and alcohol among the students.⁶⁹ According to one report, the state is spending rupees 5670 crores for food articles annually and the expenditure on liquor is 3670 cores. Annual increase on liquor consumption is 525 crores.⁷⁰ Another study reveals that annual expenditure on alcohol in the state is 12000 crores.⁷¹ If this is true an average Malayali spends double the amount of food articles for liquor.

Kerala State Beverages Corporation is the official agency that produces and markets foreign liquor in the state. The Corporation had only a few outlets in the state before 2000. Major share of the outlets had been given on rent and run by private agencies. So the statistics before 2000 is available only for 15 outlets all over Kerala. The statistics about its sale before and after 2000 collected by us from its head office in Thiruvananthapuram is shocking. The figures show that the state is moving fast towards the position of the ‘State of Drunkards’ in India. Another interesting trend is that in the consumption of liquor, the northern parts of Kerala shows dominance. In 1984-85, the total sale in the 15 outlets of Kerala was Rs.592.79 lakhs. In 2000-01 the sale was Rs.12870.13 lakhs. It means that within 16 years the percentage of increase in the sale was 2171.1%. That was surely a record. In the period 2001-02, the total sale was Rs.89140.68 lakhs in 320 outlets all over the state. After six years the sale increased to Rs.208416.68 lakhs. In other words the percentage of increase was 133.8. In short, as a study points

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out within ten or fifteen years there took place a revolution in the alcohol industry in the state.\textsuperscript{72}

The link of alcohol consumption and the Gulf boom is evident from the statistics. In the above period, in eight outlets of Malappuram district (Malappuram, Ponnnani, Thirur, Prappanangadi, Perinthalmanna, Manjeri, Wandoor and Nilambur), one of the northern districts, where majority of the Gulf migrants live, the percentage of increase was 144.41. In one of the Beverages outlets in Thirur (shop number 182), one of the most Gulf migrants concentrated areas in the state, the percentage of increase during this period was 197.75. In another outlet of Thirur (shop number 327), the sale increased from 299.66 lakhs in 2003-04 to 776.98 lakhs (159.28% increase within four years). (Detailed figures are given as Appendix III). According to the statistics of the Excise Department the annual consumption of foreign liquor in Kerala is 10 crores litre and that of toddy is 30 crores litre. Illegal sale of liquor is also 30 crores litre.\textsuperscript{73} The studies on alcohol consumption reveal that there are generally four levels of alcohol drinking: social drinking, heavy drinking, problem (harmful) drinking, without being dependent on alcohol and dependence (addiction). Each level increases the risk to health and safety. The current trend in the sale is an indicator that the state is moving to the last stage where the people are being addicted to liquor day by day.

Although there is no official statistics with regard to the use of drugs by the migrants and their relation with its business, the reports from Gulf countries are alarming. Many Malayalis were beheaded in Saudi Arabia for exporting drugs.\textsuperscript{74} Majority of those beheaded are from Malabar area.\textsuperscript{75}

\textsuperscript{72} Jaleel Edavarad, ‘Madyapanmarude Keralam’, n.67.
\textsuperscript{73} K.Sreekandan, n.71, p.14.
\textsuperscript{74} The number of Malayalees who were beheaded in three years are as follows. In 1998 one, in 1999 eleven and in 2000 ten. Hundreds of Keralites are in Jails in various Arab countries (Nellikkuth Haneefa, ‘Mayakku Marunnumayi Kolakkayarilekku Oru Yathra’ (Malayalam), Pravasi Doothan (Kozzhikode, May 2002), pp.12-17.
\textsuperscript{75} All the persons who were beheaded in 2000 are people from Malabar. In the list of 2001, eight out of ten are the people from Malabar area. For details, see Appendix V.
Occasionally, news appears in Medias about the death punishments extended to Malayalis in Gulf countries. A study reveals that Malabar area is the centre of smuggling of narcotics. Those who engaged in the smuggling of gold before, turned to this business as the chances became less in the gold import. A study observes that Malappuram, the district, which sent more migrants to the Gulf is an international centre of narcotic smuggling. The study conducted by one of the popular newspapers in Kottakkal, an important Gulf pocket in Malappuram, revealed the link of Gulf money to alcohol and drugs. The news coming in the medias are clear indications that drugs use is increasing in the state. The observation made by a writer is relevant. “Before twenty years the drug was not there in the world of the children. The only bad habit was a smoking that also from behind the screen. Today it has reached in Kerala from the western world”.

An important study states that alcohol consumption is associated with 80% of suicides, 50% of murders, 80% of deaths from fire, 40% of road traffic accidents, 30% of fatal road traffic accidents and 15% of drowning. Though micro-level surveys on health, consumption and lifestyle

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78 Nellikkuthu Haneefa, ‘Malappurathe Mayakku Marunnu Kadathu Lobiyude Keniyil Petta Gulf Malayalikal’ (Malayalam), Kerala SabdamWeekly (Kollam, 10 September 1999), p.18-22.

79 Report, ‘Kottakkal Criminalukal Thjavalamakkunu’ (Malayalam), Madhyamam, Daily (Kozhokde, 11- 15 March 2000).


81 C.Sharad Chandran, n.49, p.8.

82 Ashworth M and Gerada C., ‘ABC of Mental Health: Addiction and Dependence-II, Alcohol, BMJ, 315 (7104), Pp 358-360, 1997, (Quoted in Franz Schwarz, Christian Korbel and
occasionally include questions on liquor consumption, the result may not be correct. The respondents may hide the real fact and answer wrongly or under-report the consumption due to shame.

Total number of road accidents in Kerala in the period 1978-79 was 7018. When we come to 1999-00 the number rose to 34387 (The percentage of increase was 389.98). The number of persons killed in the same period was 1057 and 2590 respectively (increase is 116.6%). Number of persons injured in the same period was 7514 and 47860 respectively (536.94% increase). In 2003-04, the number of killed and injured again increased. The figure was 2905 and 48640 respectively. The studies conducted by the Alcohol and Drug Information Centre found that 40 percent of the accidents in Kerala are due to the drivers’ alcohol consumption. The studies conducted by National Transportation Planning and Research Centre (NATPAC) says that one out of four that drive vehicle in Thiruvananthapuram city between six and nine in the evening are drinking alcohol. This is true to all cities and places in Kerala. The newly released alcohol map released by Union Health Minister states that Kerala tops the list of road accidents in the country and the report makes no hesitation in linking them. The tendency to drive fast will be more among the drunkards. In special occasions like marriage it has become an established custom in Malabar to entertain the friends with liquor on the previous night of the marriage day.


