

Indian Labour Migration to Gulf Countries and Singapore: A Comparative Study of Marginalised Diasporas

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled ***Indian Labour Migration to Gulf Countries and Singapore: A Comparative Study of Marginalised Diasporas*** submitted by **Malyashree Mandal** bearing Registration Number: **13SIPD01** in partial fulfilment of the requirements for award of Doctor of Philosophy in the **UGC Centre for the Study of Indian Diaspora, School of Social Sciences** is a bonafide work carried out by her under my supervision and guidance.

This thesis is free from Plagiarism and has not been submitted previously in part or in full to this or any other University or Institution for award of any degree or diploma.

Further, the student has the following publications before submission of the thesis for adjudication and has produced evidence for the same in the form of reprint in the relevant area of her research.

A. Research Paper published in the following publications:

1. ***Migration and Marginalisation: A Study of Labour Migrants from India to Singapore*** has been published in *International Journal of Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary Studies (IJMS)*, 2021, Vol 8, No. 1, 40-48. e-ISSN: 2348-0343.
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B. Presented papers in the following conferences:

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2. *Tracing the Struggle for Existence among the Migrated Women to the Gulf* presented in the 2nd International Conference on Global Diaspora, organised by Institute of Management, Nirma University, Ahmedabad, 10-11 January, 2015.

Further, the student has passed the following courses towards fulfilment of coursework requirement for Ph.D. following the University guidelines.

Course Code	Name	Pass/Fail
ID 801	Research Methodology (Compulsory Course)	Pass
ID802	Indian Diaspora Theory (Compulsory Course)	Pass
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DECLARATION

I, **Malyashree Mandal**, hereby declare that this thesis entitled ***Indian Labour Migration to Gulf Countries and Singapore: A Comparative Study of Marginalised Diasporas*** submitted by me under the guidance and supervision of **Dr. Ajaya Kumar Sahoo** is bonafide research work. I also declare that it has not been submitted previously in part or in full to this University or any other University or Institution for the award of any degree or diploma.

Date: 05.07.2022

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Introduction

What is Diaspora? And what is migration? These two questions are always contested with each other. For this research both the words are used simultaneously- the people who are moving away from their own countries of origins to the new destinations for new settlements, new beginning, new countries - are being identified as diaspora or diasporic people/community. This research is particularly looking at the un-skilled and semi-skilled labour migrants (both male and female) of India to the Gulf countries and the Singapore. The word 'labour' particularly for this research, it includes those people who are in the 'blue-collar' jobs as involved in construction workers, electricians, plumbers, security guards, domestic workers, nurses and others. These movements are called as 'International Migration' from the broader perspectives. Migration is one of the critically discussed genres among the historians; it started discussion from the past continuing with the present and some are related to the very recent issues. The study of migration in past societies is a way to discuss the qualities of society with its dynamic approaches in economic, political, educational progression. Migration and mobility have changed the notion and mind set of the human being and the perception of their surrounding world they live in and how the different parts of that world are getting connected with each other through the peoples' movement. Movements of people across territorial boundaries of the colonies, nations, and continents connect the different spatial regions, people and cultures and result in the meshing and moving of spatial references and boundaries in the different historical times. From the very beginning of the migration history, Indian migration to the hostland can be divided into four different sections on the basis of migration categories. First and foremost migration pattern is depending on the various trading system and religious purposes to the different countries, it was started in the ancient time. People from India used to involve in the export and import business in spice trading, clothing, exchanging of cultures, cuisines and etc. And another group of people were visiting various countries to spread their religious values. Visiting Middle Eastern countries was very famous among the people who believed in Islamic tradition. They used to visit as pilgrims. Second is Indentured Labour migration which was started during pre-colonial era for the necessity of labour in the sugarcane plantation. It also includes Kangani system of labour migration. Third is the 'Brain Drain' system or migration with

high educational qualifications to the developed countries as white-collar workers who are involved in the technological, medical, software profession. Forth is labour migration to the Gulf Countries as temporary white-collar labour migrants. In this work, both the term diaspora and migration are used inter-changeably. Due to the research destinations – Gulf countries and Singapore, it is easily differentiable between these two concepts in contexts of these two dimensional countries from the different geographical, historical, social and economic perspectives. For the Gulf countries, people who are migrating from their country of origin are not permitted to make citizenship there and they are referred to as “incipient diaspora” (Jain, 2003, p. 113) or temporary migrants and in the Singapore the migration history started in the colonial era as Malay indentured labour system and people have already made their settlements and recognised as the Indian Diaspora. Though several studies have been done in this area but this research will focus on the ‘three myths’ of migration – i) Migrant workers are richer than non-migrants of India when they return home after finishing their contract in abroad, they are treated as an earning person in dollar, and whereas the truth is after returning home they do not earn in dollar and even sometime they do not earn any money, they have to struggle a lot to find a suitable job in homeland. ii) People of their homeland think migrant workers are always doing bad behaviour with their employees and the reason behind it that they are very jealous about their money and iii) Migrant workers are dangerous for the society. But, from the economical point of view, they are not harmful rather they are precious gift for the society. The high amount of remittances sent by them to their own families to lead their livelihood that also help their homeland or the country to grow financially strong with the high rate of GDP. Whether these myths are true or not and how it works for the migrants and non-migrants are discussed in the different chapters. These migrants are moving themselves from their country to earn more money and lead a better livelihood, to see a better future among their children/next generations and other family members. The money they send to their houses for livelihood is called ‘remittances’. Remittances are private money transfer system from migrant workers to their families living in the country of origin.

I used both the primary and the secondary data along with the Qualitative and Quantitative data analysis research methods. To collect the primary data, a questionnaire (see in the appendix), interview method via face to face mode and email are used. On the other hand, for the secondary data analysis I mainly focused on the literary texts like

novels, poetry collections, short stories, historical documents, newspaper reports and archival sources from both the destinations. These secondary data analyses are new for this research on migrant's everyday experiences in an overseas multi-ethnic environment. The impact of the recent ongoing crisis of Covid-19 is discussed for these two countries and how it affected the process of migration and the lives of migrants, also the role of Government of these respective countries to protect their labour migrants. Data on the issue of Covid-19 is collected from the various webinars, Government documents and newspaper reports. At the end, both types of data are compared to conclude the research.

Citizenship is an issue for the Diasporas. In an introduction of the study on the border and the state in the *Habsburg Empire*, the editors wrote a word on warning in the respect of citizenship.

“The Crystallization of citizenship, the national border as the dominant and outstanding symbol of the territorial state, the abandoning by the state of internal passports, all these factors seem to determine as foreigners only he who crosses the national border as an emigrant. And yet, this is not a matter of linear development, since closer security reveals that in the nineteenth century the national border had no monopoly of establishing the difference between the foreign and the indigenous.” (Heindh and Saurer, 2000, p. 972)

This study will also look into the citizenship policy and regulations for the migrants and diasporic people of India. In postcolonial theory, there are two concepts: one is ‘self and other’ and the other is ‘insider and outsider’ perspectives. The migrants or diaspora become ‘outsider’ in the eyes of the people who are living in the home as ‘insider’, same conditions are applicable for the migrants irrespective of their staying period of time. The concept of “Other” (Homi K. Bhabha, 1994, p.49) is very crucial to construct the notion of colonialism when Europeans were always thought Indian as ‘Other’ to make the differences between colonisers and colonised. The same concept is applicable for the diasporic people and migrants from the ‘insider’ perspectives to signify the enormous noticeable mythical differences between these two communities. This notion of making differences helps to make ‘hybridity’, ‘hyphenated identities’, ‘multiculturalism’ and ‘multilingualism’. Here migrants are becoming marginalised, subaltern and discriminated. Migration and Diaspora have both colonial and postcolonial effects. Ironically, the citizen's “virtual” image, where the outsider is linked with the “objective” without being able to represent him/her. On the one hand, “abducted persons”, which is a legal category

and the ‘displaced persons’ is an administrative category, the introduction of these categories gave the government to represent the migration of specific groups of people across the borders as displacement, opening up the possibility of new modalities of the bureaucratic action. On the other hand, this research provides a historical framework for the history of the migration in the context of intra-Asia migration in the contemporary period. The usual way of analysing diaspora is to look at the origin of the group and assign their features based on their shared origin. Intra-Asia migration is not new phenomenon (Miller, 2009). Migration either from shorter or longer distances had changed the psychology of the millions of people who are living around the world. Till the middle of the twentieth century, there was the common distinction between the internal and the international migration meant little in the Asian context. And the history has shaped the contours and character of political, economic and social-cultural formations across the world over different historical junctures.

For this work, the hypothesis is different. The main discussion is on labour migration over long distances (Gulf countries and Singapore) which includes the large scale of migrations to the tropical plantations in the nineteenth century and the movement of the unskilled and semi-skilled labour (both male and female) in the construction, domestic work and other service industries in more recent times. All the non-English speaking immigrant women in the Colonial period were the product of Capitalist development. The “Ladies Wreath for 1842” (Irving and Martyn, 1846) described the relationship between femininity and industrial capitalism by simply calling women “the manufacturers of Society” and at the present it is going on.

For this thesis, these trans-nation migrant labours are divided into three types except domestic servants.

- I. Migrant Workers:** The term refers to a person who is migrating himself/herself to hostland to earn money for better future and after a period of time they are settling in the new destination and becoming as diaspora.
- II. Contract Migrant Workers:** These groups of migrant workers are moving themselves for earning more for the betterment of their family on the basis of a signed contract. After finishing the contract either they have to come back to their own country or they can renew the contract or they can sign for a new contract

again. Migrants from this community cannot be a diaspora. They cannot get permanent citizenship; they can stay only on the basis of contract.

III. Project-tied Workers: The term refers to a group of migrant workers who are going completely depending on a particular project. There is no option for renewing or joining in a new one as discussed in the previous category. They are bound to return to their homeland just after finishing the project. They are in other term known as ‘temporary migrants’.

Objectives of the Research

Following are the main objectives of this research:

- To examine the history of migration from India to Gulf countries and Singapore.
- To examine the reasons and factors that led them to this large scale of migration.
- To understand the discriminations in diasporic or migrated community. A critical analysis into the complexities of recent migrant flows within Asia: the discourse of political-economic authority, hierarchies of social order within migrants in origin and destinations, role of actors and agencies in determining the migrant lives.
- To make a comparative study between two countries, in order to reflect on some larger issues relating to diaspora studies and transnational migration.

Research Questions

Following are the research questions of this study:

- Why these group of people are migrating themselves from India to Gulf and Singapore.
- Why the labours are facing problems in the migration processes and in host countries regarding salary, accommodations, working hours and conditions, illegal migrations etc. even in the twenty-first century.
- Why the women are subjected to violence both in their homeland and the hostland.
- How these migrants are becoming marginalised community or subaltern diaspora.

Limitations of the Study

This study aimed to conduct the field work survey both in the Gulf countries and Singapore, but due to the lack of financial support it was not possible to do in both. Samples are taken from the various states of India as return migrants or migrants coming for their holidays or the persons planning to go and the family members of the migrants. On the other hand, respondents for Singapore were chosen for those settled or temporarily settled in Singapore and interviews were taken in various NGOs during Sunday meeting especially during the program Asian Graduate Student Fellowship 2016, from 23rd May to 15th July organised by *Asia Research Institute* at National University of Singapore. There was another limitation of this research by way of insufficient records and data made available by the authorities and respondents. Also as I have said working with secondary sources for these two destinations is completely new, so it was very difficult to find out sufficient resources regarding that. On the basis of my own understanding I have analysed the secondary data in the Chapter Five.

Structure of Research

The **First Chapter** describes the history of international migration from India. This chapter is dealing with the details and descriptive study of the history of world diasporas with the particular reference to Jews diaspora and Biblical exposure along with the history of Indian diaspora from the ancient and colonial era to modern days migration and diaspora. Any historical study represents a combined selection from the materials which are investigated to discover what lies behind the previously accepted versions of the subject. The methodology I have used in this chapter is the historical analytical approach, which is an observation method based on the past events of migration. The main aim of this methodological approach for this research is to apply the method to know the representation of social and economical problems which are unsolved and discovered earlier. The later part of this chapter provides detail about the recent trends and conditions of the Indian diaspora and how the Indian government is taking care of its overseas people with the new policies and regulations.

The **Second Chapter** discusses about the Gulf migration. This chapter starts with the historical migration point of view from the ancient time, when India was deeply engaged with the pearls and spices trading with the Middle Eastern countries. The next section of this chapter is about the recent migration and modern-day slavery. As Aristotle says that

slaves are ‘animated tools’, the society cannot stop their activities, if the society will stop the concept of slaves the society will be stopped forever. And Gulf has a history of slavery which continues till today through the labour migration. Here the discussed agenda was the problems faced by the unskilled and semi-skilled labour migrants, who are engaged in blue-collar jobs, in the Gulf and as well as in India and at their homes also. At the end of this chapter I shall also discuss about the recent emerging of pandemic Covid-19. As the impact of it is very well known to us, here I shall try to discuss Covid-19’s impact on migration. It includes the process and migrants both. Also it states that how the Government has been taken the initiatives to recover the trauma of Covid and to rescue the migrants from the significant problems.

The **Third Chapter** is on Singapore migration, which also provides the details about the history of convict labour migration towards the recent trends of migration and how their ‘State’ structure CMIO which means Chinese, Malay, Indian and Others community and place like ‘Little India’, which is also a concept, related to migration and helped to make an old remarkable Indian diaspora. There is an important role of oral history; those who did not leave any records which were written anywhere and made a reprint of their remarkable migration journeys by ship or *Jahaj* through their generation after generation with the story of their lives. In this chapter oral history will be used to write migrants personal history from their journey by the ship to settlement in a new destination. The later part of this chapter describes, as it is discussed in the last section of Chapter Two the problems of recent migrants and the very recent impact of Covid-19 pandemic in Singapore.

‘Intra-Asia Migration’ has a central role in the making of cultural history of the modern Asian continent. There are three new concepts ‘transnational family’ and ‘global house holding’ and ‘global village’. ‘Transnational Family’ means a kind of family which try to maintain a continuity to share their strong bondage with the homeland and nation through the concept of two or more nation-states and on the other hand, the notion of ‘Global House holding’ means the formation of households which are depending on the international affairs like remittances, migration process and other. Also the concept of ‘global village’ means country; regions or localities are globally well connected by the modern technologies and also through the migration and exchange process of money, labour and culture. This new trends of migration have two features. One is these ‘intra-Asia’ migrants are basically moving themselves with the short-term project. For this, they

are staying in abroad for the stipulated time and just after finishing the project coming back to their homeland and earning a bit from agricultural land or some sources and spending time with family for the time being and then again moving themselves with the new project. The second one is these migrants are mainly migrating inside the Asian continent.

Migrants along with themselves took their religion, tradition, rituals, cultural identity, political ideologies, and social and family values as homeland nostalgia. Both the chapters Two and Three has been discussing the cultural linkages and exchanges from the very beginning of these new settlements between India and Gulf countries and India and Singapore. How, far away from India, Indians are being connected with their own culture has been seen here.

The **Fourth Chapter** is on primary data analysis, which was collected from the various interviews in different places in Singapore and India (Office of the Protector of Emigrants¹ and NORKA², Trivandrum), especially from a few districts majorly like Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Assam and very few from Bihar, Meghalaya and Orissa. These interviews were taken during the year 2015-2017 mainly and later in a very scattered way during some informal conversations with the labour migrants or any people residing in these respective countries, just to look at their views on migrants. For collecting information from the respondents, a structured interview schedule has been used. Questioner includes personal information, educational and family background, migration and living conditions, social interactions, problems and so on.

The **Fifth Chapter** is on the representation of the Indian Diaspora and labour migration to the Gulf countries and Singapore. As this research has some literary and cultural studies approaches, few novels, poetries, short stories and non-fictional documentaries are being used to discuss as secondary data sources. These two disciplines of literature and cultural studies have affinities, since one of the central features of cultural studies originated in certain key texts produced on the margins of literature in the United Kingdom. Raymond William's *Culture and Society* (1956) referred to an extended

¹ Protector of Emigrants or POE means an appointed authority under Emigration Act of India, Section 3 and includes a person authorized under Section 5.

² Non-Resident Keralite's Affairs. 6th December, 1996 Government of Kerala launched this Department to redress the grievances of non-resident Keralites both in India and abroad.

discussion of the origin of the idea of culture. Other than this, there are other sources for secondary data for this research, like, articles published in various journals, books, survey reports, national, international and local newspaper reports which cover the migration issues and many Government and non-government websites on the internet regarding diaspora and migration.

The **Conclusion** is about the remarks and summary. The whole idea of this research is to see the problems among migrants by the authorities and countries and how they are becoming 'Subaltern' or marginalised. The concept of migration has British approach which is marked by Marxist history. Migrants and migration have been started with the concept of proletarianism. Marxist history has the idea of industrial proletarianism which converted as 'Subaltern Studies' in contemporary society. Migrants are the mute actors of history and giving them a voice has been one of the stakes of the historical enterprise of subaltern studies. Gayatri Chakraborty Spivak in one of her articles published in 1988 asked a question about the voice of Subaltern, named *Can the Subaltern Speak?* (1998). This question gives an idea to the post-colonialism thinkers and how to write the history from the bottom of the lives of migrants with a postcolonial legacy. For the subaltern, their basis of action remains unrecognised, "as lines of social mobility exist elsewhere" (Spivak, 2012, p. 6). Also according to Foucault (1995), these power structures are relational. As a consequence, they cannot be maintained solely by dominant agents using exclusively bio-political or discursive techniques of governance. Instead, they also require the existence of a set of dominant agents. In Chapters Two and Three, it was discussed about the problems and continued to chapters Four and Five through the primary and secondary data sources. Through a methodological view of the conjunctures of power that exist between "Body", "State" and "Everyday Life" and here it examines how the subaltern groups become the subject to the arguments of the governmental and non-governmental issues. At the end of this thesis, there will be some suggestions for further exploration that how the authorities can help the migrants who do not know the proper rules and regulations and become illegal migrants and how the "States" can make new policies to improve the present scenario.

Historiographies of Diasporas, Indian Diaspora and Migration

Introduction

This chapter will be dealing with the large process of migration, especially the history of labour migration, with reference to the World Diasporas and the Indian Diaspora. In the first section the meaning of the term ‘Diaspora’ and how it is explored in all over the world will be discussed with the mention of all historical Diasporas. The second part will directly deal with Indian Diaspora with a focus on the ancient period to present day migration and development.

World Diasporas

The study of diaspora is a relatively new field. In the 1980s, scholars introduced studies of “dispersed populations” with the focus on identities, cultural dislocation and experiences of the migrants from their homeland and hostland perspectives but by the 1990s, there was another group of scholars who had started to use the term ‘diaspora’.³

The term Diaspora is taken from the Greek word ‘*diaspero*’; *dia* is ‘over’ and *speiro* is ‘to sow’, which means scattering or planting. It seems the term was first self-applied in the seventeenth century by those Greeks or ‘*apoieka*’ who had moved themselves voluntarily from their homeland as the colonisers were permanently residing in their homeland territories far from the Greece in the context of the Hapsburg Empire. The trading frontiers of the Indian Ocean world for two millennia, China’s thirteenth century seafarers

³ Wimmer and Glick Schiller (2002) stressed that, “[D]iaspora studies often trace the dispersed populations no matter where they have scattered, focusing on dynamics of interconnection, nostalgia and memory and identity within a particular population, relating them to a particular homeland. No longer confined to a territorially limited entity, the nation is extending across different terrains and places but nevertheless imagined as an organic, integrated whole. In this modus operandi, the nation-state building processes that impinge upon diasporic populations in various locations are usually overlooked.” (Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 2002, p. 324)

and Europeans long distance merchants since sixteenth century. The land-centred and seaborne ‘gunpowder empires’⁴ initiated migrations into conquered and colonised regions. In the present context, it means a movement or scattering of people away from an established ancestral land or people settled far from their ancestral homelands, sometimes ‘pushed’ by the ruler or authority and sometime ‘pulled’ by the necessity of the native land or themselves. As Tinker (1977) said, there are two factors of migration, one is ‘push’ factor which was used in South Asian countries for bringing the indentured labour and another is ‘pull’ factor which was used in the West for the better prospect. Also it is a movement of people across territorial boundaries of colonies, nations, and continents connect different spatial regions, people and cultures and results in meshing and moving of spatial references and boundaries in different historical junctures. “The historiography of the migration of these groups tells that the single most important push factor was severe economic conditions obtaining in India such as unemployment and poverty arising the growth and decline in local industries”. (Vertovec, 1992, p. 77)

After the translation of the Hebrew Bible into *Greek* language; where it is first mentioned that the word diaspora made a result of exile⁵ where people who were forced to be migrated feel to lead a life in lonely desert/planet. Generally it refers from the beginning of the historical movements like the dispersion of the ethnic population of the Israel, for the cultural development of that particular population. But if we look at the history, in the name of the cultural development, there are many wrong steps were taken for these poor and innocent people of these ethnic communities. There is a Biblical definition of the word ‘Diaspora’, where the term first introduced in the English language. For the English it is related with coloniser and colonised concept. With the concept of colonialism it can be seen that when the colonisers are coming to capture a port or country they first started implementing their values upon the colonised. Those colonised people if they are following their method of capturing, they are save and those who are not following their rulers they are deported to some other countries or ports as a slave or indentured labour. And these deported people are becoming as diaspora after staying in the hostland for generation after generations. Jews communities in Babylon, North Africa and Spain were

⁴ This period is also known as an era of the Islamic Gulf refers to the epoch of the Ottoman Safavid and Mughal empires from the sixteenth to eighteenth century.

⁵ “It was used by Jewish people denoting their worldwide dispersion outside their homeland, the Land on Israel. In Hebrew it was called *Golah/Galut*.” (Reji, 2017, p. 178)

not primarily defined with their attachments to their lost homeland in Judea because of this concept of colonisation – one of the main causes of making diaspora.

There is another meaning of the word ‘diaspora’ found in the *Oxford English Dictionary Online*, which was recorded as the first source of knowing about the meaning of ‘Diaspora’ in English and the source was first recognised in the year 1876, later being available in ‘online’ platform it is easy to reach among the people of the universe. Now the way how the concept of ‘diaspora’ is accepting by the scholarly world, it became a new genre, rather a new phenomenon. The word ‘migration’ also has a historical value with wandering, issues of conflict with the indigenous people and their displacement and cultural assimilation. It is a movement by human being from one place to another, sometimes it may be for long distances with large groups of people. Human diaspora has many motivations – conquest, trade, greater access to natural resources for growth and development, improvement in the quality of life. There were movements to escape from famine, natural hazards and also hiding from the politico-religious prosecution. The word ‘displacement’ denotes the violence of migration which can be developed as ‘forced migration’. The first wave of human migration was taken place around 11,000 years ago when an unfortunate moment happened with the destruction of many species of animal life, like – mammoths, camels, giant sloths and the other large mammals. A historical migration occurred between German and Americans during eighteenth century at the time of Holy Roman Empire. In the year 1709, approximately 30,000 German people had started to American provinces for better livelihood, but only 3000 people could cross the river and they had started settling down with the early German migrants behind the river Rhine. This migration in history named as ‘Palatine Migration’. Ehrlich (1979) says,

“Beginning in the third century BC, the flow of the slaves into Italy was so great that the economic basis of Roman society was changed, causing the failure of the Republic and the emergence of the Empire. The huge population (for its time) of imperial Rome, perhaps a million, was built and maintained largely by immigration of the people from the country side and outlying parts of the Empire, whether they came voluntarily or not.” (Ehrlich, 1979, p. 223)

Diaspora and Migration

In the present larger context 'diaspora' can be called as 'migration' beyond the boundaries of a nation. The word 'Migration' was derived from the Latin word *migrare*, which means the changing procedure of one's residence from one place to other place.

Main features of the history of migration are to understand the determination of the migration impulse and describe the social consequence of migration. It also focuses the early stage of trans-nationalistic migration system with the various fields from slavery and rural settlements, to cities and suburbs. Goran Rystad (1992) said, "The historiography of migration might have begun with a perspective of economic history." (Rystad, 1992, p.1167) From the pre-historic population movements to present, Patrick Manning (2005) divided the relationship between migration and world history. "The last one of the chronology defines the urbanisation of nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Migrants defined 'tradition' in different ways to create an environment of familiarity in a new land. Very often the sense of tradition was one that was imagined by male migrants from different economic strata. The 'mobility of tradition' occurred in different geographies and was a response to the power-equation among different groups of migrants themselves and between them and the 'natives'." (Manning, 2005, p. 75) In constructing a discourse which divorced culture and language from notion and citizenship called 'transnational social field' (Veeramani, 1989, p. 57) According to the process, the concept of migration can be divided into four various ways.

- **Pre-Colonial migration:** This type of spontaneous or forced migration was seen among the Jews and sometimes the people from South of the Danube, mainly for economic, military and demographic circumstances in the region.
- **Immigration through colonisation:** This initiative belongs equally to the host authorities and the migrating community. It happens rarely as an urban migration which is limited in time and includes the migration of relatively in the grouped communities.
- **Individual migration:** This happens with the particular group of people who feels they are in the opposite flow of the society/social order. To be fitted in the mainstream society they need to earn more and only solution is migration.

- **Temporary Migration:** It is a seasonal character for cross-border activities. In this process there is no mandatory rule to change the residence and it does not affect any cultural emotions.

Brenda S. Yeoh (1999) has appropriately called ‘the diasporic encounter’. This concept has a strong implication on migration, diaspora and transnationalism. It tends to endless and rich possibilities of examining the cultural and material inter-relation and exchange between different migrants in the development of Asia-Pacific histories, societies and economies. It is significant in so far as it provides us with a holistic device to place on a single canvas the numerous and multiple interactions that were occurring among different classes, groups and types of migrant and host communities. In this sense a history of transnationalism becomes a repository of a rich history of multiculturalism.⁶ Safran (1991) and Cohen (1997) said migration can be defined as producing a ‘diaspora’ if few criteria will be fulfilled like homeland orientation, boundary maintenance and the concept of homeland and hostland. The present scenario of ‘Globalisation’ is inter-related with diaspora and migration. The concept of diaspora/migration helps to make ‘global village’ and ‘global house’ along with the notion of hybridisation, hyphenated identity, multiculturalism etc. “From the macro-economic perspective, international migration is internal counterpart which occurred by geographic differences in the basis of demand and supply of labour for social developments.” (Massey, 1993, p. 434)

From the above mentioned all the cases, the concept of diaspora makes a sense of cultural, social, emotional and political displacement among the people who left their homeland either for ‘push’ or ‘pull’ factor. Whatever, it may be the reason they are in reality de-touched and separated from their own national territory/homeland, and usually these diasporic people have a hope, or at least they have a desire/wish/hope, to go back to their homeland on someday. They are living with this hope in the host for many generations. In the real scenario it says very few people are actually coming back or at least make a tour or visit for some days in their own homeland to fulfil their desire. But most of them are not even visiting. Many of them are made well settlements and happily living as Indian Diasporic Community. Residing in the distant lands far away from home,

⁶ All references to the concept of ‘diasporic encounter’ are drawn from the verbal comments made by Prof. Breanda Yeoh on 31/7/1999 during her presentation titled “Conceptions of Space in the writings of Singapore History: A Historical geographers Notes”, at the *Conference on Southeast Asian Historiography since 1945*, organized by the University Sains Malaysia, Penang, Malaysia.

its members are having success in their professional places by the impression of their dedication and hard labour to the work. They are continuing with their tradition, emotional values, cultural and spiritual assimilation with the country of their origin as the homeland nostalgia. There is some difference between the native people and the Diaspora. Their thinking and other ways of life are different. Homi K. Bhaba and other postcolonial thinkers describe the Diaspora person as a 'hybrid' colonised native. As McGown (2007) discussed Edward Said's concept where he is saying that "people in the diaspora are actually exiled people and they are always fighting a deep despair to be uprooted and to justify their presence in an alien and, being deprived of the security of deep roots." (McGown, 2007, p. 9)

Indian Diaspora

The word 'Indian' is used in a general sense to refer a person from the India and its' Indian subcontinent. Before 1947, the defined people were all Indian (along with Pakistanis and Bangladeshis), whether it was Muslim, Hindu, Tamil or Sikh irrespective of religions. Pre-partition era said the descendants of indentured labours, as it refers historically more distant trade-related migration and settlement in pre-European times. Post 1947, after the independence of India the word has a politically restricted meaning, referring to the people of Indian nationality only. Shukla (2004) said that, in 1947 the great historical event of Indian independence had an important affect on the diaspora and its social and political values. For them who were living abroad as Indian workers or migrants, they got the cultural and mental shock of their identity crisis. As the Indian citizenship rule they need to have documents like passport or visas to enter into their home country. They are not a citizen of any country. They are the temporary people in the hostland. Here the concept of postcolonial concept of identity crisis and cultural dislocation stand. The Indian Diaspora is a representation of India; its people, regions, values, cultural identity in an extended way in the universal platform. Through the movement of people and ideas, Indian influence was important throughout Asia and Europe before the nineteenth century. Though, the migration in a large number happened in the nineteenth and the twentieth century across the world. It is from the migration that the diaspora was formed and it is crucial, therefore, to understand the circumstances in India that led to this major movement of Indian people who created the communities which comprise the diaspora. The people who are migrating and settling abroad, they are

carrying their own cultural identities, ideas and values in terms of religion, art, social norms, political thought, ethics and organisational attitudes from the country of origin – ‘homeland’. Understanding how diasporic community particularly work, their nature and organisational form, requires a sense of the India from which people came and the ‘cultural baggage’ that they brought with them to their new homes.

