

**Student Migration from Kerala, India to Destinations in the Global North:
Analysis and Policy Implications**

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Abstract

The state of Kerala in India is known for its model of development and attainment of high human development indicators including the highest literacy rate in India. Yet, Kerala is overwhelmed by high unemployment and the outmigration of its residents for opportunities abroad. The popular route of migration from Kerala to the countries of the Persian Gulf has contributed immensely to the financial well-being of the state through remittances for decades. However, in recent years, a decline in the trend of Gulf migration and an increase in the trend of migration of youth to countries of the global north as students is observed in Kerala. This paper analyzed the underlying reasons behind the increased levels of student migration and some of its resulting social and economic impacts on Kerala using a theoretical framework that combines hypotheses based on the push and pull models of migration. The study demonstrates that the decision to migrate may not always be rational, due to the influence of fluctuating factors that transform over time. Meanwhile, the analysis of the currently observable factors fundamentally identifies this wave of migration as a movement of people toward opportunity and a better standard of living compared to what is available in Kerala. Additionally, the perception and knowledge of the conditions in the origin area and destination areas contribute heavily to migration decision-making. In the meantime, concerns about an ageing population, and further economic stagnation reverberates in Kerala as it is losing its young population. Nevertheless, uncertain economic conditions at destination countries also do not rule out the small possibility of a return migration of this stream back to Kerala.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The state of Kerala in India has been praised for its model of development and its attainment of high human development indicators despite its lack of industrial-based economic development or significant growth in Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Kerala has accomplished the highest literacy rate in India and has excelled in education, healthcare, gender equality, and social justice. However, when examining Kerala's development successes and accomplishments, its high unemployment rates, the continuous trends of migration of its people to other regions and countries for employment, and the state's reliance on remittances, cannot be overlooked. At present, Kerala is entering the latest phase of its migration to the countries in the Persian Gulf, while entering a new wave of migration, with a large number of students from the state seeking post-secondary education in countries of the global north with the goal to eventually gain permanent residency or citizenship there. This major research paper, therefore, aims to analyze the factors influencing the current migration trend and to demonstrate some of the possible social and economic implications for Kerala.

1.1 Background and Rationale

Migration and its impacts on both the sending and receiving countries are important issues in globalisation, international development, and public policy. The state of Kerala in India has been chosen as a region of focus for this research paper because of its highly acclaimed model of human development and the integral role played by migration in its prosperity.

Kerala came into existence as a state of India in 1956, nine years after the independence of India from British rule, with the integration of the Malayalam-speaking former Princely States of Travancore and Cochin, and the Malabar district of the province of Madras. Kerala is

ecologically gifted with a year-round tropical climate and abundant water bodies. However, a large part of the geographical area of the state is covered by fragile tropical rainforests and a long coastline that is highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.

Over time, Kerala transitioned from a society with high infant mortality rates, high fertility and birth rates, to one with a low infant mortality rate, and fertility and birth rates (Appendix 1). Heavy initial investments and government interventions in primary and secondary education, health care, immunization, agricultural credits, housing for the poor, land reforms, and other schemes to keep social welfare accessible played crucial roles in the development of Kerala (Parayil, 1996, Shah, 2010). The Kerala Model of Development garnered attention internationally because Kerala attained high human development indicators through inclusive and democratic means, despite the lack of elevated levels of economic output or growth. (Industry - Statistical Yearbook India – MoSPI, 2018, RBI Handbook of Statistics, 2022, SDG India Index and Dashboard, 2020).

Kerala's inclusive and sustainable development policies paired with an educated workforce seem favorable to human capital growth and allow for a presumption that the residents of Kerala would be able to easily find meaningful employment and get involved in successful entrepreneurial ventures that would further the growth of the state and the prosperity and wellbeing of its residents. However, despite the development successes, unemployment and outward migration remain as critical concerns for Kerala.

Outward migration of people in search of employment opportunities has been a usual occurrence in Kerala. During 1945 to 1960s many Keralites moved to Singapore, Malaysia, and to bigger cities within India such as Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai etc. primarily as semi-

skilled and office workers. Over time, migrants had attained more professional training and moved away from Kerala to work as technology professionals, teachers, and nurses. During the 1970s, a boom in employment opportunities in the countries of the Persian Gulf demanding labour to build and advance their oil-based economies attracted more migrants from Kerala, especially promoting more unskilled and semi-skilled migration. Meanwhile, migrants from Kerala who were technically skilled workers, and nurses were also moving to the Gulf countries as well as North America and Europe during this time. Post 1990s, Kerala largely witnessed a continuous stream of migration of semi-skilled and unskilled labour moving to the Gulf countries, a stream of highly qualified professionals such as doctors, engineers, and academics moving to various parts of the global north, and a stream of family networks joining the nurses who had previously migrated from Kerala (Joseph, 2022).

Overall, Gulf Migrants accounted for close to 90 percent of total migrants from Kerala and remittances accounted for 19.3 percent of the Net State Domestic Product of Kerala as of 2018. However, the growth of remittance income is currently on a declining trend. Also, migration of Keralites to the Gulf countries has also been decreasing in the recent years (Rajan & Zachariah, 2019). At present, more Keralites are migrating to countries in the global north, especially as students. Estimates of around 35,000 students are leaving Kerala per year (Rajagopal, 2022). A growing public concern is also emerging from the increasing trend of migration of students from Kerala especially through reports in news media, discourses from prominent public figures, and politicians.

This new wave of migration differs significantly from Kerala's migration experience to date as the people involved now have a possibility to gain permanent residency or citizenship at their destination countries in the global north as opposed to the limited term residency in the Gulf

countries. Therefore, the present change in migration patterns could bring new social and economic challenges to Kerala, which triggers a need for analysis of the reasons behind people's movement, and the implications it could have on the future of the state. This MRP therefore aims to provide value for future research on the evolving topic by identifying and modelling some of the resulting social and economic implications of such migration for Kerala.

1.2 Research Questions

Despite the development successes experienced by Kerala, it is continuing to be troubled by high unemployment, out-migration of skilled individuals, heavy reliance on remittances, and at present, a huge outflow of its young population to countries that could offer them a permanent home away from Kerala. This research paper will therefore use the theoretical framework of push-pull models of migration to analyse the wave of migration to answer the following questions:

What are the factors influencing the current increase in the migration of students from Kerala in pursuit of post-secondary education in countries of the global north that offer the possibility of permanent residency or citizenship? What are the resulting implications for public policy in Kerala?

1.3 Methodology

Databases including JSTOR, SCOPUS, Taylor and Francis, Google Scholar, and publications from the Center for Development in Kerala were used to access existing literature and data on the chosen topic. The search strategy included keywords and different terms that focused on "student migration from Kerala", "youth migration from Kerala", "Kerala

emigration”, “educated unemployment in Kerala”, “theories of migration”, “history of migration in Kerala” etc. The focus was directed on more recently published literature related to migration from Kerala. Literature focused on similar migration experiences from other regions was also referred for the study. Older literature was also consulted to obtain knowledge from pre-existing migration theories and to gain a broader perspective on the social and economic context of Kerala, and its history and experiences with migration. The search included articles, case studies, reviews, book chapters, whole books, news articles, and other relevant documents.

The Kerala Migration Surveys conducted from 1998 to 2018, as well as Central and State Government websites were used to obtain official data on migration and other related social and economic statistics. Background videos in the Malayalam language which included news segments, interviews, and political discussion on migration recorded from Kerala’s legislative assembly, and personal experiences shared on social media such as Reddit and YouTube were also referred for this research paper. To methodically identify the underlying reasons and motivations behind the wave of student migration from Kerala, the research topic and findings are placed within a foundational theoretical framework involving the push and pull factors of migration.

1.4 Limitations of the Study

Due to the recency of the current increase in the international migration of students from Kerala, academic literature on the topic is sparse and official data records are yet to be published. Consequently, unofficial surveys, personal accounts, street interviews, etc. were also given importance in this study. Additionally, due to the limited scope allowed by a Major Research

Paper, comparative experiences of student migration or human capital flight from other regions in India and other countries could not be analyzed in detail in this paper.

The Kerala Migration Surveys from 1998 to 2018, are used as a major data source for this study although the data is only available until 2018. A 2022-23 iteration of the survey has only been sanctioned by the state government as of mid-2022 but the results have not yet been published. Additionally, the creation of a government-led data portal on migration from Kerala has also only been initiated in 2022 and is not expected to be available immediately. However, these developments indicate opportunities for further research when more comprehensive data on the subject become available.

1.5 Structure of the Paper

This research paper starts with an introductory chapter containing the context of the research and its importance, the second chapter includes a literature review of academic and grey literature on the topic, an overview of relevant migration theories and an explanation of the foundational theoretical framework which will be used to analyze the push and pull factors influencing migration from Kerala. The third chapter will be comprised of the major findings from this study. The fourth chapter will discuss and analyze these findings within the context of the theoretical framework to infer the push and pull factors influencing the recent wave of migration from Kerala, and to highlight some of the implications of these migratory trends. This will lead to the concluding chapter which will summarize and conclude the research paper by identifying the important implications from the analysis, and by suggesting recommendations as well as areas for future research in this evolving and current topic.

Chapter 2: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

This first part of this chapter encompasses a literature review which begins by presenting the relevant existing literature on the development path of Kerala, the state of education and unemployment, and its migration experiences. After laying out the subject through the findings of various scholars, this review will add value to the existing knowledge of the topic by identifying the areas of research that needs further development aligned to the trends of migration currently observed.

The remainder of this chapter will describe the existing theories of migration and present a foundational theoretical framework based on the push and pull factors of migration. This framework implies that the push factors in the origin and the pull factors in the various destinations trigger the response of migration from individuals. In the subsequent chapters of this paper, this theoretical framework on migration will proceed to be tested to explain the triggers behind the recent wave of migration of students from Kerala to various destinations in the global north.

2.1 Literature Review

2.1.1 The Kerala Model of Development and its Criticism

Nobel Price winning economist Amartya Sen has continuously emphasised Kerala's positive achievements through public action in attaining a relatively good quality of life despite its slow and limited economic growth. Through examples such as Kerala, Sri Lanka, Cuba, Zimbabwe etc., Sen points out how some poor countries and territories were able to efficiently develop their human capital by using public action and investing in health, education, and other

fundamental needs, without necessarily accomplishing an elevated level of economic growth first (Drèze & Sen, 1989 & 1990). Meanwhile, Govindan Parayil (1996) highlights Kerala's path to development as an important example of sustainable development emerging from the 'Third World', attained by not corrupting the ecological balance or consuming massive quantities of energy and other natural resources in the process. Parayil (1996) suggests the Kerala Model as one that needs to be studied for improvements and replicated in other parts of the 'Third World' due to its foundations on sustainability and because it may be more appropriate for developing societies than models from other historical and cultural traditions. Such analyses portray the Kerala model in a positive light.

In contrast, Apoorva Shah's (2010) research examines the Kerala Model, using quantitative and qualitative data on the achievements of the welfare system in health and education implemented by Kerala's democratically elected Communist government. Shah (2010) critiques the model by highlighting the high unemployment rate of tertiary degree holders in Kerala. Shah (2010), however, presents Kerala to the rest of India as a warning of "tragic economic underachievement" and to the world as an example of "human capital investment as the most powerful development force".

Like Shah (2010), KT Rammohan's (2000) assessment critiques the development model by discussing the deficiency of economic and industrial development in Kerala. The author draws attention to the economic and most importantly technological backwardness of the region propagated by unions that prevent modernization and technological innovation (Rammohan, 2000).

Ravi Raman (2009) offers an opposing outlook by highlighting how policies such as privatization and commodification of education and healthcare deteriorate the successes of the Kerala Model and increase inequality in the state (Raman, 2009). The established democratic system combined with energetic political activism in Kerala allows these different viewpoints to exist and be supported by the public, while also arguably being the barrier for effective change to take place. Political infighting, corruption, and social inequalities are factors that cannot be overlooked when studying the inefficient economic growth of Kerala.

S.K Sharma's work (1994) points directly to the problems emerging from the Kerala Model: lack of economic growth, unemployment, and underemployment, and asserts that true sustainability of social welfare and quality of life cannot be maintained with stagnant economic growth. Achin Chakraborty (2005) builds on this analysis by referring to the growing trend of human development and economic growth in Kerala as "lopsided" and asserts that slow growth will eventually be a constraining factor for financing welfare expenditure. However, the author also argues that Kerala has avoided this with the growth of private education and health care institutions as well as the growth of remittances from its population residing and working abroad (Chakraborty 2005). At the same time, Chakraborty (2005) also conveys that with the large supply of an educated labour force, educated unemployment, and the emigration of educated people will continue to increase.

