International Journal of Management (IJM)
Volume 11, Issue 10, October 2020, pp. 2336-2346. Article ID: IJM_11_10_227
Available online at https://iaeme.com/Home/issue/IJM?Volume=11&Issue=10
ISSN Print: 0976-6502 and ISSN Online: 0976-6510
DOI: https://doi.org/10.34218/IJM.11.10.2020.227

© **IAEME** Publication **Scopus** Indexed

GUEST WORKERS IN KERALA DURING COVID-19 : AN ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

N K Muneer
Research Scholar in Economics, Jamal Muhammed College (Autonomous), Affiliated to Barathidhasan University, Tiruchirappalli (Re- Accredited with A+ Grade by NAAC), Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu, India

Dr D Kumar
Research Supervisor & Associate Professor, Post Graduate & Research Department of Economics, Jamal Muhammed College (Autonomous), Affiliated to Barathidasan University Tiruchirappalli (Re-Accredited with A+ Grade by NAAC), Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu, India

Dr C P Shaheed Ramzan
Associate Professor, (Co-Guide) Post Graduate Department of Economics, Government Arts and Science College, Kozhikode, Kerala, India

ABSTRACT

Migrant workers are integral part of labour market in Kerala. Kerala government calls them as 'Guest Workers' first in India. Shortage of manual labourers is a major problem faced by Kerala labour market both in rural and urban areas. The deficiency of casual labours has been solved by guest workers from different parts of the country. Shortage of labour is the result of some peculiarities in Kerala economy such as universal education, implementation of land reforms, gulf migration, disproportionate growth of service sector and attitude of people towards employment. Kerala offers the highest wages for immigrant workers for manual jobs in India. Guest workers are found in the all sectors like agriculture, construction, manufacturing, hotels and hospitality in Kerala. There are guest workers from almost 24 states of the country in the state . This paper examines labour migration to Kerala, important push and pull factors An attempt is made to analyse measures taken by the government of Kerala to promote economic and social benefit of guest workers moreover the state's response to the distress of guest workers during lockdown and pandemic COVID-19

Key words: Labour Market, Migrant labour, Guest labourers, Pull Factors, Push Factors, Place of Origin, Place of Destination, Lockdown.

Cite this Article: N K Muneer, D Kumar and C P Shaheed Ramzan, Guest Workers in Kerala During COVID-19 : An Economic Analysis, *International Journal of Management (IJM)*, 11(10), 2020, pp. 2336-2346.
https://iaeme.com/Home/issue/IJM?Volume=11&Issue=10

1. INTRODUCTION

Kerala is the state situated in the south-west part of India. It has many unique features especially in human development index and social development. Guest workers from different parts of the country play crucial role in the Kerala labour market. Though the correct measurement of guest workers is not available, it was estimated that there are more than three million guest labourers in Kerala. Production sectors both agriculture and industry could not generate stable and secure jobs to the youths of Kerala, subsequently unemployment was very high in the state (Gopinath, 2020a) . Millions of Kerala youths migrated to foreign countries and other states of the country for employment.

Boom in construction sector in Kerala demanded large number of manual labourers which were not available in the state. Farming sector also witnessed the similar situation. High demand for the manual labourers was filled by guest workers from other parts of the country (Gopinath, 2020b). Gulati Institute of Finance and Taxation (GIFT) conducted a study in 2013 and concluded that there were 2.5 million guest workers in Kerala and estimated that 2.35lakh people are added in each year. Centre for Migration and Inclusive Development (CMID) estimated that there were 4 million guest workers in Kerala in 2017. There are some economic, social and other facts which compel the migrants to leave their own states (Gopinath, 2019a). Some economic and social situations in Kerala attract guest workers into the state. This research paper is an investigation into pull and push factors of migration of guest labourers in Kerala.