“Indians were started migrating to other parts of the world, is not an eighteenth or nineteenth century phenomenon. It dates back to the tenth century BC; during the reign of Emperor Kanishka, Romani people (known as ‘gypsies’) migrated from Rajasthan towards the northwest and settled in Eastern Europe. Another historical migration started with Cholas, the great naval power, towards Indonesia and Malaysia which is called ‘Indianised’ kingdoms of Southeast Asia.” (*The Free Press Journal*, <https://www.freepressjournal.in/>) The record in the *Old Testament* of ivory, spices, apes, peacocks in far off lands; the movement of Buddhist disciples; Indian settlements in parts of Africa during the rule of Alexander the Great; Indian mercantile relations with Malay, China, Cambodia and Rome. Indian merchants, kings and priests helped in the spread of Indian languages, literature, religions, philosophies, art, customs, architecture, etc. all across the world right from the beginning of the Christian era. A hoard of Indian gold coins of the third century, were found in Dabra Dammo, which is the most evidence of Indian trade in Ethiopia. Religious influences could be seen in Ethiopian culture during the period of the Indian legend Josaphat and his renunciation. These migrations were not in large-scale migrants, but nevertheless, they were very important migrants from the historical perspective and as a founder of the path-breaking phenomenon. Lochan (2006) made statement that “though the finding the location of Kautilya’s *Suvarnabhumi* is an academic debate, but from the geographical context it is assured that in the third century BC, it was today’s South-East Asia and the Brahmin immigrants who ‘falsifying the notion of taboo in sea crossing’ and settled in various locations in Thailand, allowed their daughters to marry Brahmins to get permanent settlement. In the field of Indian diaspora, these migrations are considered as international migrations. The essence of these international migrations was different from those in the pre-colonial era.” (Lochan, 2006, p. 192)

The vast colonial expansion by the British Empire led to the emigration of Indian to the land of the British, French, Dutch and Portuguese colonies. Indian migrated to Mauritius, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya, The Caribbean, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana,

Suriname, Jamaica, Ceylon, Malaysia and Singapore, Fiji, Nepal, etc. during this colonial period. They went in the form of indentured labourers, Kangani system of labours⁷, etc. There were traders, clerks, lascars, bureaucrats, and professionals, too, amongst those who also migrated. India's relations with its diaspora started over time. Indian sailors, or lascars, who had been working in the British ships for transporting the goods, paid the less amount of their salary and undergone several maltreatments on the ships, most of them were came from poor families of India. They were bound to escape their foremen by foregoing their return journey to their home and they started settling in the London. Many sailors were ended up with the decision of residing in the London simply due to the inability or unwillingness of the companies' agreements. Being one of the poorest communities, they were started living in the then London city with very few financial sources with the help of local economy or The East India Company. Later, some of them started their own small business, importing goods and spices from India to recover from the disastrous situation by ships and to make a healthy new life in a new 'home'. This migration period can be frames as Old Diaspora. Mauritius also has an important for the history of indentured labour (mainly from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh) since 1834. It became the site of 'great experiment' with the use of free labour for sugar plantation. In 1836, a Mauritius based English firm of Blyth & Sons wrote to Messrs Bettington & Co. of Sydney, Australia, the planters from various plantation fields are taking indentured labour from India as five years contractual labour. They are recognised as free labour. First they have started with experimentation based, and when it became successful, they had started it in the regular based practice. The total procedures including shipping, clothing and food it used to take 5 shillings per week and that was the cheapest among other labour export countries.

With this labour exporting and importing process approximately sixty-one male labours were shipped to Sydney on 22nd August 1837 and a further twenty-eight labours in the month of December of the same year. There were four hundred men and handful number of women and children also heading for the Demerara and the Berbice on the ships named *Whitby* and *Hesperus* in the month of January, 1838. During the years 1837 and 1838, Mauritius imported more than five thousand male labours along with these only around a hundred women. "Indentured labour migration had a difference between male and female

⁷A typical feature of Tamil emigration was the 'Kangani' system in which labour recruitment from India and supervision on the plantation were in the hands of Tamil headmen.

migrants. In the Pre-Colonial and Colonial era mainly the male was migrating, there were very few people who took their family along with mother and father. The then Government issued a policy in the migration queue at Calcutta or Madras port forty women will be counted for every hundred men. Women migrants were taboo at that time. The concept of women migration was not easily accepted by the society. According to the then society women should be a good wife and good daughter, if she will go for outside work, then who will take care of their home and household. There were also a question of women's safety and security. Those male migrants who were going without their wives and to maintain the sexual abnormalities and entertainment purposes prostitutes and dancers were the replacement of a wife. In the queue there were a countable number of women who got marriage proposal for better livelihood and making a settled life in the hostland in future. Widows who had to become social outcasts and thought emigration would be something better to lead lives with a bit independency, became the focus of the recruiter's efforts, who were assembled at the depot in Calcutta or Madras for embarkation." (Tinker, 1974, p. 380)

Also a large portion of emigrated women lost their identities; they were turned out of the home, lost their friends, relatives and other family members. On the other hand, there were some benefits for Hindu women also, due to some inter-communal unrest few Hindu widow were forced to marry some Muslim men, this incident was supposed to be good for the women safety. "In the women emigration, there were so many disputes found by the authority and which caused murders, committing suicides. The Emigration Commissioners recorded in 1873 that the only remedy for wife murder was to introduce more women: but the numbers still remained only forty to every hundred men." (Tinker, 1974, p. 498) The Royal Commission in Mauritius stated that this custom was the cause of much quarrelling, which sometimes ended in murder. The British Consul in Reunion reported in 1874 that there were 33,344 males and only 5,787 females among the Indians: a ratio of six to one. He said, there was a rule that for four or five men, there will be one or two women to be their partner, to satisfy them in various ways and to act as pseudo wife. There was a rumour among the indentured labours that this kind of illegal act was only done by the labours who are coming from the Northern part of India. People from the Southern part of India, especially the Tamils they were 'pure'.

The above mentioned situation of women and men indentured labours were not only from India, but also from some other countries both male and female migrants faced the same

problems in the queue at the port, which can be identified as tortures also. At the same time there was also a limited and irregular movement to the Strait Settlements⁸ for the work in the sugar and coffee plantations as well as for the domestic services, nannies to serve the English families. There was a difference between domestic servant and indentured labour depending on the biological strength. The domestic servants were known as 'household' labour and the men were known as 'hard' labour. The system under which this movement of the labour was started and continued through the century was the indenture system. Regulation would be imposed as *ad hoc* by the Government of India as requests were made from various labours. There was no particular system to control these malpractices of recruitment process and to apply the correct process for the progression of the recruitment. Under this proceeding, a potential employer of labour placed an order to a recruiting agent which was based in India only, for the supplying and supervising to stipulated number of labours.

In the nineteenth century, there was a dilemma about the migration of its people to distant parts of the global beyond the occasional complaint about abuses in the system of recruitment. In the early period of the twentieth century, Mahatma Gandhi's historical struggle for the racism and equality among all the races in the South Africa produced in the form of enquires which was leading for the abolition of the slaves and indentured labour system. In the inter-war period, India required to use its influence with London to secure better political rights for 'Indian Overseas'. This active concern turned into passive interest after the independence in 1947 as India got embroiled in regional conflict and its achievement in the cause of non-alignment. Overseas Indians were advised to identify themselves with the interests and aspirations of the countries of their residence. This acknowledged the growing cultural, social and political distances between the India and its diaspora. Before 1950, countries like Britain, Canada and Australia were backward to flourish in Victorian-style institutions of higher education. Particularly, in medical profession in Britain was attracted by the doctors from India for over fifty years. Actually, it was started after 1945 when they started to find the gaps in training, and second to replace British doctors who were themselves emigrating overseas. A pattern of Indian integration into the British health service was established but could not function

⁸A term, referring to the unified British holdings on the Malay Peninsula of Penang, Melaka and Singapore. The Strait Settlements were created in 1826 after the Dutch agreed to leave the British alone to establish a sphere of influence based on the Malay Peninsula. They were directly administrated from Kolkata by the English East India Company and later by the Colonial Office in London.

successfully without doctors from South Asia and other Third World countries. These migrants were afraid of the caste system of India and after coming back to their homeland they were being discriminated by the Indian society. At that time, among the upper class educated family it was believed that those who crossed the border of 'Kalapani' they lost their social and religion identity, they are not accepted by the society. A group of revolutionary persons of Indian Renaissance movement like Raja Rammohan Roy, Maharshi Debendranath Tagore, other reputed members of the Tagore's family and so on stepped forward. Simultaneously, Indian medical profession could not avoid the disaster without being able to siphon off surplus doctors to Britain, Canada etc. Though many of these returned, there were a significant number who settled in the host nation of their migration. They flourished in the host nations in almost every sphere, despite all odds.

By the mid-twentieth century, post Indian independence another flow of migrants from India was observed. These were the emigration to developed nations, such as, USA, UK, The Netherlands, Canada and Australia. Indians emigrated from India as well as from the colonial settlements all over the world, due to various political reasons with the implementation of the US Immigration Act of 1990, which was effected from 1995, with the introduction of H-1B visas for the temporary workers. This phase of migration called as "new diaspora". This group of overseas Indian emigrants to developed countries are also popularly known as "Brain Drain" migrants, started mainly in the post middle of 1960, which means as Khadaria (2006) states that talented and high skills professionals are moving to the developed countries as white-collar professions like doctor, teachers, IT professionals, architectures etc. The term Indian Diaspora came into frequent use from the 1990s to represent these emigrants. It does not include the pre-colonial Indian emigration, and here lies the paradigm shift from the international migration of Indians to the Indian diaspora phenomenon. Indian migrants strongly opposed the separation among the three major Indian ethnic and the religious groups – Sikh, Hindu and Muslim. The Muslims-Hindu distinction was less in the early Indian Diaspora, as both groups were faced similar problems and situations during the process of migration. Also it was noticed that Muslims community people conducted less numbers of the indentured workers. Parekh (1994) argues that there were mainly three features among the *Hindu* slaves and indentured workers which helped them to create the diasporic consciousness – the change of their family life structure, the religious consciousness, as they adopt the holy book *The*

*Ramayana*⁹ as their essential text of the *Hindu* diaspora of the ‘old diaspora’ of East Africa, Uganda and spread through all over the world. The railway system in UK and in India was introduced by indentured labour from Punjab.. And in the concept of the ‘new diaspora’ Sikh migrants are not conscious about their casts and social status; they are always concentrating on earning money in a right way. For this reason, in India especially in their region they are working in the agriculture sector and in Kolkata they work as drivers, but in the hostland whether it is UK, USA or Middle East they are working as traders, electricians, carpenters with the better salaries and with the hope of better lives. Other remarkable emigrants were Patidars, originally from Kaira District in Gujarat. By birth they were farmers in occupation, around 1900 they became eminent in East and South Africa and made a position in local trading economy. A sizeable group of Indian Tamils went to Malaya (now divided into two countries: Singapore and Malaysia) as clerks, doctors, teachers also spoke their language but who were mainly from the Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) – the Jaffna Tamils, for that time they were brokers and spokesmen for the Indians.

The third phenomenon is “Gulf diaspora”, which was started after the 1970s sudden oil boom in Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) countries. Mainly from the Southern part of India, majorly from the states like Andhra Pradesh, Telengana, Tamil Nadu and Kerala, people have started migrating as unskilled or semi-skilled labour, but very recently in this phenomenon many skilled migrants are also moving from across the India. According to the migration procedure this can be also identified as ‘labour diaspora’ where Turks and North American can be included when they started entering Europe during Second World War. However, Karl Marx and Max Weber were the umbrella figure among the Europeans who showed how to see their own society from the concept of class, and some sociologists found race as a class. When the huge number of people from the Indian Overseas are still labourers it is possible to treat them as a class. On the other hand, another school insists that the over-riding difference is not economic but racial and

⁹ “First, the epic’s central theme was exile, suffering, struggle and eventual return – a clear parallel with the use of the Bible by religious and Zionist Jews. Second, the text is simple and didactic, with a clear distinction between good and evil, a useful simplification in the harsh world of the plantation. Third, the *Ramayana* hammered home what the Brahmins and many conservative men wanted to hear. The eldest son should be dutiful, wives should be demure and obedient and clear roles should be defined for family interactions. Finally, as Hindu traditions go, the *Ramayana* was relatively casteless, but it especially stressed the virtues of the lower castes, namely physical prowess, and economic resourcefulness.” [Parekh, 1994, p. 605]

cultural and conceives colonial and post-colonial society in terms of racial unions. This can be termed as ‘Proletarian Diaspora’¹⁰ (Armstrong, 1976, p. 405) and ‘Plural Society’¹¹ (Furnivall, 1931, p. 165).

Earlier the former India’s Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA) estimated 25 millions of Indian diaspora are living throughout the world. From the United Nations Organisation (UNO) report 2019, published in *The Times of India* on 19th September, 2019, says that “the growth of Indian Diaspora has 6.4 percent increased from 2015 all over the world. In 2015, it was 15.9 million whereas in 2019 it is 17.5 million. UAE, US and Saudi Arabia also has increased respectively 3.4, 2.6 and 2.4 million.”

Modern-day, Diaspora is an important social aspect which can be played to bridge role and to fulfil the gap between the individual persona and the society, between the local and the global market, between the cosmopolitan society and the particular. As Gabriel Also it has democratic and liberal values for their homeland. Liberal democracies can be constructed as ‘an egalitarian multicultural society’.

India and the role of the Indian Diaspora in the Present Society

At the present context, Indian Diaspora is very renowned and accepted phenomenon by the world critic. Indian diasporic communities are playing significant roles in the univers in various fields of the globalised world, which includes economy, culture and social responsibility. In the inaugural address of the First Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, 9th January, 2003 the then Honourable Prime Minister of India Late Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee said the history of the Indian civilization and its exposure and success beyond the territory as diasporic community. Government of India respects this diasporic community and their emotional values of homeland nostalgia; they made an imaginary of this community, known as *Vishwa Bharati Parivar* (Global Indian Family).

In 2000, a High Level Committee (HLC) of the Indian Diaspora headed by Dr. L. M. Singhvi, a renowned politician and the former Indian High Commissioner to the United

¹⁰ “It is characterized by low communication skills and comprises ‘a nearly undifferentiated mass of unskilled labour’, with little prospect of social mobility.” (Cohen, 2008, p. 62)

¹¹ ‘Europeans, Indians, Chinese, Japanese and Burmans have no criteria in common except cheapness. All of them have in common the economic motives hamper them.’

Kingdom, declared the NRI (Non-resident of India)¹² and PIO (Person belongs to Indian Origin)¹³ could play a role in India's economic development and more specifically they can have a cultural exchange with India. It is significant that the Singhvi Committee Report projected "overseas citizenship as a 'new' *setubandhan* (building ties / bridges) in the present. While the allusion to the 'original' *setubandhan* undertaken by Rama to rescue Sita is apparent, given the contexts of the emotional bonds and cultural linkages that the report emphasises, the 'new' *setubandhan* connotes the recovery and cementing of the natural/blood/ethnic bonds." (Roy, 2016, p. vii) To celebrate its Pravasi Bharatiya Divas or Day of Indians Abroad (PBD) has been started from 2003 and it is continued the celebration every year on 6th, 7th and 8th January. More than 2000 delegates from various parts of the diaspora attended the inaugural PBD. It is celebrated to make a strong engagement between the overseas Indian Community and the Government of India and to reconnect them with their roots. During the Convention they select some overseas Indians and honour by the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award (PBSA) to 10 delegates from the Indian Diaspora community and Indians in abroad, to pay respect to their contributions to various fields both in India and abroad. This award is conferred by President of India to NRI, PIO or organisation run by the NRI/PIO. During the conferences it is chaired by the Minister of External Affairs, Domain Experts from the Diaspora, and by the other reputed policy makers residing in India and abroad. After long discussions they recommend their valuable judgement and statement to the concerned Ministries and Developments under the Government of India for considerations as policy formation for the development of the diasporic community. With the recommendations of this committee Government of India established Pravasi Bharatiya Bhavan (PBB) to provide a venue for celebrate the history and the achievements of the Indian Diaspora. From the year 2014, these two governing bodies Ministries of Overseas Indian Affairs and Ministry of External Affairs have been merged for better works. And Government of India also declared 18th December of every year should be celebrated as 'International Migration Day To encourage Indian Diaspora, they also promoted the emergence of global organizations based in Western countries, Global Organizations of PIO (GOPIO), formed in New York

¹² "It is an Indian citizenship who has migrated to another country. For official purposes the Government of India considers any Indian national away from India for more than 180 days in a year is consider as an NRI." (www.nriol.com)

¹³ "Literally it means a person of Indian origin who is not a citizen of India. For the purposes of issuing a PIO card, the Indian Government considers any one of Indian origin upon four generations removed, to be a PIO." (www.nriol.com)

in 1989. Each country with a substantial number of Indian population, local and national religious organisations, cultural background, language, regional origin in India or particular interests, such as music, art, dance or sport. These organisations are may not be advocating on behalf of India, nor be directly political, but their social and cultural significance is profound. They also share with non-Indians about their culture and religious heritage through music, dance and food which helps to break down the barriers. They also import children from their fundamental cultures.

The Overseas Citizenship of India Scheme (OCI)¹⁴ is a scheme which was launched in the August 2005. At first the scheme was only available only for the PIO people of the sixteen countries of North America, Western Europe and Australia. In December 2005, Government of India was extended this scheme for the benefits of all the PIO people living all over the world except the PIOs from the Pakistan and the Bangladesh. OCIs people are now within the NRI people from the various aspects, they are getting more facilities in their travel, investing money in education and property. The OCI tag was also received as to encourage people from the Indian diaspora. By the 14th February 2012, there was a total number of 1,029,131 PIOs who had been registered as OCI. There are several other schemes for the OCI and PIO people which were initiated by Government of India, such as Diaspora Knowledge Networks (DKN), Know India Program (KIP), Scholarships Program for Diaspora Children (SPDC), Bilateral Security Agreements (BSAs), and Protection of Emigrants against Exploitation in Gulf countries are considered as major steps to involve the Indian Diaspora. The Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs had established the Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF)¹⁵. The Mumbai-based Indian film industry, popularly known as Bollywood, has played a significant role in the

¹⁴ “This scheme was introduced in response to the dual citizenship by Indian diaspora. A foreign national who was a citizen of India at any time or after the 26th January, 1950 or belonged to a territory that became part of India after 15th August 1947, or having any blood relations with such kind of citizen is eligible for OCI card. Also, spouse of foreign origin of a citizen of India or of an OCI card holder whose marriage has been registered and subsisted for a continuous period of not less than two years immediately preceding the presentation of the application is also eligible for registration as OCI card holders.” [http://passport.gov.in/oci/]

¹⁵ The ICWF is aimed to provide “on site” welfare services on a means tested basis in the most deserving cases. Another important focus of the diaspora, in terms the country of origin, is financial contribution – remittances, private transfers from migrants to their families. Remittances may have direct political effects if they are used to fund political parties, extremists groups or sub-national movements. However, remittances are just one mechanism through which the diaspora has a political impact on the country of origin. Diasporas, given their ‘international location’ are also capable of ‘providing information’ to the foreign policy makers of the country of origin.

global market policy to connect Indian culture to the Diaspora. Its contribution has been immense and long-standing. Hindi films had an important role in preserving Hindi language in the sugar colonies from the 1930s onward. Literature also took a good position in cultural exchange. The names of Indian writers of international distinction are multitude, today they would be considered mildly remiss for a person of some learning. Among them most famous are: Amitabh Ghosh, Jhumpa Lahiri, V. S. Naipaul, Rinton Mistry and so on.

It is understandable that why India has recently taken much interest to bridge their relation with diaspora. And another more difficult question is why Indians who were never been to India wants to continue links with its subcontinent. For post-war migrants and others who invested the opportunities to open up new connections. Now, one can be a British citizen and at the same time be an Indian. There are some examples of Indian Diasporic people, like Lord Dholakia from Gujarat, who is staying in Britain for three generations and got the citizenship of British People but he cannot forget his own Indian tradition, culture and identity. Fatima Meer is another distinguished intellectual person from South African could not forget about her homeland nostalgia, culture tradition India. There are many examples like this among the Indian Diasporic people. Interestingly these people are always trying to reconnect them with the mother land. Sometime, they try to find their son-in-law or daughter-in-law from India to carry the legacy of Indian tradition. On the other hand the first generation or second generation people who had migrated themselves either before the independence or just after the independence of India, they still believe the society, culture, economy of India are same as it was. They cannot accept the modernization of Indian tradition.

Here I have discussed the long journey of making history of diaspora and migration through the world from the ancient period. It narrowed down to the modern concept and destinations of migration through the research are of Gulf countries and Singapore. At the end of this long discussion on the history of the diaspora it is to summaries that we can use the concept of “imaginary coherence” defined by Stuart Hall (1990) to confirm the idea of identities, dislocation. With this concept it is also said wherever the Indians are in the world as diaspora/NRI/OCI/PIO/migrated labour, they cannot forget their own culture, tradition and always nostalgic for homeland. In the next chapters following I will try to focus on the issues of migration, if they really want to re-root themselves then why leaving their own land and also to find out the result of migration. Are they really happy

in their lives as migrants, are they really willing to migrate by their own choice. In the second and third chapters I will separately discuss about the migrants in Gulf countries and Singapore respectively.

Indian Migration to the Gulf Countries

Introduction

Before the 'oil-boom' history, there is no concrete historiography of migrants and the migration process for the Gulf countries. The histories of immigrants from this region are only available from the literatures on port towns which are also limited. The landscape of migration, urban life and state authorities along with the Arab Coast of the Persian Gulf in the nineteenth and twentieth century's contrast that of the late Ottoman Empire. The difference between Gulf Ports and the provincial centres of the Arab Ottoman world can be readily explained by the contrasting political realities with the exception of Ottoman Basra, the urban societies of the Arab coast were neither ruled by any imperial administration nor had been shaped by a long established tradition of the self-government as it was the case of some of the ports of the Mediterranean and the Red Sea to continue the legacy of tradition and culture of India and also the legacy of the ruler of the Government of India. The name 'Gulf' has a debate among the scholars of history, migration and diaspora studies. The ancient geographers Strabo and Ptolemy called this water belt as 'Persian Gulf'. After the nationalism movement in the 1960s, Arab side of the then 'Persian Gulf' began to call as 'Arabian Gulf' which is known as *al-Khaleej-al-Arabi* in Arabic. In the official level also, the United Nations and various other international bodies recognise as the 'Persian Gulf' and recommended the name mainly based on the history. On the other hand, Andrew Shapiro, an assistant secretary of the Saudi Arabia referred it as 'Arabian Gulf and the broader of Middle East.' To avoid all these dilemmas in the naming of Gulf, it is used in simplified way as 'Gulf' or Gulf Countries in this research work.

From the ancient past, these countries are depending on the imported labours. On the way of the Gulf it is very common picture that baking bread by an Iranian, running a restaurant by an Indian, making an under construction building by a Indian migrated labour from Madras, taxi drivers from Pathan and so on. At the beginning of the Gulf and till date, all the Gulf or Middle Eastern countries are depending on the migrants from

various destinations. They import labour from all the parts of the world as skilled, semi-skilled and un-skilled.

Incipient Diaspora

According to *Cambridge Dictionary* the word ‘incipient’ means just beginning or just coming into existence. Myron Weiner (1986) described these migrants as “incipient diaspora” which means the temporary settlements of Indian migrants. In the present context they are also known as ‘temporary migrants’, who cannot live any extra time after finishing the project or contract, who cannot bring their any family member for staying with them. These workers are not ‘immigrants’ in the sense of the term, a large number of them ‘continues to remain indefinitely in the host country.’ The ‘incipiency’ of the diaspora obtains from the fact that naturalisations and the citizenship laws in all the places are extremely strict and it is almost impossible for the migrants to have permanent resident status. Work contracts are time-bound and even otherwise the migrants are willing to return home after a few years of stay or after the completion of contract. This migration is therefore transitory as well as circulatory in nature.

The definition of the word ‘migrant’ in the Gulf countries denotes in a broad sense with an extended area from social, ethnic and professional background and on the other hand, from the Bedouin tribes and the Persian villagers to mercantile groups, mercenary soldiers, slaves and clerks. All the countries in the Gulf have various Kafala systems, which were discovered in the 1950 from the Bidoon’s culture with the notion of their hospitality and protection of the foreign guests. These Bidoons or Bedouin are stateless residents of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. This is a council of seven countries formed on 25th May, 1981. At the time of forming this council, these countries were poor, so they used to share all the facilities like economy, law, education etc, among themselves to be individually strong. There is no fixed numerical statistics for the Bidoons. They are always varying in numbers, as Van Waas (2010) stated their number at “several hundred thousand”. Unlike migrants, the *bidoons* are not required to obtain work and residence. Their labour market mobility is restricted. They cannot access the social and economic rights and privileges that the citizens can enjoy. As stateless residents, bidoons are denied from the basic services, they are unable to own property and their children also cannot attend government schools.

Kafala System

The concept of 'Kafala' was derived from the word *Kafeel* which was originally used in both tribal and legal Islamic tradition for the recruitment purpose by their own supervisors. *Kafala* has two different meanings in classical Arabic: one is to guarantee (daman) and the other is to take care of (kafl). Earlier it was used in commercial and business transactions to express how one should behave towards a minor person (master-slave rules and regulation), to express a sense of "good deed" while simultaneously with the implementation of an unequal power structure. But, now Kafala deals only with a power relation between migrants and citizens. In a nut shell, Kafala is an administrative process, which sometimes misused by employers. The ways Kafala is constitutive of hierarchical social relations in the Gulf is rarely explored. It is only in the last decade that the problems arrived from the Kafala, emerged as a policy and there are dilemmas for most GCC Governments, partly as a consequence of increased international criticism. A few Gulf countries were beginning to rethink the necessity of this recruiting process. Among all the GCC countries in 2009, Bahrain was the first country to take step forward to make changes in the process of recruitment. And in the new policy it was mentioned that the whole migrant's recruitment process will be maintained by the Government or the reputed authority. After Bahrain, Kuwait was also made changes in the recruitment policy where it said that the labour workers can change the job after three years of finishing a contract successfully. The person should not leave immediately. He/she can stay with the signing of a new contract. Kuwaiti Minister said this concept of labour migration and the condition of the work can be represented as 'modern-day slavery'.¹⁶

Differences between Diaspora and Gulf Migration

- a) Gulf migration is not following the same way of the migration process of indentured labour during the colonial period or the theory of forced migration. This recent trends of Gulf migration are not forced migration, but sometime it is psychologically forced from the home and homeland perspectives. For this matter the role of the Government of homeland is very important. They are signing into a

¹⁶ (<https://www.arabianbusiness.com/politics-economics/kuwait-begins-process-scrap-sponsorship-15037>)

contract and sending it to the employees to carry forward the task through the proper channel.

- b) Gulf migration for unskilled and semi-skilled labours is a temporary or 'incipient' process which creates cultural dislocation and identity crisis among the migrant workers and on the other hand it has a big economical benefit to his/her family. They are psychologically prepared to be 'returned' to their homeland from the very beginning rather than to be 'uprooted' from the ancestral land. So, the crisis of homeland is also temporary.
- c) The colonial notion of the international migration was mainly related to the agricultural and plantation works in a large scale. But this new trends of Gulf migration has involvement with the work in the modern sectors with the new technologies for the economical development of both homeland and hostland.
- d) The demand of different skills labours from the labour importing countries shows a change in the recent trends of migration pattern.

History of Gulf Migration

Pre-oil Booming

According to the historical fact, the movement of people from undivided India to Gulf countries was started with the emergence of Islam in the seventh century A.D. as a political power. But merchants from India were trading in the Gulf States from the ninth century. The Fatimid Caliphate in the tenth century A.D. ensured that Indian ports on the western coast were regularly visited by the ships sailing from the Red Sea region. According to the historians, Indian Muslims were gone to the holy Mecca and Medina for their pilgrimage, but no one has left behind any records of their foreign religious trips. The earliest permanent commercial settlement was probably in Muscat around the fifth century based on the artefacts like pottery and seashells which were discovered from the Harappa Valley in north India and those belonging to the Dilmun civilization of Bahrain and the Magan civilization of Oman. Then it developed through the journey to the Red Sea till 1622. Also both Gulf and India were totally involved in the international trading system. Bahrain and India started their trading relation at 2000BC, when it was named as Dilmun Island, as an important commercial centre linking between Mesopotamia and Indus Valley. In the pre-oil days one of the principal sources of trade

was pearls and spices which were marketing in the Gulf. Karwar, Cannanore, Calicut and Cochin were important trading centres of India for spices which include pepper, ivory, timber, gems and so on. Sind community was also famous for their business in weaving and textile industries. A variety of textile products from Sind, from the north-western part of India, were demandable to Persian Gulf. Indigo was also available through the port of Sind. The Indians could be found on the eastern side of the Arabian Peninsula as well. Their presence in Muscat, the principal port of Oman, was notified by Europeans. Another important system of this business strategy was also prominent. India used to import silver coin in the forms of sea birds, dried fruits, rose water, wine, horses, Persian silk, carpets and a large quality of Persian gold from the Gulf countries.

The location of the Gulf countries has the regional significance of economic and strategic position. Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates are the states which are situated around the coastal areas which are the world's largest single source of crude oil and related industries that completely dominating and monopolising the region. Other than this trading, migrants were sent by the British as to function in the colonial administration. This group of migrants were from the upper caste and upper class families of India with the knowledge of education. As they were sent by the British they were respected and maintain the administrative posts or holding the power of high position in the Gulf society. "The Royal Navy became an active in the protection of shipping against the pirates. It was an attempt by Napoleon to establish himself in the Gulf when he was in occupation of Egypt that Britain concluded a treaty with the ruler of Muscat, at the entrance of the Gulf, in 1798." (Mansfield, 1973, p. 129) The French and Russians were also actively participated to increase their influences in Persia and attempting to establish a naval supply station at the head of the Gulf, and Kaiser Wilhelm from Germany was planning to extend the Ottoman railway from Turkey to Baghdad and Kuwait as part of its *Drangnach Osten*. The English East India Company established a commercial contract with the Shah¹⁷ of Iran in 1800. It is said that, "English and Indian traders and merchants should be permitted to settle, free from taxes in any Persian seaport and should be protected in the exercise of commerce in the Shah's dominion." (Gopal, 2017, p. 22) Until India's independence in 1947, all the decisions regarding the political and economic issues, related to the Gulf region had been taken in

¹⁷ In 1730s, Nadir Shah as the leader of Iranian resistance not only drove out the Afghans but created an empire extending from the shores of the Black Sea in Europe to river Yamuna in India.