Correspondingly, while Amartya Sen's works (Drèze & Sen, 1989 & 1990) highlighted Kerala's successes and the potential for growth expected from its accumulated human capital, present day Kerala has an educated unemployment rate of 16.7 percent compared to the national average of 10.1 percent (Kerala State Planning Board, 2022). Kerala also has not attained notable industrial based economic growth, as reflected by its low levels of value adding industrial output,

in comparison to neighbouring states, and the Indian average as tabulated in Appendix 2 and Appendix 3.

Overall, these varying perspectives suggest that despite Kerala's initially promising development trajectory, the domestic economy of Kerala has failed to reap the benefits of an educated and healthy labour force. Although the Kerala model had potential for overall success, inefficient governance of its resources, and politically incentivised suppression of technological growth and entrepreneurial activities could be considered as some of the central reasons behind the high educated unemployment rates and lack of productive growth in the state. Therefore, the out migration of its people to earn a living could be considered a normal course of action. For more detailed understanding, the following sections will further investigate and analyse literature that focuses on education, unemployment, and migration within the context of Kerala.

2.1.2 Education, Unemployment, and Migration

2.1.2 a) Education

Formal educational institutions started being established in Kerala with the heavy influence of the different religious communities including the upper caste Hindus and Syrian Christians, as well as British colonialists, and missionaries (Thomas, 2018). Moreover, the universality of education emerged through the popular communist government that came into power through a democratic process in the 1950s enforcing the growth of welfare-oriented governance in the state (Devika 2010). While the objective was to provide universal education, caste and gender inequalities amplified by societal and cultural factors hindered the inclusiveness of opportunities offered through education. (Devika, 2010, Mitra & Singh, 2007).

George and Kumar (2009) highlight how there is a perception of inclusiveness and actual exclusiveness in the education sector of Kerala. While primary and secondary school education are universally available and have enabled Kerala to attain high literacy rates, post-secondary education has become increasingly commercialized and privatized (George & Kumar, 2009). As a response to these observations, Jose Sebastian (2010) highlights the deterioration of the quality of public education as a reason for the demand as well as the supply of private education in the state. Sebastian (2010) also recommends that targeting publicly funded education to the needy is required for the proper utilization of the government's funds. Prachi Srivastava (2016) highlights how low fee private education providers offer the economically disadvantaged population in India as well as in other countries of the global south with an alternative to the poor-quality public education, and questions their effectiveness in promoting equity in light of their commercial motives.

From George and Kumar's (2009) observations, it is also important to recognize that along with elite private education, a new generation of students, with little knowledge of the local language and culture, and a lack of social interaction with the underprivileged is on the rise. Sara Forsberg's (2017) research on Kerala's middle-class students comments on how the more 'prestigious' schools have their students and teachers speak only in English which is a status symbol and a dominant language used in the sought-after jobs of the national and international labour markets. Additionally, Forsberg's (2017) work also highlights how since the 1990s middle-class families invested in the cultural capital of their children from an early age with special concern for improving their English. Many of these families could also afford to send their children to study abroad as a strategy to 'avoid failure' in the highly competitive national education system. Forsberg's (2017) research also comments on how schools in Kerala show

preference in speaking about their 'international profile'. It is therefore worth examining whether the growing middle class of Kerala is being conditioned to form a highly educated class with aspirations and training to migrate abroad for better opportunities.

2.1.2 b) Unemployment

A high unemployment rate can be expected from a region experiencing slow economic growth, with an abundant supply of an educated labour force. In B.A. Prakash's (2001) study within the city of Kochi, the commercial center of Kerala, the main reasons for unemployment include the low rate of growth of employment, the large supply of an educated and young labour force, the small size and low rate of growth of the organized sector, and the low participation of educated and unemployed labour force in informal and casual activities, primarily due to the social value system that devalues this type of work. This study observes that as a result, young and educated people are forced to migrate to other parts of India and abroad for employment. Another study on overeducation and employment within the city of Kochi in Kerala reveals that due to the imbalance of the supply and demand of educated people, a substantial proportion of people are employed in occupations that are far below their educational qualifications, and they are intrinsically dissatisfied as a result. (Rasheed & Wilson, 2014).

P.D. Jeromi (2003) explores the economic growth crisis facing the Kerala Model by examining into the various employment sectors of the state. The analysis concludes that the economic state of Kerala is in peril due to the low growth of productive sectors, exceptionally low level of investment, worsening fiscal situation, and rising imports. Anita V's (2017) enquiry into the labour market of Kerala highlights the heavy influence and popular support for the dominant democratic and communist political leadership on the labour movement and trade

unions in Kerala. The Marxist philosophy based on class consciousness and struggles against the bourgeoisie and exploitation was popularized and especially strengthened during the period between 1945 to 1980 in Kerala. This paper comments on the lack of bargaining power left with the employers due to the strength of the labour unions, and the extensive public support earned by state-owned industries and institutions despite their deficient performance. Additionally, the paper focuses on the lack of support in the region for technological advancement, especially through trade union movements against mechanization, machines, and computers between the 1950s and early 1990s due to the fear of the loss of manual jobs. This inquiry into Kerala's labour market also highlights the legacy of a strong labour movement with frequent strikes and protests to be important reasons behind the lack of investment of private capital into developing Kerala's industries, which in turn translates into limited employment generation in the state (V, 2017). Moreover, Arun S (2017) underline the affinity shown by Keralites for the idea of securing a permanent job or a government job that promises a comfortable life. This report asserts that an entrepreneurial mindset is often discouraged due to the societal conditioning of risk aversion, as well as through the lack of a supportive environment available for educated youth to start entrepreneurial ventures in the state (S, 2017).

In addition to these explanations, Nair and Dhanuraj (2016) call attention to the lack of accessible agricultural credit systems, paired with restrictive policies by the government on the freedom of farmers and agricultural entrepreneurs, and corruption in land dealings, as the main reasons for the decline of high potential agriculture sector within the state. Kerala's primary sectors' contribution to the Gross Value Added through the agriculture, livestock, forestry, fishery, and mining and quarrying sectors accounts for less than half of the national average as presented in Appendix 3. Industry is central to economic dynamism, however the manufacturing

sector in Kerala accounts for a significantly lower share of the Gross Value Added compared to India as a whole (Appendix 3). Thomas & Jayesh (2019) adds that while there has been no sustainable growth in sectors like manufacturing, the growth in service sector jobs has also been severely limited due to a lack of their ability to add value, and their numbers have been far less than the number of educated graduates and youth in Kerala. Their research also suggests that the strategy used by some of the other states in India, competing to attract private industrial investments by offering cheap and exploitative labour would not be successful in Kerala (Thomas & Jayesh, 2019). Aligned with these observations, Kerala's contribution to the industrial output of India is lower than its neighbouring states and Kerala's share of India's manufacturing output has been falling slowly but steadily (Appendix 2).

Furthermore, Kerala is currently considered to be in a great fiscal crisis, due to poor management of the state's finances, with the situation worsening after the large-scale spending required to mitigate the COVID-19 crisis as well as recent climate disasters which included the Ochi Cyclone in 2017, and major floods of 2018 and 2019 (Press Trust of India, 2022). Meanwhile, the Debt to Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) ratio in 2020-21 increased to 37 percent from 32 percent in 2019-20. This is a result of declining revenue receipts and an increase in revenue expenditure. The ratio of Debt to Revenue receipts meanwhile increased to 310 percent in 2020-21 from 289 percent in 2019-20 (Kerala State Planning Board, 2022).

2.1.2 c) Migration

While economic stagnation and political inefficiencies limit employment generation in the state and triggers a search for opportunities elsewhere, P.M Mathew (2003) draws attention to the importance placed by Keralites on attaining or maintaining a social status. Mathew (2003)

highlights that employment is not the only reason for migration and provides an example from the mass emigration of low-skilled workers from Kerala to the Middle East for employment in construction jobs which were also not scarce in Kerala. Building on this perspective, the case study on the emigration of nurses from Kerala by Percot and Rajan (2007) also indicates that unemployment is not a primary reason for the mass migration of nurses from Kerala to the Middle East and further west. Unlike low-skilled workers, these nurses have higher education, and they seek better job prospects, more comforts, and higher wages abroad (Percot & Rajan, 2007). These findings support the research on the migration of healthcare professions by Rao et al (2015) which highlights the concerning levels of outmigration of surgical specialists, doctors, and nurses from Kerala despite the deficits of surgical specialists in Kerala and India, especially in rural areas.

Rajan & Zachariah (2019) also present data on how as Keralites are getting more skilled with higher education, their destinations for migration are shifting at increasing levels to the high-income economies of the west owing to better opportunities and more socio-economic stability, while unskilled migration to the Gulf countries is decreasing by substantial amounts. Complementing these studies, Jo Joseph's (2022) review on the youth migration from Kerala lists the potential for social mobility, better pay, and prospects after their studies abroad as primary factors propelling the migration of students to the developed countries of the global north. Therefore, trends of migration of people abroad to evade the social stigmas associated with specific jobs in Kerala, and to attain a higher quality of life, highlight social mobility as another important factor that influence migration along with unemployment.

Prakash et al. (2017) outline how remittances flourished as a strong source of income for Kerala because large numbers of people left the state seeking employment opportunities abroad.

Meanwhile, the sustainability of Kerala's reliance on remittance income is probed, especially after the mass exodus of migrants returning home to Kerala due to changing economic conditions, nationalization policies, and COVID-19 related job losses from countries in the Persian Gulf which are the most popular destinations for migrants from Kerala (Parkin & Singh, 2020). Additionally, heavy reliance on remittances from migrants contributes to Kerala's share of vacant houses, built for or by the emigrants expecting eventual return. Accordingly, an increased share of Gross Value Added in the state stems from higher activity in construction, repair, hotels, and restaurants, compared to manufacturing and industrial production oriented sectors (Appendix 2).

Rajan & Zachariah (2019) also confirm that remittance income has a considerable impact on the development of Kerala's households directly or indirectly while accounting for more than 19 percent of the Net State Domestic Product (NSDP) in 2018. The report also draws attention to the diminishing growth of overall migration after the 2018 migration survey, which includes skilled and unskilled migrants. The underlying reasons presented include demographic changes in Kerala, with its working-age population (who are more likely to migrate) growing at a decreasing rate. Additionally, the decrease in wages, along with nationalization policies and family tax rules in the Gulf economies that are conducive for non-nationals, facilitates faster return migration to Kerala. Furthermore, the 2018 report pointed out that higher wages offered in Kerala at present for unskilled labour is decreasing the advantage of migrating to the Gulf countries for unskilled jobs despite the social stigma associated with being employed doing these jobs in Kerala.

Meanwhile, Sara Forsberg (2017) argues that transnational capital formed from experience with the history of migration, social contacts, and awareness on a global scale, and

the flow of ideas differentiate the middle class in Kerala and shape their future horizons. From interviews with students in Kerala, Forsberg also notes that English-speaking countries are associated with living standards and educational institutions that are considered to be the best, while the Gulf countries are strongly associated with economic capital and work. This study further indicates that more exposure, training, and use of the English language in Kerala, instead of Hindi, which is India's main official language, illustrates another reason for Kerala's students to prioritize migration abroad instead of the other states in India. Forsberg (2017) also observes the interviewees as "being mentally oriented toward migrating" while harbouring conflicting thoughts regarding "being global" and serving the nation.

In addition, research from David Sancho (2017) on the migration desires of young men in India draws attention to students from a newly prosperous middle class aspiring to "escape India's culture of education" which is considered exclusionary and competitive. Sancho also draws attention to how migration decisions, strategies, and experiences differ widely among students of various middle-class backgrounds. Aspirant student migrants from India enroll in distinct types of higher education institutions ranging from highly acclaimed top universities to new, cheap colleges that typically only cater to Chinese and Indian students seeking mostly courses that promise a permanent resident status in the future. Many from this latter group of aspiring migrants studied by Sancho (2017) are part of a new middle class, lacking the capital to be successful in India, desiring to migrate to the global north as students by pursuing diplomas and shorter length courses, with the end goal of acquiring social mobility and permanent residency abroad. This "idealization of movement", along with the identified lack of opportunities for career development and high salaries befitting their educational levels and experience can trigger the educated, young population to relocate to other countries offering

opportunities that appear to fit their aspirations. The growth of this trend could be detrimental to Kerala if the bright, economically sound residents migrate and contribute their skills and capital elsewhere without returning to Kerala.