Declaration of Lockdown in the country as a measure to control COVID -19 on 20 of March 2020 caused immeasurable miseries and problems to guest workers in India. Thousands of migrants lost their jobs, dwelling places even wages (Gopinath, 2020c). This paper investigates into the measures taken by Government of Kerala to address the problems faced by migrant workers in the state and steps taken for the socio-economic development of guest workers in general.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Guest workers in Kerala has a vital role in Kerala labour market. They engage almost all economic activities in the state. This research paper investigates into the role of guest workers in Kerala. Unlike other parts of the country Kerala treated them in a better way. This paper is titled as " Guest workers in Kerala during COVID-19: An economic Analysis".

3. OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

Following are the objectives set for study in this paper.

a. To understand different factors of migration of labourers to Kerala.

b. To critically analyse different measures carried out by Government of Kerala for economic and social development of guest workers especially during COVID -19.

4. METHODOLOGY OF STUDY

In order to fulfil the first objective, primary data is collected by using scheduled questionnaire from 200 guest workers in Kozhikode district of Kerala. Second objective is fulfilled by using data from various secondary sources like Kerala Economic Review published by Kerala Planning Board, data from Labour Department of Kerala, magazines and other official sources. Management of guest workers at the time of lockdown due to COVID-19 was collected from various news papers, magazines and government publications.

5. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Harris and Todaro (1970) elaborated the basic two sectors of rural – urban migration. According to Todaro the gradual but continuous transfer of economic agents from rural based traditional agriculture to urban oriented modern industry is taking place in every economy.

Dr B A Prakash (1999) conducted a study on consequences of Gulf migration in Kerala and concluded that it has resulted in socio-economic changes the state. The result of foreign remittances can be seen in consumption pattern, saving and investment, labour market, and income distribution in the state.

Muhammed Kutty Kakkunnan (2007) conducted a study on income and employment of Tamil workers in Kerala . According to him wage differences, more employment opportunities were the two important reasons for migration. He concluded that there exist negative discrimination against migrant labourers. He concluded that migration had resulted in economic progress of migrants.

Dr Manoj P K and Neeraja James (2013) conducted a study on socio-economic conditions of migrant labourers in Kerala. They pointed out that the working condition and living condition of migrant labourers in construction sector was very poor. Labourers were compelled to work in dangerous conditions without proper protections. There were violation of human rights. The migrant workers were denied social security measures.

Vidya Viswanath and Dr Manoj Pk (2015) too investigated into the socio-economic conditions of migrant labourers in Kerala. They focused on mental satisfaction of labourers. According to them 92.50 per cent of migrant labourers in Kerala were satisfied with their jobs because of higher wages offered in the state. They were not concerned with any type of social security measures. He concluded that migration has improved economic and living standard of the migrants.

6. GUEST WORKERS IN KERALA

6.1. Background of Immigration

Economic and social imbalances among states in India leads to internal migration. Better education, high literacy rates and lack of professional and skilled jobs in the state had prompted people of Kerala to migrate for higher wages and employment outside the state and country (Gopinath, 2020d). The tendency of migration of Kerala youths led to a shortage in the availability of workforce in Kerala especially in manual unskilled works. The demographic feature of the state with stagnant and declining population growth and an aging population combined with the tendency of youth migration abroad resulted in acute shortage of workers both skilled and unskilled (Gopinath, 2019b).

Migration of Kerala youths to foreign countries had two economic consequences such as labour shortage in domestic economy and remittances from abroad. The foreign remittances resulted in construction boom in the state which needed large number of unskilled and manual labourers (Gopinath, 2016a). Major infrastructure construction projects implemented recent years in Kerala like Cochin Metro, Kannur Air Port , various roads and bridges and Techno Parks also demanded huge labour force in the state.

Government of Kerala introduced many social welfare schemes for the socio-economic development of guest workers. Interference of state government helped the guest workers to reduce their sufferings at the time of lockdown and pandemic.

6.2. Evolution of Labour Immigration into Kerala

Immigration of workers to Kerala has a long history. At the earlier stages of immigration, it was mainly from neighbouring states like Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. The migrant labourers

engaged in plantation sector in the hill areas of the state like Iduki and Waynad districts. Other works done by migrant workers were brick kilns and digging up of earth (Gopinath, 2016b). Labourers from Karnataka concentrated in Waynad and Kasargod districts while migrants from Tamil Nadu settled other parts of the state. Low wages and lack of employment opportunities were the important reasons for the migration from Tamil Nadu. The Tamil workers were predominantly from Dindigul, Tiruchirappalli, Theni, Madurai and Coimbathoor districts. In 1970s construction sector was filled by migrant workers from Tamil Nadu only.