India which was implemented by the British authorities who were ruling India. In the first half of the twentieth century, Bahrain was a British territory under the management of the Government of India with a political agent accountable to the Viceroy. Bahrain used Indian 'rupee' as their currency. And Indian stamps were also legalised in this country.

Oil was discovered by the Arabian-American Oil Company (ARAMCO) along with the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (later British Petroleum) and Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) before the Second World War, probably in 1938, but its exports and revenues only began to increase significantly after 1947. Standard Oil of California and Texaco also secured an oil business for Bahrain. Although the oil production and revenues of these islands were remained on a much modest scale after Bahrain was able to contribute their funds to the education and social services.

Period of Oil Boom

Due to the producer of huge oil and natural gas resources of the Gulf countries, these countries were played a prominent role in the world economy and the natural wealth which had made this region very important also from the geostrategic point of view. The discovery of this oil in the early twentieth century opened a new avenue of international platforms. Till the 1960 most of the migrants of the GCC countries formed their work forces, which came from the neighbouring countries like Lebanon, Palestine, Jordan, Syria etc. But in the year 1973 when the oil price was hugely hiked these Gulf countries had to start a rapid expansion of their economic plans, mainly after the innovation of The Bahrain Petroleum Company (BAPCO). In this situation, Asian workers were started migrating for working in these countries. This increasing statistics of labour migration is seen after the effect of oil boom in various fields of occupations like- building construction, maintenance, repairs, trading and domestic work. Petro-dollar rich countries have become attraction points for Asian labour market for both the unskilled and semi-skilled. Most of them were from the first generation migrants tried to join in the melting pot of cultures and religions. Having a special feature of these countries, journalists are started using the phrase as 'Fourth World' to recognise it. Asian workers migration to the Gulf countries was the movement which mutually benefitted the country of origin of the migrants and the destination countries. In the last twenty years, the trends of Asian labour migration to the Gulf countries have been increased. After showing this huge supply of labours from other countries the GCC councils became afraid with the question of nativism. They are afraid of their own identity crisis in their own land. To rescue

themselves from this situation Saudi Arabia, U.A.E., Oman and Qatar came up with a new policy in the recruitment of the foreign workers, which has a mention of reservation for the natives and for the outsiders separately. Automatically this policy helped to reduce the number of foreign workers. “A favourable changes in policies are likely to help these countries to be remained the most preferred destination. By the end of 2018, they have started issuing residential visas for the global investors and professionals up to 10 years. While blue-collar Indian workers such as labour, carpenter, plumber, driver etc. dominated the labour markets of the GCC till date, now the industry says that there will be a gradual shift with more white-collar workers from India which will show more interest to Gulf.” (*Times of India*, 4th July, 2018)

Migration and Cultural Exchange

The historic Gulf Migration has an impact of exchanging cultural and social values to develop both the regions of their own land and also in the labour importing and trading partner countries in various aspects.

Education

There was a historical renaissance in the education system. The traditional education system in the pre-oil Saudi Arabia and Kuwait was based on the religious oriented system called as *Kuttab*, in Arabic language it means an elementary school. Indian merchants were having good relationship with the Arab traders. With the help of these merchants in the year 1913 and in 1923 Bahrain had established Iqbal Club and Literary Club respectively. Also the emergence of the Bahrain’s first newspaper named *Al-Bahrainin* in 1939 was not possible without the help of Indian traders and the first printing of this newspaper was started in Mumbai, the then Bombay. The first map which defines the location of pearl cultivation in the Gulf was also established in Bombay in 1914. Before the Second World War, India was one of the most important destinations for better education and learning English which includes the royal families of Bahrain and Oman, they had chosen Indian schools like Aligarh College for their sons. Among them some notable persons were there, like- Khalid Alfaraj, Bahrain’s most remembered poet and reformer; Ibrahim Alurayed, a well-known Bombay born Bahrain poet and literate; Said

Alnooman, who played a remarkable role in the cultural movement in Sharjah in early 1910 and many others.

With the improvement of the economic conditions in the early twentieth century, the modern citizens of Dubai started developing education and introduced social awareness programmes. After the post oil-boom also the educational improvement did not stop. In the very present condition, there are large numbers of good Indian schools like Delhi Public School, Kendriya Vidyalaya are situated and working successfully in each country of the Gulf Region.

Religion

From the historical fact it is notified that before the introduction of Islamic tradition and culture in India, the Indian merchants were known as tribes of Arabia. They were admired them to that extent that they called their daughters as 'Hind', the Arabic name for India. The then, there was no as such religious intolerance among two different religious people from the two different destinations. Indians (both Muslims and non-Muslims), came mainly from Sindh, Gujarat, from the Sultanate of Bijapur established in the West Coast of India, from the Sultanate of Golkonda situated in the Cormandal Coast. Indian-Parsis visited Iran, from where their forefathers had ran away to India to escape religious oppression. Also in the Muslim dominated state, non- Muslim Indians who stayed in the interior cities of Iran which was generally known as Multanis, after the border city of Punjab. "As in *Ormuz*, the community of Indians included a good number of Hindus and Jains, easily identifiable by their practice of idol worship, sandal paste mark on their forehead and cremation after the death. In Bandar Abbas, they were called by the term 'Bania', the majority of them hailing from Gujarati and they are vegetarians." (Sampat, 1989, p. 175) Also the Hindu communities were used to celebrate their religious festivals, like New Year, which is now known as Diwali, with a big social gathering and followed by dinner parties. In Masqat, under the rule of Ahmed, the Banias founded their second temple – Haveli or Pustimargi Sect Temple. During the civil war Hindu community were not affected.

At the contemporary time also when religious unrest was going on everywhere across the world, but the Gulf countries were presenting 'unity in diversity'. Muslims and non-Muslims (which includes Hindus, Jains, Sikhs and others) were celebrated their rituals on their own way. Catholic churches were made by Malayali migrants from Kerala and by

the few Goaneese and Hindu temples which were made by South and North Indian migrants are very much noticeable.

Culture

Migration towards the Gulf has remarkable affect in cultural assimilation, other than trading deals. Though the earlier discussions about the education system and religion are also included in culture, but it needs to be a separated field for the discussion. The Indo-Gulf or Indo-Persian culture which includes music, arts, dialects etc. are famous in the universe. Culture is a medium of exchange, without its' development the progression and expanding of a culture is impossible and it continues.

Spoken dialects of Gulf's coastal towns are the replica of the Indian languages. Ten words from the Indian origin were entered into these dialects and became widely used in their everyday lives. These words were actually related to the jobs which were established and maintained by the Indians, imported products from the India, modern merchandise items from India, financial methods associated with the use of the Indian rupees, and the system of pearl diving and maritime trade.

Other impacts of the Indian socio-cultural influences include the introduction of many Indian traditional dishes in the Gulf dining table with the inclusion of Indian art in the gold and silver jewelleries and in the embroidering clothes, the use of a number of musical instruments are similar to those used by the Indian musicians, and the adoption of Wizar¹⁸ as an essential part of menswear in many parts of the Gulf. Also they had carried Indian arts, traditions and cultures and following it to their living rooms as interior decorations , colours and designs of women's costumes and dress materials, jewellery of the women of Oman and the Sothern part of the Gulf, and the rhythmic patterns of music.

Modernity

The economic condition of post oil-booming era had been majorly affected by the tradition of the Gulf. A settled lifestyle is being welcome for a modern society. Increasing wealth started making the wide doors for better future and a more sophisticated way of life. Some merchants had made money in their back home into the pearl industry and bought more number of ships to afford themselves in more lavish lives. Their new status is also reflected on the architecture of the cities, while common people made their homes

¹⁸ Wizar is a long length printed cotton material which is used to wrap around the lower part of the body.

with palm sticks and at the same time the successful merchants were designing their houses with clay or sometimes with the bricks. Emigrated merchants also brought their own traditions and architectures. It also represents the concept multiculturalism. Many of them have made their good future in the Gulf, using their wealth to build houses with modern architectures with the use of coral stones and windows. Now, Gulf countries are having digitalised with high technology cities with multi-storied buildings and all the best available facilities of the world.

Recent Statistics (up to 2017) of Migration

The increasing statistics of the foreign migrant workers to the Gulf countries over the last few decades has created a unique position in the whole region. The Gulf Countries Council is the India's second largest trading partner and the largest single origin of importing into the country. Originally Migration from India was started after the attack of Iraq on Kuwait in 1990. At that time India was dependent on Iraq and Kuwait for the oil importing business. A large number of Indian workers were stranded in the affected area during the war. In the year 1999 the number of foreign workers in Kuwait was 7.1 million which was actually the 70 percent of the total population and the 60 percent of increasing trends from the earlier strength of foreign workers. This trend of migration is increasing day by day. According to the Annual Report of 2014-2015 by Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs.¹⁹

Another report on recent trends of migration published by UNO Report in 2019 on "Indian Diaspora" in *Times of India*, 9th September, 2019 said that "Gulf migration is 3.7 lakh in 2017, but earlier in 2015 it was 7.6 lakh." Research of this statistic says this declination of the migration trends caused by certain policies taken by the Gulf Countries. International Labour Organisation (ILO) estimated that in 2017 the UAE hosted 23

¹⁹ "There are about 30 million overseas Indian workers all over the world as per the recent World Bank Report. More than 90 per cent of these workers are in the Gulf countries and South East Asia. During 2014, about 8.04 lakh workers emigrated from India after obtaining emigration clearance. Out of this, about 3.29 lakh went to Saudi Arabia, about 2.24 lakh workers to UAE, about 0.75 Lakhs to Qatar, about 0.51 lakhs to Oman, and about 0.22 lakhs to Malaysia. States of Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Punjab, West Bengal and Rajasthan were the leading sourcing states in that order of the numbers who emigrated." (<https://www.thehindu.com/business/Economy/cost-of-remittances-likely-to-come-down/article7855933.ece>)

million migrant workers which included 9 million (which means 39 percent) women migrant workers and majority comes from India. Foreign national make up the majority of the population in Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and UAE (more than 80 percent of the population in Qatar and the UAE). The proportion of non-national in the employed population in the GCC countries is among the highest in the world with an average of 70.4 percent.

Rank	Country	2017	2016	2015	Percent of change (2017-2015)
1	UAE	149962	163716	225512	33 percent
2	Saudi Arabia	78611	165355	306642	74 percent
3	Kuwait	56380	72384	66543	15 percent
4	Oman	53332	63236	85028	37 percent
5	Qatar	24759	30619	59340	58 percent
6	Bahrain	11516	11964	15619	26 percent
Total (All GCC Countries)		374560	507274	758684	50 percent

*Data is collected from various replies given in the Indian Parliament, and ranking is based on 2017 Statics by UNO.

Emigration Checked Required (ECR) and Emigration Checked Not Required (ECNR)

The concept of ECR and ECNR is very new initiation taken by the Government of India to control the illegal and undocumented migration and to give proper protections to all the Indian migrants. From the history of the Gulf country's migration, there were no such strict rules for the migrants and for both the countries. It has been emerged in the year of 1983, when the Emigration Act of India was proposed as a Bill along-with the rules and regulations for the migrants. The amendment of this act happened in 2004 dated 26/02/2004 and regulated with effect from 15/03/2004. It extends to the whole of India and applies also to the citizens of India and outside India. Passport of Indian citizens are divided into two sections – ECR (Emigration Checked Required) and ECNR (Emigration Checked Not Required). Therefore, on July 25, 2015, in a report on *The Hindu*, Prof. S. Irudaya Rajan also said “ECR passports can be imaginatively interpreted as ‘Exploitation Compulsorily Recommended’.” The passports which are issued before January 2007,

those are without any notion will be under ECR; and the passport which are issued in or after January 2007 without any notion means ECNR. The POE is an officer recruited by the Government of India to give protection and aid advice to all the people of India who are intending to immigrate themselves to any one of the country which requires ECR and ECNR passport. After returning to their home country they have to report to this POE officer about their return.

(https://www.mea.gov.in/Images/attach/20_Emigration_and_You.pdf).²⁰ The idea of the ECR was started for the safety of the Indian citizens due to the legal conditions of the other countries where they want to migrate and it is based on the various situations and conditions. ECR is required for both male and female migrants who are not qualified 10th standard according to Indian education system. Their passport will be marked with a stamp displaying that ECR required and they need to get clearance from Immigration Office every time he/she wished to step outside of India. This clearance is only required if the intention of leaving India is to work abroad. On the other hand, if the same person is not intended to go for work, but for any other reason they do not need the ECR clearance. The Emigration Policy Division of Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs allow ECR passport holders to travel abroad after producing valid passport and valid visa at the time of Immigration Centres at the International Airports in India with the effect from 01/10/2007. For this research, the migrants towards the Gulf countries are most of the time in need of ECR, for them there are few facilities are there which could be maintained by the Recruiting Agents also.

On the other hand, for the second group of the passport holders if the migrant is qualified with 10th standard or graduated according to the Indian Education system, then there is no need of ECR. These migrants will be under the ECNR process. At the time of immigration their passports will not be marked, which means having ECNR passports they do not required to get clearance from the Immigration Office every time when he/she plans to go the outside of India.²¹ Apart from these rules, there are few rules added

²⁰ According to Section 2, (i) of the Emigration Act, 1983; these “Recruiting Agent” (RA) means “a person engaged in India in the business of recruitment for an employer and representing such employer with respect to any matter in relation to such recruitment including dealings with persons so recruited or desiring to be so recruited.” (<https://www.indiacode.nic.in/bitstream/123456789/1779/1/198331.pdf>)

²¹ Following people migrants will be treated under ECNR category: “All holders of Diplomatic/Official Passports, all Gazetted Government Servants, all income-tax payers (including Agricultural Income Tax payers) in their individual capacity, all professional degree holders, such as Doctors holding MBBS degrees or Degrees in Ayurved or Homoeopathy; Accredited Journalists; Engineers; Chartered Accountants;

specially for the unskilled women migrants who are migrating as domestic workers to GCC countries. It says they have to be with passports, visas for six months and contract letter of the employees.

All the above mentioned facilities has been taken by the Government of India, only for emigrants which includes any citizen of India who intends to emigrate and in this category it does not include any dependent of an emigrant, whether such dependent accompanies him/her or not or any person who has lived outside the India at any time after the age of the eighteen years, not for less than the three years or the spouse or child of such person.

Indian Immigrants in Gulf Countries: Some Defining Markers

Post war Europe had started recruiting the temporary ‘guest workers’ from the Mediterranean countries and the US has also employed temporary migrants (both legal and illegal) from the Latin America, but the size of those migrants were very small, compared to the local population of the Gulf. Statistic says that the Second Gulf War in 1991 made a huge displacement, approximately 1.5 million people among them one million people were Yemenis, who were expelled from Saudi Arabia and two lakhs Jordanians, 1.5 lakhs Palestinians among them most of the people were left for Kuwait. This massive crisis had created the job vacancies in the Gulf countries and which were started fulfilling by the South Asians, mainly by the people from three major countries - Indians, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis.

The specific study of this research will look into only Indian migrants and the States which will be studied mainly are Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Goa and West Bengal (others states will also be discussed). The samples for this study will be on both male and female unskilled and semi-skilled labours. The people who are migrating from India to any country of the Gulf region, on short-term contract, they are mostly belongs to

Lecturers; Teachers; Scientists; Advocates etc, Spouses and dependent children of category of persons listed from (2) to (4), Persons holding class 10 or higher qualification, seamen who are in possession of CDC or Sea Cadets, Desk Cadets (i) who have passed final examination of three year B.SC Nautical Science Courses at T.S. Chanakya, Mumbai; and (ii) who have undergone three months Pre-sea training at any of the Government approved Training Institutes such as T.S. Chanakya, T.S. Rehman, T.S. Jawahar, MTI (SCI) and NIPM, Chennai after production of identity cards issued by the Shipping Master, Mumbai/Calcutta/Chennai.” (https://mea.gov.in/images/pdf/emigration_and_you_new.pdf)

the low income family from the very rural and agricultural background. At times, they invest their own money to obtain their loan or sale their property to make their journey to an unknown land. Emigration gives a symbol of safety valve for India's unemployment. It is an *El-dorado* for Indian migrants.

The migration after the post oil era has changed the economic, political, social, educational demography and it affects the tradition of class structure and emerged a progressive disintegrated new class system. This includes Upper Class as Royal families, big-business families and new families; New Middle Class as merchants, traders, bureaucrats, professionals, intelligentsia and skilled workers; and the Lower Class as oil proletariat, lower-rank employees, un-skilled and semi-skilled workers, settled and nomadic Bedouins. The rise of new class division started an invisible competition and visible conflict among each other. Based on these competitions and hazards the lifestyle and mind set of every migrants has been changed and all the problems in the work field, bad relationships with companies has also been raised. These will be discussed below:

Occupational Condition

- Large groups of Indian migrant workers in the Gulf countries are working for the construction sector as unskilled and semi-skilled workers. They are employed in the field of building of housing projects, roads, airports, office buildings and industries. They are working for Arab companies as well as Korean, American, British companies and also for some reputed Indian companies. They come with a short term contract for one or two years and in between they can be moved to another project by their company.
- The second large groups of Indians are employed by private sector in industrial services. They work as factory workers, departmental store clerks, hotel boy, security guard, drivers and so on.
- For female migrants, they are mainly involved as domestic workers. But from Kerala both the married and the unmarried women are going as nurse (sometimes they can be treated as skilled migrants as they have completed their diploma and certificate course in the nursing training) for the big hospitals in Dubai, Saudi Arabia and Oman. A very few numbers of male nurses also can be seen in Kuwait and Qatar.

Reasons of Migration

From Homeland

- For Indians, migration is basically happening because of the lack of job opportunities in the home country and not getting satisfied salary. The large construction companies like Joannov and Paraskevaides (a Cypriot firm), Bernard Sunley (British), and Engineering Products India, obtain group visa from UAE Labour Ministry. They pay \$6 to \$7 in a day with all the facilities, where migrants can remit at least \$100 in a month (Weiner, 1982). These opportunities make them very attractive to migrate till today. In the present day scenario, people are migrating for the handsome amount of remittances. Migrants are also belonging to the agricultural family background and the economy based on only agriculture is not sufficient for a family to lead a good life in the present situation. So, at least one member of these kinds of families is willing to migrate to the Gulf countries.
- Migrants want a better livelihood for their parents or next generation, better education for children.

“Why am I going to Dubai? For of my children. I am sending them to the good schools. My son wants to go to Hyderabad city for his higher education and I want to fulfil his dreams. That’s why I am going to Dubai.”²²

- Sometimes women or some men are migrating to earn huge money for herself or for daughters and sometimes for sister’s marriage dowry.

“I have three younger sisters. Being an only brother, I have to get them married off. It is my responsibility as brother to earn more money for paying a good dowry.”²³

- If the male member of the family is not efficient for earning a certain amount or he spends all of his income to consume abnormal level of alcohol, then the woman of that family has to go outside for work. Already a crisis of job opportunity is prominent in India, so the woman has chosen to migrate as domestic workers or in some other sector.
- Being in a tax free zone, the migrants can save their earnings and send the extra money as remittances to their family for traditional obligations, enhancing status symbols and mechanising agriculture or any other traditional craft.

²² Interview was taken at POE office, Hyderabad from a migrant labour who is going to Dubai.

²³ Interview was taken at NORKA office, Trivandrum from a migrant.

- Vacancies for nurses are very limited in Kerala and as well as anywhere in India; Gulf is a growing country where many new multi-specialty hospitals are coming out with huge number of vacancies. Kerala women are going towards Gulf for their better opportunity and independency.
- Apart from all these above mentioned reasons, there are other non-economic reasons that constituted push factors that applied both to male and female migrants. Caste was one such significant factor that propelled outward migration. Emigration for the poor, unemployed, landless and lower caste labourer thus not only provided economic sustenance but hope of social emancipation in terms of removing him/her from the immediate locale of the caste system and related exploitation. For this study, the samples are belongs to the Muslims, Christians, Hindus, Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe community.

From Hostland

- The local population of the pre-oil booming Gulf countries was very small and lacked with the technical skills which were needed for the modern traditional society. Less than half of the adult populations in most of the Gulf States are trained either in vocational education or in the traditional Quranic schools and they are with poor knowledge in English language. A sizable number of educated local labour forces are into the government administration services. Because of this, the importance of labour for all the levels of job market had been necessary. They had started adopting workers since the very beginning of the oil economy as one of the major State policies in all the Gulf countries. The introduction of the foreign labours and the professionals has been continued in such large numbers that some of the native populations in the Gulf have become minorities and marginalised in their own countries.
- A second reason for importing labour is that the Gulf governments are attempting to make cultural diversity in their economic system and reduce their dependence upon oil exports by investing in industry. They want to tied up with an exchange programme with the other developed and rich countries which will help them to progress not only culturally but also in the field of education, modernity etc.
- It is forcing more for the middle-class women in the wealthier countries to enter into the labour market. It is one of the main reasons behind the high demand of the domestic workers. The work pressure is getting increased day by day so that many

professionals are now working for overtime. Some are taking duty for night shifts or early morning shifts as their workplace is extending the operation hours due to the growing business competition. Many families have become “time-starved”, they are carrying great burdens and having difficulties to balance between both personal and professional field. Because of the shortage in child-care facilities dual-income families are now completely relying on migrant nannies and housekeepers to take care of their children and to keep the home safe and secure. Among many upper class families in the Gulf, the number of domestic workers they are recruiting has an important indicator of wealth and family status. As Oishi (2005) said that the masters think that all the domestic workers are like Mercedes Benz. They use highly cost car to maintain the social economical status. Here in the Gulf countries rich people of the native citizens and high skilled migrated people from India keeping house maid/domestic workers/nannies not always as a helper. Sometimes it is also to maintain and remain in the high social status.

- Another important reason for a company to import labour could be for not giving preference to local or Arab migrants is that, it is difficult to reject their claims for medical beneficiaries, free schooling system, subsidised housing facilities and government employment which the State ensures for the local Arab migrants who internally migrated in the same country.

Problems faced by them

Statistic says that the numbers of migrants to the Gulf countries are increasing day by day. On the other hand, simultaneously there are problems among them with the procedures, companies, even with their own country. Some problems are being recovered and some are still going on. Forgetting about all these problems, Gulf migration is happening both legally and illegally. The problems which are founded those are mainly for the illegal migrants. If the legal migrants will face a problem he/she can go to the Indian Embassy, which are there to help the Indian migrants, on the other hand illegal migrants cannot go for complaining for the lack of proper documents, sometime they saw that their names are not there in the company payroll. Indian Government and Embassy are reluctant to seek any change in the status of migrants. They are concerned about wages and working conditions, which is stipulated by the contracts and properly adhered

by employers. But the Embassy is not equipped to monitor contracts not to investigate complaints. Problems will be discussed in following:

With the Companies

- For the Gulf countries, there are histories of slavery from the ancient period but no incidents were documented properly. Only the oral history or oral records are available. This cultivated dependence on a slave population has been suggested as one reason for Emiratis' reluctance to take on unskilled jobs that involve manual labour. In this way the low wage workers of these Gulf countries are always leading their lives as slaves. Two public sectors of the Indian firms played an important role in the Middle East, Engineering Projects India (EPI) and the National Building Construction Corporation (NBCC). "The Government of India permits Indian companies to pay a lower wage to Indian workers so that they can successfully compete for contracts in the Gulf against British, American, Cypriot, Korean and Japanese firms. Indian companies in the Gulf import some of their engineering equipment and construction supplies from India, while the Indian workforce in the Gulf imports consumer goods from India, including Indian food, saree and Indian films." (Weiner, 1982) People who are migrating for the high wages but sarcastically it is true that from the history to the present contemporary context the low wage or unsatisfied wage issue is one of the main problems among the Gulf migrants. Salaries are often not paid throughout the contract; they are being cheated by the company as they are being illegal migrants, when they realised and understood, they cannot complain to any authority not even to the Indian Embassy, when there is any legal issue company can easily deny their employees due to the absence of proper documents. Sometimes not paid at all for several months but they will be paid towards the end of the contractual period, resulting in workers being repatriated without full payment of their dues.

"We are not being paid for the last three months and always the amount of loan is increasing at our home. It is difficult to the family members to maintain their livelihood and for growing up a child. Very few amount I can send them just to survive that is also from my savings." ²⁴

This problem is same for a person who works with a company and a domestic worker.

²⁴ Interview was taken from a construction worker who works in Kuwait, but came to West Bengal, India for holidays.

“In the same house I’m working for last two years. They haven’t been paid me any amount of my salary. If I will go and ask them they will be surprised and will say they will give me my salary when I will leave the job finally and go back to India.”²⁵

Also, on 7th September, 1999 *The Times of India* it is reported that, “Most of the Malayali women employed in the Gulf countries are for domestic works. They have neither voice nor safety. The salary too cannot be said to be commensurate with the work. But they bear it out as poverty awaits them at home.”

- Bringing family is also discouraged for the unskilled and semi-skilled migrant labours irrespective of gender, whether a skilled migrant, who is in an administrative or upper level service or in white-collar job, easily can bring their family for staying with them.

“If you are a businessman, you can bring your family and you can live your life as the way you want and you can leave according to urgency. But being a labour you cannot bring your family. Once you come here, you cannot leave immediately, sometimes for emergency also.”²⁶

- Employers are sponsoring agreements and visas for the labour migrants. These visas are sometimes do not receive by the migrants on their arrival and leave them in a trajectory moment in an unknown world. Due to these problems, their lives could be in hell. A report by *The Times of India*, dated on 9th November 1999, said: two boys who worked at Doha were in nightmare. They have paid Rs. 50,000/- to the recruiting agent and to the employer, instead of giving work as skilled workers or as contracted, they were used to do sweeping and working hours were 16 hours in a day and had to beg their evening meal. Insufficient salary was paid for the first few weeks and then it stopped. A colleague of them was committed suicide.
- Work permit fees paid to the recruiting agent in homeland are being deducted from their salaries.
- Working hours are generally longer than the generally recognised or written in the contract, eight hours work in a day also according to the Labour Law of Gulf countries, which will be discussed in the Chapter Four where primary data will be

²⁵ Interview was taken from a domestic worker who works in Oman from Telangana, India.

²⁶ Interview was taken from a security guard, works in Bahrain from Kerala, India.

analysed. Sometimes the working scheduled is divided according to the religious preference. In a Muslim dominated State non-Muslim labours are always getting humiliation by the working hour, especially during Ramadan (holy month according to Islamic calendar) when Muslim gets holiday or less working hours for their day long fasting ritual, the people belong to the other religion community have to work overtime to fulfil their targets and for that there is no extra payment. When a group of Indian workers are threatened to strike after contractors said that Muslim workers need only six hours work during Ramadan, but Hindus had to continue for 10 hours. The Indian Embassy reminded the workers that the employers were within their legal rights and those unions and strikes were illegal. (Weiner, 1980) So, again here we can see that migrant labours are marginalised and becoming voiceless in front of the power or State authority.

- Gulf government provides health, education, medical and housing facilities to the natives, not to the migrants. Construction companies or private agencies provide dormitories and medical services to their workers, usually near the construction site, which is always not satisfactory and healthy. They usually stay in a small room with 20 members, but there is no option to go anywhere, because separate arrangement is very costly. The rooms are not airy and hygienic. Also in this dormitories system workers used to stay in a shifting hours basis. Like, those who have morning duties they left the room in the morning and the workers having night shift return in the morning and sleep in the same bed. In this 'living room crisis' syndrome it is known as 'shifting sleeping duty'. On the other hand, for the case of female domestic workers the Gulf Government has a rule to make a separate servant's quarter for the maid. But half of the houses are not following the rule. So, the female workers who stay at their master's house for 24*7 job pattern they have to sleep or take rest either in the living/drawing room or in the balcony, which also arise the questions of privacy and health issues.
- Sexual harassments and physical abuses are another important factor for the female migrants, irrespective of their works, as a domestic servants or nurse.
- Migrant women in the Gulf are contractually bound to do celibacy, and any kind of illegality of this rule, even if it does not result in visible pregnancy, even it is suspicious that a female worker is sometime engaging herself in sexual activities, in this grounds she could be terminated, deported and often imprisonment can be

done at their working place. This is symbolizing as a crime, which is called Zina²⁷.

With the Natives

Before discussing the problems with the natives, we should look into the nativist phenomenon, where the *theories of nativism* come under the American experience. From earlier discussion it shows that Gulf and India had a good cultural exchange, but unfortunately the migrant labours of the Gulf faces problems with the native or local which started only after the post oil-booming period, when native populations are getting less employment in their own country for a lower level job. Problems are like:

- Unskilled or semi-skilled labour cannot participate in local programs as well as in their own religious rituals also with the skilled labours and their family. They feel identity crisis and cultural displacement. Coming from the different culture background they are unable to associate themselves with the natives. Also working as a labour or low-wage worker make them feel insecure among the own countrymen, so they cannot associate with the other people who is also coming from India.
- On 28th July 2016, one of the leading Indian daily newspaper *The Hindu* says, “in Saudi Arabia 10,000 Indian workers are jobless with the over dues and respected companies are not been able to give their food also. They are trying to return to India, whether the Indian Government promised them that they will be taken care of them with every possibility.” But there was no guarantee whether they can return or not with the help of Government of India and Indian Embassy. And the reason is not having proper documents with them. Here is also the concept of localisation worked. Being local they cannot think themselves as marginalised and minor, so they are forcing their authority to make policies and rules where there should be restricted number of migrants in the job sector.
- In the literary representations also the struggle for localisation is observed. Where the scholar of migration studies said, it also described that why local people are showing their anger to the migrants who are mainly skilled worker and working in the government sector or in white-collar jobs.

²⁷Having sex outside of the marriage in Muslim Jurisprudence. It is especially for women.