Existing literature on the topic of Kerala's experience with development, unemployment, and the movement of students away from the state call attention to many of the complex issues it is facing. However, it also highlights the unrealized potential lying within the small, and relatively poor state of Kerala, which is undeniably rich in human capital. Analysis of existing literature on the topic of the Kerala Model of development has stressed the importance of human development, along with its criticisms and problems of fiscal constraints emerging from stagnant economic growth. Further research into education within the Kerala context, a driving force for its development, shows trends of success in terms of human development, alongside rising inequalities, and inefficiencies in the system. Additionally, trends of rising unemployment along with current trends of migration of the young and educated population haunt the future of development in Kerala. Therefore, there is a need for future research to methodologically identify the inherent reasons behind Kerala's recent migration trends within a theoretical framework, and to pick out some of the most important resulting social and economic implications on the state.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Economic Migration Theories Relevant to the Kerala experience

One of the earliest migration theories or "Laws of Migration" was published by E.G. Ravenstein after examining census data from the late 19th century. According to Ravenstein (1885), all migratory movements are guided by these laws. These laws describe migration to be

the deficiency of hands in one part of the country being supplied from other parts where the population is redundant (Ravenstein, 1885).

Meanwhile, E.S. Lee's (1966) theory of migration delves deeper into the push and pull framework alluded to by Ravenstein and it involves studying the factors associated with the area of origin, the factors associated with the area of destination, intervening obstacles, and personal factors. Lee (1966) concludes that the decision to migrate is never completely rational due to the influence and valuation of many factors at the origin and the destination. This theory observes that the balance in favour of the move must be enough to overcome the natural inertia that always exists (Lee, 1966).

As a more specific perspective, the Harris-Todaro model of migration focuses on the growing urbanization in developing countries and argues that migration from rural to urban areas is a result of the rational economic behaviour of individuals acting on the wage differential between the areas. This model highlights unemployment as a factor that regulates the flow of migrants (Todaro, 1969, Harris & Todaro, 1970). While Harris and Todaro were dealing with rural-to-urban migration within a country, their framework has been applied to international migration as well. Expectations of higher wages in the United States, for instance, are a major force attracting migrants from Central and South America.

Moreover, the Historical Structural Models of migration which include the Segmented Labour Market Theory, Dependency Theory, and the World System Theory all share common Marxist-inspired attributes that point to the causes of international migration being rooted in the realm of historically conditioned macrostructural forces involving disequalising economic forces of global capitalism. These theories highlight the demand for cheap labour from poor countries,

globalization of the capitalistic economy by the powerful global north countries, and the interdependencies in the global market based on economic inequalities, to be the key drivers of international migration. (Morawska, 2012).

In contrast, Dragos Radu and Thomas Straubhaar challenge the sole focus of economic factors as determinants and consequences of migration. They emphasise the importance of capturing social influences that affect migration such as the characteristics of the group of which individuals are a part, and venture beyond the push and pull models of migration. (Radu & Straubhaar, 2012).

Likewise, the cumulative causation model of migration strives to capture the dynamic, self-feeding character of migration with a strong importance placed on the influence of social ties and network connections on migration decisions (Massey, 1990). For instance, people from a given ethnic or other group tend to migrate to places where people of similar background are to be found. This explains, for instance, phenomena in receiving countries like “Chinatown” and “Little Italy” . This model calls for integrating the various theories and findings from migration studies for a stronger analysis of the subject.

From these multidimensional theories and models of migration, the push and pull model of migration described by E.G. Ravenstein and E.S. Lee is used as a foundational theoretical framework to understand the underlying reasons and patterns of the current wave of student migration from Kerala, to then be able to expand and the social and economic impacts this wave of migration can have on Kerala. The Harris-Todaro model of migration which concentrates on wage differentials, and the Historical Structural models which places an emphasis on capitalism driven labour force movements are also important variants of the push and pull model.

Additionally, the cumulative causation model is essential in bringing together a comprehensive outlook on migration. However, they are not applied too broadly in this theoretical framework to stay within the scope of this study, and to exclusively focus on the elementary and specific factors influencing this new wave of migration from Kerala.

2.2.2 Push and Pull Forces of Migration

To better understand the migration decisions resulting from the forces pushing migrants away from their areas of origin and the forces pulling them to their areas of destination, the following foundational factors assembled by E.S Lee will be used along with supporting concepts from E.G. Ravenstein's laws of migration:

Factors Concerning the Origin	Intervening Obstacles
Factors Concerning the Destination	Personal Factors

Figure 2.2: Foundational factors presented by E.S. Lee's Push and Pull Model of Migration

2.2.2 a) Factors Concerning the Origin and Destination

Valuation based on the exposure to the Origin and Destination

Experience with the area of origin, and the lack of experience with the area of destination before arrival affect the judgements made by the migrants as per the theory presented by E.S Lee (1966). The area of origin is often filled with good experiences as migrants are more likely to have spent their formative years of youth and good health here. This in retrospect can produce an overvaluation of its positive elements and an undervaluation of its negative elements. Meanwhile, the difficulties of assimilation into an unfamiliar environment might create an

equally erroneous evaluation of the positive and negative factors in the destination. Lee observes that the balance in favour of the move must be enough to overcome the natural inertia that always exists (1966).

Currents or Streams of Migration

According to E.G. Ravenstein (1885), “currents of migration” are set in the direction of great centers of commerce and industry which absorbs the migrants. E.S Lee (1966) asserts that migration tends to take place within well-defined streams to highly specific destinations and associates the greater diversity in a region with a higher rate of migration. Meanwhile, Ravenstein (1885) links technological and industrial advancement with higher levels of in-migration by claiming that the provinces of a country within which migration is proceeding most actively, will be the great centers of human industry, or in a part of the country whose resources have only recently become available. Ravenstein (1889) also stresses that migration means life and progress and equates a sedentary population to stagnation. Likewise, the Harris-Todaro model also draws attention to how factors such as industrial and productivity growth, and better wages increases the size and rate of labour migration to an area (Todaro, 1969)

On the flip side, factors at the origin such as bad or oppressive laws, heavy taxation, an unattractive climate, and uncongenial social surroundings, are also mentioned by Ravenstein (1885) as causes for migration. However, Ravenstein (1885, 1889) also emphasises that none of these currents of migration can compare in volume to the inherent human desire to better themselves in material respects.

Counter currents or counter streams of migration

Ravenstein's (1885, 1889) papers point to how when the inhabitants of the country immediately surrounding the area of rapid growth flock into it, the gaps left in the rural population are filled up by migrants from more remote districts, and this influence continues. This observation is cemented by the claim that each main current of migration produces a compensating counter current. Over-population in one part of the country, while undeveloped resources which hold out greater promise for remunerative labour, exist elsewhere, causes this migration flow. (Ravenstein, 1885). E.S. Lee (1966) complements this theory by claiming that for every major migration stream, a counter stream develops. Migrants become aware of opportunities at the origin which were not previously exploited, or they may use their contacts in the new area to set up businesses in the old. Or else, they may stay long enough to make enough money to be comfortable at the origin (Lee, 1966). Meanwhile, Todaro (1969) provides examples of counter currents including the reversal in migration from urban to rural areas during the great depression as a higher probability of securing employment opportunities existed in rural areas compared to the depressed urban factories during this time of economic downturn.

2.2.2 b) Intervening Obstacles

Lee's (1966) theory of migration states that the intervening obstacles such as distance, physical barriers, and immigration laws are major factors that affect migration decision-making. Additionally, the efficiency of migration streams is considered high if the intervening obstacles are great. Meanwhile, fewer intervening obstacles causes reduced efficiency and negative selection of migrants as more people are free to move and attempt to migrate (Lee, 1966). Lee (1966) therefore theorizes that unless severe checks are imposed, both the volume and rate of

migration will increase with time. The Historical-Structural Model based on the world-system theory also alludes to how rapid advancements in global transportation, and communication, as well as the immigration policies of receiver governments have stimulated the movement of a large number of people seeking livelihoods in the post-industrial economies of the north and west (Morawska, 2012).

2.2.2 c) Personal Factors

Lee's (1966) hypothesis states that personal sensitivities, intelligence, and awareness of conditions elsewhere are accounted for, in the evaluation of the origin, meanwhile, the destination evaluation is influenced based on personal contacts and sources of information that are not universally available. Lee (1966) also comments that the personalities which are resistant to change and the personalities that are welcome to change are factors that influence migration decisions. In addition, the cumulative causation model places emphasis on the influence of various personal factors, and interpersonal ties and networks that link migrants in the origin and destination areas, in the migration decision making (Massey, 1990). Radu and Straubhaar (2012) refers to migrants as a self-selected group rather than a random sub sample of the population of the country of origin, because migration is a result of their own rational decision to move after evaluating their specific circumstances at the origin and perceived opportunities at the destination.

Meanwhile, Lee's (1966) theory distinguishes positive selection and negative selection of migrants with positive selection equated with a higher quality of migrants. Migrants responding primarily to plus factors at their destination are considered positively selected, as they have no necessity to migrate, but they choose to do so for the perceived opportunities at the destination.

Meanwhile, migrants responding primarily to minus factors at origin are considered negatively selected. Therefore, taking all migrants together, selection tends to be bimodal - including both positively and negatively selected migrants (Lee, 1966).

This theoretical framework mainly combines the existing push and pull theories of migration and enables the complex and varied factors that influence the migration decisions to be categorized and analyzed further. The subsequent chapters will present the findings and observations related to Kerala's current experience with migration, and they will be assessed against this theoretical framework with the aim to attain a clear outlook on some of the specific influences behind this wave of migration and the potential implications for Kerala.

Chapter 3: Findings

3.1 Unemployment trends in Kerala

The National Institution for Transforming India (NITI Aayog) a policy think tank of the Government of India, which replaces the Planning Commission of India has developed a Sustainable Development Goals Index for the States and Union Territories of India. The composite score for each State/Union Territory in this index, computed by aggregating their performance across the goals revealed Kerala as the top performer among all Indian States with a score of 75 on 100. Compared to the other states of India, Kerala continues to rank the highest in eliminating hunger, reducing poverty, offering quality education, advancing climate action, and providing affordable and clean energy. However, despite these impressive achievements, Kerala continues to rank low in sustaining Decent Work and Economic Growth, and in promoting Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure development (*SDG India Index and Dashboard, 2020*)



Figure 3.1.1: Kerala's lowest performing Sustainable Development Goals:

SDG 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure

SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

SDG 5: Gender Equality

(See Appendix 4 for the detailed information on Kerala's SDG performance)

Source: SDG India Index and Dashboard, 2020

The unemployment rate in Kerala has been following an upward trend and ranged around 10 percent during the 2019-2020 period, which was significantly higher than the national rate of 4.9 percent during this time. Educated unemployment (secondary and above) for people above the age of 15 in Kerala was 16.7 percent, which is also much higher than the Indian average of 10.1 percent. The unemployment rate amongst Kerala's youth aged 15 to 29 is even more striking at 36.9 percent in rural areas and 33.9 percent in urban areas. Female youth face a higher rate of unemployment in Kerala at 58.3 percent. The live register of employment exchanges in Kerala shows the total number of job seekers as of August 31, 2021, to be 3.83 million. (Kerala State Planning Board, 2022).

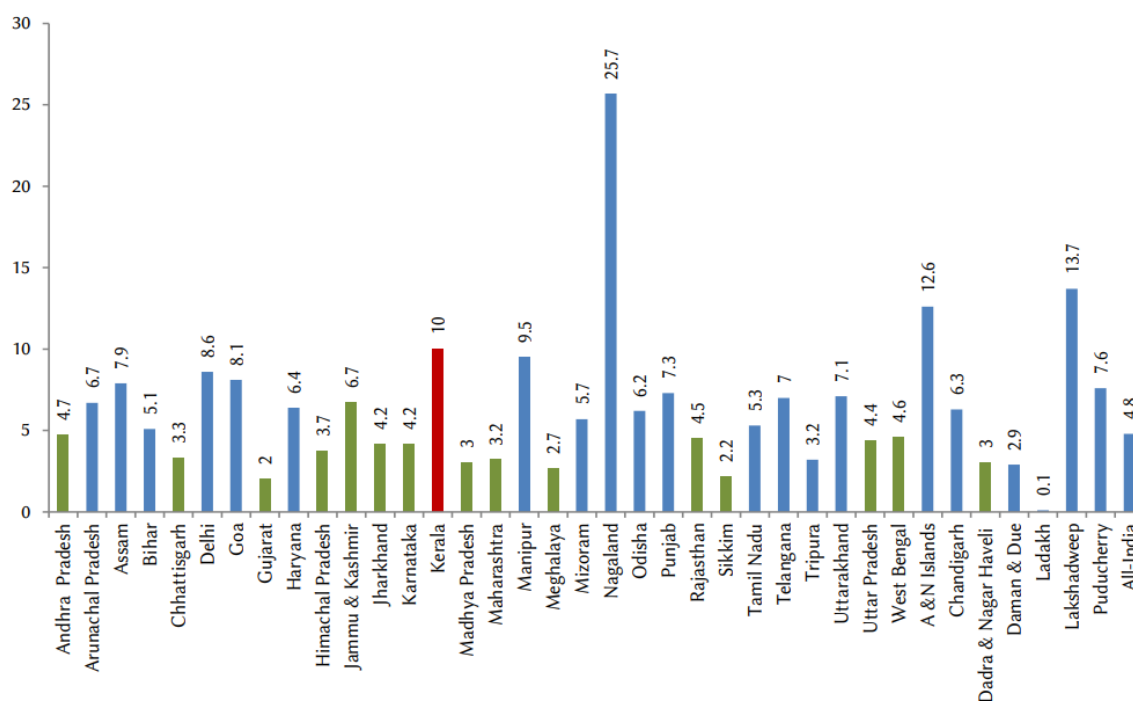


Figure 3.1.2: Kerala unemployment rate (15 yrs and above) compared to rest of India, 2019-20

Source: Economic Review 2021, Kerala State Planning Board.