The second stage of immigration of guest workers started with the arrival of migrants from Odisha to work in timber industries in Perumbavoor in Ernakulam district and Kallai in Kozhikode district. Migration from Bihar started with the emergence of iron and steel industry in Kanjikode (Palakkad District). The collapse of forest based plywood industries in Assam led to the migration of the labourers from Assam (Gopinath, 2020e). Migrants from West Bengal engaged in plywood industries and construction sector. At the earlier times labour migration was through social network of labourers. Later it was carried out by agents and multinational companies.

7. ACTIVITIES ENGAGED BY GUEST LABOURERS IN KERALA

Most of activities both unskilled and semiskilled are engaged by guest workers in Kerala. The economic activities done by guest workers are ironically known as 3Ds namely Dangerous, Dirty and Demeaning. Plantation is the oldest sector in which migrants were attracted. Historically tea, coffee and cardamom plantation are highly depending on guest labours from Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. Most of the guest workers are in construction sector. National and multinational companies which undertake large scale construction projects employ guest workers. Most of the guest workers in construction sector are from backward communities from West Bengal,Jharkhand, Bihar ,Uttar Pradesh , Tamil Nadu and Odisha. Traditional fishermen from five Indian states like West Bengal, Odisha ,Andhra Pradesh , Karnataka and Tamil Nadu are working in marine fishing in the state. As a result of collapse of plywood industries in Assam , workers from Assam ,Odisha and west Bengal migrated to Kerala. Ernakulam and Kannur are the two districts in which plywood industries are concentrated in Kerala. There are guest workers in mining and quarrying sector which includes granite stone cutting, red stone cutting and sand mining. Mainly single men from West Bengal, Assam ,Odisha ,Tamil Nadu and Bihar engage in mining and quarrying sector. Guest workers from north eastern states and Nepal are found in hospitality sector in Kerala. Other sectors like iron and steel manufacturing, textile and apparel, wood furniture, footwear industry and sea food industry also give employment to guest workers in Kerala. Guest workers are also found in mosques and temples as priests in Kerala.

8. DATA ANALYSIS OF GUEST WORKERS IN KERALA

Though guest workers are engage in all types of activities, majority of them are in construction work. In construction sector they are doing all types of activities .Result of field survey shows that 54 per cent of them are dealing with construction activities. Guest workers are found in industrial activities like manufacturing of chapels, bricks, plywood industries and furniture manufacturing in the study area. The following table explains different activities engaged by guest workers in study area.

Table 1 Activities done by guest workers in Kozhikode district

ACTIVITIES	NUMBERS	PER CENT
Construction	109	54.50
Industry	22	11.00
Hotels & Restaurants	21	10.50

Agriculture	16	08.00
Shops	13	0 6.50
Quarrying	08	04.00
Others	11	05.50
Total	200	100

Source; Researcher formulated from Survey

The wages obtained by guest workers are not same. Wage rate differs from Rs 500 to Rs 1800 per day. Some of the guest workers have become contractors and owners of small enterprises. Most of them are living single in lodges. A few of them have settled permanently in the state. The table below shows monthly earnings of guest workers.

Table 2 Monthly earning of Guest Workers

Income (Rupees)	Numbers	Per cent
Up to 12000	22	11.00
12001- 16000	57	28.50
16001-20000	69	34.50
20001-24000	24	12.00
24001-28000	20	10.00
28001 and Above	08	04.00
Total	200	100

Source: Researcher formulated from Survey.

9. PUSH AND PULL FACTORS OF GUEST WORKERS IN KERALA

9.1. Push Factors

Push factors are those factors which force an individual to leave his place of origin voluntarily. According to Zelinsky people move from less economic opportunities and retarded social development towards the developed and fast developing areas where migrant can expect greater gains and consequently better living. Push factors at the place of birth work as a repellent force and make pressure on the people to leave their place of origin. Migration of labourers can be treated as the result of push factors (negative forces) in the area of origin and the pull factors (positive factors) in the area of destination.