Johnson Poovanthuruthu, n.68.

Ibid.

On this matter, we made a secret investigation as part of the research in one of the villages of Malappuram district. It was surprising that out of the 25 marriages that we selected for study in 16 marriages the groom treated their friends with liquor. It was also revealed that the co-operation of the friends on the day of marriage depended on this.
The number of suicide cases in the state in 1990 was 5501. In the period 1999 it rose to 9778. Within nine years the percentage of increase was 77.74. According to the statistics published by the Crime Record Bureau of the Police Department, the suicide rate in Kerala is three times than the national average. Annually 25 persons out of one lakh commit suicide every day in Kerala. The studies of Kerala Mental Health Authority say that 32 persons out of one lakh commit suicide every day in the state. The global rate is only 14.5 per one lakh. According to one social scientist, who is associated with Maithri Counselling Centre, says that the figures about suicides are often misleading. There is no data available about those who have failed in their attempt to kill themselves. It is said that about 10 times as many as those who commit suicide are those who failed in such attempts and continue to live with different degrees of physical, mental and social disabilities. If suicides, crime rate and alcohol consumption rate were to be taken as indicators of mental health, Keralites fared very badly.

According to a study conducted by Pravasi Bandhu Welfare Trust, Sharjah, 40 Malayalis committed suicide in UAE alone in 2003. In 2004, the number was 74 and in 2005, eighty persons killed themselves. In 2007, number of Malayalis who committed suicide in UAE was 100. According to this study, the reasons behind the increasing suicide was depression that arising out of financial problems. The study says that the families of the migrants spend extravagantly without knowing the actual financial conditions of their migrants. In most cases, the migrants do not let their relatives know their financial situations. The result was the economic depression that leads to

89 Report, The Indian Express Daily (Kozhikode, 16 October 2005).
90 Johnson Poovanthuruthu, n.68.
suicide. The statement made by a scholar after a detailed study of health status of the Keralites deserves special mention. “The most tragic picture is the alarming rise in suicides deaths in our state. Eight per cent of death is from suicides. If we add on accidents and violence, it will rise to 13 per cent and jump to second place among important causes of deaths”.93

A famous writer has noted the relationship between this increased alcohol consumption and apoliticism developing in the state among the youth especially after eighties.94 The alcohol addicts are prone to many diseases. Cancer, blood pressure, heart diseases, mental diseases etc are more in the alcohol addicts.95 A study conducted by the psychiatry Department, Calicut Medical College among the drug addicts admitted in the Medical college Hospital reveals that use of drugs and alcohol has increased among the adolescents. Among the patients, 50 percent started using narcotics between 10 and 25 years of age.96 Alcoholism in the state has started to lead the young generation in Kerala from reality to a world of illusion. It has started to lead the Malayali to an imaginary world of apoliticism, spirituality and communalism. An alcohol addict is playing his role in creating the curtain of the degenerated neo colonial modernity. To celebrate everything and to ignore everything that is serious. This is the culture that is developing in Kerala.97 If the state enjoys first position in suicide, women abuse and road accidents the main role is that of alcohol.98

95 Dr.C.J.John, ‘Madyapanam Rogamavumbol’ (Malayalam), Desabhimani Weekly (Kozhikode, 19 November 2006), p.20.
96 See Jaleel Edavarad, n.67.
98 K.K.Rahulan , Mathrubhumi Daily (Kozhikode, 14 September 2007).
The news appearing in the Medias since the eighties regarding the migrants and their activities reveal that though a generalization is not possible a trend of devaluation in the life of the people is observed in various circles. The material boom that spread out by the Gulf migration seems to have produced dangerous consequences on the social and cultural life of both migrant and non-migrant communities here. Youngsters seem to have become hedonic in their attitude. In the public programmes like Ganamela, annuals of clubs and other social organizations, football tournament etc now held in Malappuram, this cultural change is observed everywhere. All the programmes become the venue for the violent competitions of different alcoholic gangs. Youngsters even lose their life and seriously injured in these incidents. The report prepared by one of the popular magazines in Kerala revealed the role of Gulf money behind this. “Many clubs working in Malappuram are under the pseudo gentlemen and whose members living under the coolness of Gulf money. The money earned through hard physical labour by brothers or fathers are behind the genesis of these adolescent gang whose nickname is Shukoor sundaranamar”99. “Very often, they resort to undesirable means for achieving their objectives. Money making ‘at any cost and by whatever means’ seems to have become the accepted philosophy of economic life. A kind of ‘mammon worship’ is found to have re-emerged in the society”.100 Different kinds of frauds to earn money are taking roots in the Gulf pockets and focusing the migrants and their relatives especially the less educated women. One among the many frauds that appropriated money was money chain companies.101 Accordingly, ruthless exploitation of fellow

100 M.P.Abdullah, n.48, p.180.
101 For details See, M.K.M.Jafar n.59.
beings is no longer considered a ‘sin’. The reports appearing in the medias shows what menial ways some of the migrants resort to earn money.

The observation made by an eminent scholar regarding sex racket is significant. “The whole operation acquired the dimensions of an organized industry with the Gulf boom and the explosive growth of the visual medias post-1990. With these twin developments, ‘mobile’ providers became common, servicing clients both ‘in-house’ and in places of his choice”.