- Migrants are discriminated from the every corner of their lives in host land. They are not having any political rights. They cannot join in any unions. This is a tricks of the natives to get benefit of not creating any unrest from the migrants. Migrants are always a national issue and Government is there to give them priority. So unrest by migrants means government will take quick action, which may not be always for the natives. That is the reason Government of the hostland making their rules for the benefit of their own citizens. Language problem is also an issue. Majorly used language in Gulf countries are Arabic and English. People faced this problem sometimes for their own negligence. As a worker said: *“Because we did not want to learn ... it was not interesting..... But when I came to work here, I came know, English is the main language and without the knowledge of English it is difficult to survive and work here.”*²⁸
- Sometimes for the Hindu Indian migrants to a Muslim dominated country, they face religious identity crisis and communal unrest (may be due to some political crises in the country of origin), which can be at the extreme level to lose their job. One report came in *The Economic Times*, Kolkata, on 31st December 1993, titled “Hindus in the Gulf paying price for Ayodhya”, the report said: “Simmering anger over the destruction of the Babri mosque in Ayodhya continues to affect non-Muslim Indians, especially Hindus, working in the Kingdom. What many non-Muslim Indians face is prospect of losing jobs once their work permit expires.” The report further said: “... servants, maids, porters and drivers were being treated with the even more contempt than is usually received for such South Asian by their Saudi employers.” The estimated that nearly 1 million Indian expatriates were working in Saudi Arabia, of whom, nearly, 600000 were from Kerala.

Sometimes, problems can be different from the usual one. As it is said in *Times of India*, a leading daily newspaper report titled, *Indian Worker stuck in Bahrain*; dated on 23rd March, 2011, described a pathetic condition of an Indian worker who went to Bahrain for working. Originally this person was belonged to Andhra Pradesh and got infection of HIV virus. Before sending him back to India, Bahrain Government took him to the hospital to recheck the report. Again it shows the infection of the virus. Now the pathetic scenario came, the person was not having passport with him and it was kept by the company. When the incident was known by the Government of both the countries they came to

²⁸Interview was taken in West Bengal from a returnee.

know that actually he is an intentional illegal migrants or trapped in the process of the illegal migration. Authority of the company was also unknown about the problems. Result of it, he is not carrying his own document. But with the help of the both Governments and his company where he used to work somehow managed to return home.

At Home

In India and even sometimes at their own houses or locality migrant labours are facing problems. They are bound to leave their family members (like spouse, children, parents and siblings). Though they are leaving to earn more and better livelihood, actually they are not happy with what happens at back home.

- ‘Feminisation’ or ‘materialisation’ of migration makes ‘crisis of paternal care’ among the left behind children. (either father or mother migrated, sometime both are migrated)
- For female member migration male has to maintain all the household duties.
- For male migration female has to maintain all the household duties. Due to the male superiority and male inferiority, in many cases female member is ill-treated by the others whether it is aged or young. She will play a crucial role in the adjustment pattern. It is her responsibility to hold both, her own and the extended family together. Though she herself goes under the pressure of the changing situations and new demands made on her own. Still women do come out of the shell and become independent decision makers.
- Sometime marriage could be broken, when the husband did not come back for a long time or he got married with someone in the Gulf or he is having extra-marital affair.
- Women migration is a historical phenomenon. It was started as the concept of ‘Coolie Woman’, still for the Indian society and tradition does not accept the unmarried girl who is migrating to earn, some time she will be addressed as ‘impure’ while coming back to homeland (this case happened in Kerala)²⁹. Because in Dubai and Saudi Arabia as a developed country she will have free access of everything. And when an unmarried boy migrates he will not be addressed with anything.

²⁹ Interview was taken at NORKA office, Trivandrum, Kerala.

Impact of Covid 19

Sudden emergence of the worldwide crisis for Covid-19 has very bad impact on the migration process and the migrants. Women and men, both were out of the country could not and still unable to come back to their own country. They are either not getting permission from the Indian Embassy or border is closed or else once they will be back, they are afraid of losing their jobs. Uncertain declaration of complete lockdown did not give time to take any decision. In this situation these workers/labours were stuck into their work places. Without doing works, they were not paid, or some companies paid advance for some months which they have to return by working hard and overtime when the lockdown will be over, so surviving was a big issue. Very few companies are there, which had taken care of their employees. They paid salary on time and they took measure for their health and food and insure the health of their family members back home. Those who are working in the factory or construction site, they stayed in a very unhygienic condition. The Covid protocol says to maintain physical distance, but these people were staying in a room of ten people without window. Existential crisis are highly visible. In this tough situation of pandemic some organisations in the Gulf countries came forward to help these migrant workers to survive and recover these difficulties. Asian American Hotel Owners Association (AAHOA) opened 2000 free rooms for the workers who were stuck in the hostland. Also these rooms were used for the quarantine and isolation purposes. Another remarkable work was done by Overseas Malayali Association (ORMA); they helped all those stranded Indian migrants in UAE. One of the executive members of ORMA said, which is reported on *The Economic Times*; on 24th May, 2020, stated that, “With the help of our members and their families, we are trying to address issues of food, medical support and medicine supplies of migrant workers who have lost their jobs and raising funds to buy air tickets for Indian and non-Indians. An estimated 1.8 lakh Indian workers in the Gulf were waiting for their turn to board one of the special flights being organised by the Government of India, under the Vande Bharat Mission (VBM) scheme.” Vande Bharat Mission is a scheme initiated by the Government of India to bring back those stranded migrants workers in abroad during the Covid-19 pandemic and sudden lockdown. On the other hand, due to lack of worldwide economical progression gone down job facilities, recruitment process and demand for labour also became less. So the women who wanted to migrate or came home for a holiday they are neither getting new jobs nor getting chance to join in their earlier work.

The journey of this chapter started with a history of two Gulf, first is pre-oil booming Gulf and second is post-oil booming Gulf. Though the India's connection with Gulf is not new phenomenon, but this chapter denotes the post-oil boom relation with India and the necessity of Indian labours. On the other hand, here I observed the necessity of the Indian people for migrating themselves to the Gulf. I have taken interviews of some migrants which I have mentioned here and tried to discuss their problems and conditions. Very recently Covid-19 pandemic has an impact on Gulf migrants. Sudden lockdown feared them of losing their jobs. In this difficult situation how they had survived and Government of both homeland and hostland helped them to be rescued that also I have mentioned. In the next chapter I shall discuss about the lives of labours who are being migrated to Singapore.

Indian Migration to Singapore

Introduction

Writing a ‘standard’ history of Singapore is difficult. There are diversities in culture and versatile experiences among people are so prominent that neither foreigner nor Singaporean of any one community can speak for the society as together. The name of the Singapore has a long historical connection with the Ancient History of India. The original name of this country was *Temasek*, which was taken from Indian language, in Malay it means *lake*, a land which is surrounded by water.

There was a famous Chinese inhabitant Wang Ta-yuan, Temasek who lived as native in Singapore and described about the undivided country. Wolters (1970) said Wang Ta-yuan made this place for the traders who came from China for doing export and import business. On the other hand it also describe that, “it could be taken that the Malays are also convened the name of the island; they would in all circumstances have given it from their own word “Sinngah”, which means “a place to stop at”, or “to bait by the way” (Wolters, 1970).

History of Modern Singapore

This modern Singapore was founded on the 30th January in the year 1819, when one of the famous local rulers of the Johor signed a preliminary contract with Sir Stamford Raffles, who was actually given all the credits of this historical event of the foundation of Singapore and became Singapore’s second resident and chief administrator for a short period in 1823. The first initiation was taken by him was to make Singapore as a free trade port for the indentured labour. Being in the different kind of geographical location at the southernmost point of the Asian mainland, which is a cause of Singapore’s commercial and economical success in modern times, but earlier it was not actually important when the routes were depended on trading which was mainly centred on the Southeast Sumatra and the crossing towards China was made by West Borneo.

The East India Company repudiated Raffles's attempts to prevent Dutch's growth in the South Sumatra but Lord Hastings, the Governor General of India, permitted him to visit Calcutta in 1818. Raffles failed to win Hastings over to his plans for diffusing British influence throughout Sumatra, but he was succeeded to take a decision for protecting British trade route through the Straits of Malacca. Most of the Indians in early phases of establishing Singapore were soldiers from the camp or the indentured labours. But there were a few groups of merchants from the Penang's large Indian mercantile community. The most important person was Naraina Pillai, who was with Raffles and in his second visit to the Singapore in the May 1819. He started a brick kiln, became Singapore's first building contractor and also opened a shop for cotton piece goods.

For the remembrance of making Singapore as a British trading colony Raffles wrote in a letter to his friend William Marsden in June 1819, with a note saying that, his new dream country just an infant. He thinks it is his own child and for the progression of this country he will nurture this country very carefully. After this, in May 1823, Raffles issued a regulation to stop the slave trading system in Singapore and declared that no one who had come since 29th January, 1819 could be remained as a slave. Slave borrowers, who were numerous among the Malay population, were to work off their debts for period of maximum five years.

"According to the first official census in January 1824, Singapore had nearly eleven thousands inhabitants, out of that Malay still formed the largest community, with the Chinese in second position. Third place was taken by Bugis and that time also 756 Indians along with 74 Europeans, 16 Armenians and 15 Arabs were there. Also it was noticeable that 12 European firms were running with the agents from London or Calcutta houses." (Turnbull, 1977, p. 26)

Indian community made an impact in the Singaporean history. The majority people were labours, ferrymen or tradesmen. They were divided into separate group on the basis of their background, language, culture and religion. In the middle of the nineteenth century there were Parsis, Tamil and North Indian businessmen who were standing in Singapore, but they were recognised as individuals rather than the community leaders.

"Britain's political intervention in the Malay states from 1874 onwards and the development of peninsular tin and rubber production diverted the attention of the officials, developers and writers away from the Straits Settlements. An enterprising new

generation of the colonial officials became absorbed in the Malay states. Singapore acquired her own civil service only in 1954, eight years after she became a separate crown colony. Singapore's independence was proclaimed on 9th August, 1965. Immediately it was recognized as an independent republic within the Commonwealth by Britain, Australia, New Zealand and the United States and in September 1965 she was admitted to the United Nations." (Turnbull, 1977, p. 97) "At first Singapore government spoke of Malaya as 'one people now divided into two oceans', 'one people in two countries' and aimed to make Singapore as a model of tolerance which would eventually lead to the rebuilding of the Malaysian federation. Malay remained as their national language and the new national anthem "Majulah Singapura" was sung in the Malay language. The last formal links with Malaysia were cut in 1973 with the separation of stock exchange and the rubber market." (Yew, *Singapore Parliamentary Debates*, <https://www.nlb.gov.sg/>)

Indian Migration to Singapore

The arrival of Europeans in Southeast Asia and Indian merchant's trading through the waters of the Bay of Bengal, negotiated their ships through the Straits of Malacca, and extended towards the South China Sea, all these incidents happened long centuries back and this was the ancient history and beginning of Indian migration to Singapore. From the mid-eighteenth century the Indians of Singapore started improving their positions and gradually started competing with Europeans in the maritime commerce.

Later, during the British Raj, Indian migration was started with the Lascar and Sepoys of the Second Battalion twentieth Regiment of the Bengal Native Infantry from Bengal, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh under the Hastings's charge as Governor General of India. The political and the economic relationship between the Colonial Office situated in London and these territories decided about the recruitment patterns to make betterment of the employment relations and working conditions in Singapore. Mainly they worked as garrison and convict labours, but other than this they were survived in 'bazar contingent' as domestic servants, chaiwallas, grooms and dhobis, largely lower caste Hindus and Muslims. Convict labours were mainly from the overcrowded people in the Company's Indian Jail. In the 1850s, Governor Blundell paid tribute to the contributions of the convicts, saying that the roads, bridges, jetties which are exist today in the Singapore and as well as in the undivided Singapore were made by the indentured labours. They had

given their hardest manual labour and skills to make this country and all the status which the country Singapore is getting this is only the result of their successful work.

McNair (2018), as the Superintendent of convicts in Singapore, also explained there was a clear visualisation of caste system. If a man of higher caste travelled with a lower caste people in the ship to cross the 'kalapani' or 'black water', he/she will be untouchable for his own community at back home. In India all of his relatives and friends disowned him in this caste issue. With the comparing to the other communities, "Indian community has been a minority, 6 percent and 12 percent of the total population. In fact, the 1980 census percentage of 6.4 percent is the lowest since 1821. It was highest in 1871 at 11.8 percent." (Sandhu, 1969, p. 65) Generally, Indians were popularly known as either 'Benggalis', who were represented the North Indians, or 'Kling'³⁰ or 'Keling', who were represented the South Indians. Muslim merchants are generally known as 'moplahs' or 'kakaks'. Gujeratis are generally known as 'orang Bombay'. Rai (2004) also stated that, "Almost every strata of the Indian society was represented amongst the convicts, including Benares *brahmanas*, Sikh and Dogra *Ksatriyas*, Chettiar, Bengali and Parsi financiers and *ryots* and untouchables from the various parts of the subcontinent." (Rai, 2004, p. 65) Convict labours in the Strait Settlements were used to call themselves as *kumpane ke nauker* or Company's Servant. In the novel *A Different Sky* (2010), the author Meira Chand also described the pathetic condition of the Indians during the Japanese Occupation.

Along with the tradition of caste system, racism was also important in the history of Singapore's migration. Push factor was also an encouraged process in labour migration from southern India. "Agrestic slavery had long been a feature of the political economy of these districts in Southern India from which labour emigrants to the Strait arrived." (Clothey, 2006, p. 6) The Methodist Missionary William Goudie described the lives of low-caste labours,

"The first law of life in the parchery is that for every mouth that eats there must be two hands earning. From the child of four upwards they must all be breadwinners or they cannot be bread-eaters ... life is almost literally from hand to mouth, and a few days without work or a sick person in the house means hunger ... and in years

³⁰A local term used to refer to South Indians. A popular legend has it that "kling" is onomatopoeia for the sound made by the ankle-chains of the early India convicts. However, it is more likely a corruption of the ancient Indian kingdom of Kalinga, used to refer to people from that region.

of drought there are much longer periods, when the life of the labourer is one long battle with the ghastly presence of hunger.” (Clothey, 2006, p. 7)

Hermann Hesse wrote about class and caste discrimination during his journey to Singapore and how an Indian always adjusted himself with all kind of tortures just to earn bread for livelihood, in his travelogue named *Singapore Dream and Other Adventures: Travel Writings from an Asian Journey* (2018). He said,

“I saw a labourer who was chased from the work site and pursued by the overseer, who kept beating him. He had committed some kind of minor treachery, and he was completely willing to be punished, but under no circumstances did he wanted to stay there, just to stay there, stay by his work, stay by his bread, stay by his honour, stay by his communality with the others. The strong young man unresistingly let himself be struck and whipped with the end of a rope. He slowly yielded to the violence howling loud and without restraint like a wounded animal, and great tears ran down his dark face.” (Hesse, 2008, p. 47)

On the other hand, women migration was very difficult and controversial as well. A shortage of women is a feature of all pioneer immigrant societies, but here it was artificially prolonged in the plantations by the endurance of the male immigrant throughout the whole period of indenture, which is known as ‘free’ emigration to Malaya. Stepping out of ‘home’ or the place of origin was thus an immodest and unchaste act for the Indian women. If it was considered polluting for the lower castes to migrate, it was twice as immoral and impure for a woman to migrate. ‘Gender’ emerges as a significant concept of analysis in the study of Indian migration to the Southeast Asia because of the total silence rendered history about it. “Migration is written as a by-product of the economic process of colonialism. These processes are by and large shown to be gender neutral. Indians were less than 10 percent of total Singapore populations during 1845 census, but by the 1860 it became second large community. Most Indian immigrants were young men, who were spared and saved to accumulate enough money to return home to settle. Though very few Indian women came to Singapore until 1860s and the sex ratio had become imbalance. Female migrants were especially single women when they were moved for non-economic reasons such as overcoming the stigma of widowhood or were social outcasts. It was also seen as a vehicle of female emancipation.” (Vertovec, 1992, p. 59) From the late nineteenth century mobility was a gendered reality: a higher number of men moved than the women; and men and women were moved for very different reasons.

The presence of women in any population and more so as migrant one is very significant for the manner in which it constructs and negotiates its identity. “A male labour profile and consequently as unbalanced sex ratio meant that the community was unable to keep traditional Indian values based on the family.” (Mani, 1977, p. 147) “In 1901, there were only 171 Indian women to every 1,000 Indian men in Malaya, there was a marked improvement in the sex-ratio by 1931 when there were 482 women to every 1,000 men.” (*Singapore and Straits Dictionary*, 1901, p. 99) The Sub-Controller of Negapatam was responsible for Malaya emigration and made a proposal to increase the numbers of married women. In a report on 7th May 1908, he said, ‘Women do go, and many are of the ease-loving class of prostitutes.’ But a married woman has a fear for the loss of reputation.

Though crossing the sea was always considered polluting the upper casts through their small numerical taboo, as the whole ships were used to be filled up either by the lower castes or by the convicts. It continues till nineteenth and twentieth century also. After that, with the continuous progression of social development though the notion of untouchability had been disappeared from the mind of the people, but it had been replaced with another notion known as identity or being ‘Other’. But, with the problems and hazards till today Indians are migrating to the Singapore as ‘permanent residents’ and as ‘transit migrants’³¹ both male and female migrants. They perform in the essential service sector, called as “3D (Dirty, Difficult and Dangerous)” (<https://www.ilo.org/safework/areasofwork/hazardous-work/lang--en/index.htm>). They are involving themselves for the nation of Singapore. According to their job status, Singapore’s emigrant workers could be divided into the two sections – one is guest workers and other is immigrant workers. The first group of migrants which was named as guest workers/temporary migrants, mainly involved in the blue-collar unskilled and semi-skilled workers, who earn under Singapore \$2000 per month. The second group called as immigrant labour which is a community of skilled/professional migrated workers or skilled work-permit holders who hold the post of supervisors, managerial and professional positions. They earn more than Singapore \$2000 per month and get

³¹ These migrants will not get permanent residency. They have to come back after completion of their two/three year’s contract. They are mainly low paid labour worker. This ‘transit migrant’ system started after the 1965, when Singapore Government passed the Regulation of Employment Act; “which introduced a one-year permit scheme for unskilled labour. They are prohibited from marrying Singaporeans without getting prior permission from the State and were generally not allowed to bring their dependents with them.” (Oishi, 2020, p. 22)

permanent residency and all the facilities of citizenship in Singapore. And, according to the period of migration, Indians in Singapore has three divisions. First is the group of Indians who have migrated to Singapore for more than two/three generations earlier, called ‘Old Indians’. Second group contains high skilled Indians, professionals and entrepreneurs came after 1990s, known as ‘New Indians’ and the third group is migrant workers. On 5th January, 1996 *Business Times*, reported that “migrant blue-collar workers on work permits³² totalled 300000, while there were 50000 foreign workers on employment passes.” (Kaur, 2006)

The below mentioned table will give a statistics of the number of ‘work permit’ holders went to Singapore excluding domestic workers.

Year	Number of work-permit holders	Population of Singapore
February 1994	>135000	3419048
2006	420000	4401365
2011	670000	5183688
2014	770000	5469724
2016	753000	5607283
2018	718800	5638676
March 2020	720800	5703569 (according to Census Report 2019)

*Data Source: Statistics from Singapore Archive and Ministry of Manpower.
(<https://www.mom.gov.sg/documents-and-publications#/>)

Kangany/Kangani System

Kangany/Kangani is a popular system of individual labour recruitment in the coffee and later in the rubber plantation which was controlled by the Indian Immigration Committee in 1907. The word Kangany/ Kangani was taken from Tamil language which means an overseer or a supervisor; in Malay and Ceylon language it became a specific labour term for the foreman of a group of labours who were working in neighbour on a plantation or construction. There was a person to recruit workers from the villages of India, and will get paid by the commission for each labour. Comparing to the indentured labour system,

³² A foreigner with a Government issued individual permission to work in Singapore. It also includes Employment–Pass, S-Pass holders who are generally withdraw salaries under SGD \$2400 per month and those who get salary SGD\$ 4600 qualifies the eligibility for the Permanent Residents (PR).

the contractual position of these labours under the kangani system was less difficult. Most of the time contract was verbal or informal rather than written and documented and the worker had the right to discontinue his contract within a month's notice. In this process, fewer amounts paid for the recruitment, so that Government preferred this system most. In the early 1930s, under the impact of the Great Depression³³, "Kangani recruitment system was suspended and it was formally abolished in 1938. During 1918-1930, licensed Kangani labours in Singapore was 1129, among them 951 were male workers and 178 were female workers." (*Straits Settlements Annual Departmental Records* from 1918-1930, https://archive.org/stream/annualdepartment1921stra/annualdepartment1921stra_djvu.txt) The Indian Immigration Department in the Straits only maintained records of labours recruited by kanganis in the Strait Settlements after 1899. From then till 1917, no kangani-recruited labours were recorded in Singapore. A Labour Commission of Singapore reported in the Government Report of Singapore, 1969 that,

"The [kangani became] ... the person on whom the labours were completely dependent for work, wages and accommodation. The workers would become indebted to him and, because of low wages, could with difficulty redeem their indebtedness and assume free economic status. Furthermore, recruitment of Indian labour took place by province and village and ... caste status, kept the various groups relatively immobile." (p. 5)

Though Kangani system was stopped, but recruitment procedure is continuing till today with the 'free labour trading method' from India, where free labours volunteered themselves for their employment at Malayan depots in India and they are assisting by the agents in migrating to Malaya. This system is again cheaper than the Kangani because no payments required to be paid to anyone.

³³ "It was a severe worldwide economic depression that took place during the 1930s. The timing of the Great Depression varied across the nation however, in most countries it started in 1929 and lasted until the late 1930s. It was the longest, deepest and most widespread depression of the twentieth century. In the twenty-first century, it was commonly used as an example how far the world's economy can decline. It had an impact on Indian economy which was then under the rule of the British Raj. The Government of British India adopted a protective trade policy which, though beneficial to the UK, caused great damage to the Indian economy. During this period, 1929-37, exports and imports fell drastically crippling seaborne international trade. The railways and the agricultural sector were the most affected." [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Depression]

Migration and Cultural Exchange

India is a country with great historical values and cultural heritages, also with the help of British and other revolutionary activities helped to improve Indian education system at that time with an impact of pan-Indians. Through the ships and long sea-way journey from India to Singapore, they were carrying their homeland nostalgia and traditions, later they did not stop in one point, they brought also the social and political movements which were related to Indian independence movement. In this section it will be discussed in further.

Education

In Singapore, the standard of Indian education system is better, especially in the primary stage. The demand for Tamil education is not commendable on the mainland; the Government has been able to make moderate provision for Tamil in the education system along with the vernacular system of education. Since 1947, Tamil primary schools were incorporated into the national system. All primary education had to be given by their mother tongue, due to this regulation; the child was not able to go the English medium school after completion of primary level for secondary education. The demand for secondary education in Tamil was very poor, and there was one such school which was able to take in all pupils who wanted to continue their education in Tamil medium. Tamil language could be taken as a subject in the English school. In 1859, the Singapore St. Francis Xavier Malabar School had been started in Tamil medium. In 1932, Ramakrishna Mission established the Vivekananda Boys School and later the Sarada Girls School as Tamil medium schools. It was an attempt by missionaries to serve the old settled Tamil population in the settlements. In 1948, Tamil Education Board was established. But many Tamil schools could not run properly for the lack of financial support and those schools were for coolies and labours, as they do not stay as that. With all the difficulties till today, an active Tamil literacy culture has been implanted and continues to flourish.

The first Tamil newspaper was published in the 1920s and thereafter there has been considerable publishing activity in newspapers, periodicals, literary magazines, some novels and religious expositions. Many of the newspapers, periodicals and literary magazine were shortlisted as financially unsuccessful. *Thamil Murasuin* Singapore has been succeeded in establishing themselves soundly forever thirty years and recently

became a third national daily. Malayalam newspaper *Kerala Bandhu* has also been established in the late 1930s.

Under the labour code of 1923, with the help of the Government of India, “provision was made for the education of labours’ children. The code stipulated that a school be erected on each estate with ten or more resident children of school going age. The school going age was defined as from six to twelve years. It was one thing to legislate for educational facilities; it was another to see that these were conscientiously provided. This was clear from the attitude taken by the planters’ representative in the Federal Council when the code was debated.” (*Proceedings of the Federal Council*, 1923, p. 107-108) Thus the planters became the reluctant custodians of the education of the vast majority of Indian children.

Languages

The official languages of the Singapore are respectively - English, Malay, Chinese (Mandarin), and Tamil. For the daily use, Indians are using English as an official language, but 3.1 percent people are speaking in as Tamil at home. Tamil is also used a second language in the public schools of the country. There are television channels and radio stations which run in the Tamil language. Tamil language is accepted by the libraries, cinema halls, movies, theatres and bookshops of the country. Tamil language is used in the signboards of the temples, mosques and churches made by Indians to feel the taste of the local Indian community as homeland nostalgia. Some business groups and non-profit organisations are using Tamil in Little India (description is later) area on a daily use basis. Five others Indian languages are also recognised as second languages in the school curriculum such as, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Urdu and Punjabi.

Religions

Singapore is the multi-ethnic/poly-ethnic secular country. Majority of the Indians believe in Hinduism. There are approximately thirty five Hindu temples in Singapore, most of them made on the base of the South Indian Dravidian architecture. Some communities are having their own temples like, Sri Lankan Tamil community is having the Sri Senpaga Vinayagar Temple at Ceylon Road and the Chettiar³⁴ community is having their Sri Thandayuthapani temple at the Tank Road. The North Indian community was also made

³⁴One of the groups of local Hindus who have persisted in strict maintenance of caste system among themselves. They belonged to a cluster of 96 villages in an area which is situated in present Ramanathapuram and Pudukottai districts of Tamil Nadu.

the Sri Lakshminarayan Temple, which was built on the structure of the North Indian architecture. It is remarkable that out of the all temples two Hindu temples have been recognised as National Monuments of Singapore.

“The most visible and celebrated Hindu festivals in Singapore are Deepavali and Thaipusam. Deepavali is a festival of lights with varied background legends. A common locally accepted myth pertains to the defeat of a tyrant king by Lord Krishna, a popular Vaishnavite deity one of his king’s decrees was supposed to have been a ban on the use of lights. Conversely, lights symbolize freedom and captivity.” (Siddique, Sharon and Puru Shotam, 1990, p. 46) The Indian people of Singapore are following some rare occasions to make a healthy relation between the labours and their supervisors, in a theoretical sense to demolish the concept of master-slave relationship, to maintain the equality. Celebrating Deepavali is one example of it. It was started since the period of European planters and now this particular day is the public national holiday. On this auspicious religious and cultural occasion Little India area is being decorated with colourful lights and flowers and people are best to buy their new clothes and all. The whole preparation starts from one month before. On the other hand, there is another Hindu Festival, named Thaipusam. It is celebrated in a particular day of full moon according to Tamil month of Thai to commemorate the birth of the Hindu deity Murugan, where, in the main, devotees carry out their vows by their prescribed rituals. Thaipusam, in India is also known as Thai Ponggal, which occurred on the particular day of the Tamil month of ‘Thai’ mainly in the month of January and February when the asterism Poosam is high. It is mainly celebrated in Singapore, Malaysia and other countries where a large number of Tamil populations are staying. Other than these two major celebrations, there are few more Hindu religious ceremonies like Fire Walking festivals, Holi and Hindu temple Chariot procession.

Sikh community also made a special position by the State. They are having special consideration from not wearing motorcycle helmets or military cap for their religious necessity of wearing turbans and also in the schools they get relaxation in uniform. It is regulated by the Government of Singapore. Like Hindus, Sikhs also built several Gurudwaras in Singapore, among them the oldest is Central Sikh Temple, founded in 1912. The main Sikh festivals celebrated in Singapore are the birth and death anniversary of Guru Nanak and Guru Govind Singh, Vaisakhi and the Sikh New Year.

Among the Muslim residents in Singapore 12.4 percent were Indian with most of them are remained as Malay. Indian Muslim Singaporean can easily inter-married with the Malay from the pre-date of the Islamic period. In the real scenario, the Indonesians and the Malays came to know about the Islam through the merchants of South India, not through Arab missionaries. Muslims from South India, especially from the Coromandel Coast called as 'Nanak'. Celebration of Ramadan/Hari Raya Puasa³⁵ and Eid-ul-Fitar are also famous in Singapore. Irrespective of religious differences all the people of Singapore celebrates these occasions. They get a national public holiday on the day of Eid. There are also Indian churches, mosques and Buddhist Pagodas in Singapore. The Masjid Jamae, which was built in 1826 also known as the oldest Tamil mosque in the Singapore. In 1888, the Tamil Catholic Community also made the church of Our Lady of Lourdes.

Being a cosmopolitan city, caste system was found in the some religious ceremony also. People of the Paraiyan caste had to carry out their customary obligations like carrying the corpses of deceased high caste men and beating the drum at their funerals. This persistence of caste consciousness led to the formation of the caste associations, primarily in town but it was extended to the estates. The deprived castes were forced to be conscious about their identity and existential crisis by the discrimination they faced and later they came together to form the Adi Dravida Sangams in cities and towns in Singapore, to continue the legacy, tradition and identity of being Indian. There are few organisations who maintain secularism among the citizens, like Singapore Mohammedan and Hindu Endowments Board (SHEMB), founded in 1905; Penang Hindu Endowments Board (PHEB) and the Hindu Religious Charitable Endowments Department (HRCE), The Malayalee Association (1918), The Malayalee Hindu Samajam (1926), The Malabar Muslim Jamaath (1929), The Syrian Christian Association (1929), The Travancore Association (1929), The Gurudwara Sahib Sri Guru Singh Sabha (1918), Khalsa Dharmak Sabha (1924), Indian Merchants Association (1924) for Gujarati community, all these offer a valuable perspective till date and they do social works also.

Social Reform Movements

From nineteenth century onwards Hindu reform movements are emerging in India and the effect of this movement crossed the border. This Hindu reform movement was very

³⁵ "Puasa is the Malay term of fasting. Generally, it used to denote fasting during the Muslim month of Ramadan, when Muslims refrain from eating and drinking daily before sunrise to after sunset." (Siddique and Puru Shotam, 1990, p. 178)

prominent in Singapore. Organisations like Ramakrishna Mission³⁶, Arya Samaj³⁷ and Sree Narayana Mission³⁸ were very much actively participated in this movement. Some group of traditional religious followers, specially the lower caste Hindus took part in this reformation. This movement had focus on the betterment on education among the urban Hindus, by conducting some religious education classes for children and the adults, and interpreting the values, concepts, traditions, charities and principals behind the religion mainly for unskilled people.