9.1.1. Economic Factors

Low wages, unemployment, poverty, indebtedness, irregularity in employment and low level of economic development are the important economic factors which compel the guest labourers to leave their place of origin. The researcher find out that these economic factors are the causes of migration of more than 90 per cent labourers. Lack of adequate employment opportunity and low wages are the prime reason for migration. Collapse of the plywood industry and the resulting unemployment were the initial reason for migration from Assam in the earlier stages.

9.1.2. Social and Political Factors

It is found out that social factors like cast discrimination and oppression are also responsible for leaving native places. Political and communal violence in northern states of the country induce minorities and scheduled cast communities to leave their place of origin. The source districts of eastern and north eastern states are well known for political and communal conflicts. Some respondents of guest labourers from Assam opined that forced recruitment by some insurgent groups is also caused for leaving their native place. Some migrants from Odisha who were Christians reported that they had fled their home state mainly because of the communal

violence in 2008. According to some migrants from Assam political tension and lack of freedom to move around in their native places are the reasons for migration. The enforcement of Foreigners Act in Assam has accentuated the movement of undocumented migrants from Bangladesh in Assam to Kerala.

9.1.3. Natural Calamities and Droughts

The major source areas from where workers come to Kerala are famous for cyclones, floods as well as drought. Natural calamities like floods and cyclone particularly in coastal areas of the country and in Assam cause some migrants to leave their native places. Occurrence of natural calamities destroys dwelling places and all earnings which compel them to migrate other places. Droughts and lack of rains leads agriculture crises particularly in Tamil Nadu , Andhra Pradesh and northern parts of Karnataka.

9.1.4. Government Policies

State governments like Odisha and Jharkand implemented policies to protect nature and wild life like establishing of Marine Protected Areas and National Wild life Parks and caused for losing of livelihood opportunities of people also contributed for migration. The nesting of Olive Ridley turtles along the Odisha coast and related conservation measures had forced the fisher folks from Odisha to migrate to Kerala. Un availability of sufficient fish landing centres and supporting facilities in the native place have also caused for migration of fishers from Kanyakumari district of Tamil Nadu.

9.1.5.Other Factors

Fishers from Kakdwip in Sundarbans revealed that exploitation by the boat owners in their native place induced them to leave. Workers from Jharkhand Odisha, including those from tribal communities went out from their homeland due to threats and challenges they faced at their native place due to illegal mining and allied activities. The collapse of plywood industry in 1996 was the reason for starting migration from Assam to Kerala.

9.2. Pull Factors

Pull factors are the favourable circumstances in the destination area that make it more attractive place to live than their native places for migrants. Kerala has some unique features which attract migrant workers. Following are the some attractions in Kerala for migrant workers.

9.2.1. Economic Factors

High wage rate and better employment opportunities are the important factors which attract guest labourers into Kerala. Non availability of domestic workers especially manual unskilled labours resulted by migration of labourers from Kerala to middle-east countries and socio-economic peculiarities of the state are attributed as the reasons for high wages in Kerala. Remittances from Middle East countries led to construction boom in Kerala. Most of the guest workers engage in construction sector.

9.2.2. Peace and Social Harmony

Minorities like Muslim and Christian labourers consider Kerala as a comfortable and peaceful place to live compared to their native places in northern states of India. In the field survey many of guest labourers (Artisans) from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar cited the importance of conflict free and peaceful situation in Kerala. It is important to note that there are churches and mosques which deliver services in Hindi, Oriya and Bengali languages in Kerala.