News coming from different parts of the state reveals the link of the sex racket and Gulf migration. A major field where the sex racket held their grip is the field of Album making, a new trend developed in Malabar in the new millennium. It is said that more than three hundred music albums are being produced every year in the state. Out of these 200 albums are produced in Malabar. One of the aim behind the album is sexual abuse. The girls who act in the albums are reaching in the hands of sex racket. The study made by a popular daily in Malayalam has brought to light the systematic arrangement and strong net working of the sex racket which includes

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102 M.P. Abdullah, n.48, p.181.
103 For details see, the following reports. *Gulfil Ninnu Lakshangalumayi Mungiyavarkkethire Kesu Madyamam Daily* (Kozhikode, 22 January 2002); *Pathu Laksham Dirhamumayi Malayali Dambathimar Mungi, Madyamam Daily* (Kozhikode, 19 March 2002); *Nalpadiyanju Laksham Kabalippichayalkkethire Nadapadiyayilla, Madyamam Daily* (Kozhikode, 18 June 2002); *Saudiyil Lakshangalumayi Malayali Mungi, Madyamam Daily* (Kozhikode, 15 September 1998); *Qataril Lakshangalumayi Mungiya Malayali Arrestil* (Madyamam Daily, (Kozhikode, 12 August 1991); *Panapaharan Kesile Malayali Kudumbathode Mungi, Madyamam Daily*, (Kozhikode, 12 February 2003); *Pathu Laksham Dirhamumayi Malayali Abudhabiyl Mungi, Madyamam Daily*, (Kozhikode, 23 January 2001); *UAE Yil Oru Vyapari Koodi Mungi Madyamam Daily*, (Kozhikode, 18 August 1999); *Net Workingilude Thattiya Lakshangalumayi Malayali Mungi*, *Madyamam Daily*, (Kozhikode, 5 September 2006)


suppliers, owners, transactors and managers.\textsuperscript{107} The study made by another Malayalam daily has also substantiated this.\textsuperscript{108} An important development with regard to Gulf migration is a tendency of fraud in every sector. In the case of passports, visa, money transaction, certificates, and all type of documents the Gulf Malayali takes illegal routes.\textsuperscript{109} The connection between the fake passport lobbies and drug exporting mafia are strong.\textsuperscript{110} The longing to become rich fast make them seek short routes. Cheating, sex racketing, smuggling, drugs, fake visa stamping etc are the common ways sought to become rich. It is common with the migrants to sink from the Gulf cheating the friends and sponsors.\textsuperscript{111} The observation made by a writer regarding the crimes committing by Malayalis in the Gulf is significant. “It is very serious that a native Arabi is afraid of a foreigner who came there seeking job to drive alone and to keep money when goes to market”.\textsuperscript{112} Various forms of corruption had crept into the society. Fraud, cheating, forgery, bribery, influence peddling, and similar offences have got boost.

There are no two opinions that the increasing use of alcohol and narcotics will lead to many social evils. The alcohol and drug addicts in their need for money, may turn towards various anti-social activities and be agents of smuggling or tube money or members of theft groups or quotation groups.

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\textsuperscript{107} Pradeep Pillai and Others, ‘Chati, Mamsakkachavadam’ (Malayalam), Malayala Manorama Daily, (Kozhikode, 15 June 2005); See also, Bevinja Abdulla, ‘Pravasi Nilavil Nilakkunnilla’ (Malayalam), Mathrubhumi Daily (Kozhikode, 03 April 2008).
\textsuperscript{108} Nisar Olavanna, ‘Chiraku Karinha Swapnangalumayi Madangiyavar’, Chandrika Daily (04 - 07 November 2000).
\textsuperscript{109} A famous Dubai based Malayalam journalist writes that a secret agency works in UAE in the name Kasrgod Embassy doing all works of illegal transactions. He writes, “There is an Embassy in UAE , without a flag or an ambassador or an Embassy building – Kasargod Embassy. Thousands have escaped by the help of this Embassy, by the certificates they issued, they got promotion in jobs, family status visa…” (See, Ammar Keezhuparamba, Marubhoomiyile Mazha Megangal, (Falcon Books, Kozhikode, 2004), pp.76-78.
\textsuperscript{110} Nellikkuth Haneefa, ‘Vyaja Passportil Adangiyirkunna Duranthngal’ (Malayalam), Pravasi Doothan, (Kozhikode, December 2002), pp.16 – 21. See also, Kerala Sabdam Weekly (Kollam,10 October 1999).
\textsuperscript{111} Nellikkuth Haneefa, ‘Lakshangalumayi Mungunna Malayalaikal’ (Malayalam), Pravasi Doothan (Kozhikode, November 2002), p.19.
\textsuperscript{112} Mohammed Kakkad, ‘Gulf Malayalikalam Perukunna Kutta Krithyanglum’ (Malayalam), Chandrika Daily (Kozhikode, 29 March 2008).
All these anti-social groups have become very active in the state especially in the Gulf pockets. What is pitiable is that these anti-social groups and their muscle power are widely used by the political parties and even by various religious groups in the state.

According to the statement by the Home Minister of Kerala, *havala* transaction of about 10,000 crores are reaching annually in the state.\(^\text{113}\) Various studies conducted in Malabar area have found that youngsters are widely used as carriers of tube money. Youths are easily attracted to this havala maphia as the offers to the carriers include mobile phone, motor bike, home theatre, music albums and many other items which has become essentials of a consumer society like Malabar.\(^\text{114}\) Today it has started to threat the very law and order situation in the area.\(^\text{115}\) The roads and highways of Kerala have become the scene of murders and violence in connection with havala business.\(^\text{116}\) Before the introduction of new economic policy the agents of tube money in the Gulf used to Purchase gold, electronic articles and other items and exported to Kerala through ships. In late 1970s and eighties the youngsters of Gulf pockets ran the business these smuggled articles. Thus this illegal money transaction that started by 1970s or by the beginning of Gulf migration had a simple role of increasing the inflation in the state in its early phase.\(^\text{117}\)

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\(^{115}\) When the havala business became very profitable competition and the consequent rivalry developed. Havala groups started to betray each other. Many notorious under world criminals have made Malappuram as their centre of work as the havala maphia started to use them widely. Saifan, the 18 year old boy who was killed near Edappal in May 2008 was the victim of the rivalry between Kodally gang and Vengara Gang (See the report, ‘*Potti Mulakkunna Panam; Podarunna Paka’* (Malayalam), *Madyamam Daily* (Kozhikode, 22 May 2007)). In the murder of Saifan, the person who was caught was Kodali Sreedharan, One of the notorious criminals of Kerala.


\(^{117}\) M.Riju, ‘*Chora Manakkunna Kuzhal Money Transfer’* (Malayalam), *Madyamam Daily* (Kozhikode, 22 may – 26 May 2007).
Gulf migrants and their money have become the prime element of corrupting the public departments even without their knowledge. The studies made by one of the national newspapers in Kerala have revealed how Gulf money have corrupted the customs office, emigration office, passport office, registration office etc where the migrants contact usually. The emigration offices in Kerala have become the centers of corruption and bribery. It is said for each emigration clearance the Office imposes 6000 to 7000 thousand rupees. The emergence of a new section called ‘middlemen’ or ‘brokers’ in all fields – marriage proposal, real estate etc – accelerated this corruption which was already spread in the state. Various departments that are expect to help the migrants like Department of Emigration, Embassy etc are exploiting them maximum. The problems that are facing the migrant community abroad are lot.