Figure 3.1.3: Kerala's Youth (15 to 29 yrs) Unemployment compared to the Indian Average

Source: Economic Review 2021, Kerala State Planning Board.

3.2 Migration Trends from Kerala

Linked with the findings regarding unemployment, Kerala has faced high overall rates of outward migration of its people in search of employment opportunities. The most recent Kerala Migration Survey from 2018, estimates that 2.1 million out of the 34.5 million people of Kerala, (6.1 percent of the population in 2018) are migrants working abroad. Gulf countries received 89 percent of total migrants from Kerala in 2018, a decline from the 1998 share of 94 percent. Meanwhile, the share of Keralite migrants in US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, UK, and the rest of Europe, increased from 2 percent in 1998 to 6 percent in 2018 (Rajan & Zachariah, 2019).

Due to several reasons including the stigma toward unskilled work in their homeland, many people from Kerala have migrated to the Gulf countries for unskilled work which offers higher wages. This left behind a greater supply of unskilled jobs in Kerala paying higher wages

compared to the rest of India, which is now taken up by migrants or guest workers from other parts of India. As of 2017-2018, there were around 3.1 million migrants from other parts of India working in Kerala predominantly employed in construction and manufacturing jobs (Kerala State Planning Board, 2022). Interestingly, this number is greater than the estimated 2.1 million migrants from Kerala working abroad as per the 2018 Kerala Migration Survey (Rajan & Zachariah, 2019). It is also estimated that around 98,000 dependent children of migrant workers live in Kerala, and most of them are also attending school in the state (Parida, 2021).

Gulf Migration and Remittances

Gulf migrants contribute abundantly to Kerala and propagated an inflow of remittance income to the state which led to poverty reduction, a decrease in the unemployment rate, increases in health care facilities, and improvements in education and demographic indicators (Afsal & Reshmi, 2020). Twenty years of migration data collected by the Kerala Migration Surveys indicate that the level of remittances has been increasing in Kerala over the years, although at a declining rate. A major portion of remittances have been used for living expenses, another substantial portion held as cash or savings, or was used to pay back debt. Smaller portions were allocated for children's education, to repair or purchase homes, or to purchase gold or land.

	Sample	Per cent	Rs (in Crores)
Day-to-day HH expenses	169411319	37.6	11560
Children's Education	34478571	7.7	2353
Pay back debt	55952055	12.4	3818
Purchase house	11355004	2.5	775
Repair of House	26070440	5.8	1779
Purchase/improve land	10928900	2.4	746
Start new business	2243000	0.5	153
Donation to temple/church etc	4782560	1.1	326
Purchase gold	19566058	4.3	1335
Cash in hand/Bank	86310973	19.2	5890
Others	29060470	6.5	1983
Total	450159350	100.0	30717

Figure 3.2.1: Use of Remittances by Households – Based on a sample survey

Note: Right-most column represents the total estimate of remittances received by Kerala's households in 2018.

Source: Kerala Migration Survey 2018. (Rajan & Zachariah, 2019)

The migration survey data also confirm that more consumer durables such as cars, mobile phones, televisions, washing machines, and air conditioners are owned by non-resident Keralite households. The findings also indicate a direct connection between the number of non-residents and their housing type as the wellness or luxuriousness of housing in Kerala grows as the number of migrants increases (Rajan & Zachariah, 2019). Meanwhile, Census data from 2011 estimates that 10.6 percent of the houses in Kerala alarmingly remain vacant, mostly owned by non-residents of the state (Kerala State Planning Board, 2022), and awaiting the eventual return of the migrant owners.

Return Migration from Gulf Countries

Gulf migrants usually return home to Kerala for retirement, or at the end of their work term due to the lack of permanent residency options for the non-local population in the Gulf countries. In recent years, the migration from Kerala to the Gulf countries has been undergoing a noticeable decline and return migration back to Kerala has been on the rise. The Kerala Migration Survey from 2018 reports that around 60 percent of total number of emigrants returned to Kerala. This is primarily due to changing social and economic conditions including nationalization policies in the Gulf countries, expiry of contracts, compulsory repatriation, low wages, non-payment of salary, harsh behaviour of employers, health problems of employees, problems at home, and other unfavourable working conditions (Afsal & Reshmi, 2020, Rajan & Zachariah, 2019).

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

Figure 3.2.1: Number of Return Emigrants (REM) to Kerala and Percent Change

Source: Kerala Migration Survey 2018. (Rajan & Zachariah, 2019)

After returning to Kerala, many cope with economic challenges such as low wages, unemployment, and lack of opportunities to utilize their skills and savings accumulated from abroad. Meanwhile, the government of Kerala does not have enough reintegration programmes

to efficiently reintegrate return migrants back into the workforce and is not prepared to accommodate all the return migrants. Additionally, household consumption for which had improved due to remittances is now forced to be cut down as more migrants return home (Afsal & Reshmi, 2020). The recklessness of Kerala's reliance on remittance income is also becoming evident as the growth of incoming household remittances is diminishing. Total remittances which account for a significant share of the Net State Domestic Product, is also growing at a declining rate. (Rajan & Zachariah, 2019).

Years	Remittances (crores)	Percent Increase
1998	3,530	—
2003	7,965	125.6
2008	12,511	57.1
2011	15,129	20.9
2013	24,374	61.1
2018	30,717	26.0

Figure 3.2.2: Trend in Household Remittances to Kerala (in Rupees Crores)

Note: This is an estimate of remittances sent by emigrants to be used for household consumption in Kerala. This estimate only accounts for a fraction of the total remittances received by the state (estimate of the total remittances received by Kerala is presented in Figure 3.2.3)

Source: Kerala Migration Survey 2018. (Rajan & Zachariah, 2019)

Indicators	1998	2003	2008	2011	2014	2018
Remittances	13652	18465	43288	49695	71142	85092
NSDP	53552	83783	140889	159144	196077	440515
Remittances as percent of NSDP	25.5	22.0	30.7	31.2	36.3	19.3

Figure 3.2.3: Remittances as a share of Kerala's Net State Domestic Product (Rupees Crores)

Note: This accounts for the estimate of the total level of remittances received by the state.

Source: Kerala Migration Survey 2018. (Rajan & Zachariah, 2019)

Kerala's first experience with a mass return migration from the Gulf countries was during the Gulf War during 1990 and 1991. The financial crisis in 2008 also unexpectedly brought many migrants back to Kerala and caused a decline in remittance income. Although these sudden declines caused worry in Kerala, they rebounded and continued to grow after the calamities, as much of the impact was limited as it originated in specific Gulf countries (Balan, 2020). Additionally, India's adoption of a more liberal economic model helped improve economic growth in most of India after the crisis in the early 1990s. However, the current level of increased return migration, and reduction in overall migration to Gulf countries due to the various social and economic reasons, and COVID-19 led lay offs, are more concerning as further employment lay offs, and declines in remittance income can be expected. (Balan 2020, Young 2020, Rajan & Zachariah, 2019).

The Current Wave of Student Migration

Consistent with the decline in the number of migrants in the Gulf countries, an increase in the number of migrants residing in the US, Canada, UK, Australia, and New Zealand is also now evident from the Kerala Migration Surveys. The 2018 data indicates that approximately 30 percent of total migrants from Kerala have a post-secondary degree or above. Additionally, over the years, the number of student migrants from Kerala has been steadily increasing, while the number of job-seeking outmigrants is declining, confirming a shift in the overall migration trends from Kerala (Rajan & Zachariah, 2015).

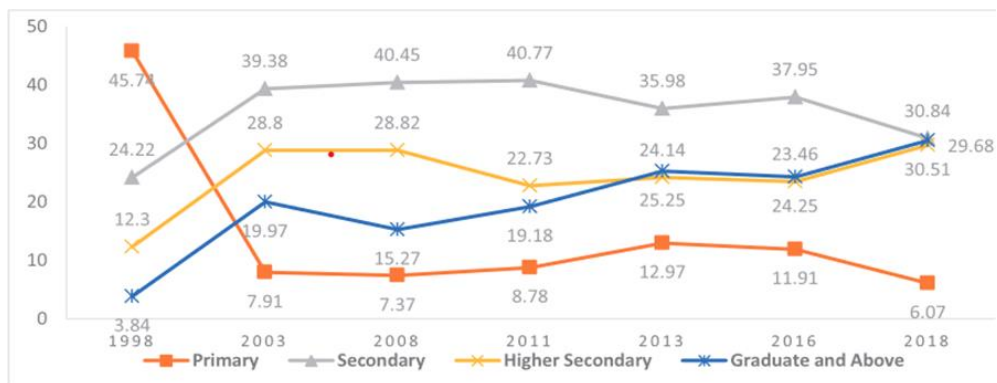


Figure 3.2.4: Changes in Educational Status of Emigrants from Kerala (1998-2018)

Source: Remittances, Investment and New Emigration Trends in Kerala. (Sunny et al., 2020).

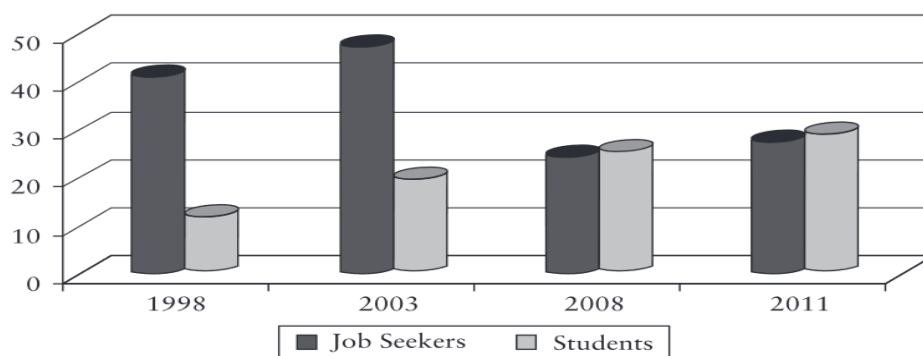


Figure 3.2.5: Students and Job Seekers among Out Migrants from Kerala (1998-2011)

Source: Researching International Migration (Rajan & Zachariah, 2015)

Large numbers of students from Kerala are now opting to pursue post-secondary education in countries of the global north that offer the possibility of permanent residency or citizenship (Joseph, 2022, Sunny et al., 2020). Canada, New Zealand, Australia, Ireland, UK, USA, Sweden, Germany, France, and the Netherlands are the most favoured destinations for most students from Kerala. Within these countries, the ones providing efficient pathways to

permanent residency, post graduate work permits, and cost-efficient programs are preferred more (Timothy, 2019).

Meanwhile, a quick online search finds more than 80 Study Abroad consultancies located across the state, with a vast number of them beginning their operations within the past 10 years. These organizations provide a variety of services to make the migration experience of students as smooth as possible. These include support for applying for admissions, preparing for language tests, applying for study permits and visas, renting accommodations abroad, and even securing part-time employment, while studying abroad (Appendix 5). Additionally, banks are providing new educational loans for aspiring student migrants, and they are confident to do so with the high repayment rates of education loans in the state (Edex Live, 2022). Moreover, the Indian community, as well as student peers who have already settled in the preferred destinations become a crucial resource and a valuable network for aspiring migrants (Deuchar, 2021).