9.2.3. Infrastructure Facilities

Transport facilities especially long distance direct trains from different parts of the country to Kerala facilitate better movement of guest labourers. For example Guwahati-Trivandrum express train which starts from Assam passes though Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu helps travelling of guest labourers. There are long rout trains from North - Western states like Rajadhani express and Mangala Express. There exist better communication facilities like postal system and mobile net work coverage in the state . It is very easy to transfer money from Kerala to their native place through formal and informal channels

9.2.4. Better Education and Health Facilities.

Kerala is famous for better education and health facilities. Universal school education and availability of schools also attract some guest workers. Children of guest workers are studying in schools and colleges in Kerala. Public Education system in Kerala induced some guest labourers to settle permanently in the state Like education public health system in Kerala is also a pull factor for migration of labourers into Kerala .There exist different types health systems in each village of Kerala irrespective of rural and urban divide.

9.2.5. Other Factors

There exist a wide network and agents to recruit guest workers from other states. There are some labours who act as agents for labour recruitment. Some organisations including Christian missionaries recruit young men and women from north eastern states to work their hospitals and other institutions in Kerala. In hospitality sector some institutions send their students as trainees to various hotels and resorts in Kerala.

10. MEASURES TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT OF KERALA FOR THE WELFARE OF GUEST WORKERS

Kerala is the first state in the country to enact a social security scheme for guest workers. Government of Kerala constituted a Working group on Labour Migration under the 13th Five-Year Plan (2017-2022). The Fourth Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC) evaluated the implementation of the welfare schemes for guest workers as a priority. Various departments are following several measures for social and economic development of the guest workers.

10.1. Education Department

The General Education Department of Kerala has been engaged in promotion of inclusive education for children of guest workers since 2008. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan appointed educational volunteers who speak mother tongues of migrant children in selected schools in areas with concentration migrant children. As a result of these programmes, there are number of students studying in various schools in Kerala. The Kerala State Literacy Mission implemented a programme to teach the guest workers Hindi and Malayalam languages in 2017. Children of guest workers are also studying in colleges in the state. There is educational scholarship for children of migrant workers (Gopinath & Chitra, 2020).

10.2. Health Department

Resourceful migrant workers were recruited and trained to provide health information and connect the migrants to services in their own language coordinating with the other frontline workers of the department. The Department of Health and Family Welfare has introduced Link Workers through National Health Mission (NHM) in addition to the HIV prevention intervention. Guest workers are also provided free health services including preventive vaccines just like natives of Kerala.

10.3. Social Justice Department

The Social Justice Department has started setting up mobile crèches to take care of kids of migrant workers .There are three worker facilitation centres in the state for migrants one each in the south, central and north regions.

10.4. Inter State Migrant Workers Welfare Scheme (ISMWWS) 2010

Under the ISMWWS, a separate fund was created under the Kerala Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board (KBOCWWB) for the welfare of migrant workers. A worker in the age group of 18 to 60 years can enrol under the scheme after completion of one month from his arrival in the state, paying a renewable annual membership fee of Rs 30. Government contributes a sum equal to three times of the annual receipts through membership to the fund, and a similar contribution is also earn marked from the KBOCWWB. As per the scheme every employer who engage inter state migrant workers should ensure that such workers are registered under the scheme. Following table explains salient features of the interstate migrant workers welfare scheme 2010, revised in 2019.

Table 3 Features of Interstate Workers Welfare Scheme

No	Package and Eligibility	Benefit
1	Rs 1 lakh for those enrolled and Rs 25,000 for those not enrolled	Compensation to family upon death of the worker.
2	Rs 10,000 compensation during membership period for temporary disability of not less than six- month duration due to work –related accidents.	Relief Benefit
3	Rs 25,000 for treatment of members for fatal diseases that five or more days , with or without hospitalisation	Treatment Benefit
4	Rs 25,000 to Rs 50,000 for those exit from labour market after a minimum of five-year enrolment under the scheme.	Terminal Benefit
5	Maximum Rs 50,000for body repatriation of migrant workers who die in Kerala , irrespective of enrolment	Body repatriation
6	Annual scholarship of Rs 1000 to Rs 3000for the education of children of enrolled migrant worker	Education Scholarships
7	Rs 15,000 for maternity –related expenses	Maternity Benefits

Source: Labour Commission (GOK 2019)

10.5. Apna Ghar Housing Scheme

The Apna Ghar Housing scheme was launched in 2019 by the DOLS with the intention to provide affordable rental housing to migrant workers in the state. The migrant hostel with facilities dormitory style rooms, cooking and dining facilities ,drying areas and toilets is available to the migrant workers at a subsidised rent though their employer. A bed can be availed by migrant workers at a rent of Rs 1000 per month. DOLS has constructed such hostel in Kanjikode, Palakkad and intends to construct such hostels in Ernakulam and Kozhikode.