Social Relations

The Gulf migration and the consequent material boom have brought about modern amenities into the houses. The construction boom that accompanied the Gulf money replaced the traditional thatched or tiled houses from the Gulf pockets. These new houses are equipped with all modern facilities. Bathrooms are attached to bedrooms. Washing machines are provided in the bathrooms. Gas-connections are taken for cooking. The

For details See, G.Sekharan Nair, ‘Vilavu Thinnunna Velikal’ (Malayalam), Mathrubhumi Daily (Kozhikode, 2 – 6 October 1985); Vechoochira Madhu, ‘Gulf Swapnangale Vida’ (Malayalam), Mathrubhumi Daily (Kozhikode, 9 – 11 February 1988); K.Abdullah, ‘Gulf Swapnangale Vida’ (Malayalam) Mathrubhumi Daily (Kozhikode12 – 19 February 1988); G.Sekhran Nair, ‘Akkarappacha’ (Malayalam), Mathrubhumi Daily (Kozhikode 12 – 25 January 1987); Radha Krishanan Narippatta, ‘Sambathika Thakarchayude Kanappurangal’ (Malayalam), Gulf Voice (Kozhikode, January 1999), p.21; R.Abhilash, ‘Emigration Thattippukal’ (Malayalam), Kerala Kaumudi Daily (Kozhikode 28 May 2005 – 30 May 2005); Pradeep Pillai, ‘Marunattilekku Mafia Vazhi’ (Malayalam), Malayala Manoroma Daily, (Kozhikode)


Razak Orumanayoor, ‘Pravasi Prasnam’ (Malayalam), Chandrika Daily (Kozhikode, 01-06 August 2001).

K.P.Vijaya Kumar, ‘Gulf Swapnام Asthamayathinte Thudakkam’ (Malayalam), Thejas Daily (Kozhikode, 01-07 September 2006).
confession made one of the popular writers of Kerala testifies the dynamic changes in Kerala. “Before 15 years I publicly said that flats won’t be built in Kerala. I believed that Malayalis cannot live without touching soil. But I was mistaken. Within these 15 years hundreds of flats were built in Kerala. Malayali proved that he could live without touching soil”.122 With the spread of modern telecommunication facilities almost all the houses got phone connections. Televisions and cassette players are ready for entertainment. Various studies conducted about the impact of Gulf migration have revealed the ascendancy of the migrants’ houses over non migrants in the possession of modern facilities.123

The result of all these are that the social relations in the villages had turned upside down. When all facilities are there inside the houses, peoples rarely come out of their houses. Traditionally men used to assemble casually in some common places and used to spend their leisure time. Village women took bath, collected water, collected fuel wood together from a common place. There they shared their feelings, knew the hot news of the village. Children used to play indigenous games in the evening. But the new life style made them live apart from their fellow beings in one and the same village. The old social centers like banks of rivers, wells and ponds where women used to communicate each other became stories of the past. The huge walls built around the houses kept them apart from the outside world.

The Gulf remittances, no doubt has led the society to one, which is controlled and steered by money. Studies conducted by various agencies in the Gulf pockets have substantiated this. The social gatherings like marriages,

123 In a study conducted in 1999, about 54 percent of the emigrant households had a television set each, about 40 percent of the emigrant households owned refrigerators (See KC.Zacahriah et al, n.36, p.22); Another study reveals that an index of the value of the house of a typical emigrant was 7.05 compared to 4.30 of a non-migrant (KC.Zacahriah et al, ‘Socio-Economic and Demographic Impact of Migration in Kerala’, Working Paper No303 (Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram, May 2000).
meetings, local festivals, tournaments, annuals etc have lost their social meanings where local people shared their skills, labour and co-operated each other and now they have become the stages for arrogance and show of money and social status. One of the widely discussed issues in the present Kerala society is the social and political problems created by the ‘new rich’ (Gulf Panakkar). No doubt, Gulf money has reshaped the social structure of Kerala. Those who were at the bottom of the income ladder have gone up all the way and reached the upper level in all the nooks corners of Malabar. Naturally, this sudden transformation of the minority community and the related showing in the social activities is not liked by others. This has created social tension and resentment. A few years back, the then chief minister A.K.Antony, made a statement which was subjected to severe criticisms from many corners and he was accused of even anti-minority. The statement was that the minority communities in Kerala were cornering ‘undue benefits’ using their political and economic clout gained through Gulf remittances. A recent study conducted in Malappuram revealed that many splendid activities especially those related to ceremonies and which were once the means of the royal families to show their eminence and affluence in the society have now undertaken by the ‘newly rich’. It is found that twenty house holds of the selected villages together spent a total amount of Rs. 1,84,75,000 for marriages during the year 2006. The survey again reveals that 212 families together spent an amount of Rs.7,41,000 as special expenditure during festivals. Again 26.7 % spent Rs.1,92,000 on reception. Surprisingly, the expenditure on education incurred by 38 house holds was 14,68,302 rupees only. How ever the total telephone bill of 223 families was Rs.44,85,960.


125 M.P.Abdullah, n.48, pp.154-155. According to the South Asian Migration study, more than half the population of Kerala is Hindus, about 56 percent. However among the emigrants from Kerala, only 31 percent were Hindus, Muslims constitute less than 25 percent of the total, but as much as 44 percent of the migrants were Muslims. About 20 percent of the population was Christian, but as much as 25 percent of the emigrants belong to this community. The inevitable consequence of this proportion are visible not only in state politics, but also in local politics,
According to one study, a good percent of the personal computers and cell phones in Kerala are not used. They are only for show. The piece of advice made by one of the famous Malayalam writer is significant in this context. The observation made by one of the studies is thought provoking. “The drunkards of Kerala are the best indicator of a disintegrated society. The reports that alcoholism is increasing in Kerala is signal of this danger. This anarchic culture has big role in creating a generation that lost self confidence and self will. The meditation centers, human gods, devotion marketing centers, fortune diamond sellers, computer astrologists, fake astrologists that appeared in Kerala are the signs of a society that lost their self strength”.