Another important social reform movement in Singapore was the ‘Self-Respect Movement’, which was actually emerged in Tamil Nadu in 1920s to liberate Dravidian people, Adi-Dravidias³⁹ and the lower caste Tamils from the oppressions made by Brahmin. In Singapore, Tamil Reform Association (TRA) was inspired by this

³⁶“Ramakrishna Mission Singapore, is a branch of the Ramakrishna Order of India, worldwide Spiritual and Welfare Organisation. Swami Vivekananda, on his way to America to attend the Parliament of Religions, visited Singapore on 12th June, 1893. After his short stay, many monks of the Ramakrishna Order paid their visits to Singapore and created interest in people. In response to their earnest appeal Swami Adyananda was sent to Singapore in May 1928. The Swami with the help of devotees and well-wishers started a branch centre of the mission on 7th August, 1928. To facilitate the increasing activities of the Mission, they had a building at Norris Road in 1932. During the Japanese Occupation from 1942-45, the Mission gave sheltered hundreds of homeless people. The Mission did commendable work during the war by providing food and medicine to the victims of the war. It started with a temporary hospital with 80 beds and dispensaries to help the sick and wounded. Currently, Mission has active contribution to the society which are running successfully, like they have Boy’s Home, Kindergarten School, Spiritual and Cultural Activity Centre, Medical facility, yoga Classes etc.” (<http://ramakrishna.org.sg/rkmsg/>)

³⁷“The formation of Arya Samaj in Singapore was in 1927 in a shophouse in Rowell Road and till today it is running successfully. It runs Hindi classes at his premises for the Indians and non-Indians through the Dayanand Anglo Vedic (DAV) Schools systems. From 1942 to 1945, during the Second World War the activities of Arya Samaj were interrupted by the Japanese Occupation in Singapore. In 1963, the Arya Samaj movement’s present building at Syed Alwi Road near Little India was opened. In 2014, on 1st and 2nd November, Arya Samaj celebrated International Arya Conference to mark 101 years of the Arya Samaj Movement. It celebrates International Yoga Day, traditional Hindu festivals like Deepavali, Holi and their community hall is use for weddings and other rituals.” (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arya_Samaj_in_Singapore)

³⁸“Sree Narayana Mission is named after the great saint-philosopher and social reformer, Sree Narayana Guru. It was registered in Singapore as a charitable organization in 1948. Sree Narayana Mission is affiliated to the National Council of Social service, Singapore and is an Institution of Public Character since 1984 and till today it is running successfully. It operates a 224 bed nursing home and two Senior Care Centres for elderly citizens. They organize few programmes to promote social interaction with young single-parent household to provide support for the physical, mental and social needs. It is one of 67 charities which received the Charity Transparency Awards, 2019, awarded by Charity Council.” (<https://sreenarayanamission.org/>)

³⁹A term coined by the reformist Dravidian movement as a reactionary label against that of the Aryan-imposed low caste and outcaste labels. Whilst still referring to such groups, the label attempts to escalate their status by emphasizing their pre- (that is Adi) Dravidian and so of course their pre-Aryan standing in the South Indian socio-cultural history.” (Siddique and Puru Shotam, 1990)

movement. These groups of social reformers also promoted the use of the Tamil languages and the development of Tamil literature culture, tradition in Singapore.

Another remarkable reform movement was held by Indian National Army (INA). This was a historical work by Indian Diaspora in Singapore during Japanese War with the development of INA under the rule of Indian leader Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose from July 1943 to till August 1945. This period is recognized as the 'Zenith' of the Indian nationalist dedication amongst Indians in Singapore.

Cuisine

The great varieties of Singaporean food are a combination of the Indian food, which is basically derived from Tamil Cuisine and the local Tamil Muslim Cuisine, along with the North Indian food. Indian cuisine has diversity and the rich culinary traditions from the Indian sub-continent. To some extent according to necessity of the taste and culture, Indian dishes have become modified into different forms combined with Singaporean cultures according to the demand of local people. The local forms of Indian food may be seen as a form of hybridisation in Indian-Singaporean cuisine. There are some Indian restaurants in Singapore, they are – 'Colony', 'MTR Singapore', 'Aromas of India', 'The Song of India', 'Maharaja Boat Quay', 'Straits Kitchen' and so many are growing up.

CMIO (Chinese, Malay, Indian and Others)

CMIO (Chinese, Malay, Indian and Others descendants) is a community space as a part of the urbanisation process in Singapore. Also it could be referred as a strategy of mentioning a racial classification system to maintain the racial differences in the Singaporean State.

Singaporean is a poly-ethnic society and it is a composition of Singapore's population which has remained same in culture from the past several years. The major demographic change was visible early in the nineteenth century, when the Chinese were gradually taking the dominating statistics in Malay. By the 1891, the Chinese people were 67.1 percent of the total population, the Malays were 19.7 percent, Indians were 8.8 percent and the others which includes Europeans were 4.3 percent." Actually, in Singaporean context CMIO is represented on the basis of 'race' (ethnicity), culture, and language. Chinese are mentioned by the Chinese race, culture and dialects, but particularly

Mandarin, is now being used as the lingua franca amongst Chinese dialect-speakers. Malay is known by their Malay race, the Malay-Muslim culture, and the Malay language. Indian is recommended by the Indian race, , Indian culture, and the Tamil language. This Indian race and culture mainly include the Dravidian culture which means culture from the Southern part of India. Others are known by the European or Eurasian race, Western culture, and the English language.

As a community space CMIO has three fundamental features such as, at first providing community space for the migrants of different communities, second is improving a good relation with the tourists of the CMIO community and third is making an interactive relations among all the community members.

Little India

Little India is a place for settlement and occupational benefits. From the beginning of its established, the early Indian migrants had chosen Serangoon Road area for their cattle-related activities. As Indians were mainly convicts and indentured workers⁴⁰ and they were engaged in prison-related services like laundrymen, food suppliers, they were attracted by this area for the Indian convict jail on Bras Basah near the Dhoby Ghat junction.

The earliest attractions for the Indians were the Market Street/Chulia Street area, where the petty shopkeepers, watchmen, and Indian professionals like money-lenders, bankers, lawyers used to gather. A later it was shifted in the High Street district situated in the north of the Singapore River, at present it is dominated with the Sindhi, Gujarati, and Sikh cloths and electronics merchants. A third area of Telugu and Malayalee community is to be found in the dockyards and near the railway station of Tanjong Pagar and Keppel Road. Indians mainly Tamils, Telugus, and Malayalees were employed in ship-related industries and the naval base since the European rule. Kampong Glam, between the Beach Road and the Jalan Besar, where Indian Muslim traders started their small trading in jewellery and textiles sectors. From the 1880s Serangoon road was also attracted to the

⁴⁰The majority of migrant workers who settled in Singapore from china and some from India. Under indenture, workers have to pay back the cost of their transportation, labour recruitment costs, and other expenses, often at inflated prices, before they are able to choose where they work.

South Indian commercial settlers who found little space which was earlier dominated by the North Indian enclave of the High Street area.

After the introduction of Singapore State Municipality in 1936, the Little India area had started developing. Now, in 2016 it was a flourished as business place and businessmen were also staying at the same area with their families. This place attracts all the international tourists along with availability of great Indian food. One resident from Singapore's Little India proudly said, "Everyone knows that if you want anything Indian, you only have to come to Serangoon Road."⁴¹ K. S. Sandhu (2006) wrote about the growth and development of Singapore:

"Lack of space to organise a homogenous community within the central core, coupled with the opportunities in the new area to pursue such uniquely Indian economic activities as dairying and tanning, and led the Indians to establish a ribbon developing along Serangoon Road. This was later intensified and confirmed as a dominantly Indian area through the government's sitting of labour lines there for a predominantly Tamil labour force and the overflow of shopkeepers and traders from the central core." (Sandhu, 2006, p. 774)

Trends of Recent Migration to Singapore

Presently, the small island Singapore is very attractive to the job seekers in every field and it is a good country for better and modern education also. Many foreign companies from USA, UK, Australia and other developed countries are coming to do their business. To fulfil the massive crisis of job vacancies, a large number of Indians are migrating towards Singapore, along with the other countries. Singapore is 269 square miles and 88 miles North of the Equator, which is very small compared with just three and half times of Washington DC. The approach to the Harbour of Singapore Island is one of the most beautiful in the world. This is a land-locked island known as 'The gateway of the East'. This country got a status in 2006 as 'Global City, World of opportunities.' In the year 2009 and very recently in 2022, Singapore ranked first in the world rank for having globalised economy and again seventh in the world for social globalisation.

⁴¹ Interview was taken in Singapore on 23/06/2016.

The specific study of this research will only focus on Indian migrants and the States which will be studied are Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, West Bengal and others will be mentioned. Due to limitations and conditions the researcher will look into the labour/working class (unskilled and semi-skilled) both the male and female migrants. The migrants are on short-term contract, they are mostly belongs to the low income family from the very rural and agricultural background. At times, they invest their own money to obtain their loan or sale their property to make their journey to the new land. Like the Gulf countries, Singapore does not have Emigration system. Indian Embassy here works in a different way. They work only for the skilled and person comes with permanent residency. These labour migrants have to come through the Ministry of Manpower (MOM), Singapore, for their any problems they have to go to MOM only. It was known as Ministry of Labour until 1998. This works under the Government of Singapore. This Ministry formulates and implement the labour policies related to the workforce in Singapore. With the help of these policies Singapore became one of the successful Southeast Asian counties for maintain the foreign labour flows. The growth of Singapore's economy and developed as a well-known competitor with the first world country has not been made in a day. History says, as it is discussed by Amarjit Kaur and Metcalfe (2006) that "Singapore's gross of national product increased between 1960 and 1992 and full employment was attended from 1973. From 1970 to 1979 manufacturing exports became the engine of the country. The total output grew from 16.6 percent in 1960 to 29.4 percent in 1979 after the amendment of Regulation of Employment Act 1975; Singapore embarked on its industrial drive and strove to become less reliant on unskilled labour. This amendment provided for the issuance of work permits for a period exceeding one year, and also included a provision for the imposition of a levy on foreign workers, although the latter was not implemented until 1980. The continuity of the labour flow from India is remarkable without interruptions. Singapore nation-state embarked on a policy to encourage more women into the formal sector and this coincided with the implementation of the domestic workers' recruitment policy to facilitate the former policy." (Kaur and Metcalfe, 2006, p. 45) They also discussed "In 1981 the state also announced that it would phase out all migrant workers by 1991. Subsequently, following the recession period of mid 1980s, the state adopted a comprehensive migrant worker policy and levy scheme (in 1987) that enabled it to regulate both the size and compositions of the migrant workforce. In 1988, Singapore made some changes in the Immigration Act, which became stricter to secure the border and regulate the entry of

migrant workers - the work permit scheme which categorized workers according to their skills, race and gender that allow the country to manipulate the labour market on the basis of demand. Second is the foreign levy scheme which imposed to reduce its dependence on unskilled labour, consistent with its goal of becoming a pre-dominantly high-tech country.” (Kaur and Metcalfe, 2006, p. 45) In the year 1990, Singapore again changed their Immigration policy and named as Employment of Foreign Workers Act 1990 which affected the work permit holders to be no longer governed by the provisions of Employment Act of 1965.⁴²

Also, on the other hand, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong gave a speech on the migrants in the occasion of ‘National Day’ celebration of 2010, though this speech includes the migrants of all categories from the white-collar skilled professionals to blue-collar unskilled labour migrants. (Kathiravelu, 2015) To improve the business and international relation between India and Singapore, there are Comprehensive Economic Co-operation Agreement in June 2005, India-Singapore Strategic Partnership (ISP) in November 2015 by the Prime Minister of India. Under this strategy Singapore enjoys an excellent, broad-based and multifaceted bilateral relationship with India. “In 2017, Singapore was India’s 5th largest trading partner worldwide and simultaneously Singapore also named India’s top source of FDI in the first half of FY 2018/19.” (<https://www.mfa.gov.sg/>)

As, this work is completely based on un-skilled and semi-skilled marginalised labour migrants, all the detailed study which will be discussed below only on the basis of the research on them particularly.

Occupational Status

From the historical point of view, it is notified that the Indian migrants were involved mainly in working class or risk factor occupation. Earlier, they had served their destined country as convicts, indentured workers, and plantation workers and so on. In the recent condition the status of the work slightly changed in the name of field and necessity.

- A large number of Indian labour migrants work in Singapore as construction workers. They are employed in the house building projects, dock facilities, roads,

⁴² “This new and changed policy was designed to improve the bureaucratic procedures for the legalization and regulation of the foreign workers. This Act also introduced quotas (‘dependency ceilings’) for the mentioned sectors like – construction, marine, manufacturing and service which are applied for the adjustment according to the demand of contemporary labour market.” (<https://www.mom.gov.sg/legislation/employment-of-foreign-manpower-act>)

airports, office buildings and industries. They work for Indian, British, American and Chinese companies. They come with a short term contract for one or two years and in between they can be moved to another project by the understanding of their company.

- A second large group of Indians are engaged with security guard jobs and as a clerk in small/big shops, departmental stores, some works as a sweeper also.
- Women migration to Singapore is not much commendable from the colonial period. But now a day, women are migrating with their own arrangement or by the demands of the household master as a domestic servant is commendable. These domestic workers hold the fixed tenure of their work permits which are having restricted number of renewals, while in Singapore they have to take pregnancy tests in a certain gap and blood tests. They are unable to marry local citizens and they will not be permanent residents. Even they are not allowed to get citizenship of Singapore.

Factors for Migration

From Homeland

- For Indians, migration is basically happening because of the lack of job opportunities in home country and not getting satisfied salary. The foreign companies pay them Singapore \$30 to Singapore \$50 in a day, which is a very big and satisfactory amount to the workers comparing to the Indian salary.
- The second main reason for migration is better livelihood and children good education in India. The migrants come from the very rural and poor background. They are unable to give proper education to their children or other small members in the family. That's the reason they think if they will earn a good amount in Singapore and save something then they can make a good remittances for better. One of my respondents from Singapore said to me as a father when he was giving interview tome, started crying and saying that how is child leading a difficult life. When many of his friends fathers are going abroad to earn a lot to have better livelihood. This conversation with his child inspired him to be migrated. And he had chosen Singapore as the best place to money making.

- Like the Gulf migrants, sometimes women or some men are migrating to earn huge money for herself or for daughters and sometimes for sister's marriage dowry. Again another respondent in Singapore told me why he as an elder son migrated to earn more money. He was having his aged parents and three sisters at home. To give marriage and make settlements for his sisters he is trying to earning money and saving it for the dowry.
- Female migration due to male's abnormal alcoholism; domestic violence is also found in Singapore case.

From Hostland

- There is as such own population in Singapore. The CMIO system says this country is full with the migrants and diaspora from the colonial era. These people are small enough and lacked with the technical skill which is needed for modernisation of their traditional societies. Because of this, according to the State Policy of Singapore the importance of labour in all levels are necessary.. This policy has quickly made a severe dependence on migrated labour. The growing number of foreign labours and professionals are now huge according to the statistic.
- Migration statistic says very handful number of women is migrating every year to Singapore from India. Because in Singapore mainly the Vietnamese and Philippine domestic workers are found. But those women are mainly stepping out from 'home' for the demand of a maid from an Indian family. The Indian Diaspora and permanent resident they think the people who live in India they are with the Indian ethics and traditions which will be good for a family, children and elder member. It is forcing more to the middle-class women in wealthier country to enter into the labour market. It is one of the main reasons behind the high demand of domestic workers. The global economy is in 'new-rich' for the developed country. These people are benefited to expand themselves in international business and to pursue more affluent and comfortable lives. Care givers/domestic workers are also work on call 24 hours a day wherever it is a crises. Their works include personal attentiveness, long hour's investment and affordability. There is another reason for the need of domestic workers. People in these developed countries are old, and this has increased the demand of nurses,

domestic workers and care givers. Also for the native domestic works supposed to be undervalued and given little respect or appreciation.

Problems Faced by Immigrants

Though the statistic says the number of migration to Singapore is increasing day by day, but at the same time there are problems among them with the procedures, companies, even with their own country. Some problems are recovered and some are still going. Ministry of Manpower Singapore is very reluctant to seek about the conditions of migrants. They are concerned about wages and working, which is stipulated by contracts and properly adhered by employers. Though the illegal migration towards Singapore is very difficult and ratio is very low, but sometimes it happens very carefully. The new immigration law passed on 1 April, 1989 and by May of the same year 68 illegal Indian workers had been arrested and 500 has registered for assisted repatriation with India's diplomatic mission in Singapore. Also, one newspaper reporter wrote that, "Hundreds of illegal Tamil workers clutching small bags and bedrolls have pitched camp in ... [the Indian High Commission's] sprawling grounds." (Mandal, 2021, p. 40) Those illegal migrants cannot get any help or permit clearance from the State and authority, so they face many problems which cannot be recovered. For Singapore scholars use the term 'irregular migration' instead of illegal migration or it can be said as 'migrant workers are in irregular statuses'. The above mentioned problems of migrants are not only for illegal or undocumented migrants, many times legal migrants are also facing problems, which will be discussed in below:

With the Companies

- The domination system to the deprived it is continuing in Singapore from the pre-colonial time. British East India Company started slavery process to the indentured convict labours. People are migrating for high wages but sarcastically it is true that from history to present the low wage or unsatisfied wage issue is one of the main problems among the migrants. Salaries are not paid on time and sometimes it is also not paid at all for several months and the employer pay the whole amount towards the end of the contractual period. As a result of it, the workers may not get the actual amount of their salary. This is a common factor for

a domestic worker also. Still in some point Indian labours are in a better position than the other labours from other countries. One shopkeeper said, he is scarifying all of his life to do hard work in abroad and to earn more for seeing happy faces at his back home.⁴³

- It is same as Gulf countries. The labour migrants or the ‘transit migrants’ cannot bring their family irrespective of gender to Singapore. In 1856, the Governor of the Straits Settlements, Edmund Augustus Blundell gave a speech about the temporality of the migrants and how they feel among themselves with this situation which is very much appropriate till date. He said that there is no feeling and assurances of citizenship for future.
- Employers or Ministry of Manpower sponsoring agreements and visas but sometime it is not received by the migrants. At the time of arrival they become clueless. Though for the migrants of Singapore these chances are less because MOM takes the initiative for recruitment and all the documents. But this incident occurs very rarely.
- Work permit fees paid during the time of making visas and other documents are deducted from their actual salaries.
- Working hours are usually longer than the actual eight hours work in a day sometimes without any holiday (though Sunday is a holiday for whole country). They are working only to fulfil their dreams and hopes.⁴⁴
- Singapore government provides health, education, medical and housing facilities to the migrants. They usually stay in a small dormitory room/mass-housing with 20 members or more than that, but there is no option to go anywhere. Sometimes these houses are situated in a very dirty place, which is very unhealthy. Living room crisis is also present here like the Gulf countries. Workers get the dormitories which are aided by the Singaporean Government under Housing and Development Board (HDB), but the beds are not sufficient according to the number of migrant workers. They are using the same bed in a shifting sleeping process which could bring the health issues, questions of privacy. Two thousand workers are staying in forty large dormitories building, in the large dormitories can accommodate 3000 to 25000 workers and these are designed for communal

⁴³ Interview was taken in Singapore on 23/06/2016.

⁴⁴ Interview was taken in Singapore on 24/06/2016.

living, with common recreational facilities, mini grocery stores and remittances services and managed by operators which is regulated by MOM under the Foreign Employment Dormitory Act, (FEDA) 2015. These dormitories are divided into three types. First type is 'large dormitories' which often purposely built and looks like a barracks. These houses are accommodating at least 1000 people per site. Second type called as 'medium dormitories', it is a typically housing for a few hundred residents per site often converted from industrial buildings. Third types of residential complexes or 'temporary dormitories' are company quarter, the crisis is also there. These rooms are often related minimally by occupations or caste backgrounds. "The idea of making these rooms are not new, it was started from the colonial era among the old migrants. It was known as 'Kepala'. The first homes were made in Serangoon road. These were set up and run by patron bosses. This tied in with the dominant system of employment whereby employers personally selected their workers from their own villages. This meant that the group that lives together often shared similar village backgrounds and the boss himself usually had important village connections and status. Thus was instituted a system that borrowed from village rules – binding employees to paternal authority that included overseeing the men's daily living needs. Often food was cooked on the premises in the communal kitchen, although cooked food stalls were also utilized." (Nayagam, 1970, p. 31)

Due to excessive dependency on migrant workers, state cannot maintain the proper arrangements sometimes, 20 people stay in 960 square feet room. In 2015, HOME surveyed on the dormitories under their social work scheme and they had stated that migrants are staying in an unhygienic condition with the pests and cockroaches, bed bugs and rats. After the report given by HOME, Ministry of Manpower also made a surprise inspection in the dorms. They had also found cockroaches, damaged lights and fixtures, faulty shower taps, corroded railings and stair cases. After looking at these conditions Ministry had charged the Directors of the dormitories. A Commissioner, a Deputy Commissioner and an Assistant Commissioner for Foreign Employee Dorm are responsible to maintain rules and if there is any punishable offence, the punishment is very hard; it could be charges as affine from SGD 50,000 to be in jail up to twelve months. As a result of this strict rules and punishments

migrants are always afraid, they cannot open their mouth, they become voiceless and marginalised.

On the other hand, the living room crisis is not common for the female domestic workers. All the apartment and house of Singapore are having a separate room or quarter for their servants. The migrant who stays for 24X7 services, they are staying at their separate, private rooms.

- Singapore is a region of 'maid-trade'. Sometimes female migrants are facing the human trafficking. Being in a poor family and less educated, they are not aware about the reality and crime. People take this weakness as their own benefit. Agents or illegal recruiters sometimes give them the false ideas of achievements and wrong way to earn money. If these female migrants are trapped in this way, either they will be sold by the agents or they have to work as sex workers.
- To control the human trafficking, MOM has given charges to some agents, particularly for recruiting female migrants as domestic workers. This process is different from the Gulf countries recruitment technique. Most of these maid/domestic workers recruitment agencies make video recording of maids who has been registered with them. For the most cases, the maids talk about themselves, usually in broken English or some of them use their mother tongue, particularly for the house which speaks or originate from their own place. For a few minutes they explain their reasons for wanting to work as maid in the overseas. These recordings are shown to the employers to help them to select their maids. During the time of applying, the women are asked to give their preferences according to choices like household work, looking after children, taking care of invalids or the aged. There is another story of domestic worker's recruitment. In the few cases it shows that employers want to recruit a maid from their own mother tongue community, so that they could easily communicate with their maids. Also, they want maid from their own religion. In these cases, employers are always afraid of when they will not be in the home, maids may want to impose her owns religious customs and habits to children and this is very sentimental issue. This mentality also saves racial problems. On the basis of this, the statistic of migration says, Indian maids are working in Indian houses and it is same for other countries.

Natives

As in the previous chapter (chapter Two) ‘the theory of nativism’ is discussed, and it says that local and outsiders problems are there for many reasons. An eminent scholar Balibar (2004) said, “the outsider or non-citizen is an indispensable element of the citizen’s identity. The relationship between the native people and the outsider is not inclusion or insider view, rather than the outsider is the ‘other’ who exists in a relationship of exclusion with the native.” Here migrants are outsiders and their problems are discussing below.

- As a minor group Indian migrants faced nativism problem from the colonial period. It was well known to the other communities that a high proportion of crimes among Indian labours were committed for the reason of sex. In community where men were outnumbered than women and marriage became a flimsy institution. Marital identity, enticement of marital women and prostitution became frequent. “The officers of the Labour Department took up with the Government the possibility of a system of registration for Hindu marriages solemnised in Malaya (the undivided Singapore). They were supported by the planters, whose General Labour Committee of 1920 had recommended such a scheme, so the Hindu Marriage Registration Act was passed in 1924, providing for voluntary registration of marriages among Hindus.” (Arasaratnam, 1979, p. 246)
- In the present context problem with the natives are not stick in one field, it became complicated. Unskilled or semi-skilled labour cannot participate in local programs as well as in their own religious rituals also with the skilled labours and their family. They feel identity crisis and cultural displacement. Also working as a labour or low-wage worker make them feel insecure among the own countrymen, so they cannot associate with the other people who is also coming from India.
- The natives or other nationals are becoming educated in English and technical knowledge is the another reason of clash. Local people are trying to get into job in their own country from lower level to upper level. Because of this, job crisis started for the migrants. And in very recent

Singapore Government had started the anti-foreign policy which will affect these transit migrants as well.

- Language problem is also another issue. Majorly used and official language of Singapore is English. People faced this problem sometimes for their own negligence. They cannot communicate with others. This situation also becomes as a harassing moment for the migrant.

At Home

Migrants are facing problems at home also.

- Children are neglected by their parental care. (either father or mother migrated, sometime both are migrated)
- For female member migration male has to maintain all the household duties. There will be a question of 'family values' and 'tradition'. "The migrant family constitutes the first social area where 'gender', 'mobility' and 'tradition' get defined. The existence of 'ethnic enclaves' in society where these traditional models are encouraged and perpetuated gives members a sense of security." (Mandal, 2021, p. 46)
- For male migration female has to maintain all the household duties. For many cases female members are ill-treated by the others whether it is aged or young. And then there will not be any question of ethics and traditions. This is simply said as men's work. After receiving the money from husband or other male migrant at regular intervals through banking channels, the woman starts maintain all the responsibilities.
- So many divorce cases and extra marital affairs can be seen in the migrant's family. Both husband and wife are not loyal to their relationship. They do not come back for a long time or starts a new relationship in the foreign land.
- Gender discrimination is also very prominent. If an unmarried girl will migrate to earn, some time she will be addressed as 'impure' while coming back to homeland. And when an unmarried boy migrates he will not be addressed with anything.

Paying Respect to the Migrants by the Authority

The above discussed sections are giving a pictorial view of problems faced by the labour migrants. They are becoming xenophobic, marginalised, living life in exile in the homeland, hostland and even at their homes. But every bad thing has a good impact. Singapore Government has already started realising that they cannot survive as a best globally developed country without the help and sacrifice of the migrants. Indian nationals are among the largest foreign working labour-intensive industries. They are praising about the contribution of migrants labours in every field like, building construction, shipyards, marine, domestic services and all. In the open International platform the Government and the Governing bodies are also paying respect and saluting their hard works to develop and making a pride about Singapore in front of the Global world. On International Migrant's Day in 2016, the Ministry of Manpower shared an album to its Facebook page and YouTube channel entitled '*Unsung City Makers*', (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ABH9VcZHBWU>) as a tribute to "Foreign Workers who left their homes to help build ours", they also added "Migrants who literary built the Singapore of today", "They built our Nation". In 2018, also MOM featured a very different campaign which involves a group of youth who helped to paint a wall with the picture of migrant's dormitories to know their life style and a process to understand their 'mutual appreciation, trust, tolerance and respect.' On this year migrants were also got another respect from the intellectual world. In the Global Migrant festival, 2018 had a weekend discussion performed with a film screening organized by a travel writer Shibaji Das, where Singaporeans and migrants are referring each other as 'brothers' and 'sisters'.

Impact of Covid-19 on Labour Migration

The effect of the very recent crisis of 2020, Covid-19 has impact on the system of the world migration and the market of the world economy with special reference to the labour migrants. Singapore is also facing the same problems. This section will be discussed on the basis of MOM and other Government website, ongoing webinars on migrations and newspaper reports. Covid-19 or Corona Virus is a viral disease, but it made a clear picture of marginality, discrimination, the role of power politics among labour migrants. The first and foremost cause of being marginalised is, labour migrants are not getting proper treatment as the natives and white-collar migrants are getting. The issue of marginalisation rose from here. The study says, spreading the viral infection in Singapore

mainly caused by the migrants. Being a voiceless foreigner they were told that the virus is spreading because of them. These migrants have brought it from their homeland. But, later the scenario has changed. Migrants became victimised. As they are living in a small room or dormitories, they cannot maintain the proper social distance and started spreading the virus and positive cases are increased. From the above mentioned section it says that migrants are already having crisis and problems in the hostland, here the story of crisis among the crisis become here. Not getting an appropriate living space where migrants can stay healthy with maintaining social distance, also they are not having sufficient soap and sanitizers to wash hands to keep themselves hygiene and sanitized (*Guardian* reported). They are affected by Covid-19, a cruel virus. Singapore Health Ministry also has preliminarily confirmed that 618 cases of Covid-19 infection spread among the foreign workers residing in dormitories under 'work permit' visas. In this period Singapore Government has issued 'Special Pass' for those migrant workers who has lost his/her job but have to stay in Singapore due to ongoing stranded situation. At the general situation also Singapore Government issued this Pass for the few migrant workers who has filed a salary, injury or other claims which is under process. This category should have work-permit earlier and that should either be cancelled or be lapsed and this pass makes their stay legal. They have to leave the country just after the finishing of cases.

Till the end of April 2020, the numbers of the positive cases are increased to 4800. As these migrant workers are 'hidden backbone' of the country, the Singapore Government is not sitting with empty hands. From the very beginning they have started testing and those who are with mild symptoms or asymptomatic they are asked to stay at home in isolation and those who are affected seriously either send to hospitals or vacant public housing flats, military camps, exhibition centres, even floating hotels, all these places are turned quarantine house by the Government where they can live with social distance. These places were well equipped with delivering food, maintaining hygiene, monitoring the quarantine, 24 hours Wi-Fi for the workers to communicating with their family and for the entertainments and distribution of 'care pack'/Covid-19 safety pack which contains reusable masks, hand sanitizers and thermometers. There are 1200 factories which are also converted as dormitories, can accommodate 50 to 50000 migrants with social distancing.