Furthermore, student migration has become easier for Keralites in recent years as more colleges and universities in the countries of the global north have increased their intake of international students. For instance, Canada offers specific fast-tracked student permit processing for students from India, China, Brazil, the Philippines, and a few other countries (Immigration, 2018). In 2022, the UK witnessed a 215 percent increase in the number of student visas granted to people of Indian nationality (Immigration Statistics, 2022). While India and China make up the biggest share of total international students in the US, the flow of Indian students to the US increased by 12 percent while the Chinese Students inflow decreased in 2021 (SEVIS, 2021). Additionally, the increasing hours of work permitted for international students, and the post-graduate work permits advertised by governments of global north countries such as Australia, New Zealand, and Canada attract more young working age population from across the world

(Commission, n.d., Staying to Work after Study, n.d., Immigration, 2022). International students are also considered a source of employment in the post-COVID economy as many of the countries in the global north have ageing populations, and are experiencing labour shortages in retail and services industries, which becomes an avenue for international students to find part-time jobs (Haidar, 2022, Germany and India Sign Migration Agreement, 2022). Previously, Healthcare and Information Technology industries were considered the predominant avenue of employment for migrants from Kerala. However, in the current economic context, more opportunities are opening for immigrants as many people are leaving the workforce as retirees in the global north (Chaudhury, 2022).

3.3 Student Migration as a Public Concern:

As more of the young population is leaving Kerala to various destinations abroad, news, media and major public figures have started raising concerns regarding the phenomenon. As per Manorama Online, one of the main newspaper companies in Kerala, the Central Government has reported in parliament that 30,948 Keralites went abroad for studies in 2019, which is far higher than the number in 2016 which was 18,428. They also state that this number is expected to reach 100,000 within five years as per indicators. Meanwhile, the number of students who completed secondary education in Kerala in the 2020-21 academic year totalled to be 4,232,028. While the migration of students from India is increasing by about 40 percent every year, Kerala's numbers are more alarming as it takes the lead in the number of students in proportion to the population, who are expected to leave (Thummarukudy, 2022).

A quick look into the main page for discussions concerning Kerala on the popular online social discussion platform Reddit, reveals hundreds of posts on student and youth migration from Kerala. People are obtaining feedback, sharing personal experiences and views, and engaging in

debate regarding the topic without revealing their personal identities here (R/Kerala, 2022). At the same time, YouTube, one of the most popular mediums for sharing information on the internet at present, hosts thousands of videos regarding migration experiences and migration pathways that are even specific to aspiring Keralites.

In a street interview conducted by a YouTuber: Elated Vlogs in late 2022 at a high-end residential and commercial neighbourhood in Kerala called Pannampilly Nagar, numerous people including senior residents, but mostly young people were asked for their thoughts regarding the increased number of young people leaving Kerala and moving abroad to countries offering permanent residency. Interestingly, many of the people interviewed were also aspiring migrants aiming to leave Kerala as they found no future here. Low salaries, low opportunities after studying hard and earning a degree in Kerala, low quality of life, lack of respect for the rule of law, and prevalence of rote learning in the education system, were the main concerns discussed in support of this migration trend from Kerala. Some of the interviewed people also stated that a better quality of life, with better social security, higher salary, and more job opportunities available abroad is triggering the move. Almost all the people interviewed stressed low salaries in Kerala as the main issue at hand. A few mentioned that the outflow of migrants can only reduce if salaries, job opportunities, and the educational system improve within Kerala, or if its governing system becomes more accountable and work toward maintaining the foundations it was built on. Meanwhile, some of the people interviewed were aware of the higher living expenses and high tax rates abroad, and the comparatively higher levels of inclusiveness Kerala has in comparison to the rest of India, and yet endorsed migration due to the better quality of life perceived abroad in comparison to Kerala. Additionally, concerns about Kerala losing its young

population and becoming home to an ageing, retired population were implied by some of the respondents (Elated Vlogs, 2022).

The percentage share of elderly persons in Kerala is increasing and it is projected to reach 20.9 percent of the population by 2031, which is much larger than the national projection of 13.1 percent. The prediction for the old age dependency ratio for Kerala is also much higher at 34.3 percent compared to the national rate predicted at 20.1 percent (Kerala State Planning Board, 2022).

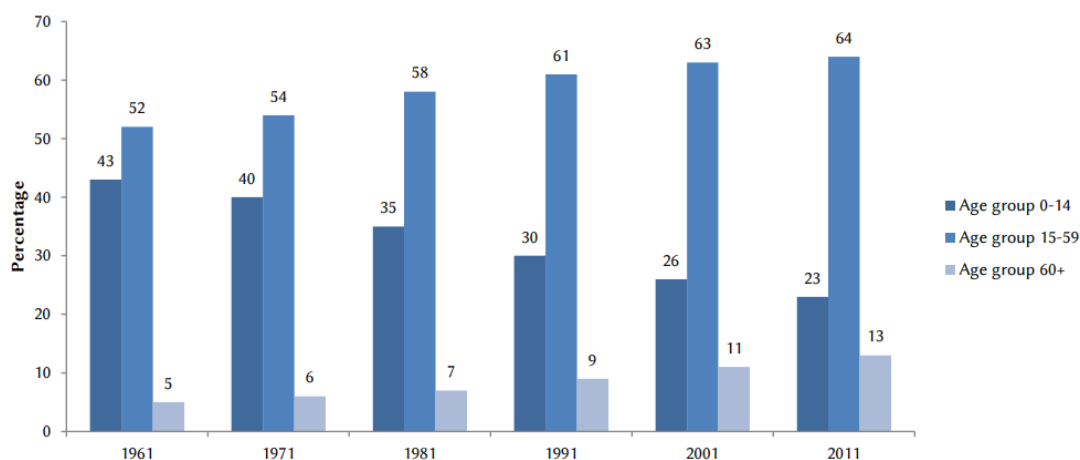


Figure 3.3.1: Age Group Distribution of Kerala 1961-2011, in percent

Source: 2021 Economic Review, (Kerala State Planning Board, 2022).

Aligned with these predictions, the Central Kerala region has already become an area filled with vacant homes, luxurious mansions, and old parents left behind by the working-age population who have mostly moved abroad to European countries for a better standard of living and security (OnManorama, 2021).

Kerala's renowned traveller, educational publisher, TV broadcaster, and a member of the state's planning board, Santhosh George Kulangara comments on this issue by stressing that the

young population who shift their migration paths to countries such as the US, UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, etc., have no incentive to return to Kerala, as opposed to the Gulf migrants, and their future generations born abroad will have even less of a reason to return to Kerala. He also comments on the future of Kerala with a large number of luxurious vacant homes and mentions that it is either time to stop building or to provide the young generation with a home in Kerala, where they see a future, can be content with, and be empowered to dream and prosper in. (The Tranquil, 2022).

V.D. Satheeshan, who is a Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) in Kerala addressed this issue in Government in August 2022 by drawing attention to the growing number of students leaving the state regardless of their financial ability by taking on massive amounts of student loans to study abroad. He condemns the poor and diminishing state of Kerala's educational institutions, lack of fruitful research, and over-politicization of these institutions as reasons for the youth's preference to migrate rather than to stay in Kerala (MediaoneTV Live, 2022). Similarly, MLA Mathew Kuzhalnadan also raised concerns about student migration in a government sitting and emphasised on the limited employment opportunities and low salaries available in Kerala as crucial factors causing the youth to leave a liberal democracy such as Kerala in search of a comfortable life elsewhere, (The Tranquil, 2022). These politicians' concerns are also echoed by prominent News channels and online newspapers in the state, highlighting how thousands of students are taking up loans to study abroad, intending to eventually settle down at their preferred destinations in the global north (Marunadan Malayali, 2022, Edex Live, 2022).

Chapter 4: Discussion

Considering the current findings regarding unemployment and migration trends, the theoretical framework using the push and pull factors of migration can be applied to test if the fundamental reasons behind the observed migration trends from Kerala can be explained. The following sections will therefore discuss the factors concerning the origin and destination, intervening obstacles, and personal factors influencing migration of students from the context of Kerala and identify the related social and economic implications that emerge.

4.1 Factors concerning the Origin and Destination

4.1.1 Drivers of Migration from the Origin

Aspiring student migrants from Kerala tend to have a balance in favour of the move due to many reasons. Despite many of the aspiring migrants having liveable conditions in Kerala, factors already reviewed by scholars including high levels of educated unemployment, lack of educational excellence, lack of government support for entrepreneurial and industrial growth, a history of migration within the state, and even within their families, an “idealization of movement” popular amongst the young population, awareness of the lack of opportunities they have in Kerala when compared to parts of the developed world, etc. fundamentally influence migration decisions at the origin.

Aligned with the perspectives presented in the Harris and Todaro model of migration (1970), and the findings presented in the previous chapter show economic betterment to be a crucial reason for migration from Kerala. Low salaries, and high unemployment especially for the youth are integral push factors at the origin.

However, in addition to these factors, the youthful age of the aspirant migrants, information sources such as news reports, online discussion forums, social media platforms, and peers act as complimentary influences in migration decision-making from the origin. As theorized by Radu and Straubhaar (2012), influences other than purely economic ones also play important roles in migration decision making and cannot be overlooked when analyzing the reasons triggering migration from Kerala. The ability to learn about better opportunities abroad, and to discuss their thoughts and concerns on migration among peers and experts across the globe, is possible due to the advancements in communications over the internet. Additionally, having peer networks, both online and in person, with common aspirations to migrate for a better life, often pushes the individuals involved to be influenced by the popular viewpoint within the group and lean toward migrating away from Kerala. Likewise, the successful experiences of peers who have already migrated abroad and have secured jobs after graduation become a trigger in favour of migration within the context of a highly competitive job market in Kerala, and the rest of India.

Meanwhile, Lee's (1966) hypothesis suggests that there exists a heightened propensity to migrate at certain stages of the life cycle, and to some degree, migration becomes a part of the rites of passage for many. This is especially true in the context of Kerala as an increasing number of students, are choosing migration abroad as the obvious course of action, after the completion of their initial post-secondary program, or even high school education. This trend is augmented especially due to the rhetoric of there being no hope left in Kerala, circulated amongst the public primarily due to high levels of educated unemployment and the visible political inefficiencies in the state (Marunadan Malayali, 2022). Additionally, it is easier for young people who are still in

their student phase, and yet to be tied down and settled into their family lives to take the risk and migrate despite not having firsthand experience with their chosen destination.

4.1.2 Perception of the Destination

Aspiring migrants rely on the perceived information about their destination, sourced from close family or peers who have had direct experience at the destination. Additionally, as mentioned in the previous section, the internet would have also played a role in solidifying reasons to migrate to a particular destination. Better or opposite conditions to the negative factors at the origin that trigger the move are often the factors at the destination that pulls in the migrants. For instance, in contrast to the unemployment in Kerala, job opportunities perceived at the destination in the global north become a factor that supports migration.

However, once the migrants reach their destinations and experience life abroad, their initial evaluations can change with hindsight. For instance, aligned with Lee's (1966) observations, after harboring positive expectations before the move, when difficulties arise in assimilating into their new destination, migrants may proceed to overvalue these negative experiences at the destination.

Having to deal with a higher cost of living, with limited purchasing power, compared to Kerala, and having to work low-skilled part-time jobs while studying to keep up with their expenses, often cause hardships for new student migrants (Sancho, 2017, Burns 2020). These student migrants usually have no experience working in these types of jobs at their origin, as there is a social stigma associated with educated people working in low-skilled jobs in Kerala. These experiences paired with the memories of an easier life with the support of family and friends in Kerala can cause an overvaluation of the positive experiences at the origin area in

retrospect. This could also trigger a reevaluation of migration decisions and even cause the migrants to be in favour of a return migration partly due to nostalgia, and partly due to the overvaluation of factors concerning the origin. However, due to the heavy initial investments made by the student migrants to reach their destination through fees and high international student tuition, and large student debt weighing on many of them, the prospect of a return migration is often off-limits until they have attained solid financial capital to do so.

Implications for Kerala: Erroneous poor valuations of the state in comparison to the destinations could increase the migratory tendencies of the youth

The imbalance of exposure aspirant migrants has on the origin and the destination could cause erroneous migration decisions to take place. This might seem less likely due to the availability of information on the destinations through means like YouTube on the internet. The credibility of the information provided, however, cannot always be confirmed due to the monetary motivations individual information providers have on the internet. Likewise, the personal bias of previous migrants, sugar coating of experiences in the global north, marketing schemes of migration consultancies, corrupt sources, etc. can influence the information that is obtained from secondary sources instead of one's own experience. Enabling aspirant migrants to gain a true picture of their destination and the potential hardships or advantages associated with it is also important for Kerala's government if they want to attempt to attract the young population who are better fit for Kerala to stay at home and contribute to its growth.