The piece of advice given by a famous Malayalam writer to the Gulf migrants in early eighties is also worth mentioning. He said, “Earning money should not be your aim; it should be the means. Money is the means to achieve a great goal. Unfortunately we forgot this”. A call made in one of the souvenirs of a Gulf organization is also significant. “The social evils against which we fought yesterdays are coming back in other forms. We should not lose the achievements attained by the struggles made by the reformatory organizations and the farmers and communist parties. Superstitions, ill beliefs are haunting us with the support of imperialist powers. Land reforms, universal education, public health, decentralization of power, complete literacy and many other sectors where the state stood ahead of other states now threatened by infectious diseases, environmental pollution.

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The statement was made by Sakkariya, one of the eminent writers in Malayalam. In one of the conferences in Dubai, he said to the Gulf Malayalees, “You please stop sending money to Kerala and stop destroying the state”. (Sakkariya, ‘Chila Dubai Visesangal’ (Malayalam), Kala Kaumudi Weekly, (Thiruvananthapuram, 18 November 2007), p.1680.

Surendran Chunakkara, n.124, p.34. See also, M.N.Karassei, ‘Athmavu Popyokumbol’ (Malayalam), Arabiyile Sulthan (Thiruvananthapuram, 25 February 2005), pp.88-89

Communal powers and colonial powers are trying to withdraw the people from the agricultural sector and lead them to the consumerist culture.” 130

Almost all the studies have pointed to the hard working nature of the Gulf migrants. “More significant have been the changes in the attitude to work. They now value more the importance of hard work, work discipline and scientific temper. The influence of migration experience on widening of the horizons of interest and broadening of perspectives has also been significant and positive”.131 “They (Gulf migrants) did not flinch from tasks for which they had little competence or experience, but accepted them with cool courage and assiduously acquired the required skills and expertise. In several cases, it was a matter of sheer struggle for survival. Persons with little knowledge of cooking acquiring skills in culinary arts to the entire satisfaction of employers and clientele and unskilled workers turning overnight, as it were, into pipe fitters, plumbers and mechanics, were not rare”.132

But it has one more side. A tendency that has been developing in the Gulf pockets is the growing tendency of laziness among ex-migrants and the non-migrants who are the close relatives of migrants. “An undesirable tendency that is noticed among the relatives of the migrants is the laziness that is putting pressure in their life. There is no gender difference in this matter. Those who were actively working in the labour sector before, have ceased their work since the migration of their kith and kins. The young generation in the migrant families are sitting idle in their houses. The work participation in Gulf dominated areas is lower than the other places” 133

131 P.R.Gopinathan Nair, n.37, p.6.
133 P.Ibrahim, ‘Kudiyethathinte Sishtam’(Malayalam), Chandrika Weekly (Kozhikode, 28 August – 3 September 2004), p.11. See also, Akbar Kakkattil, ‘Marunattilekulla Kathukal’ (Malayalam), Salala Kerala Muslim Cultural Centre Souvenir (Salala, 2000), P.71.

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Another scholar has expressed the same views regarding the Gulf migration.\footnote{N.P.Hafiz Mohammed, n.12, p.76.}

According to one estimate there are about 700 Malayali organisations in UAE alone.\footnote{A.M.Mohammed, ‘Keralthinu Veliyile Keralam: Gulf’ (Malayalam), Madyamam Annual (Kozhikode, 2007), p.281. Interviews with the leaders of the expatriate organizations revealed important facts about the relief activities undertaken by each. P. Ismail Kunju Haji, General Secretary, Sunni Centre, Muscat said that the centre was giving a fixed amount for all the applicants as assistance to house contructions and girls’ marriages. T.C. Ashraf, President, Kerala Muslim Cultural Centre, Muscat also disclosed various relief ventures undertaken by the organization.} Almost all the political parties have their cultural units in the Gulf. These and other hundreds of organizations, most of which are formed even \textit{Grama Panchayat} and ward levels are actively undertaking various activities including financial aid to patients, marriages, construction of houses and many other things. It has become a tendency among the natives to depend the Gulf migrants for everything. The relatives of the migrants think that migrant families are well-off and turn to them for any financial help including hospitalisation, marriages, education, house construction etc. This has also become one of the reasons for the laziness of the people. Occasions of declining the help required by the relatives and natives results in unhappy situations and this alone may lead migrant families to become the topics of gossips. The study conducted by the Department of Economics, Mahe, Pondichery University found that the Gulf boom has created some unhealthy trends especially among the children of Gulf migrants. Laziness, shortage of attendance in schools, indiscipline etc are some. The same study reveals that the ambition of most of the migrants’ children was to become a Gulf migrant. The second option was to be a cricket player. Only a few expressed their interest to be doctors or engineers. Surprisingly none of them wanted to be an I A S officer. The attitude of the youths towards work that require physical labour is not an encouraging one.\footnote{Ibid. p.12.} The remarks made by the world famous Indian journalist after visiting Muscut should be an eye-opener to each and
every migrant. “It was not about the hard work or the sweat shed by the Malayalis in building this city on a magnificent manner I am thinking. Why this exceptional calibre that they cannot copy to their motherland”?137 A famous scholar has observed the link between this laziness and Gulf money. “Flocks of unemployed youths are usual sights in every places in Kerala. They are not ready to do any work. Physical works are done by peoples of other states. This is a big problem. It is connected with the economic system developed in Kerala. Possibility for production is nil and the chances for external remittances are more. It was in this situation this culture developed”138. The observation made by a famous thinker is significant. “Our culture is to live in Kerala creating an atmosphere and palatial houses not congenial to Kerala, without eating Kerala food, without wearing Kerala dresses and without speaking Kerala language”139.

Health, Education and Employment

An important domain where the Gulf money has its imprint is health. The state could achieve covetous achievements in the health that vie with the developed nations even before the Gulf boom140. Various health indicators have given Kerala reputation as the healthiest state in India, Various policies of the government and wide and free health facilities provided by the government were responsible for this achievement. Modern treatment that

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137 This is the statement made by Kushvant Singh, the popular journalist of India (C. Sarath Chandran, n.46).