10.6. AAWAZ Insurance scheme

AAWAZ is an insurance scheme launched by DOLS in 2016 and is available with effect from 1st November 2017, the 61st anniversary of formation of Kerala state exclusively for migrant workers. A migrant worker can get enrolled for free under Aawaz and avail a health insurance cover of Rs 15000 and an accidental insurance cover of two lacks. Registration is done through the DOLS facilitation centres and an identity card is issued. Aawaz scheme is ensuring cashless medical treatment to beneficiaries through Bio- metric cards.

10.7. A Critical Review of the State of Access to DOLS Schemes

Despite the policy measures, the workers have not been able to benefit substantially from any of the schemes because majority of workers who come to Kerala are not recruited by a contractor from their native states, the Interstate Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment and Condition of Services-ISMW) Act 1979,does not apply to them in its current form. Most of those who are recruited at the native state and brought by the contractors to Kerala also are not registered as the data for the period 2012-2017 reveals.

Table 4 Number of Registered guest workers in Kerala

Financial Year	Sex		Total Registration
	Male	Female	
2012-2013	6462	371	6833
2013-2014	9854	247	10,101
2014-2015	10,662	349	11,011
2015-2016	4157	224	4381
2016-2017	5560	287	5847

Source: Welfare to Rights: Implementation of Select Legislations: A Review, ARC (GOK 2018)

It is clear from the table that as observed by the Administrative Reforms Commission the scheme has not become successful with only 2741 registration during 2016-2017 whereas Kerala was estimated 2.5 million interstate guest workers in the state. During the period from 2012 to 2017, a total of Rs 12.3lakh was spent as benefits to migrant workers which was only 1.3 per cent of the total available funds. It is also important to note that the benefits disbursed were mostly related to compensation towards death or repatriation of the body of the died workers .

Lack of awareness and poor demand from the beneficiaries are the important reasons for the failure of the scheme. Lack of adequate staff in KBOCWWB for implementing the scheme is also another reason for failure. Formalities for fulfilling the requisite for registration like certification by employer and capping of monthly wage Rs 7500 are also another reason for failure of the scheme. Introduction of AAWAZ by collecting biometric data is appearing more surveillance measure than with the intend providing health and accidental insurance. One of the key reasons for the low awareness and uptake of the scheme is the human resource constraints of DOLS to promote awareness and enrolment. Employers are not interested to register all workers fearing that this may result in documentation of the number of persons attracting legal action to provide them with employee benefits.

It was viewed that housing facilities created under the Apna Ghar scheme is helpful only private enterprises meeting requirement of single male migrants, instead of addressing the housing needs of the most vulnerable workers such as the footloose workers and migrant families. The housing facility is very inadequate which is offering only 620 beds in the entire state. It is argued that state should promote mainstream living facilities to affordable prices.

11. LOCKDOWN AND GUEST WORKERS IN KERALA

Declaration of the national lockdown on 25 March 2020 as a measure to control of COVID-19 had adversely effected migrant workers in the country. Migrant workers suffered a lot, they were abandoned by their employers, evicted from their residences, deprived of social security even their wages and thousands of migrant workers were pushed to the streets with their families. Thousands of workers were forced to walk towards their homes hundreds kilometres away. Some of them even died on the way without getting food and shelter.

The first case of COVID- 19 case in India was identified in Kerala on 30th January 2020. All of the guest workers lost their jobs as a result of lockdown. Many of the employers asked their workers to return home still the situation improved. The footloose workers suffered more as they could not assemble at the junctions seeking work since road and shops were closed. Hotels, malls, saloons and restaurants also had fewer visitors and nearly closed. As a result of lockdown the footloose workers and others who lost their jobs started to return to their native places. Many of them had to hurriedly leave without obtaining the salary they had entrusted with the employers.