4.1.3 Migration flows toward progress

The theoretical framework implies that streams or currents of migration flows toward areas of progress, greater diversity, technological advancement, and industrial growth. These

claims when placed within the context of Kerala allow for a better outlook of the migration flows from the state. The popular migration route to the Gulf countries and the current trend of migration of students to the countries of the global north are excellent examples of how opportunities through commerce and industries attract the migrants from Kerala who do not have the same access to these factors at home. Additionally, compared to Kerala, the destinations of the student migrants are mostly high-income countries in the global north with stable governments, institutions, and well-developed financial markets, which imply a better standard of living. Additionally, the destination regions in the global north chosen by the students from Kerala are often cities or towns with universities and colleges that welcome a sizable number of diverse migrants as international students and offer resources and support for adaptation. This in turn increases the attractiveness of these regions to more potential migrants. These are fundamental “pull” factors that cause movement from one region to another that seem more attractive in terms of opportunities for advancement.

Kerala, despite its shortcomings of high unemployment rates, government inefficiencies, and low rates of industrial growth, is not a failed state by any means. Kerala is still a democracy, offers a liveable tropical climate, and has an inclusive society with various religious groups residing together relatively harmoniously. Nevertheless, despite these factors and Kerala’s prominent levels of human development, student migration from the state is increasing, in agreement with Ravenstein’s theory, as a means for the youth to mainly better themselves with the opportunities and stability provided by the well-developed economies of the global north.

Implications for Kerala: Aspirant migrants' poor outlook on Kerala could cause exponential losses for the state.

It can be inferred that as per the evaluations of the aspiring migrants, their homeland Kerala, ranks poorly in its ability to provide them with the opportunities to lead a better life as opposed to distant lands in the global north. As these destinations offer the possibility of permanent residency, student migrants from Kerala are more likely to eventually invest in houses, and businesses and spend their earnings here, in addition to the large sums paid initially as international tuition fees. As a result, Kerala loses out on potential investments these migrants could have made within the state. Additionally, the ability of these migrants to permanently settle down in the countries of the global north with a higher cost of living, as opposed to the temporary residence in the Gulf countries, also considerably reduces the expected remittance flow to Kerala.

4.1.4 Counter Flows of Migration

Confirming Ravenstein's hypothesis regarding gaps left behind by migrants being filled by a counter stream or counter current of migrants from surrounding areas, migrant workers from other parts of India are moving to Kerala for unskilled work mostly involving manual labour which is left behind by the locals. As Kerala's young population continues to migrate out of the state, employment opportunities will likely increase and draw more migrants from other regions of India to Kerala.

Implications for Kerala: The possible patterns of countercurrents/streams migration to Kerala

When taking the wave of student migrants leaving Kerala with the goal of permanently settling abroad into perspective, it is plausible to forecast that the offspring of the guest workers who are educated in Kerala from a young age could move into more skilled forms of employment in the future, filling the void left behind by the local youth, and eventually becoming a more established population in the region.

Additionally, it is also possible for opportunities previously overlooked by the student migrants from Kerala to draw them back to Kerala as a counter stream of migration. Lee (1966) hypothesises that the volume of migration varies with fluctuations in the economy. Business opportunities can distinguish the positive or negative factors at the origin and destination with clarity. During times of economic downturn, a leveling of opportunities occurs, and sheer familiarity with the place of residence, which constitutes an element of safety, militates against moving to places where positive factors no longer so heavily outweigh those at home (Lee, 1966).

Kerala is part of India, which is one of the fastest growing economies of the world. India is expected to continue to grow despite the challenging global economic environment predicted for 2023 (World Bank, 2022). The exposure to international settings, education, and skills, as well as financial capital, which could be obtained abroad in the long run by the current student migrants could enable them to find and act on opportunities in their homeland in the near future that are worth investing into. Additionally, the looming economic uncertainty and anticipation of a recession in 2023 in much of the global north could also play a role in limiting the migration of students from Kerala (DW News, 2022). Also, because of an impending period of stagnant

economic growth, the status of the people who have already made the move to a destination in the global north with aspirations of permanent residency can change. Massive layoffs and resulting uncertainty in maintaining the status of a temporary resident permit holder, and the inability to keep up with expenses at the destination during a period of economic downturn can trigger reasons for reverse migration back to Kerala. Aligned with Lee's (1966) observations, the efficiency or rapidness of the stream and counter-stream migration therefore could reduce when the origin and destination seem more similar in terms of attractive opportunities.

4.2 Intervening Obstacles and Migration Decision Making

Lee's migration theory highlights the impacts intervening obstacles have in migration decision making. While distance is a crucial obstacle for many migrants, the ability to communicate instantly over the internet and the increased availability of transportation options to travel back and forth causes migration decisions to be less difficult for the new student migrants from Kerala. It is now effortless to stay connected to their family and friends at the origin while residing in their destination country. Additionally, the increased intake of students to colleges and universities in the global north countries, cross border agreements, and policies to increase migration from India to countries in the global north facing labour shortage also confirm the hypothesis that heavy migration can be expected toward developed countries that lessen intervening obstacles by improving technology and by political design (Lee 1966).

Meanwhile, the financial burden of international student fees, and the high living expenses abroad are mitigated for students from Kerala through educational loans provided by many banks in Kerala. Additionally, the abundance of study abroad agencies, and information on the internet makes the migration process accessible for more Keralites. These developments

fundamentally reduce the intervening administrative and financial migration-related obstacles facing the aspiring student migrants from Kerala.

As the obstacles are mitigated, the volume of student migrants increases, cementing Lee's theory of reduced efficiency and positive selection resulting from fewer intervening obstacles (1966). As obstacles decrease, migrants can move more freely and easily, causing more people to attempt the journey, as opposed to a situation with many intervening obstacles. Elevated levels of obstacles would filter out the aspirants, and only those who possess desirable qualities, and want to migrate would have to go through all the challenges associated with the migration process. In Kerala's case, many student migrants are now able to go through the migration process by enrolling in short diploma courses merely as a pathway to potential permanent residency abroad, as opposed to migrating abroad to study full-fledged programs that are academically valued (Sancho, 2017). This can also be considered as a negative selection of migrants as more student migrants who are not highly qualified or considered high-quality migrants can migrate due to the reduction of intervening obstacles. This theory is also attempted to be put into practice at present by the UK Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak by proposing limits on student migrants pursuing 'low quality' degrees as a measure to bring net migration levels down despite opposition from universities who rely on international student tuitions (Geiger, 2022). Therefore, as aligned with Lee's (1966) hypothesis, unless severe checks like this proposal are imposed, both the volume and rate of migration will likely increase.

Implications for Kerala: Increasing volume and rate of out migrants can cause unbalanced demographic shifts and cause further economic stagnation.

With a large number of the young population continuing to migrate abroad, an increasingly ageing population who has passed their economically productive years is left behind, and this can become a contributing factor to the economic stagnation of Kerala. Additionally, Kerala's significant number of vacant, and often luxurious homes, and continuous outmigration of youth, indicate a potential for revaluation and decline of the real estate market. While the Gulf migration, remittances, and attachment to the homeland fuelled the trend of constructing luxurious homes in Kerala, the current trends in migration leaves most of these homes vacant, waiting for the Gulf returnees, or are used by a retired, and ageing population, whose offspring has already left Kerala or are planning to do so. Moreover, as Kerala transitions demographically, the government is also faced with a requirement to provide proper care and assisted living facilities for the elderly population of Kerala.

4.3 Personal Factors and Migration Decision Making

Lee's hypothesis draws attention to the critical influence of unique personal beliefs, circumstances, and experiences on the evaluation of migration decisions and it holds true in within the context of migration decisions made by young Keralites. Often, the potential migrants who have personal contacts such as family members or friends who had previously migrated to the destination countries, could have the advantage of gaining more precise information on the conditions that await them. This makes their migration decision an educated one. Having personal contacts at the destination could also make the initial adaptation to an unfamiliar environment more streamlined for some migrants. Meanwhile, those who do not have the

advantage of personal contacts at the area of destination are more likely to have initial difficulties with settling into their new environment.

The reliance on Indian student associations and peer student migrants for support with migration decision making, and with settling down in destination countries solidifies the importance of social influences of groups in migration as highlighted by Radu and Straubhaar (2012). Furthermore, like previous trends of families of Keralite nurses moving abroad to countries like the US, the social networks maintained by the current student migrants also strengthens Massey's (1990) theory of the self-feeding nature of migration.

The increased exposure to media and entertainment from the global north also plays a role in creating a heightened, attractive, perception of the life young immigrants could expect at their destination countries in the global north. However, if these are their main avenues of knowledge on the destination countries, it is likely for their real experience with the destination countries to be different from their expectations.

Lee's (1966) theory about positive and negative selection of migrants is also illustrated in the migration trends from Kerala. There exists a range of student migrants aspiring to study at the highly reputed universities of the global north, to migrants choosing a community college for short courses which still provides them with a path to potential permanent residency in the global north. The first option is usually selected by those who already have the financial and social capital to be competitive and successful in India, even without choosing to migrate (Sancho 2017). This group is a result of positive selection as they have no necessity to migrate but choose to do so due to perceived opportunities at the destinations. Meanwhile, the latter option is usually chosen by those who do not have a competitive advantage or the skills necessary to advance in

their region of origin and choose migration as one of their only paths to success and a comfortable life (Sancho 2017). This group is negatively selected as they are mostly reacting to the negative conditions at the origin. Due to the existence of both groups of migrants leaving Kerala, Lee's (1966) description of migration selection as bimodal also remains valid within the context of Kerala as the origin.

Implications for Kerala: The bimodal selection of migrants suggests decreasing affinity to Kerala by a wide section of its population.

The migration of both positively and negatively selected individuals implies that the range of different personal influences and different social and economic backgrounds are not hindering the movement of people from Kerala for better opportunities. This also signals that the youth migration of Kerala should be of graver concern to the policymakers of the state as it encompasses people of more than just a specific background.

4.4 Interpretation of the Kerala Migration Experience based on the Theoretical Framework

The categorization of the observations regarding migration from Kerala within the theoretical framework illustrates that it is not easy to consider the decisions to migrate as always reasonable, due to the influence of varying factors that are susceptible to change over time. The review of literature on Kerala, recent news stories, and politicians are raising the alarm regarding the rapid outmigration of the youth from the state. While they highlight valid concerns, further evaluation of this topic shows that migration streams fundamentally move toward opportunity and a better standard of living, which in this case results in a movement toward countries in the global north. This investigation into the distinct factors influencing the wave of student migration

from Kerala also helped identify some implications for the future of economic and social development in Kerala. They include the significant influence held by the public's evaluations and perception of origin and destination areas, the perception of the youth on Kerala's future in comparison to the global north, the possibility of return migration to Kerala, expected higher volume of out-migration and concerning demographic shifts within Kerala, and the widespread nature of this migratory trend. While these are concerns for future investigation, more detailed implications emerging from the increased student migration from Kerala can be inferred as the trend evolves.

Additionally, using different theoretical frameworks that go beyond analyzing the push and pull factors such as this one, could add considerable value for future research. The push and pull models of migration based on the theories of E.G. Ravenstein and E.S. Lee enable categorizing the various triggers of migration from Kerala, and the discussion and analysis in this chapter primarily points out the economic reasons and triggers for migration while also touching upon the role of social influences of networks, and personal factors, on migration. Models that offer a broader perspective such as Massey's cumulative causation model of migration which focuses on the self-feeding nature of migration, signal that integrating various theories that factor in economic and social influences can provide a stronger analysis of the migration trend in Kerala. Furthermore, the current theoretical framework could also be evaluated beyond the Kerala experience through a comparative analysis on the experiences of student migration from other Indian States like Punjab which is also witnessing many its youth leaving the state to various destinations abroad.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

5.1 Summary of Findings

From Government data releases, Kerala Migration Surveys, research papers, and news stories, it is evident that the migration of students from Kerala to countries of the global north is increasing. Kerala ranks highest among the states of India in human development achievements and is renowned for its attainment of high literacy rates, healthcare provisions, and an environmentally friendly development journey. However, it has also been a region plagued with government inefficiencies, educated unemployment, and migration for job opportunities. While migration is not new for Kerala, this new increased trend of migration varies immensely from the popular route of migrants to the countries of the Persian Gulf, which enriched Kerala through remittances and supported its development over the past few decades. The destinations preferred by the current wave of migrants are countries of the global north such as Canada, UK, Australia, US, etc. which offer a possibility of eventual permanent residency or citizenship. Therefore, these migrants are less likely to return to Kerala or spend their earnings in Kerala like the Gulf migrants. As this new wave of migration continues, concerns regarding the future of Kerala are also on the rise, especially when its ageing population and stagnant economic growth are taken into perspective.