138 Dr. K.N. Panicker, ‘Saamoohika Mattathinte Puthiya Vegangal (Malayalam), Madamam Weekly Onappathippulu (Kozhikode, 2008), pp. 19-20; See also, K.P. Nirmal Kumar, ‘Vattunna Vinyarpinteyum Vilayathu Nanyathinteyum Kalam’ (Malayalam), Mathrubhumi Weekly (Kozhikode, 08 August 2004), pp. 8-13.

139 Surendran Chunakkara, ‘Kerala Samskaram Engane’ (Malayalam), Mathrubhumi Weekly (Kozhikode, 08 August 2004), pp. 8-13.

140 In the infant mortality rate, sex ratio, death rate, birth rate, longevity, doctor-patient ratio etc Kerala is far ahead of the national average and near or equal to the developed nations. The death rate in India is 8.10, that of Kerala is 6.40 and that of America is 6.10. Infant mortality rate in India is 63, Kerala is 10 and America is 8. Longevity of males and females respectively is 64 and 65, Kerala is 74 and 76 and that of America is 78 and 80 (Quoted in Dr. B. Iqbal, ‘Keralam Janakeeya Arogyathilekku’, Mathrubhumi Weekly (Kozhikode, 11-17 June 2006), p.9.

rivals the developed countries is now available in Kerala. The Union Health Minister Ambu Mani Ramdas has appreciated the development of Kerala in the health sector.\footnote{Minister says that the treatment expenditure in the state is only 20 percent of that of the developed nations (Report, \textit{Malayala Manorama Daily}, Kozhikode, 14 November 2005).}

But recently, some disturbing trends threaten the very basis of the accomplishments that Kerala gained in the past. An alarming trend is that the public health system is slowly getting alienated from the people. According to one study, only fifty per cent of the people especially from the lower income groups seek medical help from the government hospitals.\footnote{B.Iqbal, ‘Kerala’s Health Sector : Crying for Cure’, \textit{Kerala Calling} (Thiruvananthapuram, May 2006).} Privatisation of health sector is the related development that weaken the public health sector. Official data regarding private medical institutions in the state before 1986 is not available. Anyhow, the combined medical facilities in the state before 1986 is dealt in detail in the previous chapter. There we saw that Malabar area was far behind the southern parts of the state in the matter of medical facilities. But the surveys conducted by the Department of Economics and Statistics, Thiruvananthapuram, show the dynamic growth of private medical institutions since mid seventies in Kerala. In this development, Malabar area showed a good performance. Number of private institutions in the state in 1986 was 9663. In 1995 it increased to 12618. In 2004 it again rose to 12918.\footnote{Government of Kerala, \textit{Report on Survey of Private Medical Institutions in Kerala-2004} (Department of Economics and Statistics, Thiruvananthapuram, 2006), p.3.} Number of inpatients treated in 1995 was 35.66 lakhs. In 2004 it became 44.89 lakhs. It means an increase of 25.88\%.\footnote{Ibid. p.13.} According to the survey conducted by the government in 1986, the place of Malapuuram is twelfth in the case of private allopathic hospitals.\footnote{Government of Kerala, \textit{Report of the Survey of Private Medical Institutions in Kerala, 1986} (Department of Economics and Statistics, Thiruvananthapuram, 1986).} But, Malappuram, where majority of the migrants are concentrated came to eighth place according to the second survey. But as far as the income of the private medical institutions
are concerned the district has fourth place next to Eranakulam, Thruvananthapuram, Thrissur and Pathanamthitta.\textsuperscript{147} In a small municipal town of Perintalmanna, Malappurum district, there are about 45 private hospitals.

The growth of private medical institutions in the state can be attributed to the inflow of external remittances from Gulf countries.\textsuperscript{148} Many studies have observed the dramatic development observed in the Gulf pockets is the attitudinal change in treatment habits. Migrants’ dependents show a craze to private hospitals in treating their ailments. Even for minor diseases, they like to be admitted in private hospitals. A study made by a popular newspaper revealed that women prefer to get admitted in private nursing homes even months before the date of delivery.\textsuperscript{149} In the words of a famous doctor and social activist, “Kerala is moving to a situation like in America where all modern facilities available but by the fully privatization of the health sector, forty lakhs people have been denied even the primary treatment”.\textsuperscript{150} “The average expenditure on health care per household is higher among the non-resident Keralites families than among the non non-resident Keralite families”.\textsuperscript{151} A study has found that Private medical expenditure is the highest in Kerala among Indian States.\textsuperscript{152} The expansion of allopathic medical care institutions in the public sector has been exceeded by that in the private

\textsuperscript{147} Government of Kerala, n.144, p.160.
\textsuperscript{148} Government of Kerala, \textit{Report of the High Level Committee on Social Infrastructure and Services}, (State Planning Board, Thiruvananthapuram, 1984), p.69. The trend in Malabar is such that one of the sectors where the NRKs invest their money is the health sector. And again, migrants and their relatives are the main promoters and beneficiaries of private health industry. Chekku Mohammed Haji, who went to Dubai in 1958, and one of the earlier migrants we interviewed is the owner of Moulana Super Specialty Hospital, Perintalmanna. Al Shifa Hospital, another Super Specialty Hospital in the same city is also the contribution of NRKs. Dr.Azad Mooppan, the Managing Director of Malabar Institute of Medical Sciences, Kozhikode is also a non-resident Keralite.
\textsuperscript{150} Dr.B.Iqbal, n.143.
\textsuperscript{151} K.C.Zachariah and S.Irudaya Rajan, n.47, p.22.
sector, according to the result of a recent Kerala Sastra Sahitya Parishad study.153

The facts brought out by a study made by one of the popular news paper in Kerala throw light to the inner corners of private hospital industry. Starting private hospitals is one of the most profitable industries especially in the Gulf pockets. According to nonofficial statistics, 96 percent deliveries are taking place in hospitals nowadays and of these 62 percent are in private hospitals and 22 percent are caesarean. International statistics show that possibility for caesarean is only 10 percent. The development of private hospitals has pushed the government health sector back. In 1960-61 number of beds in public sector was 13,000. In 1970-71 it was 20,000. In 1980-81 it was 29,000. In 1986 it increased to 36,000. But between 1986-96 the number of beds increased was only 2000. Now it is below 40000. On the other side the private sector registered great progress. In the public sector the increase of beds was 2000. In the private sector it increased from 49,000 in 1986 to 67500 in 1996. The percentage of increase in the public sector was 5.5 percent whereas in private sector it was 40 percent. Number of hospitals, doctors, and para-medical staff also increased very much (See the Table 8.1)154. More than fifty percent of the private hospitals in the state are unauthorized.155