The announcement of lockdown panicked the workers and their families also. Being access to food was a challenge, the Local Self -Governments gave the responsibility of providing food to employers and house owners who gave house on rent to workers. The' Community Kitchen' set up by Local Self Governments initially did not provide food to migrant workers. There was a situation in which many of guest workers had to request their native family to send money to purchase food. Although government introduced many provisions, the guest workers struggled to obtain cooking fuel and related things. Many of them tried to walk on roads and railway lines to their native places. News papers reported protests by guest workers in many parts of the state like Paippad in Kottayam district, Koothattukulam in Ernakulam district, Pattambi in Palakkad district ,Payyannur in Kannur district and in other parts of the state. There was protest in Perumbavoor in Ernakulam district on the poor quality of food given to them.

When Shramik trains were organised for workers to return home, workers living in rural areas struggled to reach at railway stations .There were trains to Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand , Odisha ,West Bengal and Assam from Kerala during the period of pandemic. Some private bus operators organised trips charging huge amount to West Bengal, Bihar and other parts. Since the Shramik Special trains were discontinued without providing opportunities for all workers to return home ,a lot of workers compelled to travel by air by borrowing money from others. In the unlock phase many of guest workers are returning to Kerala even through air to get any job in the state.

The mobile clinic introduced by the Health Department of Kerala provided treatment to minor ailment as the workers were unable to seek healthcare coming out of the camps and also screened the migrant workers for COVID-19 symptoms. Messages on COVID-19 preventions were circulated in Assamese, Odia , Bengali, Hindi, Kannada and Tamil languages. Moreover ,home guards and volunteers who can speak mother tongues of guest workers were appointed to interact with them and to address their problems. Many senior officials visited camps of guest workers to comfort them and WhattsApp messages were also given in their languages.

As Government of India introduced Shramic special trains, various departments worked together for screening COVID-19 and facilitated their return to native places. Kerala Police and Kerala State Road Transport Corporation provided their buses to transport registered workers to various railway stations. Free food and water were provided to the workers at the time of travelling. Collective efforts of the volunteers, activists, NGO, contractors, employers and public were worth mentioning to help guest workers. Various types of supports which included donation of food ,masks and sanitizers ,establishing multilingual help lines and public announcement, preventing forced detention, providing healthcare services ,helping workers to travel to native states and using all medias including social media to facilitate support to migrant workers.

As a result of return of guest workers due to COVID-19 all most all economic activities in Kerala were stopped. Construction sector in the state was badly affected. Contractors in construction sector even went to native places of workers to bring them Kerala for completion of their works .Hotels and restaurants also faced difficulties in the absence of guest workers for functioning. Many of the saloons and barber shops remained closed even after lockdown due

to lack of workers. Actually the COViD-19 and lockdown were a lesson to 'malayalees' to assess the influence of guest workers in their normal life.

12. CONCLUSION

Kerala has become one of the most promising destinations among Indian states for guest workers from other parts of the country. There are guest workers from almost all states in Kerala. A longest migration corridor has emerged , connecting Kerala with Assam, West Bengal ,Odisha ,Jharkhand, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. The demographic features of Kerala population, Shortage of labour, backwardness in source region and favourable socio-economic conditions in Kerala indicate the possibilities of increase in migration. Many factors economic, social and political induce guest labourers from their native places to migrate Kerala. Economic factors like low wage, unemployment and poverty are the important push factors. There are some economic and social factors which attract the migrant labours into Kerala. High wages and more employment opportunities are the important pull factors of migration into Kerala.