Apart from these issues, there are few major issues which actually very pathetic and tortures. When World Health Organisation (WHO) has declared Covid-19 situation as pandemic, the world is in terrible fear. This small country was not the out of order. Singapore also followed the others to control this crisis. It has taken steps, like—complete lockdown of the country, except the essential services. Basically, these migrant workers are not involved in any essential service; they are in a construction works, security guards, drivers and domestic workers. Already the recession period is going on in the world job market. People have started losing their jobs, becoming unpaid for a long period, which makes them confused whether they can rejoin to their work after recovering the temporary crisis or it is a permanent loss. Some of them have already finished the tenure of their contract. The renewal process is also stopped. They actually do not know what is going to be happened with their fates in the near future. Sudden lockdown of a country also shuts the scope for work. These migrants are either daily wage workers or they are in the ‘no work no pay’ rules. When everything is closed they are also not having work, so they are not getting money. As these migrants are not having enough savings to survive for longer time, sometimes workers are unable to do test whether they are infected by the Covid-19 or not.

They have also made a new policy on 25th September, 2020; which will isolate small groups when a new case is found in a dorm, instead of an entire block of workers. MOM also said,

“Latest medical evidence shows those who have recovered from Covid-19 and are within 150 days of their infection would not need to be quarantined, they still have anti-bodies to guard against re-infection. Thorough our collective efforts, our migrant workers will remain safe and healthy, and our business can minimise disruption to their operations.” (<https://www.mom.gov.sg/newsroom/press-releases/2022/0216-removal-of-entry-approval-requirements-for-certain-eligible-ltphs>)

Female domestic workers are also in trouble. Those who are staying at their master’s house, they are saved and continuing with their daily works and getting money. But those who are not staying at their master’s house, they are in big trouble. As all the transports are closed, people cannot go anywhere these domestic workers had no options other than staying at home. They lose their job and did not get any salary. Also, for them there is

question of sanitization. As domestic workers are directly related to household works and spent most of the time with family members, if they come from outside owner does not know whether his/her servant is clearing herself and maintain social distance or not. From this doubt and phobia they are not allowing their domestic workers to come and this one of the reasons for losing jobs. Their salary is important not only for their own livelihood, but it is more important to their family members who stay in India to continue their lives, paying the loans etc. Also, remittance is not under essential service. Even having some savings they cannot send money to back home. The tension and depression has been started. All the international borders, flights are close; they cannot even go back to India. All the migrants, along with labours they are in the stranded situation without money. Expensive treatments of Covid-19, having proper food to increase immunity system, doing sanitization became a burden. They are not only stranded in the new country, they are stranded at their rooms also. No one can loiter without any emergency. One migrant said to *The Strait Times* that “we are in prison”. Excessive use of Wi-Fi makes the speed very poor, they are unable contact with their family back home properly, and workers cannot even go to the ATMs. Only, those who are staying at the company quarters, they are allowed to go for work by the company provided lorries but that is also not a happy moment. One worker said, “Stacking at the back of the lorries gives a feeling of goats which are stacked into their slaughter house.”

Due to the crisis of pandemic situation over the world, the graph of world economy is downtrodden. According to the World Bank report, “in the period of April-June total growth of building construction in Singapore has decreased 12.6 percent and total economic growth has gone down to 41.2 percent. This situation called as ‘circuit breaker’⁴⁵. Reason behind the downtrodden curve is 96 percent construction workers are in quarantined as they are positive Covid-19 cases. Though manufacturing industry is also going down to 23 percent but actually it has been rose 2.5 percent from the earlier statistics.” (<https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/singapore>) After showing this economic graphs and statistics migrants have started thinking that Singapore may cut the dependency on migrants. The country will recruit more local people to reduce the expenditure on migrants. New construction, new scope of works will not be happened very soon. People who are prepared themselves to migrate, started making visas and other

⁴⁵ This official term used for a synonym and interchangeably used to the word ‘lockdown’ of Singapore with most shops, offices and construction sites closed and public transport reduced. It was lasted from 7th April to 2nd June, 2020.

necessary things in India, they are also feeling crisis, because Singapore can revoke their old employee or they can keep the old one with less salary but they are never going to recruit a completely new person in very near future. This makes a mental stress disorder on the migrants who stranded without job, and some of them are finished their contract period but no option for renewing or returning they are becoming xenophobic, marginalized, depressed. By this mental state suicide rates among the migrants are increasing. *Reuters* reported in June, 2020 “Spate of Suicides among migrant workers in Singapore raises concern.” (<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-singapore-migrants-idUSKCN2510QP>) Health workers of Singapore surveyed and stated that prolonged periods of isolation and restrictions in movements are making them restless, they have started doing self-harming also.

Among these entire crisis issues, there is a ray of hope also. Government of India has already started ‘Vande Bharat Mission’ was also initiated in Singapore from the month of June, 2020, in a phased manner to bring these stranded Indian migrants from Singapore and other parts of the world. They have already started sending safely to India. At the first phase they have sent the pregnant women with all safety measures. Singapore is quite authoritative of lots of surveillance of migrant care or female domestic workers. On the other hand, NGOs, religious organization, social workers are helping them by creating community kitchen and giving sanitizer, masks, PPE kits and all the necessities as much as possible. Singapore Indian Association, Singapore Indian Development Association (SINDA), Alliance of Guest Workers (AGW), Humanitarian Organisation for Migration Economics (HOME), Transient Workers Count Too (TWC2), Tamils Reform Associations (TRA), Tamils Representatives Councils (TRC); these self-help groups, mainly led by Sikh community, are cooking vegetarian food to serve these starving migrants. *The Strait Times* reported on 4th September, 2020 as titled “Mustafa to send home some foreign staff”. (<https://www.straitstimes.com/global>)⁴⁶

Aayisha Biryani House in this pandemic situation employed staffs; most of them are students, to cook for Indian nationals stranded in Singapore. *Hope Bound* is an online platform set up by sisters to bridge up the gap between vulnerable communities and available relief options. *Mental Act* is set up by 30 volunteers who provide mental health awareness for the community, 24 hours crisis help line and so on. Kathak dancer Sunena

⁴⁶ Mustafa is a renowned Indian departmental store in Singapore, maintained by Malayali community.

Gupta aimed to provide three meals a day to 500 migrant workers organized a live dance series on 'YouTube' channel to raise funds \$5000 with the performance from artists from *Singapore Fine Arts Society, Apsara Arts, Chitrakala Arts and Shrutilaya Dance School*, all are leading by Indian artists.

This chapter is also discussed the same issues which I had mentioned in the previous chapter for the Gulf migrants. Here I have discussed the history of making Singapore and becoming of modern Singapore. How it attracts the labour market and why Indian labours are migrating themselves to Singapore, their conditions in regular time and in the time of Covid-19 pandemic. Role of the Governments toward the migrants to show them the right ways to survive and be happy. In the next chapter I will directly enter into the primary data analysis section which I had collected during my field works.

Labour Migrants to Gulf and Singapore

This chapter will be dealing with the primary data sources and first hand experiences regarding the study, collected from various places like Protector of Emigrant Office Hyderabad and Kolkata, NORKA Office Kerala, other Government data and officials from various libraries, NGOs in Singapore and respondents from both the location of research i.e. Gulf and Singapore. To study the background of the migrants, reasons behind it and their present financial and living condition after migration, the research had been chosen and done with eighty respondents all together and forty for each area. The observation and analysis will be based on these numbers only.

It will analyse the Gulf countries migrants whom I met in India during the field work conducted in 2014 and 2015. There are forty (40) respondents from Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Odisha, Kerala and West Bengal and so on. Secondly, there will be Singapore migrants, whose interviews had been taken during Asian Graduate Fellowship Program, conducted by National University of Singapore from 23rd May to 16th July 2016 in many NGOs in Singapore. For Singapore, there were also forty (40) respondents who had participated in interviews and their responses are taken as primary data for this work.

Age

Age is an important factor for Gulf migration. Those are migrating, mostly involved either in construction work as a male labour or in domestic work as female labour. Both the work is based on heavy manual labours and risk factors, only physically fit people can work, due to that only young people should immigrate to Gulf countries and Singapore. But the actual study gets the different result. Rahman (2001) said, in Bihar among Gulf emigrants estimated that the average age of migrants is 34 years. Another study by Jain (2007) noticed that 84 percent of emigrants were under 35 years of age and among them 50 percent workers are unmarried. For the other destination – Singapore, the reality is same. Most of the migrants belong to the 30-40 years age group.

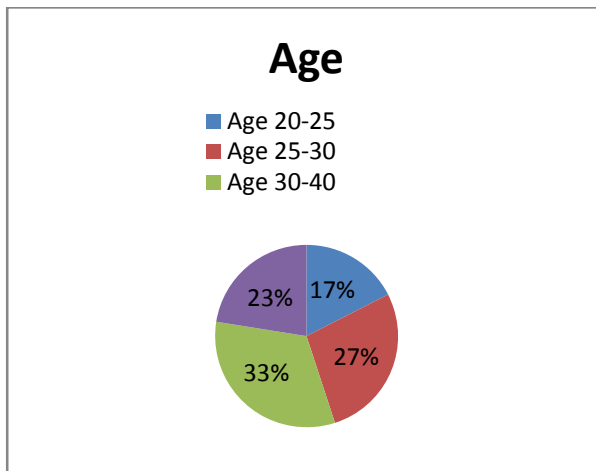


Figure 1: Gulf Migrants

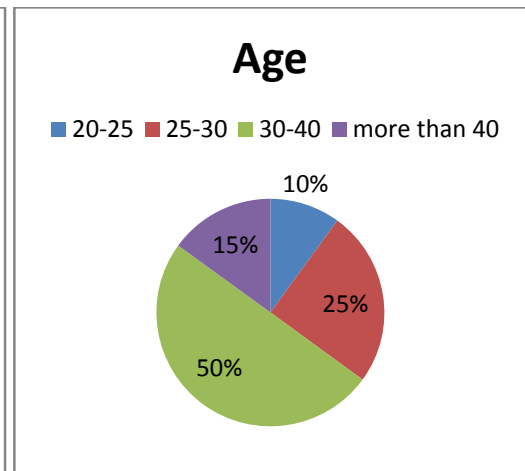


Figure 2: Singapore Migrants

For this study, figure 1 explains that the distribution of migrants by age which shows that 20-25 years age group, a supposed to be the efficient group for hard working labours, is just 17 percent of the total respondents, which is only 7 members out of 40 respondents. 25-30 years age group is also not commendable; it is 27 percent, 11 respondents. The most migrated group of labour belongs to 30-40 years of age group is 33 percent, 14 in number, because Gulf companies are recruiting only physically fit candidates with medical check-up in the process of recruitment. They want people who can participate in the rigorous hardworking system. Only 23 percent people go under above 40 years age. This age group could be a reason for facing problems. They are actually not fit for hard work, sometimes unable to fulfil the demands of authorities.

The Figure 2 says, age group of 20-25 are very less, they are just 10 percent, only 4 members out of 40 respondents. Group of migrants belong to the age groups 25-30 and 30-40 are numerically sound. They are 25 percent and 50 percent respectively. Again people of more than 40 years are very few, only 15 percent.

The reason behind the majority of migrants between the age group of 25 to 40 for both the countries are, these people are hard workers in one hand and on the other side they are always the 'beast of the burden' of their family. They are ready to take all the responsibilities of their family at their homeland. At the time of field work, it was also observed that these migrants are especially the male migrants they are elder son of the family. All the responsibilities are taken by them. They sacrifice their lives in the name of responsibility. They want to see the happy faces among their younger brothers and sisters. These elder brothers are sending remittances to the family and the family members are

sometimes misusing this money to maintaining the high status. There is a myth if a family member is in abroad, it does not matter what kind of work he/she is doing only the taboo of 'abroad' matters. They donate money to the religious places. After finishing the money the father/ mother or any eldest/youngest member of the family ask for money before time. Families back home cannot understand the trouble of a migrant in hostland. Knowing these kinds of issues also they cannot raise their voices and keeping a smiling face.

Sex

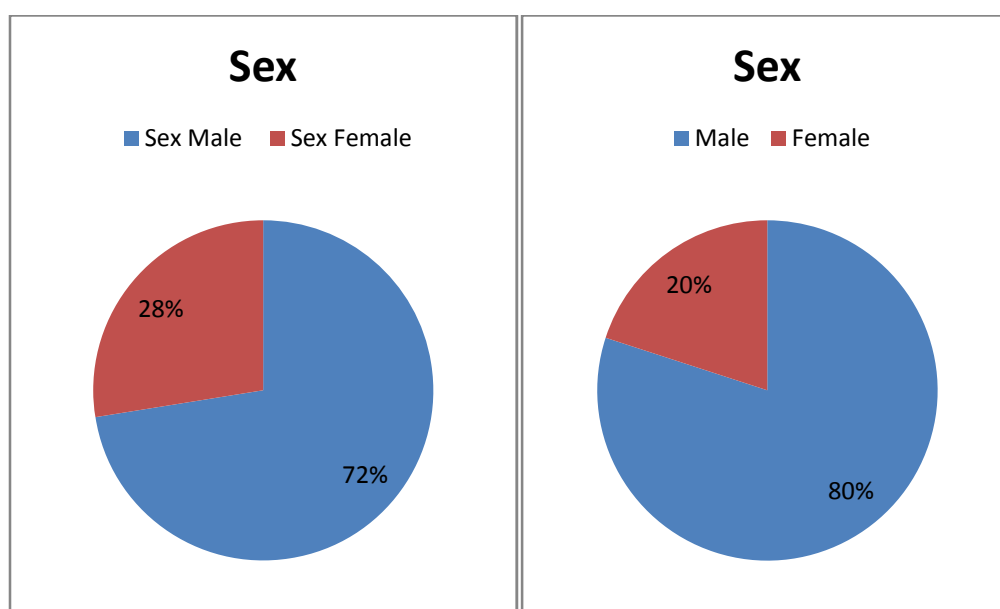


Figure 3: Gulf Migrants

Figure 4: Singapore Migrants

Figure 3 says that the women migration to Gulf is very low in number, only 28 percent, which is 12 people out of 40 respondents, where the male migration is 72 percent. Unskilled and semi-skilled women have very low participation in Gulf due to male dominated countries and regulations; to work in Gulf female can find only the field of domestic servants or nurse as their suitable job. However, in domestic work also many times women are physically and sexually abused, whereas men are comparatively safe in Gulf. For Kuwait female labour migrant is very less as Indian Government stopped women emigration to Kuwait for some time due to illegal issues. Men have more work options also.

On the other hand Figure 4 is very much similar with Figure 3, which denoted the ratio of migrants to Singapore. This figure says only 20 percent women are migrating towards Singapore, whereas the male migration is 80 percent. Indian women are not keen in migration, whether it could be the Gulf Countries or Singapore. On the other hand, the work structure is responsible for less women migration. The heavy work and risk factor does not permit women physically.

There is also a social factor for less number of women's involvement in the migration process. Till in the contemporary Indian society working women are not happily accepted. Society wants to see women at home. A few sections of women, especially educated women could break this notion/barrier and came out of home to make their own identity. But majority and these un-skilled women are still in dilemma. Those who are one step forward for the migration process in/out side country; they are at the last corner of their lives. The reasons behind the female migration towards Gulf countries and Singapore which I got from my respondents are mainly for the domestic violence, alcoholism of the male members, less earning by the male earner, mental torture to the widows etc. No one is going to make their own identity by choice, this migration is the last option for them to earn a bit for surviving.

Religion

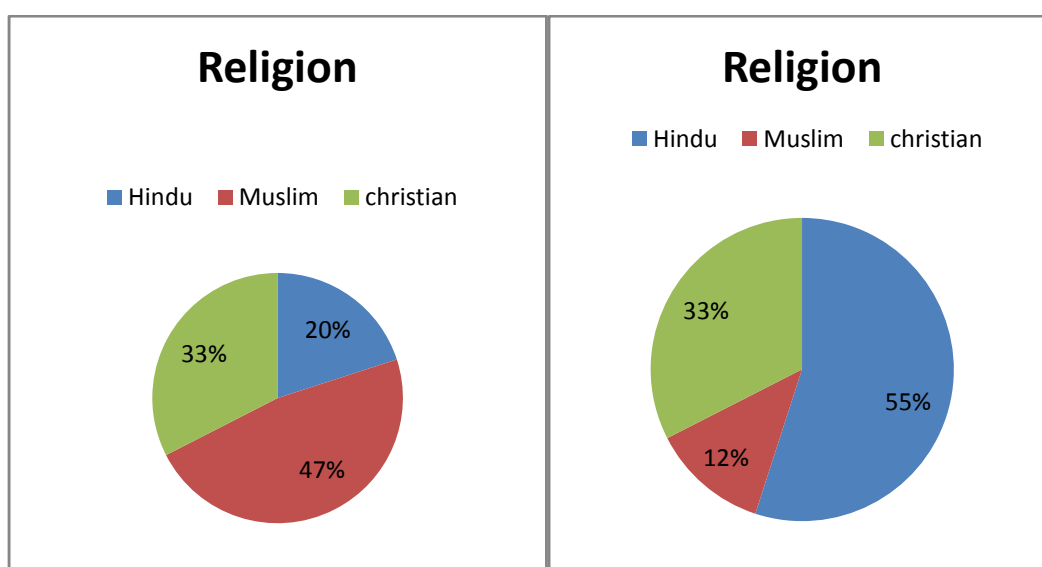


Figure 5: Gulf Migrant's

Figure 6: Singapore Migrants

Figure 5 says, migration to the Gulf is dominated by Muslims. Muslims are 47 percent, Hindus are 20 percent and Christians are 20 percent. There were no respondents from any

other community. Two majorly responded states Andhra Pradesh and Kerala are leading by Muslims and Christians. Hindu migrants are majorly found from West Bengal, Assam and Orissa. There were only two Hindu migrants from Andhra Pradesh, as it is said that, generally Hindus from Telangana prefer to go to U.A.E and Muslims from Hyderabad prefers to go to Saudi Arabia. Studies conducted by Nambiar (1995) in Kerala and Rahman (2001) in Bihar say “Muslims are more than Hindus to Gulf because Muslims are educationally backward and most of the unskilled emigrants were Muslims from these regions.”

Figure 6 gives us result from the opposite direction; it says that migration to Singapore is dominated by Hindus (55 percent), majorly from Tamil Nadu, Punjab, West Bengal, and Uttar Pradesh. Muslims and Christians are respectively 12 percent and 33 percent. Christians are from Kerala and Andhra Pradesh and some of them did not believe in Christianity at the time of migration. They became Christian after they got married with other community people, other than Indian and same happened with Muslims.

Marital Status

Marital status is other important feature to know about migrant’s background and reason behind migration, whether this migration is happening by ‘pushed’ factor and ‘pulled’ factor. These influences of his/her migrations come when the person is married he/she has to take responsibilities for his/her family and that is the basic necessity of finding a job. If he is not able to find it in India, he has to immigrate to other countries. On the other hand, for the women, when the men of the house are not earning sufficient or she is a widow/divorced or cheated by her husband for his extra-marital affair, she has to find work for her children. It is same for a female migrant, if she could not find in India, she has to go overseas.

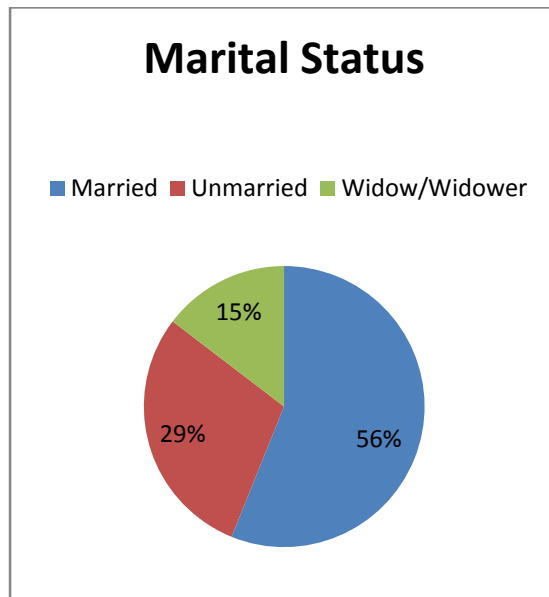


Figure 7: Gulf Migrants

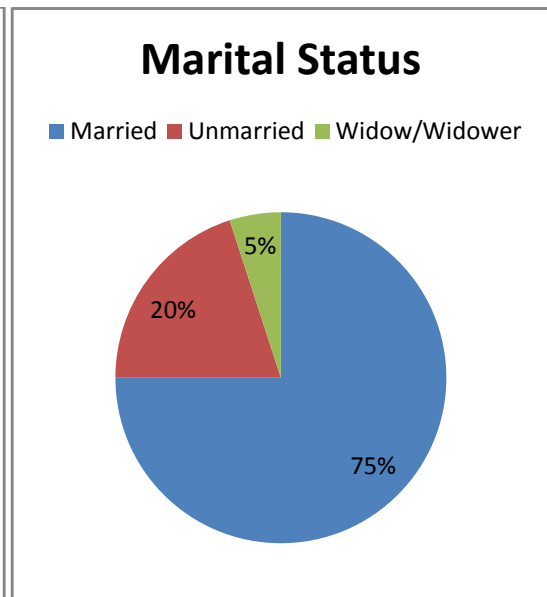


Figure 8: Singapore Migrants

For this study, Figure 7 observes 56 percent migrants are married, 29 percent are unmarried and 15 percent are widow or widower. There were no divorced respondent among them. The unmarried migrants are going for their future savings. Young boys are going due to their family financial crisis (either father is absent/not able to work/not earning sufficiently) and young girls are going to earn the money for their own dowry. As this study is based on Gulf and no unmarried female below 30 years cannot go as an unskilled labour. But there were four respondents among them two were from Kerala as a nurse and unmarried (semi-skilled) went to Dubai, which is allowed and other two were went to Bahrain for unmarried domestic servants at the age of 27, which is illegal.

On the other hand, Figure 8 observes, 75 percent of the migrants are married. Hypothesis of this research says, a person with married status is more responsible to his/her family member than an unmarried person. The percentage of unmarried migrants is only 20. Also it could be said that, for the security reason female are not interested to go another country whereas only unmarried male are migrating. The third section is widow/widower which is very less for Singapore – only 5 percent. Again the hypothesis says widows/widowers are unwilling to go for their health issues. Generally they are belonging to the old age category and unable to do heavy and risk work.

Education

For this study, migrants to the Gulf countries and Singapore, the respondents has been chosen as unskilled and semi-skilled labours, there education level is low and they are under the Emigration Check Required (ECR) category. Jain (2007) says that, there is no serious problem of ‘brain drain’ with this process.

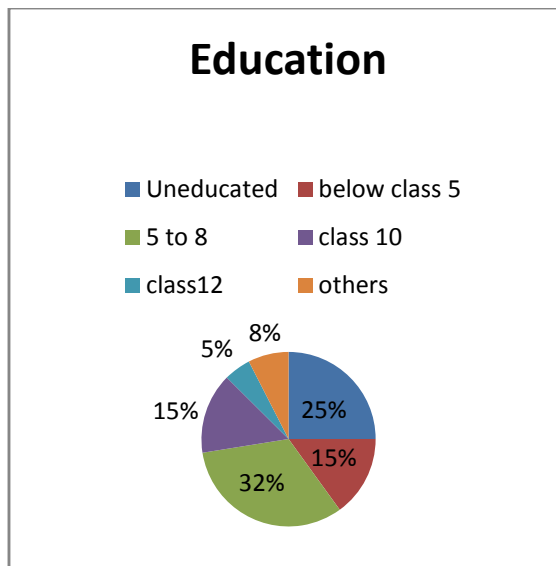


Figure 9: Gulf Migrants

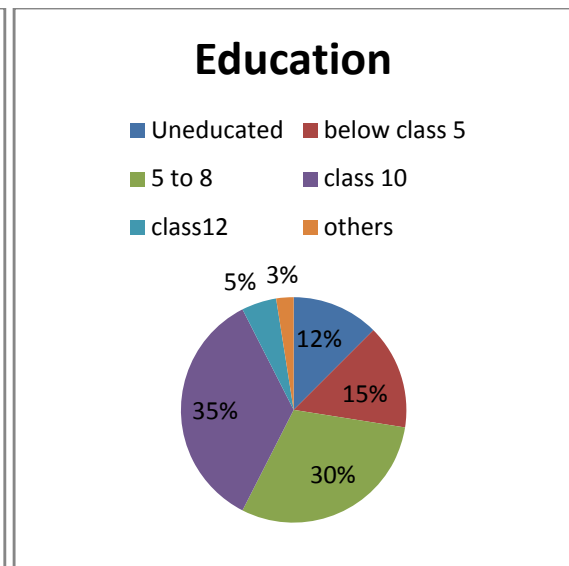


Figure 10: Singapore Migrants

Figure 9 describes the level of migrant’s education. It varies from uneducated to after class 12. Most of the migrants are average educated from class 5 to 8, it is 32 percent. Most of the cases founded here, it happened that the boy or girl had to leave the school at the early age due to lack of money to continue their education. Boys have to go to field or find some other works to help his father and family financially and girls are always become the ‘beast of burden’, she has to be married by the age of 14 to give relief to her father from dowry. Uneducated are 25 percent, mainly the female migrants who goes as domestic servant. Below class 5 and till class 10 are 15 percent, class 12 passed are 5 percent. There are 8 percent migrants who has other degrees, like nurse will be counted in this group, because after completing their class 12 they go for diploma courses, still they are not skilled, they are semi-skilled.

Education is another important factor to know the reason behind migration and also for knowing the working status of the migrant. In the section of the Gulf migration it is mentioned that the migrants with low level education or uneducated, are put into the system of Emigration Check Required (ECR) category. But for the Singapore this system

is different. All the migrants have to come with a contract issued by Ministry of Manpower (MOM) of Singapore Government.

Though education is not mandatory for getting the entry pass in Singapore, but it is mandatory to get a satisfactory job. People who are migrating they are not with very good education and in India they were working in agriculture or in a small private company (same as Gulf migrants). Here in the Singapore they get job according to their education qualification. In Figure 10, the groups of migrants who are uneducated (12 percent) and got below class 5 educations (15 percent) are in sweepers or security guards and female migrants of these groups are as domestic workers. Majority of the migrants are in class 5 to 8 (30 percent) and class 10 passed (35 percent), they are either in construction works or in small factory. Very few people are class 12 passed (12 percent) and with other education (3 percent), (this other mainly includes diploma education) they are in private sectors with blue collar positions.

Place of Origin

From India to anywhere in Gulf countries migration is a very popular trend whereas migrating to Singapore from all over India is not popular at much. It is popular in the Southern part and the Western part of India. Though for this study I have taken data only from the people who came from the southern states of India.

Every year a huge number of people migration from unskilled to skilled worker from every states. But, due to study limitation of time and money, here only six states will be studied – Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, West Bengal, Kerala, Bihar and Punjab for Gulf countries.

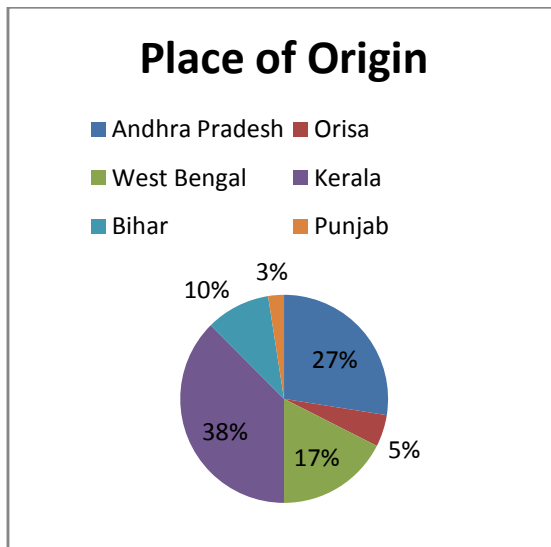


Figure 11: Gulf Migrants

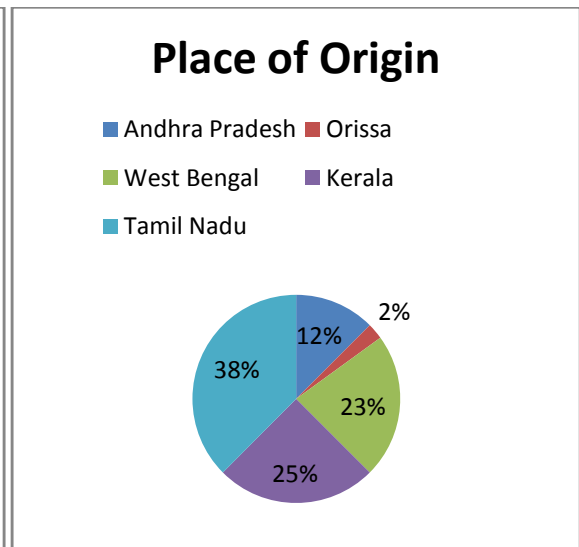


Figure 12: Singapore Migrants

Figure 11 is describing the origin of a migrant, from where they actually belonged to. It shows that 38 percent migrants are from Kerala and 27 percent are from Andhra Pradesh. These two states are leading states in Gulf migration. Then West Bengal has 17 percent, which includes some Bangladeshis also. People from Bangladesh come to this state and take the Indian citizenship, for better opportunity they identifying themselves as Indian. Also, 10 percent are from Bihar, 5 percent are from Orissa and 3 percent are from Punjab.

Destination to Singapore is continuing from the colonial period of India. Immigrants found in this small island (undivided Malaya) to earn a good amount of money and better livelihood than their homeland India. Among many of them are permanently settled in Singapore as Indian Diaspora. Though the respondent migrants of this research are going as un-skilled or semi-skilled labours with a contract for a period of time, they cannot settle there. Sending states from India to Singapore are Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Orissa and West Bengal (other states are involved, but not found samples for this research).

Figure 12 says, migrants for Singapore are from Tamil Nadu (38 percent), in the second position Andhra Pradesh (25 percent), Kerala (12 percent) is in the third position. Among samples rest of the people are from West Bengal (23 percent) and Orissa (2 percent).