This research paper was produced to further analyse and categorize the reasons behind this movement of students from Kerala with the help of a theoretical framework, and to identify some of the resulting social and economic implications on Kerala.

Existing works of research have already identified the existing conditions within Kerala that trigger migratory inclinations among its people. These include Kerala's lack of industrial

development, and its history of governance with a communist government in power, which was not always supportive of mechanization, neo-liberal growth policies, or private enterprise.

Additionally, the strong labour movement, constant strikes, and corruption within public service played important roles in creating an environment that limits the human capital potential within the state. Researchers have also pointed to the lack of actual inclusivity in education provided in the state at present, along with the tendency of many schools to groom students to migrate abroad eventually, all function as contributory factors that are conducive to migration. Most importantly, the high levels of educated unemployment, lack of entrepreneurship, and the stigma associated with low-skilled work, along with inefficient employment generation from government action have rationalized the decision to move abroad for many Keralites.

Meanwhile, scholars have identified that changing economic conditions in the countries of the Persian Gulf, paired with their nationalization policies have changed the main migration route for people from Kerala to more developed economies of the global north.

This research paper builds on these existing findings by combining the push and pull theories of migration into a theoretical framework to further categorize and analyze the many complex and varied factors that influence the migration decisions among young Keralites and has identified some of the resulting implications for Kerala. Separating the underlying factors behind migration decisions into the factors concerning the origin and the destination, intervening obstacles, and personal factors, and contextualizing them from the perspective of aspiring student migrants from Kerala, provided a clearer outlook on some of the specific influences behind this wave of migration and its potential impacts.

The exposure aspiring migrants have to Kerala and the region of destination plays a vital role in the valuation of the migration decision. Meanwhile, it was identified that erroneous

valuations can also be made due to biases and hindsight views. Influences from peers and the heightened levels of information accessible through the internet could also affect the migration decisions of student migrants from Kerala. Currents or streams of migration to the global north from Kerala are toward industrially and technologically advanced regions offering a better standard of living. On the flip side, counter currents, or counter streams of migration to Kerala can be expected from migrants from other states of India aiming to fill the labour force, or through the reverse migration of the present stream that is leaving the state. The current reduction in intervening obstacles in student migration has tremendously influenced the increase in student migration from Kerala. However, the reduction in intervening obstacles also causes the quality of migrants to drop and enables a negative selection of migrants to make the move. In addition, personal contacts abroad, financial, and social capital, and the unique circumstance and goals each migrant prioritizes determine their migration decisions and eventually, the experience they have abroad.

From the observed reasons for student migration from Kerala, it could also be inferred that if the youth continue to harbour a poor outlook on Kerala in terms of the opportunities it could provide them, destinations of the global north will continue to be much more attractive as a place of permanent settlement and could continue to fuel this trend of migration. Additionally, this means that along with human capital flight, Kerala could lose out on potential investments, and cannot expect significant levels of remittances from the migrants who go to the countries of the global north which have high costs of living. On the other hand, Kerala could also see a wave of return migrants if potential opportunities are discovered in Kerala or due to an economic downturn negatively affecting the destination countries of the global north. Meanwhile, the decrease in the intervening obstacles faced by migrants from Kerala is making migration

accessible for more people and is threatening the increase in the proportion of the older population within Kerala as more of the youth are leaving the state. Additionally, the increase of young migrants from different educational and financial backgrounds leaving Kerala, makes it a more serious policy concern for the state.

5.2 Recommendations

From the findings of this research paper, the migration of students from Kerala to destinations abroad at an increasing level as seen in recent years is indicative of a lack of opportunities and provisions for an ideal livelihood available in Kerala, compared to the quality of life what the aspiring migrants perceive to attain from the well-developed countries of the global north. Keralites' willingness to take on large student loans to pay international student fees and other migration-related expenses to make the move further cements these findings.

Therefore, if the direction of the state's governing body is to limit the out-migration of youth, then policy must be oriented in such a way that life in Kerala is attractive and provides the young people with opportunities that enable them to see a future in settling down there permanently. Investments in a higher quality of education with increased accessibility could result in a more inclusive generation of employable skills. Additionally, the promotion of entrepreneurial skill-building courses as part of basic education could be an effective way forward for the young population to obtain skilled employment and be entrepreneurial instead of continuing the mindset of just securing a comfortable job. Education and skills-building programs aimed at the development of the stagnant, but high-potential, industries within the state can also prove to be effective solutions to mitigate educated unemployment within the state. However, for such changes to be effective, the political environment of the state will also need to

be challenged into becoming more business-friendly and supportive of enterprise and industrial growth. Furthermore, reforms aimed at raising salaries and promoting career development opportunities will be needed to curb outmigration, and to encourage the educated population to stay and contribute to the development of Kerala.

5.3 Future research

Due to the limited scope of this paper, and due to the recency and ongoing nature of the issue of increased student migration from Kerala, only the elementary of the reasons behind the migration, and potential impacts on the state could be analysed and identified. To add value, a gendered perspective, or destination-specific overview of the student migration from Kerala could be investigated. Furthermore, comparative research with other high human capital outflow regions such as Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe, the Philippines, and India's Punjab could also add value to this research and be potential avenues to assess the theoretical framework of migration and highlight the similarities and differences of each region's experience with migration.

Additionally, an evaluation of the effectiveness and results of the current policies regarding migration in both Kerala and the destination countries could be especially useful in gaining an understanding of the momentum of this wave of migration. Furthermore, additional analysis on this subject can be conducted once more recent migration data is available from a 2022 or 2023 iteration of a Kerala Migration Survey. This could provide more up-to-date and comprehensive information on the migration streams, popular destinations, the sentiments of the migrants, and how the wave of migration has already impacted the state.

Appendices

Appendix 1:

Birth Rates, Death Rates, Infant Mortality Rates, and Fertility Rates in Kerala and India

Kerala	1958	2020
Crude Birth Rate	24.58	12.77
Crude Death Rate	7.57	7.17
Infant Mortality Rate	49.31	5.13

Sources : Government of Kerala. Population & Demographics. Annual Vital Statistics - A Trend Analysis; Annual Vital Statistics Report 2020.

	Infant Mortality Rate (per 1000)		Birth Rate (per 1000)		Death Rate (per 1000)		Total Fertility Rate	
	Kerala	INDIA	Kerala	INDIA	Kerala	INDIA	Kerala	India
2004	12	58	15.2	24.1	6.1	7.5	1.7	2.9
2005	14	58	15	23.8	6.4	7.6	1.7	2.9
2006	15	57	14.9	23.5	6.7	7.5	1.7	2.8
2007	13	55	14.7	23.1	6.8	7.4	1.7	2.7
2008	12	53	14.6	22.8	6.6	7.4	1.7	2.6
2009	12	50	14.7	22.5	6.8	7.3	1.7	2.6
2010	13	47	14.8	22.1	7	7.2	1.8	2.5
2011	12	44	15.2	21.8	7	7.1	1.8	2.4
2012	12	42	14.9	21.6	6.9	7	1.8	2.4
2013	12	40	14.7	21.2	6.9	7	1.8	2.3
2014	12	39	14.8	21	6.6	6.7	1.9	2.3
2015	12	37	14.8	20.8	6.6	6.5	1.8	2.3
2016	10	34	14.3	20.4	7.6	6.4	1.8	2.3
2017	10	33	14.2	20.2	6.8	6.3	1.7	2.2
2018	7	32	13.9	20	6.9	6.2	1.7	2.2
2019	6	30	13.5	19.7	7.1	6	1.6	2.1
2020	6	28	13.2	19.5	7	6	1.5	2

Source: Reserve Bank of India, Handbook of Statistics on Indian States. 2021 – 2022

Appendix 2:

Kerala's share of national industrial output compared to its neighbouring states

Net Value Added (in Rupees 10 million) from The Annual Survey of Industries - Factory Sector							
	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
India	527766	592114	704576	836703	851949	895342	975162
Kerala	7705	7197	8734	9266	11715	13460	11975
% share	1.5	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.4	1.5	1.2
Tamil Nadu	39713.5	59143	71993.21	76955.71	91364.46	87213	87863.79
% share	7.5	10.0	10.2	9.2	10.7	9.7	9.0
Karnataka	42532.5	36700	40860.77	103164.9	53479.36	55334	56995.77
% share	8.1	6.2	5.8	12.3	6.3	6.2	5.8
Andhra Pradesh	35470.84	39210	57779.01	67052.75	23822.42	18628	28081.14
% share	6.7	6.6	8.2	8.0	2.8	2.1	2.9
Telangana	-	-	-	-	28101.8	30126.0	28831.7
% share	-	-	-	-	3.3	3.4	3.0
Maharashtra	112878	117872	149695.7	156765.6	178729.3	200516	208830.8
% share	21.4	19.9	21.2	18.7	21.0	22.4	21.4

Note: Andhra Pradesh officially split into Andhra Pradesh and Telangana in 2014

Source: Industry - Statistical Yearbook India 2018. Annual Survey of Industries, Government of India, Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation

Appendix 3:

Shares of different sectors in Gross Value Added and Employment, Kerala, and India, 2019-20

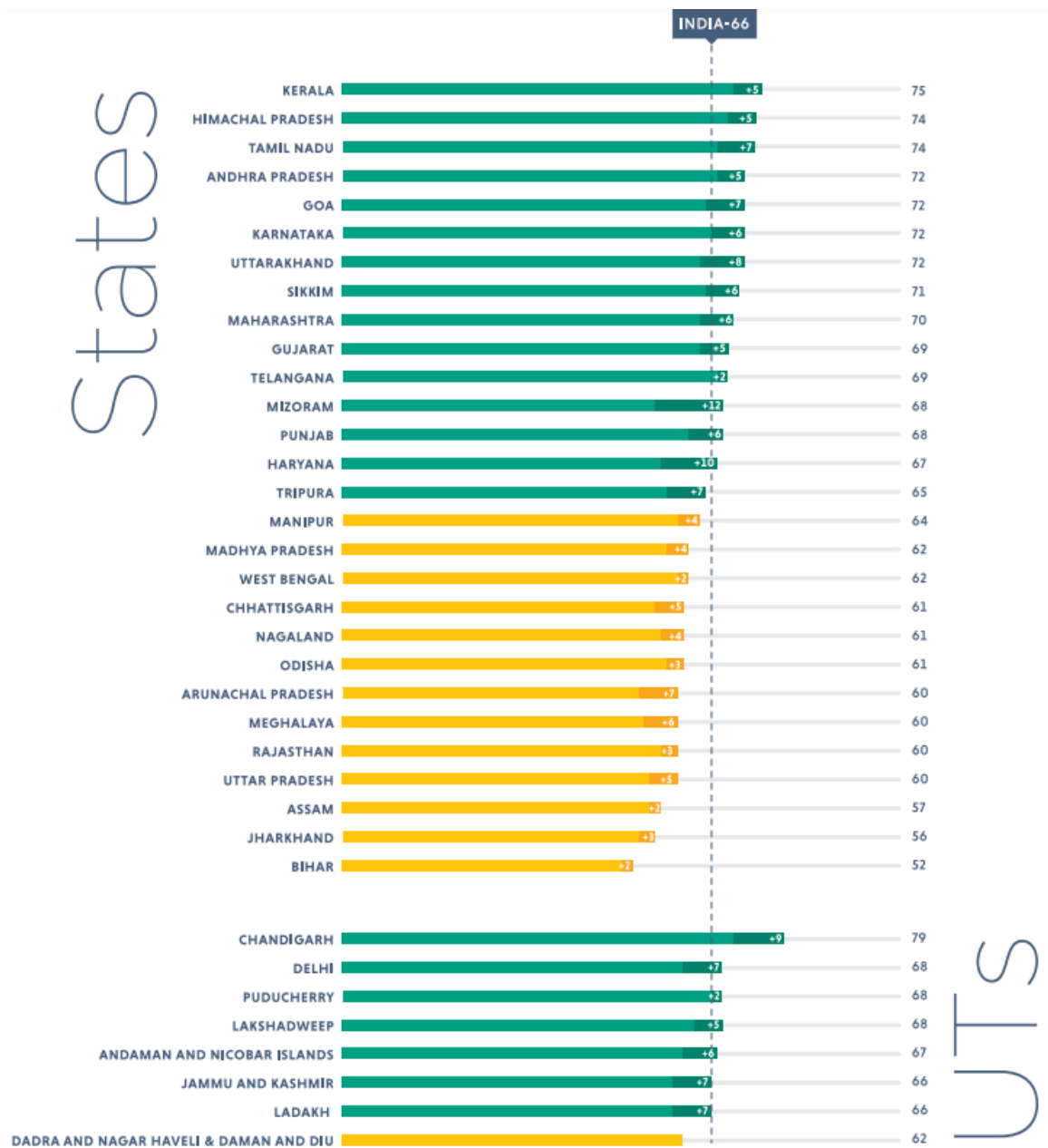
Sectors	Shares in Gross Value Added		Shares in employment	
	Kerala (GSVA)	India (GVA)	Kerala	India
Agriculture, livestock, forestry and fishing	8.4	14.83	21.89	45.56
Mining and quarrying	0.4	2.43	0.26	0.28
Primary	8.8	17.26	22.15	45.84
Manufacturing	11.1	17.10	10.59	11.15
Electricity, gas, water supply & other utility services	1.3	2.26	0.57	0.61
Construction	13.4	7.80	19.4	11.63
Secondary	25.9	27.16	30.56	23.39
Trade, repair, hotels and restaurants	18.0	15.85	18.2	13.22
Transport, storage, communication & services related to broadcasting	7.7	4.5	8.74	5.62
Financial, real estate & professional services	22.9	21.97	5.15	2.01
Public Administration and other services	16.8	13.25	15.2	9.92
Tertiary	65.3	55.57	47.29	30.77
	100.00	100.00	100.0	100.0

Source: Economic Review 2021, Kerala State Planning Board.