This paper has also discussed measures taken by government of Kerala to promote socio-economic development of guest workers and response of the state to the distress of migrant workers during the national lockdown by using valuable secondary evidences. Kerala's experiences to promote the welfare of migrant workers in the state are important lessons for the inclusion of migrant workers in India. Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment and Condition of Services) Act 1979 has to be amended to include all migrant workers including those who move themselves. Enrolment in social security schemes like IMWWS 2010 of government of Kerala should be kept simple and avoid more formalities like paying fees, producing various certificates. While introducing 100 per cent interstate portability of Public Distribution System (PDS) by March 2021, Government of India should consider migrant workers in Kerala especially most of the family members are outside of their villages. The shelter schemes like Apna Ghar of GOK should consider the housing needs of the most vulnerable workers such as footloose labourers or migrant families instead giving subsidies to employers expense on housing. Institutional mechanisms should be evolved at state, district, and LSGs levels to ensure co-ordination of programmes. The Trade Union in India have a crucial role to play so that the migrant workers benefit from various measures created by unions across Indian states .Being guest workers are an integral part of Kerala labour market both government and public should recognise and respect them and their services.

REFERENCES

[1] Ciji K T (2013) " Impact of Replacement Migration on Wages and Employment on Construction Sector in Kerala" Ph D Thesis MG University.

[2] Gopinath, R. (2016a). A Study on Training and Development in BSNL with special reference to Job Satisfaction in three different SSAs using Modeling. *Global Journal for Research Analysis*, 5(6), pp. 367-370.

[3] Gopinath, R. (2016b). How the Compensation Management and Welfare Measure influence Job Satisfaction? A study with special reference in BSNL to three different SSAs using Modeling. *International Journal of Scientific Research*, 5(8), 305-308.

[4] Gopinath, R. (2019a). Corporate Governance's Responsibilities in Socially, *International Journal of Advance and Innovative Research*, 6(2) (XXXV), 207-211.

[5] Gopinath, R. (2019b). Impact of Knowledge Management Practices on Organisational Effectiveness of Self-financing Engineering Colleges' Faculties, *International Journal of Scientific Research and Review*, 8(5), 32-39.

[6] Gopinath, R. (2020a). Role of Demographic Characteristics Influence on Self-Actualization of Academic Leaders in Tamil Nadu University, *Pal Arch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt/ Egyptology,* 17(6), 9344-9358.

[7] Gopinath, R. (2020b). Role on Employees' Attitude in Work Place. *GEDRAG & Organisatie Review*, 33(2), 1461-1475.

[8] Gopinath, R. (2020c). Study on Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Self-Actualization among Academicians of Tamil Nadu Universities. *International Journal of Psychosocial Rehabilitation*, 24(2), 5327 – 5337

[9] Gopinath, R. (2020d). Prominence of Self-Actualization in Organization. International *Journal of Advanced Science and Technology*, 29 (3), 11591 – 11602.

[10] Gopinath, R. (2020e). Investigation of Relationship between Self-Actualization and Job Satisfaction among Academic Leaders in Tamil Nadu Universities. *International Journal of Advanced Science and Technology,* 29(7), 4780-4789.

[11] Gopinath, R., & Chitra, A. (2020). Business-Family Interface and the Capacity of Managing Challenges Faced by the Women Entrepreneurs of Informal Sector - A Relationship Study, *TEST Engineering and Management*, (83), 24905– 24911.

[12] Government of Kerala, "Economic Review" Various Issues.

[13] Gulathi Institute of Finance and Taxation –GIFT (2013) " Study on Immigrant Workers in Kerala".

[14] Harris JR and Todaro MP (1970)" Migration, Unemployment and Development"

[15] Joy Puthuma (2016) "Impact of Migrant Workers in the Kerala Economy", Research paper, International Journal of Informative and Futuristic Research.

[16] Manoj P K Dr and Vidya Vishwanath (2015) " Socio-Economic Conditions of Migrant Labourers in Kerala " IJAR ,November

[17] Moses J V and Rajan S " Labour Migration and Integration in Kerala"

[18] Muneer N K and Kumar D Dr (2019) " Role of Migrant Labourers in Labour Market of Kerala" IJRAR March.

[19] Neeraj James and Manoj P K (2013) "Unorganised Labour in Housing Construction Sector in Kerala ; An Empirical Investigation into the Human Right Issues and Other Problems" IJSR January.

[20] Peter Benoy and Vishnu Narendran (2017) " Gods on Work Force in Kerala , Unravelling Labour to Kerala" Centre for Migration and Inclusive Development(CMID) Perumbavoor.