Occupation at Home

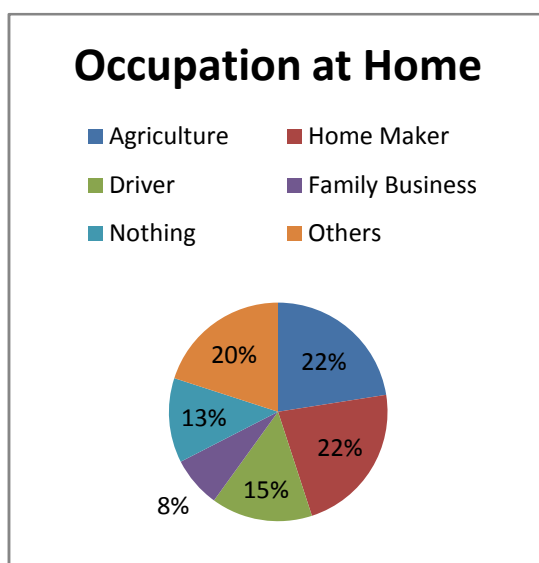


Figure 13: Gulf Migrants

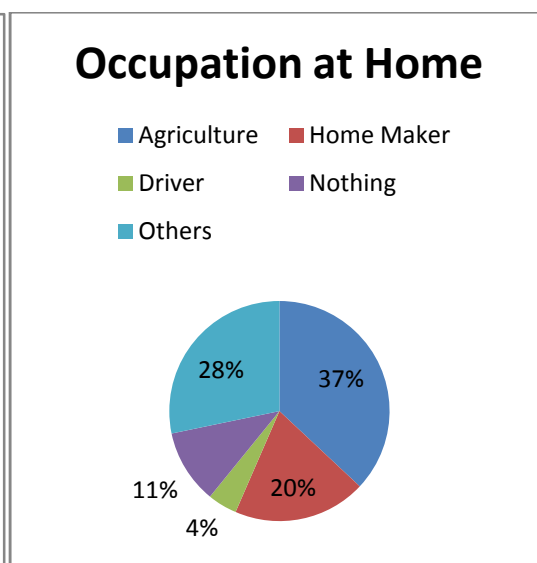


Figure 14: Singapore Migrants

Agriculture is the main source of income to a big number of Indian populations. One of the main reasons for emigration to Gulf is landlessness. Most of the Gulf migrants do not have sufficient land to survive with a proper livelihood and some of them are remained landless. Those who are having lands, they are unable to cultivate and unable to get profits due to droughts and low irrigation and all the natural calamities. Figure 13 says, the people who are migrating mostly involved in agriculture at their home, it is 22 percent. On the other hand, there are another group of migrants is 22 percent, they are home makers. These homemakers are female migrants. They are bound to go overseas but never did any outside job at home. The next group is 15 percent as driver and 20 percent are mentioned as others which include carpenter, plumber, electrician, contract labour etc. 8 percent are in family business which means grocery shops, vegetable vendors, cycle shop and so on. Rest of the 13 percent is doing nothing at home. They are either student, just left their study in between and went to earn money or the nurses who after passing the diploma go to Gulf as their first employment.

For Singapore also all the migrants are from very financially weak family without having a proper and stable occupation. Agriculture (37 percent) was the main source of income for them also and for female migrants they were actually homemakers (20 percent). Agriculture as a source of income in Indian climate it is very difficult, there is no certainty to earn huge amount or same amount in every year. People cannot be depended for their livelihood only on some amount of land. And the earning from agriculture is

always not same for every year. Agriculture is completely dependent on nature and weather. So, sometime it has good earnings and for some years it has no earning. It has uncertainty. On the other hand, homemakers are also not safe – domestic violence is on high rate and dowry system or becoming a widow pushing them for migration. 11 percent people were doing nothing in India; they started finding their job only in Singapore. 4 percent were drivers and 28 percent were in other group (not in any particular) which means they were frequently changing their jobs due to many unsatisfactory reasons.

Influences for Migration by Others

As Gulf migration is popular phenomenon in recent time, migrants get influenced by others easily. Others mean the relatives, neighbour, and friends. From the respondents, there are migrants who went as group from the same locality or their relatives helped to migrate and get the job in the same place.

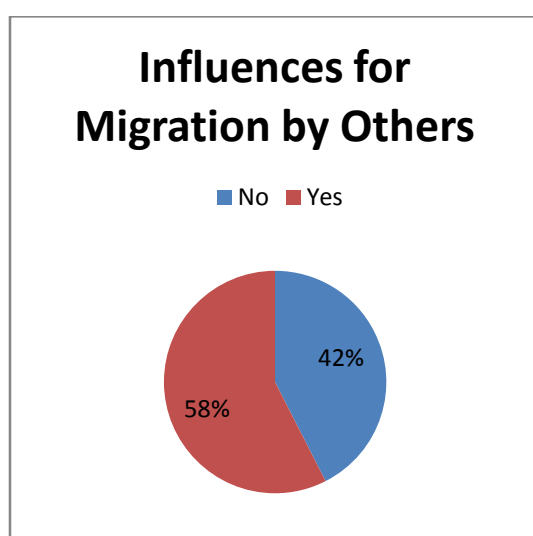


Figure 15: Gulf Migrants

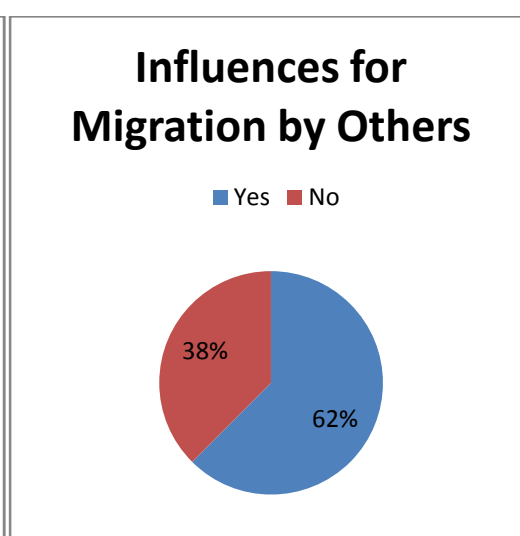


Figure 16: Singapore Migrants

From the above figure 15, it is identified that most of the people go by the influences. They are 58 percent and the other 42 percent people migrate by their own knowledge. The people who migrates by the influences, they are mainly attracted by the tax free money and some people are over excited with exaggerated exposure of staying abroad. Before going, they do not know the actual picture of Gulf. Every migration has influences or reason behind. Like Gulf countries, for Singapore also first and foremost influence is financial betterment. As crossing border is a completely new to them, they are most of the time afraid of getting cheated or losing things. Wherever migrants get to know that in the

new land have already some known people, they feel more comfortable. On the other hand, the migrants who are already working there want familiar atmosphere in the workplace, so they influences their neighbours, friends, family members and other relatives also. Figure 16 says among the Singapore migrants 62 percent were went by the other's influences and rest of the 38 percent migrants went by themselves without knowing anyone in Singapore.

Family Reasons

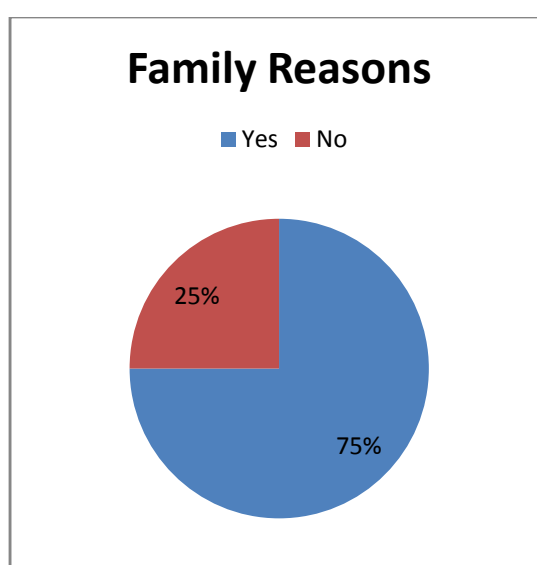


Figure 17: Gulf Migrants

Here, for this research of Gulf migration as financial condition is one of the main problems in the back home, so family has a big role on Gulf migration. These migrants are mainly going for the benefit of their family members. They send remittances for the better livelihood, better education of their children, dowry for their sisters or sometimes for themselves, to pay the loan which they took from relatives or banks or from other sources before leaving India to complete visa and other official proceedings. Figure 17 says only 25 percent migrants are not going for family reasons, rest of the 75 percent of the Indian migrants are going only for family.

For the case of Singapore it is different. All the migrants to/in Singapore from the sample of this research are going only for the further benefits and betterment of their family members. None of them is going for their own benefits. This is the reason for not having separate graph for Singapore. These migrants are always looking forward to the better

livelihood of the family, better education of the children, good house, medical benefit etc. by their remittances. Also there are few unusual reasons especially for the migrants towards Singapore, they are going because of their sister's/daughter's marriage. With their extra earning they can pay good amount of dowry for better groom and as they are from poor family, sometimes they take loan from their extended family members; to pay these loans they use their remittances.

Place of Destination

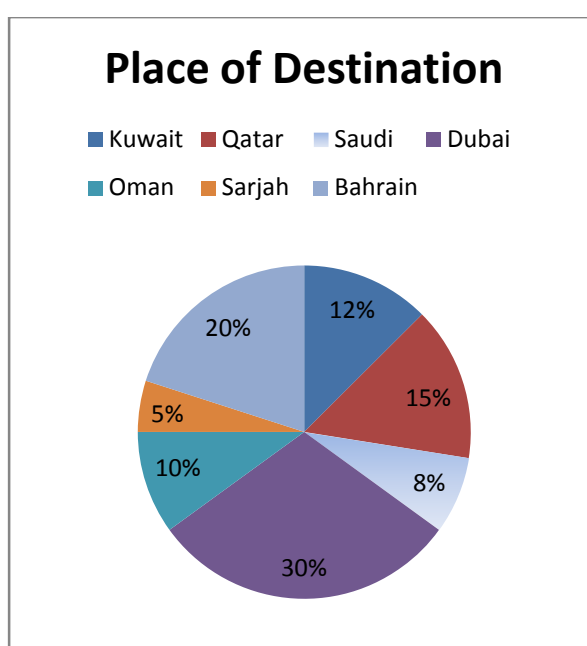


Figure 18: Gulf Migrants

Gulf Countries Council (GCC) is a united province of seven countries. These migrants are divided in these countries both for blue-collar jobs and domestic workers. This figure 18 describes, they mainly migrates towards Dubai (30 percent). Now, Dubai is a gold melting pot, everyone targets Dubai as their first destination to earn more. Next following destined countries are Bahrain (20 percent), Qatar (15 percent), Oman (12 percent), Kuwait (10 percent), Saudi Arabia (8 percent) and Sharjah (5 percent).

And for Singapore there is no separate graph. Singapore is one nation and one country. There is no separate state for this country.

Financial Support for Migration

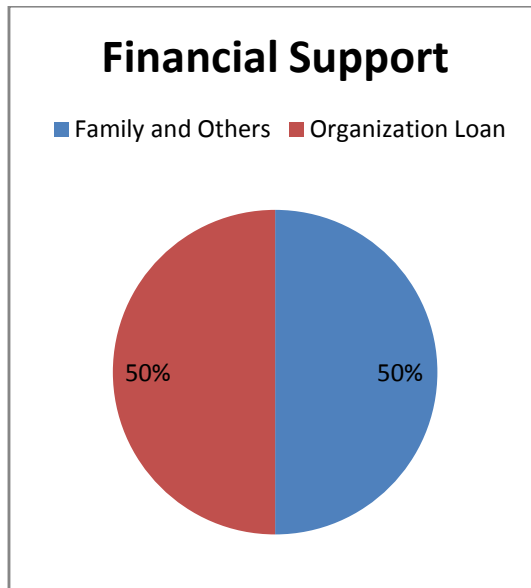


Figure 19: Gulf Migrants

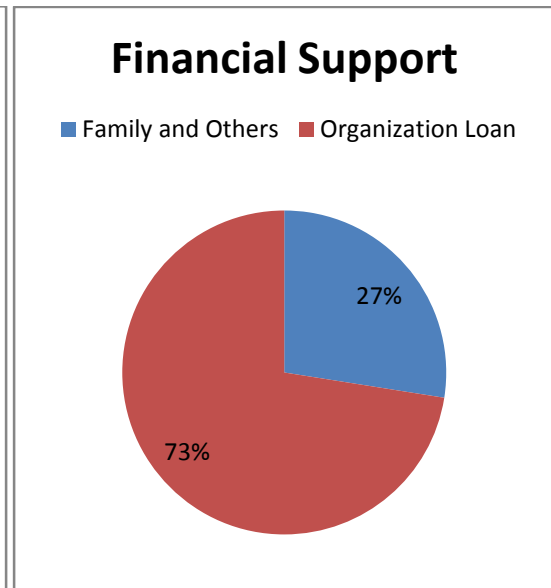


Figure 20: Singapore Migrants

The Gulf migrants are financially weak to be migrated. As it is mentioned in early chapters that they are migrating to earn more, they take monetary help from various sources. This figure 19 states that the financial support from family members, relatives or friends and also from the other organisations (like bank or co-operative loan, selling agricultural lands, mortgaging things) are same in percentage (50 percent) for both the categories. For the case of family members and others, it is to be said that in the most of the cases migrants have to return the loan amount to their relatives or friends and sometimes to the family members with the full of interest rates. On the other hand, taking loan from the organised sector, it is mandatory to return the money with interest in the stipulated time. Though for the both cases, migrants have to return their loan but there was a very simple difference found from the interviews. Those migrants said that if they take money from the family then they can pay it back during a long time period according to their flexible and suitable time and condition. On the other hand, according to their problems and easiness they can make the time span short and long, whereas for the organised sector they will have a bounded time span.

As it is discussed in the earlier part on 'Family Reason' that migrants of Singapore take financial help from their members and it is lesser than Gulf migrants. Here, Figure 20 says, migrants take support from their family are only 27 percent whereas taking support from various organizations and banks are 73 percent. The percentage differs because

there is no benefit for taking money from family members. Most of the cases are like that they have to pay the loan in a stipulated time period with a particular amount of interest. It is same for the bank and other organisations. The relatives sometimes also deny the amount what they actually gave; they say more from the original. For these kind of cases migrants face troubles, bank and authorized organisations cannot deny. So, they mostly rely on that.

How the Visa Made

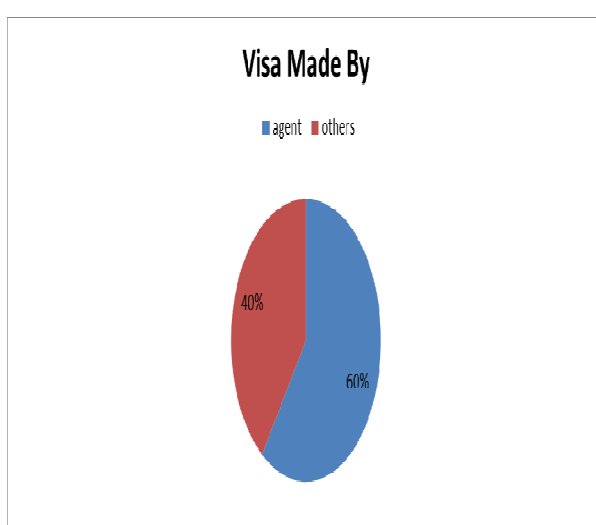


Figure 21: Gulf Migrants

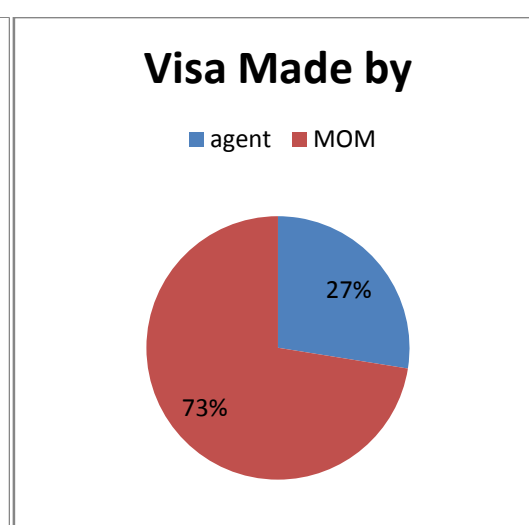


Figure 22: Singapore Migrants

Getting a visa for a migrant is the most important factor in the whole process. All these illegal migrations and problems are originating mainly because for the wrong way of visa making. Sometimes migrants are misguided by the people and they do not go through the proper channel and become cheated. For this research, figure 21 identifies that only 40 percent migrants go by agents and rest 60 percent are by the other modes. Among these 40 percent, all are not genuine, some take huge amount money to make visa but do not make actual visa. These migrants face problems with false contracts and illegal issues. On the other hand, 60 percent sources are including government authorities and extending agents, which mean the agents never seen by the migrants. In this category migrants also face problems. Those take help from governments are safer from the others, but those take help from unseen agents they are in much trouble. They paid money but did not get visa or any papers; sometimes they get wrong appointments also.

Visa making process for Singapore is different from Gulf countries. As it has been discussed that visas for Gulf are mostly made through agents rather than POE or Government, but here the involvement of the agent is very less (27 percent) [according to Figure 22]. Ministry of Manpower (MOM) make migrants visa or contract pass for entering and staying to the country. This process helps to control the illegal migrants.

Money Spent for Migration

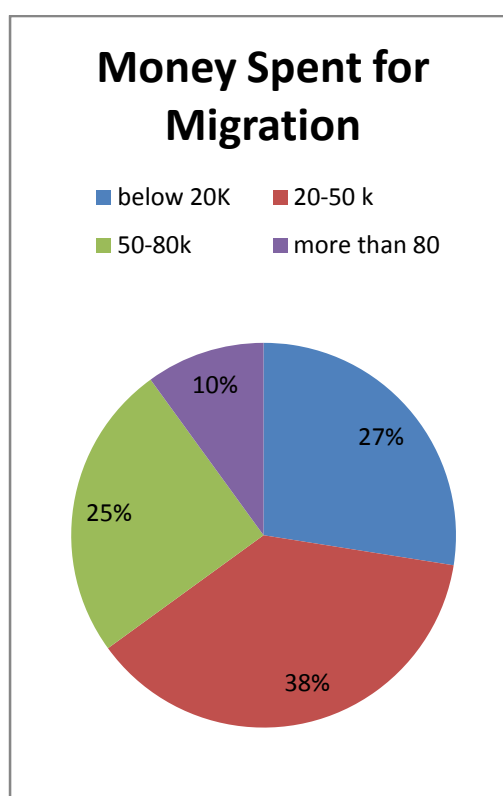


Figure 23: Gulf Migrants

These Gulf migrants are mainly from the agricultural background with lack of money and lands; still they are bound to pay some money to the agents or authority, whether there is a chance of making these proceedings are through proper channels or through legal ways. These amounts are variable. It depends on agent's demand and the destination country. Here, the figure 23 says that, only 10 percent of the all respondents give more than eighty thousands rupees, majority which is 38 percent gives 20-50 thousands. 25 percent migrants among them are in the 50-80 thousands group and rest of the 27 percent give less than twenty thousands; they are mainly make their visa by themselves from Protector of Emigrants office itself.

For Singapore there is no chance of giving money to the agents. As Ministry of Manpower takes place for giving jobs and job's contract to the migrants. So, there are lesser chances of illegal migrations. People are going through proper channels with all the legal documents.

Occupation in the Hostland

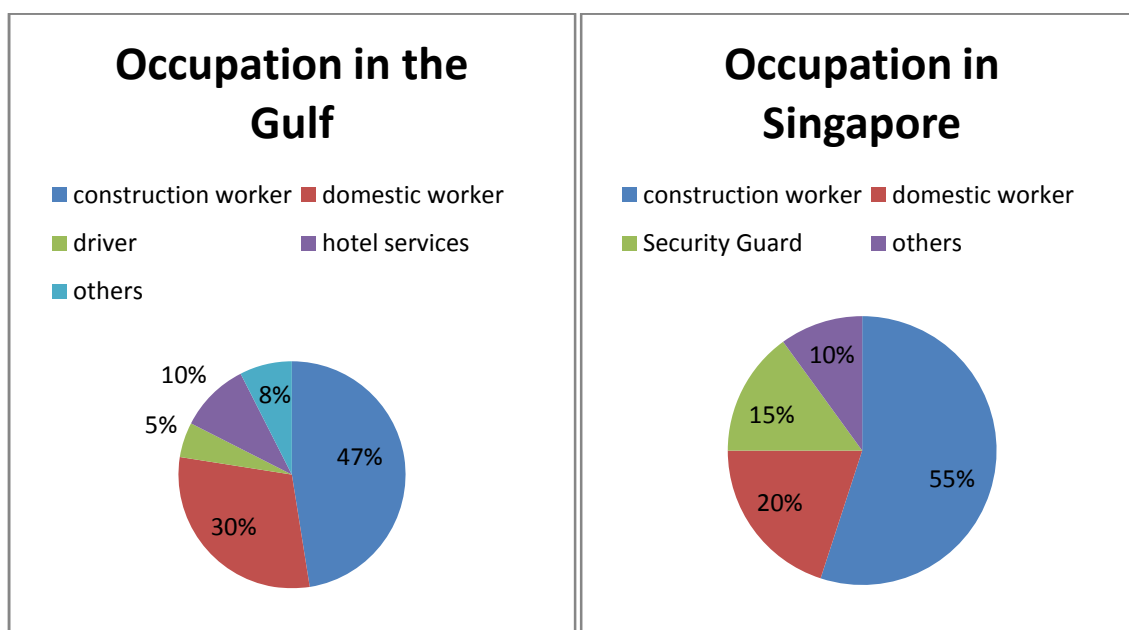


Figure 24: Gulf Migrants

Figure 25: Singapore Migrants

These Gulf migrant workers are in different occupations in blue-collar field. Figure 24 says, majority among the respondents for this research went as construction workers (47 percent), 10 percent are in hotel services (mainly as hotel boy and very handful number as cook), 5 percent works as taxi drivers and rest of them works in the other sector which includes weepers, electricians, workers of a farm etc., these migrants are male migrant. Here, 30 percent female migrants are found who go for domestic work, especially as maid servant.

On the other hand, migrants of Singapore are involved in various fields of works with blue-collar job. As Figure 25 states that most of the migrants are working as construction workers (55 percent), 20 percent of the research samples are in domestic works, 15 percent migrants are there as security guards, either in office or in a house as care takers. At last, rest of the 10 percent migrants has no specific job situation. They are like a

vagabond. They do whatever they get according to the vacancies and availabilities in the job sector in Singapore.

Working Hours

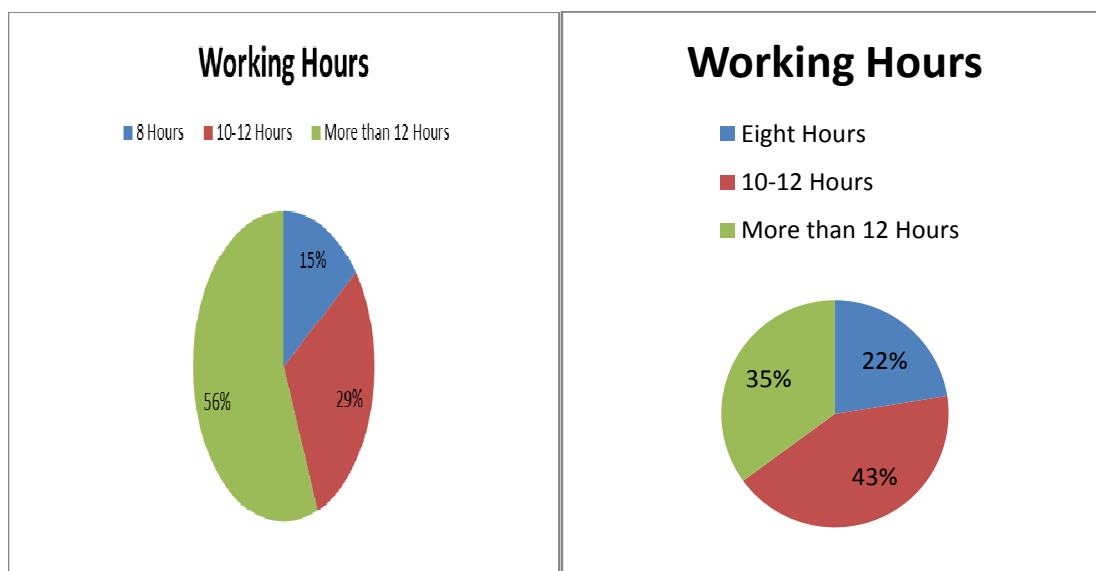


Figure 26: Gulf Migrants

Figure 27: Singapore Migrants

To describe about a worker community in the contemporary time working hours is an important issue. One of the main reasons for worker's agitation for humiliation is working hours. Though, working hours varies from work to work, where in the case of Gulf countries it is always not that easy to say. There are several cases found from the respondents or from the already worked and published data that these migrants work more from their estimated time schedule. This figure 26 says that there are 56 percent of these migrants work for more than 12 hours and 29 percent work 10-12 hours in a day sometimes without weekly holiday, which is illegal. As per the law a worker can work maximum eight hours in a day. Sometime it may be increased due to the festival times for the hotel staff, during the Eid time for the non-muslim labours and they should be paid for the over working hours. During the Ramadan at the day time due to their fasting Muslim migrants are not in work place, they get holiday. But these labour migrants are most of the time they are not getting overtime remuneration. They work without a single penny. Only 15 percent workers work for 8 hours in a day with the maintaining of Labour Law. This overworked situation found among the domestic servants also. Domestic workers are staying at master's place in a separate servant quarter. But as they stay in the same house

they are always called for work by their master or mistress, especially at night time after finishing their all household duties when these domestic servants go for sleeping they will be called for taking care of their babies and the whole night she will be awaked as nanny. For them sometime, this kind of situation makes to work for 24X7 hours.

Like the above mentioned Gulf countries Labour rule, Singapore also has an Employment Act. For all the workers in Singapore including migrants has a particular working hours and working pattern. There is an Employment Act for every employee who works in Singapore. This Act informs them about the daily working hours, number of working days, rest days and holidays. The actual working hours for an employee is eight hours per day. Again in Singapore it is violating for some cases.

Following the Singapore Employment Act, all the companies and offices maintained the rules overviewed by Ministry of Manpower. Figure 26 says, migrants work for eight hours is 22 percent and ten to twelve hours working labour is major, they are 43percent. Other 35 percent are working for more than twelve hours. These groups of migrants are rarely fulfilling the special category of Employment Act. They are mainly either illegal migrants or they are facing discriminations, humiliations by the companies and masters. This Act says employees who are working more than the maximum hours of requirement of daily working hours, are need to apply for the overtime exemption from the MOM. But, during the interview time it had been seen that respondent migrants are never get their overtime rest or salary even.

Monthly Salary

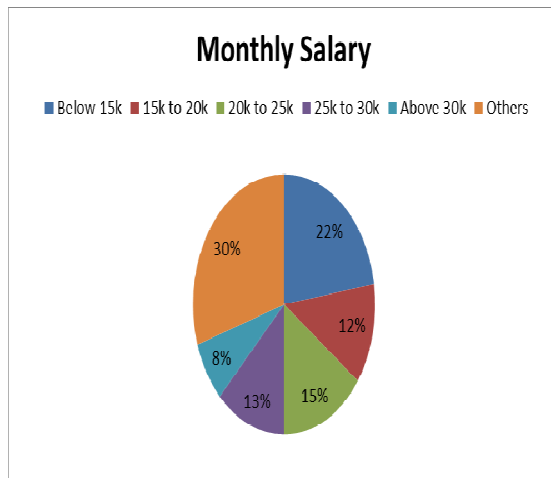


Figure 27: Gulf Migrants

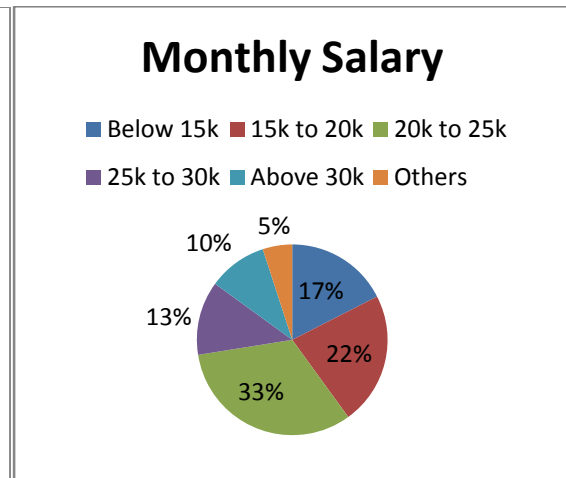


Figure 28: Singapore Migrants

After the working hours monthly salary is an important issue. Along with the time, salary also can be an issue of humiliation and agitation. Most of the migrants did not get actual salary what was mentioned on their contract and did not get satisfactory salary comparing to their works. Figure 27 describes that, among the all respondents 22 percent gets salary below Rs.15,000/-, which is very less to survive in Gulf countries and they cannot even save anything for themselves but they have to pay at least minimum amount of remittances from that for their family and pay the loans. 12 percent migrants get Rs.15000/- to 20000/- which is also not sufficient. Among the other recipients, 15 percent get Rs.20000/- to 25000/-, 13 percent get Rs.25000/- to 30000/-. Only 8 percent migrants get above Rs.30, 000/- and due to research ethics and some restrictions researcher could not get proper data from other 30 percent of the interviewers.

For the case of Singapore, most of the migrants did not want to share/disclose their salary during interviews, but the data which has been placed here got from the section of the migrants who are in the same field with the others. I had tried as much as possible to give the correct data regarding salary. Like Gulf countries, in Singapore also these un/semi-skilled labours do not get the satisfactory amount of salary, most of the time they are less paid or not paid in due time. Figure 28 says, among the respondents, 17 percent get their salary below Rs. 15000/- which cannot be sufficient to survive in Singapore. 22 percent get their payments in the range of Rs. 15000/- to 20000/- and 33 percent get Rs. 20000/- to 25000/-. These amounts are also not sufficient after giving remittances to home. The

migrants who are in the groups of Rs. 25000/- to 30000/- and above Rs. 30000/-, they can save little amount of money. Only 5 percent migrants earn more than Rs. 30000/-.