Appendix 4:

Sustainable Development Goals – Kerala's Performance: highest among all states

Source: SDG India Index and Dashboard | iTech Mission. (2020). NITI Ayog.



	2020	2019	Direction
Regular wage/salaried employees in non-agriculture sector without social security benefits (%)	54.40		
Households covered with a bank account against target (PMJDY)	100	100	–
Functioning branches of commercial banks per 1,00,000 population	19.60	18.95	↑
ATMs per 1,00,000 population	27.99		
Women account holders in PMJDY (%)	58.83	56.97	↑
SDG 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure			
PMGSY - Habitations connected 2020 - Cumulative progress 2019 - FY 2018-19 progress	99.50	100	
GVA in manufacturing to total GVA (current prices) (%)	10.76		
Manufacturing employment as a percentage of total employment	11.77	11.31	↑
Innovation score as per the India Innovation Index	30.58		
Score as per LEADS report	3.16		
Mobile connections per 100 persons	123.01	121.32	↑
Internet subscribers per 100 population	77.47	111.16	↓
SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities			
Population in the lowest two wealth quintiles (%)	3.20		
Elected women in the State/UT (%) (Lok Sabha elections)	5		
Seats held by women in PRIs (%)	52.42	51.85	↑
SC/ST seats in State Legislative Assembly (%)	11.43	11.43	–
LFPR - Transgender to male	0.99	0.99	–
Crimes against SCs (per 1,00,000 SC population)	28.2		
Crimes against STs (per 1,00,000 ST population)	28.9		
SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities			
Urban households living in katcha houses (%)	0.20		
Deaths due to road accidents in urban areas per 1,00,000 population	6.40		
SBM(U) - wards with 100% door to door waste collection (%)	85.46	85.46	–
SBM(U) - Individual household toilets constructed against target (%)	126	47.52	↑
SBM(U) - MSW processed to total MSW generated (%)	74.96	32	↑
SBM(U) - wards with 100% source segregation (%)	100	95.53	↑
Installed sewage treatment capacity to sewage generated (%)	4.29	6	↓
Urban households with drainage facility (%)	75.10		
SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production			
Per capita fossil fuel consumption (in kg.)	189.90		

	2020	2019	Direction
Usage of nitrogenous fertilizer out of total N,P,K (%)	40.22	43.56	↑
Hazardous waste generated per 1,000 population (Tonnes/Annum)	3.05	1.08	↓
Hazardous waste recycled/utilized to waste generated 2019 - Schedule IV hazardous waste	32.64	9	
Plastic waste generated per 1,000 population (Tonnes/Annum)	3.809		
BMW treated to total BMW generated (%)	58.67		
Grid interactive bio power per 10 lakh population (MW)	0.06	0.02	↑
SDG 13: Climate Action			
Lives lost due to extreme weather events (per 1 crore population)	136.27	36	↓
Disaster preparedness score as per Disaster Resilience Index	24.50		
Share of renewable in total energy mix (including allocated shares)	40.16	44.79	↓
CO ₂ saved from LED bulbs per 1,000 population (Tonnes)	45.64	44.47	↑
DALY rate attributable to air pollution (per 1,00,000 population)	1698		
SDG 14: Life below Water			
Mean shore zone coastal water quality - BOD(mg/l)	0.62		
Mean shore zone coastal water quality -TN (µmol/l)	21.29		
Increase in area under mangroves (%)	0	0	–
Average pH in the shore zone	8.02	7.88	
Potential area developed under aquaculture (%)	4.7	12.8	↓
SDG 15: Life on Land			
Forest cover (%)	54.42	52.30	↑
Tree cover (%)	7.56	7.62	↓
Area covered under afforestation schemes (%)	0.05		
Degraded land over total land area (%)	7.66		
Increase in area of desertification (%)	2.45	2.45	–
Wildlife crime cases 2020 - per mha of protected area 2019 - absolute number of cases	12	16	
SDG 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions			
Murders per 1,00,000 population	0.90	0.85	↓
Cognizable crimes against children per 1,00,000 population	50.90	38.10	↓
Victims of human trafficking per 10 lakh population	6.19	2.28	↓
Missing children per 1,00,000 child population	23.37		
Courts per 1,00,000 population	1.66	1.66	–
Cases under PCA and related IPC per 10 lakh population	2.61	4	↑
Births registered (%)	97.20	97.09	↑
Population covered under Aadhaar (%)	108	101.78	↑

Appendix 5:

An abundance of study abroad agencies within Kerala – google search results compiled

Study Abroad Agencies that operate in Kerala found through a quick online search	year founded/ years of experience	Website
Immiliw	2018	https://www.immilawglobal.com/about-us/who-we-are/
Avix Overseas	2012	https://avixoverseascareers.com/
Cadaut	16 years	https://www.cadaut.com/about.php
Fast Global	10+	https://fastglobalmigration.com/in/contact-us/
Croyez Immigration Service Private Limited	2016	https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/company/croyez-immigration-service-private-limited/1749997N2016PTCL11379-https://croyez
Santamonica Study Abroad Pvt. Ltd.	2002	https://santamonicaedu.in/
M&G Immigration & Study Abroad	2000	https://www.mandgworld.com/
REG Immigration	2016	https://regimmigration.com/ ; https://ca.linkedin.com/company/reg-immigration-education
Avies Australia	2006	https://aviesaustralia.com/best-australian-immigration-consultants-in-kerala/
Can Approve	1998	https://canapprove.com/
Akkam Overseas	2015	https://www.akkam.in/
Godspeed Migration	2015	https://www.godspeedvisa.com/whyus.php
Manjoo ns Education Academy	1985	https://www.manjooeducationacademy.com/
RH Study Abroad	2007	https://www.rhstudyabroad.com/
SCHOLAB OVERSEAS EDUCATION		https://scholabedu.com/
GlobalSpace Study Abroad Pvt Ltd		https://www.globalspacestudy.com/index.php
Cliffons Study Abroad	10+	https://cliffonstudyabroad.com/
Geebee Overseas Education Consultants	2001	https://www.geebeworld.com/
SureGrow Overseas Education Consultancy Pvt. Ltd		https://www.suregrow.co.in/
Abe Services - Study Abroad Consultants	2008	https://abeservices.in/
Insight International Study Abroad	2017	https://www.insightinternational.in/
Uni Ark Study Abroad	10+	http://www.uniark.in/
VideshConsultz - Best Study Abroad Consultants in Kerala	2008	https://www.videshconsultz.com/index.php
Victoria's Educational Services		https://vabroad.educationalconsultant.cochin.business.site/?utm_source=google&utm_medium=referral
GLOBAL NEX STUDY ABRQAD		
Edroots International, Kochi - Study Abroad Consultants	2007	https://www.edroots.com/
Orion Study Abroad Pvt Ltd	2017	https://www.orionstudyabroad.com/
Thirdwave Overseas Education consultant	2002	https://www.thirdwave.org.in/
Campus World	12+	https://www.campusworld.net/about-us
Rhodes Study and Tours Private Limited		https://rhodesstudyandtours.com/study-abroad-education-consultants.html
Apply Abroad Academy, Kochi - Study Abroad Consultant		https://applyabroadacademy.com/
Campus Overseas Study Abroad Consultants LLP	2005	https://www.campusoverseas.com/
Medcity International Overseas Corporation	2016	https://www.medcityoverseas.com/
Pingme Study Abroad	2017	https://www.pingmestudyabroad.com/
Matglober Study Abroad	2017	https://matglober.com/
Edabroad	15+	https://edabroad.in/
Global Reach, Kochi - Study Abroad Consultant	1991	https://www.globareach.in/
Nova Education Consultants Pvt Ltd		https://www.novaedu.in/
Guidance Plus Educational Service		https://study-abroad-consultants-in-cochin.business.site/#summary
Edwise International - Study Abroad Consultants - Cochin	1991	https://www.edwiseinternational.com/
Trillium Foundation Study Abroad		https://trilliumedugroup.com/
Eden Overseas - Education Consultancy in Kochi	2004	https://www.edenoverseas.com/
My Awesome Career - Study MBBS Abroad Consultant Kerala		https://myawesomecareer.org/
Scottia Education	10+	https://www.scottiaeducation.com/
EDU MASTERS STUDY ABROAD	2001	http://edu-masters.in/
Edmerk Study Abroad		http://edmerk.com/
aecckochi	15+	https://www.aecckochi.in/
DK Study Abroad LLP	2016	https://www.dkstudyabroad.com/
Dream Abroad Educational Consultants	2018	http://www.dreamabroad.org/index.php
Universal Study	2006	https://universalstudy.net/
Fortune Study Abroad	2006	https://www.fortunestudyabroad.com/
Quebec Study Abroad	2020	https://www.quebecstudyabroad.com/aboutus.php
Leadz Study Abroad PVT LTD	2014	https://leadz.edu.com/
International Academy	2001	https://www.internationalacademy.in/
IDP Education Kochi		https://www.idp.com/india/?utm_source=local&utm_medium=organic&utm_campaign=amb&utm_term=cta-website&utm_content=kochi
Exprenza Private Limited		https://exprenza.com/
Irish Expert - Study Abroad Consultancy Kochi		https://irishexpert.com/about-2/
Edufair Learning Solutions Pvt. Ltd		https://edufair.com/our-story.php
Euro Way Study Abroad		https://eurowaystudies.com/about-us/
Riya Study Abroad	2010	https://riyastudyabroad.com/
Global Educational Consultants		
Anfield Study Abroad	2018	http://anfieldstudy.uk/
EduMania Overseas Education Consultants	2018	http://edumania.com/
Tropous Abroad Study Consultancy		https://tropous.co.uk/
CASILDA Education Overseas Pvt Ltd		http://casilda.in/
Mount Bell Global Studies		http://mountbell.com/
Maryland Study Abroad LLP	2018	https://www.marylandstudyabroad.com/
Harvest Abroad Studies PVT LTD	2005	https://www.harvestacg.com/
ABCStudyLinks	1988	https://www.abcstudylinks.com
Affiniks Study Abroad & Immigration Pvt.Ltd.	2010	https://affinikstudyabroad.com/
Leacon International		http://www.leacon.in/
Maxmorgan Consultants		http://www.maxmorganconsultants.com/
SIEC Study Abroad Visa Consultancy	1995	https://www.siecindia.com/
Visa Valley Study Abroad & Immigration Consultants	2016	https://visavalley.com/
IEC MBBS ABROAD	2000	https://iecmbbs.com/
iChimes Study Abroad Pvt Ltd	2019	https://ichimes.com/index.php
Emigrity Study Abroad	2020	https://emigrity.com/
Derrick Jones Management - Nurse Immigration, Overseas Education Consultancy		https://derrickjones.com/
INSPIRE EDUCATION SERVICE Study Abroad & PhD consultants	2011	https://inspireeducationservice.com/
MWT	2002	https://www.mwt.co.in/about-mwt-consultancy/

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