153 For Details See, Kannan K.P et al , Health and Development in Rural Kerala (Kerala Sastra Sahitya Parishath, Thiruvananthapuram).
Table 8.1

Private Health Sector (Allopathy)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1998</th>
<th>1995</th>
<th>Growth Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hospital with Beds</td>
<td>1,864</td>
<td>1,958</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital Without Beds</td>
<td>1,701</td>
<td>2,330</td>
<td>37.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.of Beds</td>
<td>49,030</td>
<td>67,517</td>
<td>37.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctors</td>
<td>6,345</td>
<td>10,388</td>
<td>63.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Para medical staff</td>
<td>13,921</td>
<td>25,526</td>
<td>81.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Though health facilities have developed very much, some undesirable trends have been noticed in the health sector. Studies have found that death profiles patterns of Kerala and USA presenting striking similarities. While 52.8 and 46.5 percent of males and females die due to heart disease in Kerala the corresponding figure of USA are 47.9 and 47 (See Table 8.2). Except in cancer in all other diseases Kerala and USA show astonishing resemblances.

Table 8.2

Patterns of Death: USA and Kerala (1996-2001)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Disease</th>
<th>Kerala</th>
<th></th>
<th>USA</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infectious Diseases</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cancer</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>22.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart Diseases</td>
<td>52.8</td>
<td>46.5</td>
<td>43.9</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suicides/Accidents</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lung Diseases</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unaccounted</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: C.R.Soman, n.93, p.27.
Diseases like Blood pressure, Diabetes, cancer, coronary disease etc are increasing.\textsuperscript{156} “The emergence of silent epidemic of life style diseases poses disastrous consequences for our state. The prevalence of diabetes mellitus and high blood pressure in Kerala is much higher than the reported estimates in the West”.\textsuperscript{157} Most of these diseases are the outcomes of the wrong food habits that the people follow.\textsuperscript{158} These lifestyle diseases are more in Kerala than Indian average (See Table 8.3).

**Table 8.3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disease</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>Kerala</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blood Pressure</td>
<td>589</td>
<td>1433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diabetese</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart disease</td>
<td>385</td>
<td>914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Illness</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cancer</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Recent surveys conducted in different categories of people in Kerala revealed that one out of three adults in Kerala is hyper tensive. Hyper tension, the insidious killer contributes to heart attacks, stroke and kidney failure in addition to eye complaints. The alarming increase in heart attacks and strokes in Kerala is partly the contribution of high prevalence of hyper tension in our society.\textsuperscript{159}

\textsuperscript{156} These ailments are known as the ailments of the rich. All these are connected with the lifestyle of the people.

\textsuperscript{157} C.R.Soman, n.93, p.27.

\textsuperscript{158} Dr.B.Iqbal, n.143, p.10.

\textsuperscript{159} C.R.Soman, n.93, p.28.
An interesting feature that has emerged recently in Kerala is the alarming increase in overweight and obesity. Overweight and obesity are indicators of increasingly indolent society. Obesity is a risk factor for heart attack, hyper tension, breast cancer, diabetes and joint problems. In other words, most of the life style diseases that we mentioned earlier are woven into the fabric of overweight and obesity that exist in our society. Recent studies in urban and rural Kerala reveal that fifty per cent of women in Kerala frankly obese.\textsuperscript{160} Studies conducted by Centre for Survey Research and Management Services, Kochi have revealed the increasing rate of life style diseases especially heart diseases among the Gulf migrants.\textsuperscript{161}

It is found that the rate of disease has increased. Rate of affecting disease in the state in 1974 was 71 only. In 1987 it became 206.\textsuperscript{162} A study conducted in Kozhikode district reveals that the rate of disease is high in migrant families especially the Gulf migrant families. Fat added food, over eating, lack of physical exercises, loneliness etc are observed to be the factors for this phenomena.\textsuperscript{163} Increase in number of bakeries, fast food centers are noticed in Kerala since eighties. “Local tea shops were turned into broasted chicken homes”. This remark made by a journal truly reveals the situation.\textsuperscript{164} One of the strange features that is noticed is that these life style diseases are spread both among the rich and the poor and the treatment of these diseases take a long period and a big amount.\textsuperscript{165} According to a study conducted by

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{160} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{161} T.N.Sugatahan et al, ‘Mortality excess from heart Disease and Injuries Among Gulf Expatriates with Special Reference to Kerala’, Demography India, Vol29, No.2 (New Delhi, 2000),pp.201-210. See also, T.N.Sugathan and K.Sankara Narayana, ‘Increased trend in Heart Diseases and Accident Among Keralites Gulf Expatriates’ Seminar Paper, 5\textsuperscript{th} IEA eastern Mediterraean Regional Scientific Meeting (Safat, Kuwait, October 2000).
  \item \textsuperscript{162} Dr.P.Ibrahim, n.133, p.12.
  \item \textsuperscript{163} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{164} V.P.N, ‘Muslim Samooham Oratma Parisodhana’(Malayalam), Thejas fortnightly (Kozhikode, 1-15 November 2008), p.13.
  \item \textsuperscript{165} Joy Elaman, ‘Keralathinte Arogyam: Nayamo Nadapadikalo?’ (Malayalam), Sasathragathi Masika, (Kozhikode, November 2005), p.77.
\end{itemize}

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Kerala Sastra Sahitya Parishad, 39.63% of the family budget is spent for treating diseases in Kerala. In 1987 it was only 7.18%.\textsuperscript{166}

As in various areas of social development the achievement of Kerala in education is also remarkable. According to the Census of 2001, the literacy rate of the state is 90.29% as against the national rate of 65.38%. Since the Gulf boom, attitude of the parents towards education has shown a diverse turn. Almost all the studies have pointed towards this. As far as education is concerned, changes are of positive and desirable type. The education of girls also has got primary importance.\textsuperscript{167} The experience at abroad and exposure to different people and their cultures have broadened the minds of an average Keralite and their visions about education of their children and their future got a positive turn. A study reveals that 80 percent of the migrants have at present higher aspirations than before about the education of their children. Nearly 88 percent now look forward for securing for their children high status in society.\textsuperscript{168} “Emigration has an impact on the amount that the households spend on education. The average expenditure per Non-resident Keralites household was Rs.7731 and that per non-non-resident Keralites was Rs.6143.\textsuperscript{169} Two important trends are observed in the educational arena since 1980s in the state. First, Educational institutions that provide vocational courses and training which help to find jobs in the Gulf started by various agencies all over Kerala. The courses include construction related courses like aluminium fabrication, lift operation, motor operation, machine operation, fire and safety, computer hardware and software, animation, tailoring, plumbing, welding, various paramedical courses etc. As one scholar opined this has

\textsuperscript{166} Dr.B.Iqbal, n.143.
\textsuperscript{167} P.R.Gopinathan Nair, n.37, p.63.
\textsuperscript{168} Ibid, p.156.
resulted in a qualitative change in the vocational educational system in Kerala.\footnote{BA.Prakash, ‘Gulf Migration and its Economic Impact The Kerala Experience’, \textit{Economic and Political Weekly} (December 12 1998), p.3211.}

The educational institutions of Kerala comprise both government and private. The private institutions are either aided or unaided. The unaided institutions include both recognized and unrecognized ones. A trend observed recently in the state is mushrooming of unaided educational institutions both recognized and unrecognized. Almost all the studies have pointed towards the migrant’s desire of sending their children to schools other than public ones viz. either English Medium or recognized or unrecognized unaided schools. The recent statistics reveal the increasing number of unaided schools and the number of children in them. Number of children in the unaided recognized schools in 1965-66 was only 19945. In 2001-2002 the number became 263072 whereas in government school the figure 1749191 and 1770883 respectively. In aided schools it was 2398700 and 3068083.\footnote{O.M.Sankaran, ‘Pothu Vidyahyasathinte Ara Noottandu’ (Malayalam),\textit{Sastragathi Monthly} (Kozhikode, November 2005), p.73.}

An official study conducted in 2008 reveal that there are 2646 unrecognised schools in the state. Out of 2646 unrecognised schools 2189 schools are English medium schools and only a nominal one following mother tongue as medium of instruction. The number of students in these schools is 3,12,443.\footnote{Government of Kerala, \textit{Report of Survey on Unrecognized Schools in Kerala} (Economics and Statistics Department, Thiruvananthapuram, 2007).} On analysing the district wise number of unrecognized schools, Malappuram, the high Gulf migrants concentrated district, has the highest number of unrecognized schools next to Thiruvananthapuram. Again the district wise analysis reveals that Malappuram district has the highest number of schools having residential facilities. Ironically, Kottayam, one of the most educated and the most literate districts in the state do not have a single school having such facility. Again, Malappuram ranks first having the
highest number schools having pucca buildings. Though these unaided institutions have contributed much for the educational progress of the region it has a reverse side. A study conducted about the mushrooming of unaided institutions expressed that this trend may prove to be extremely detrimental to the poor and downtrodden and may become very difficult to reverse.173 “The state Planning Board has already predicted that as much as 3000 uneconomic schools will have to be closed and 50,000 teachers rendered unwanted by 2001. The Board estimated a fall of 16.77 lakh children in the school age group by 2001. 580 schools were identified as uneconomic schools... It is ironic that as many schools are facing closure, there is a mushrooming of recognised schools”.174 The studies foresee inherent danger in the proliferation of unaided schools especially English Medium Schools.175

The migration influenced the unemployment in the state in two different ways. No doubt, it has helped to decrease the unemployment in the state. Eighteen lakhs Keralites work in the Gulf countries means thirty six lakh employment opportunities arise; eighteen lakhs in the place of destination and another eighteen lakhs in the place of origin. Various business and industrial establishments started by the Non-resident Keralites had also decreased unemployment. “Migration provides a significant safety valve for India’s unemployed, most notably from the state of Kerala”176


175 Report, ‘Malayalam Marikkunnu’ (Malayalam), Malayala Manorama (Kozhikode, 20 August 1996). Some expatriate organizations even run and manage English medium schools and colleges with all modern facilities. E.K. Moideen Haji, General Secretary, Sunni Youth Centre, Al Ain, said that they were running one English Medium School (Grace Valley Public School, CBSE Affiliated) near Kadampuzha and one college (Fathima Zahra Women’s College) Thirurangadi.

But, “the unemployment in Kerala increased double fold in the period 1999 – 2004. In 1999, the number of unemployed in the state was 12.14 lakhs. In 2004, it rose to 23.89 lakhs. The unemployment of men increased to 67 percent and that of women to 128 percent. The rate of unemployment which was 11.2 percent in 1999 rose to 19.2 percent in 2004”.\textsuperscript{177} The unemployment in the state is the unemployment of the educated. It is ironical that the external remittances coming to Kerala becomes a catalyst for generating unemployment in the state. The important factor that influences education is money. The Gulf money has helped in increasing the number of educational institutions and the peoples’ demand for education. “Rising wages in a context of growing unemployment is apparently paradoxical”.\textsuperscript{178} Migration and the consequent remittances have affected the labour market from three different angles. Firstly, about two million people’s emigration created a lacuna on the supply side, especially in the agricultural sector and construction sector. Secondly, windfall remittances and the consequent expansion of various sectors generated high demand for various categories of workers. Another point that the beneficiaries of these remittances here live happily without doing any job. Meanwhile, some of the occupations such as masonry, carpentry etc which were traditionally held by certain castes were broken and members of other castes and communities came.

A very interesting outcome of the Gulf migration is that this out migration from the state in turn led to another flow of in migration into the state. A big flow of workers form the other states of the country began to flow to this tiny state especially to Malabar seeking employment. “As soon as a contractor takes up a contract for any construction or road work, he appoints an agent to recruit workers not only from neighbouring states, but also from

\textsuperscript{177} P.Suresh, n.13, p.13.
\textsuperscript{178} P.R.Gopinathan Nair and P.Mohanan Plillai, \textit{Impact of External Transfers on the Regional Economy o f Kerala} (Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram, August 1994), pp.21-22
states as far away as Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal. In any construction sites, the lingua franc is not Malayalam but Hindi, Bengali or Tamil… for the in migrant workers from other states, Kerala for all practical purposes their promised land, the Gulf”.

\[\text{179} \quad \text{K.C.Zachariah and S.Irudaya Rajan, n.19, p.60.}\]