Migrant's Satisfaction

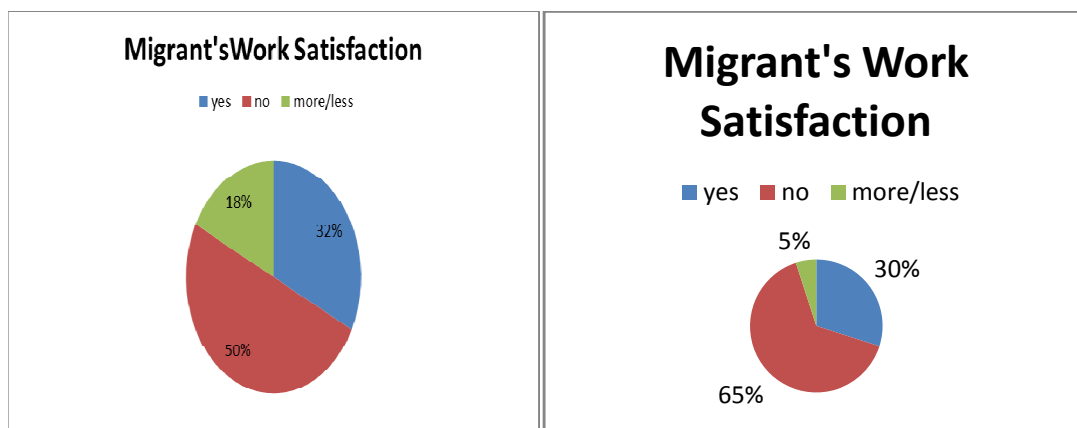


Figure 29: Gulf Migrants

Figure 30: Singapore Migrants

Figure 29 and 30 discuss the satisfaction level of the migrant workers respectively of Gulf countries and Singapore. These workers are going for better livelihood, but after seeing these data it could be asked whether they are really satisfied or not with everything which includes staying condition, working place structure and atmosphere and other social problems (above mentioned other issues). Figure 29 says only 18 percent labours are satisfied in every aspect and 50 percent workers are completely not satisfied. 18 percent labours are more or less satisfied with everything.

Satisfaction in the work depends on mainly money, if the salary is satisfactory then there will not be any dilemma whether the migrants are satisfied or not with their work. As above mentioned that most of them are not getting satisfactory/proper salary and it is easily said that they are always not satisfied with their work. According to Figure 30, only 30 percent migrants are satisfied with their working condition. Majorly 65 percent of the respondents said they are completely hopeless and unsatisfied with their contact and work. 5 percent migrants were not keen to share their experience regarding satisfactory works. They did not say proper answers; they said they are more/less satisfied with their work.

Satisfied Family Members

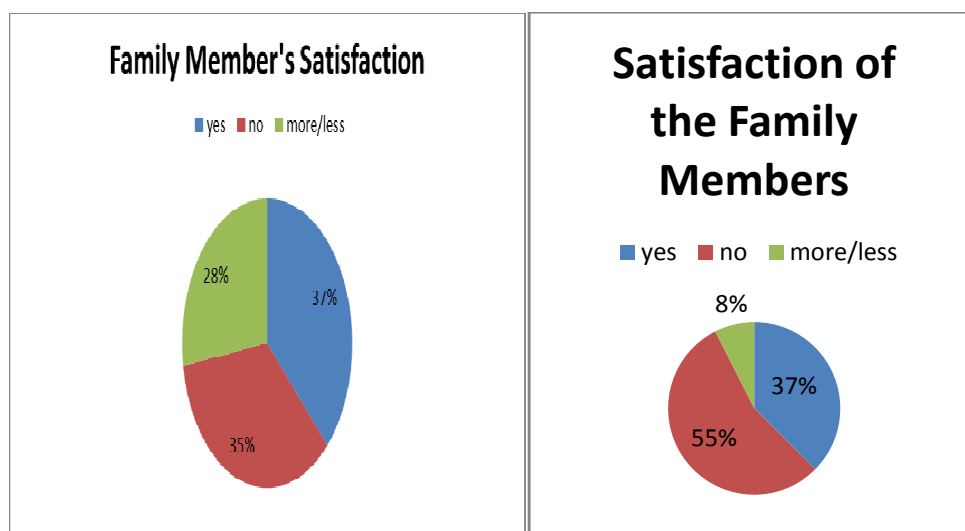


Figure 31: Gulf Migrants

Figure 32: Singapore Migrants

Figure 31 says about their family member's satisfaction. These migrant workers left their homeland to earn more and to make family members happy, but the members of their family are actually always not satisfied. Only 37 percent members are completely happy and 35 percent members are not satisfied and 28 percent workers are more or less satisfied. These unsatisfied family members are suffering most in the home – they are unable to get the remittances, paying the loan, difficult to survive and the children of the member are also neglected by the society. Those who are more or less satisfied they get few facilities and comforts for surviving. Along with the migrants it is necessary to know whether the members of their family satisfied or not. In the early context it is mentioned about the satisfaction level of the migrants. These labours are migrating to earn more money for better livelihood at home.

But according to samples response for Singapore, Figure 32 says, that the family members are always not happy, only 37 percent families are completely satisfied with the remittances and savings. They are those few who are well paid. Majorly 55 percent families are not satisfied with the earnings. They are not getting any remittances. These migrants are less paid, troubling to survive in Singapore. But 8 percent families are more/less satisfied. Sometimes they get remittances and they can save some money for the future when they do not get remittances. These migrants do not get salary every month and they do not have any frequency, whenever they get money immediately they send money to home.

Except this monitory reason, there are some other reasons which make them unsatisfactory for both Gulf countries and Singapore. Most of the time, the most dependable member of the family migrates and the members in the country loose strength. Wife and children suffers most sufferers regarding this. Children are not getting proper parental care, either they miss father or mother (mostly it is father). They are psychologically affected. Wives also become victimised by the other members of the family for false reasons. For not getting remittances in due time, wives or the other elder members or sometime children even have to go for hard work to earn their daily bread.

Known Person in Work Place

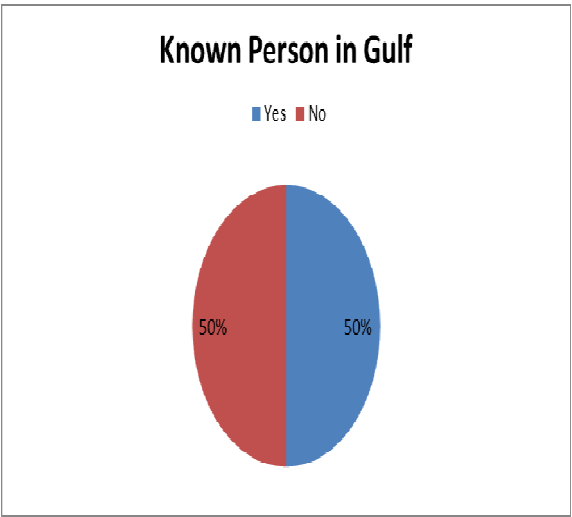


Figure 33: Gulf Migrants

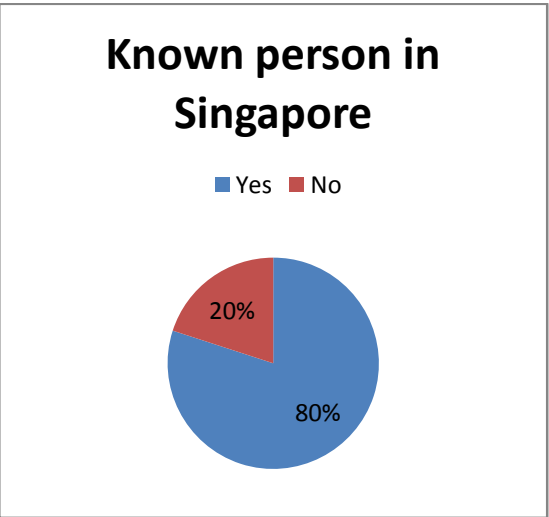


Figure 34: Singapore Migrants

Workers who are migrated, they are always not in a strange land. Many of them are going with the help of some known persons; they could me either from their family or from their neighbours or friends. This Figure 33 says, ratios of the knowing person of migrants among the samples are similar. 50 percent of them went with the help of known person or found person in the Gulf who is already known to him and rest of the 50 percent are completely new to an unknown land.

Migration to Singapore does not happen suddenly. Un/semi-skilled labourers collect information about company and country. They try to get their visas and all the arrangements by the well-known person. This will help them to survive and work in a

new land more comfortably. So, this figure 34 says 80 percent migrants are having known person in Singapore whereas only 20 percent people are in a completely new atmosphere

Accommodation

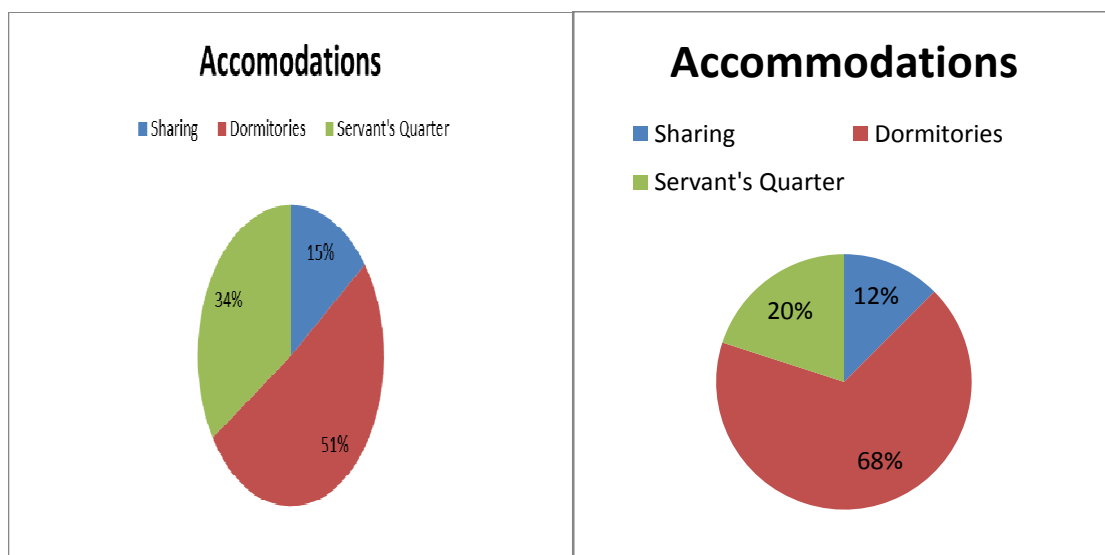


Figure 35: Gulf Migrants

Figure 36: Singapore Migrants

Accommodation is one of the main factors for a migrant. Before migration he/she thinks 'where to stay? Is it safe and secure?' these kinds of questions come to their minds and here the Figure 34 describes about the various types of accommodation. There are many types of accommodation for the Gulf countries migrants. Here from the interviewers got only three types, those are more available. 15 percent of them stay in a sharing flat. These sharing rooms could be for two or more than that with the separate set up for food. Major section of them, 51 percent, stay at dormitories, these are very un-hygienic. People used to stay in a shifting basis (those who have morning duties they leave early and those who have night duties stay in the same place and bed and vice-versa). Also, these rooms are very small for five peoples, but more than ten people stay there together with the set-up of food. Only 34 percent of them stay at servant's quarter. They are mainly domestic workers (female) stay at their master's house along with all the required facilities.

Here in Singapore also accommodation is a major factor. It raises questions of safety and settlements in the new country. As Figure 35 says, those migrants who had already known people in Singapore (80 percent), for them in the beginning of their new journey accommodation does not affect much about security. But, other 20 percent migrants who

are completely new in Singapore, accommodation matters to them. Figure 35 also says there are three types of accommodation systems in Singapore. 12 percent labour stays in sharing based room, it could be double or triple, and 68 percent labour workers stay in Dormitories. The structure and system of dormitories are same as Gulf – shifting basis, but for few migrants they get dormitories made by Government which are more comfortable, secure and better in condition. Rest 20 percent stays in Servant's Quarter. They are mainly domestic workers. According to Singapore Labour Law the definition of quarter is different. Government of Singapore provide a quarter to the labour migrants made by the Housing Development Board (HDB) to stay during their contract of work. They can stay in a separate room or a sharing based room with cooking and washing facilities. And it is not the permanent solution, if the migrant worker is not happy for this staying arrangements after this temporary arrangement they can move to somewhere according to their choices.

Relationship with Supervisor and Company

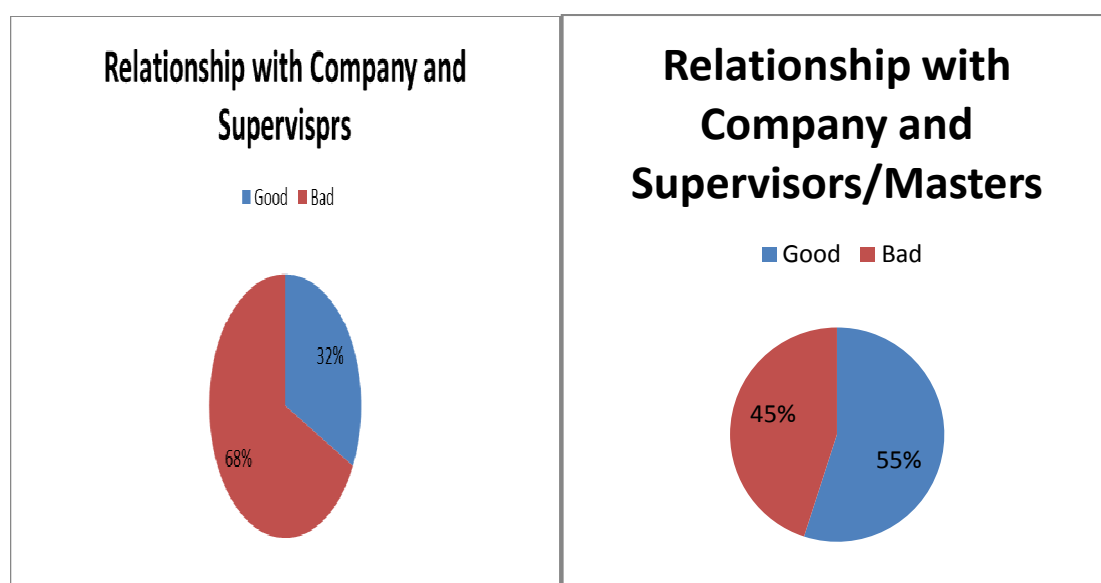


Figure 36: Gulf Migrants

Figure 37: Singapore Migrants

Relationship with supervisor means migrants (his/her) relationship with the company and the masters, and it states the satisfactory level of a migrant. Bad relationship with authority can ruin a worker's life completely and on the other hand, a good relationship can take a worker to the peak point of happiness and job satisfaction. Here, Figure 36 states a picture of the relationship. It is strange that only 32 percent among the

interviewers have good relationship with their supervisor and rest of the 68 percent has bad and poor relationship. The cause of the bad relationship could be the early mentioned reasons like: extra working hours without money, untimely salary, bad accommodations and other facilities.

These second group of migrants of Singapore get all the facilities according to their contracts. In Singapore the ‘master-slave’ relationship is widely spread as a well-known feature. Figure 37, says, there are 55 percent migrants who has good relations and 45 percent migrants have bad relations with their company/master/supervisor.

Discrimination

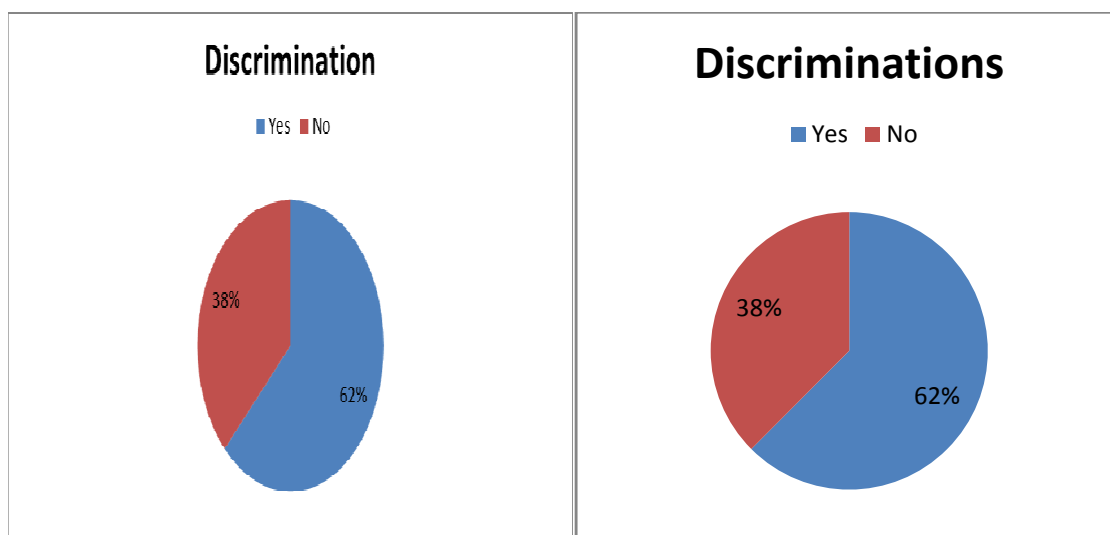


Figure 38: Gulf Migrants

Figure 39: Singapore Migrants

Discrimination is another main problem for the Gulf migrants as well as among the Singapore migrants. They are humiliated and suppressed in many aspects, like in their working place they feel crisis of identity, dislocation of culture in the very beginning to a new country and it starts discrimination with the local people in social, religion, cultural atmosphere. On the hand, to some extend those discriminations are continued in the work place also, especially for salary and other facilities. The Figure 38 states that, only 38 percent migrants said that they do not face discrimination whereas a major section of 62 percent says that there are discriminations everywhere. Among the respondents of Singapore, according to Figure 39, 62 percent migrants said there are discriminations and

only 38 percent said there are no discriminations. They feel crisis situations in cultural aspects, in identity and above all in economic condition.

Years of staying

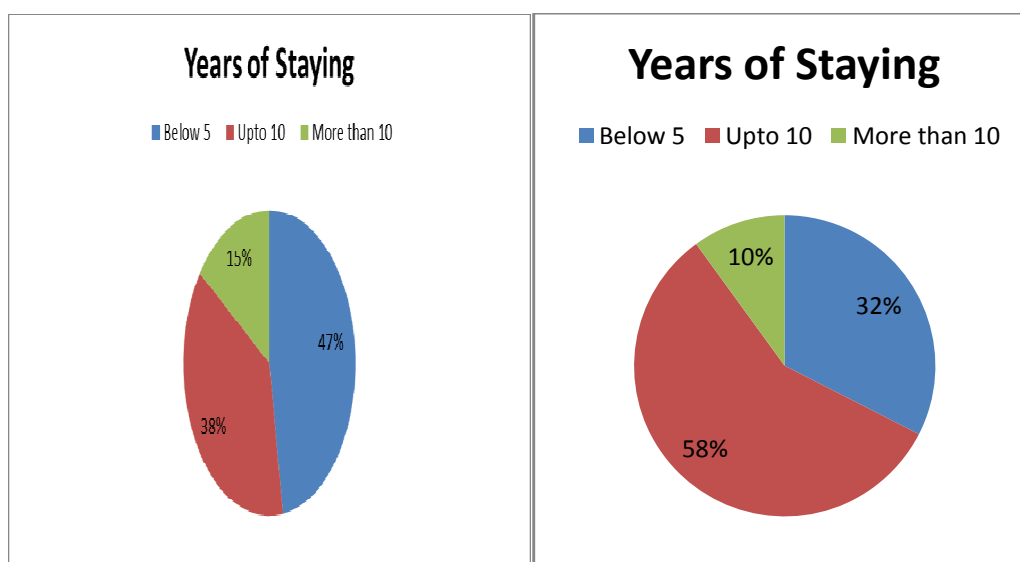


Figure 40: Gulf Migrants

Figure 41: Singapore Migrants

As it is described in the Chapter Two that Gulf migration is not Diaspora, it is called as '*Incipient Diaspora*' these unskilled migrant labourers cannot stay for a long time and they cannot make their permanent settlements. They have to be depended on their company contract, if they are good in behaviour and with all the legal matters of the country and their company want them for the continuation then only they can renew their contract. Otherwise, they have to come back to India and try for other jobs with new destination. For this rule of the all GCC countries these unskilled migrant labourers do not stay for a long period. Figure 40 says, 47 percent of all stays only for below five years, 38 percent stays up to ten years, and only 15 percent among them stays for more than ten years. These 38 percent and 15 percent migrants are not in single contract, they are on their third or fourth contract after renewing or else they are going completely with a new contract with a new company. From the interview, it is found that, those 47 percent labourers are mainly unsatisfied, subaltern, suppressed for many reasons and they do not want to go again.

As Gulf migrants are "incipient diaspora" and they are not eligible for permanent citizenships and in Singapore also according to their monitory status these group of

labour migrants are not allowed to stay permanently in Singapore. They usually goes for two/five years contract after that they comes back permanently or they renews their contract and stays few more years. Figure 41 says 32 percent migrants stay for below five years, 58 percent stays for up to 10 years and only 10 percent migrants stay for more than 10 years. Some of the respondent says, they stays for one contract (3 years) and comes back to India and stays with their family. Then again after few years they goes back to Singapore and engage themselves with another contract, like that they can longer their staying, may be more than 10 years and none of the side as family and money lose anything. In this way, presently many migrants come and go and try not to neglect their family members and children.

How Often They Can Visit Home

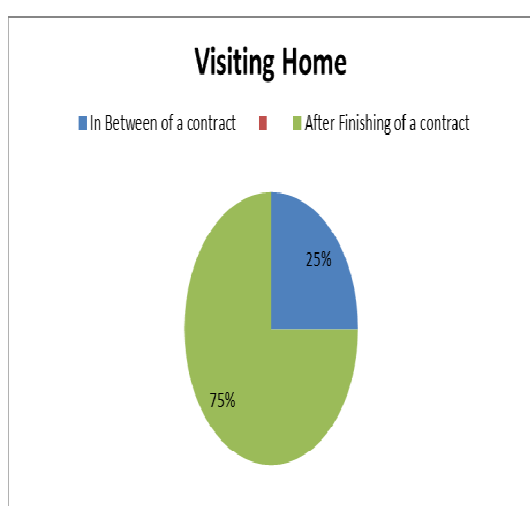


Figure 42: Gulf Migrants

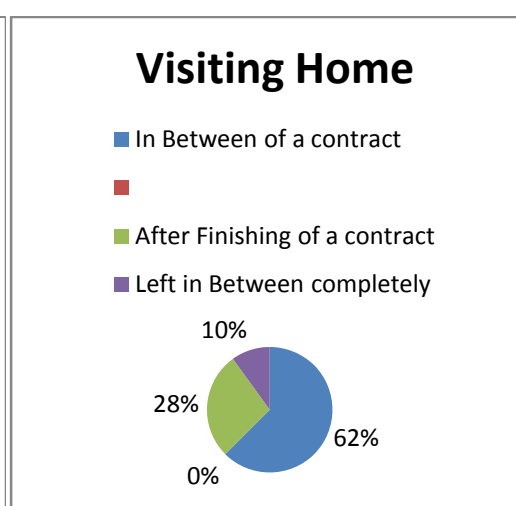


Figure 43: Singapore Migrants

As it is described early that Gulf country jobs are based on short time contract, so, migrants are generally do not come home to visit in between of it until there is any emergency. Figure 42 describes that only 25 percent migrants visit home in between their contract and other 75 percent migrants visit home or returned after finishing the contract. Those 25 percent migrants include those who have long-time contract for three years or those who do not get time between the two contracts.

Singapore's migrant labours are based on contract services. They can visit their home as per the rules of their joining contract. Figure 43 describes that 62 percent among the respondent migrants visit home in between the contract with the taking of leave, 28

percent of them visit after finishing the contract and for Singapore it is found that 10 percent respondent left their job in between the contract and came back to India.

Remittance

Remittance is a system of money transfer by a foreign worker to his/her home individually or to his country. This remittance can change the GDP and the economic growth of a country. On the other hand, it is very much important for the family member of the migrant. They are completely dependent on these remittances, with this they pay the loans which were taken for the migration and start a happy and healthy livelihood. Their children also start going to better school for a good education. Though they were from the financially backward section and after getting the remittance they try to enter in the upper middle class group of the society. Due to some research ethics and bindings it is unable to disclose the actual data regarding remittance from the interview and also the interviewers were not willing to give this data. But they said, remittance is not fixed for every month and it is not necessary that they send it every month in a same date, whenever they get chance they sent an amount as remittance.

India became one of the top recipients of remittances from the Indian Diaspora in 2017. According to ILO (International Labour Organization), “India received 65.4 billion remittances from the all the GCC countries in 2017 (UAE-12.67, Saudi- 10.51, Oman- 3.07, Bahrain- 1.25, Kuwait- 4.69 and Qatar- 3.97) .” In these GCC countries, due to low oil prices and policies discouraging recruitments of foreign workers, and this will down the flow of remittances from Gulf countries and on the other hand, from Singapore, India got 828 billion remittances. By the effect of this declination of recruitment in 2018 India got only 3.5 percent which is \$466 billion remittances.

Language Problem

Though it is the last but it is an important factor among the migrant’s problems. Indian unskilled labours who are migrating to the Gulf countries and Singapore are not properly educated and they do not know Hindi and English well other than their mother tongue, as Arabic is the main language for Gulf countries and English is the official language for Singapore. After reaching to a new land they face a problem with the language. They

cannot communicate with the local and officials. Only the existing members from India mainly from their own native places are there, and these migrants can communicate with them for every issue. It is not the problem only in the beginning, sometime this can be continued towards the end. This language gap makes them segregated from the security, if they are in trouble they are unable to commute with the police or authorities and it is very difficult to rescue them. For domestic workers also they cannot understand the instructions which were given by their masters and this could be a reason for problem of staying (in Singapore, maybe it is one of the main factor MOM give permissions only to those domestic workers whose native land and master's native land is same). During the time of data collection I also felt the language problem and communication gap. Being a non-native person for the people of Southern India, Orissa, Assam and other states apart from West Bengal and my respondents were sometimes uncomfortable with Hindi and English language, it was difficult for me to understand their feelings, descriptions for some cases. It makes the research gap also. And it can be said that, if they are uncomfortable inside their own country because of language gap and surely it is a major issue in the hostland to be culturally and identically fitted with the natives.

Passive Impact of Migration

There are women who are not migrating but their family members like fathers/sons/husbands are migrating, they are also finding problems at their home. If a father or son is migrated, then the mother is the head of the family. For her it is difficult to maintain all the household duties alone. Still in 2021, in few parts of India cannot accept a female as a head of the family and taking decisions. For that reason, they face social humiliation and discrimination. Their marital relationship is also damaged and sometimes wives are cheated by their husbands. Husbands are having extra-marital affairs at their work place. Children of migrated fathers are deprived from healthy paternal care. Their fathers come home after two years or more and stay for a very little period when they go back children are becoming lonely. And if the mother is migrating, then the child is away from maternal care. For some cases it has been seen that mothers are leaving their child at their very early stage when they should feed breast milk. These parents bring so many things, dresses for their children but they cannot give the psychological support of upbringing. They always do not get time and chance to make a phone their home, making an International phone call is very costly. Many of them cannot even afford a smart

phone; if they can then also under the dearth of salary they cannot properly recharge their phones. If a mother is leaving her daughter at back home at daughter may face some physical assaultation by the other male members of the family and locality. But she is unable to share that incident to her mother. These children are developing depression and psychological diseases. These migrants cannot take their family members while moving because they are temporary or not having sufficient accommodation for them. The salary which they get that is also less for them for minimum livelihood. Very rare cases are there, where husband and wife are moving together. In these cases their children are staying back at home alone with their other members. Ultimately children are becoming sufferer in these cases.

A Comparative Study

After finishing the primary data analysis, the research outcome says that situations and status of the migrants for these two destinations such as Gulf [Dubai (30 percent), Bahrain (20 percent), Qatar (15 percent), Oman (12 percent), Kuwait (10 percent), Saudi Arabia (8 percent) and Sharjah (5 percent)] and the group of people who are migrating as un-skilled and semi-skilled labours, they are under the age of 30-40 years old. But gendered differentiation is there; male and female migrants are mostly Muslims by religion can be seen for Gulf migration, whereas the lesser number of Hindu migrants are seen. The reason behind it is – people who believe in Islam they feel comfortable in the Muslim dominated country with all the rules and regulation along with the food habits. People for Gulf are mainly from Kerala and Andhra Pradesh and other States of India are involved in this migration for a construction workers, plumbers, electricians, domestic workers and on the other hand, people for Singapore are mainly from the Southern part of India; especially from Tamil Nadu as security guards, drivers, and construction workers. Being a whole nation Singapore has no divided destination. The educational qualification is also same in standard. Singapore from the various districts of India like Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Odisha, Kerala, West Bengal, Bihar, Tamil Nadu are almost same for most of the cases. Migrants who are used as sample (40 people for each country) for this research are belonged to unskilled and semi-skilled category, but few of them are need to be treated as skilled, as they are working as trained nurses. According to the statistics stated from these data, the migrants are mostly male of 30-40 years old and female migrants for Singapore is also lesser than Gulf, because people from Gulf countries they

need domestic workers and nurses, whereas the necessity of them is less for Singapore. At the time of data collection, female migrants who were willing to give information they are mainly engaged with security jobs or nurses. The names of the samples are not disclosed for their security reasons and unwillingness; and other data are authentic and published with the permission of the interviewers. As people (for this study) for both Gulf and Singapore are migrating as un-skilled and semi-skilled labour under the ECR passport, their educational qualification is not mandatory. They are mostly below the 10th standard. From the Indian perspective it shows that the educational background of migrants (mostly all) are very poor they are either uneducated or they have passed 5th or 8th standard, very less number of them crossed 10th standard or above. Due to their lack of education there are crisis in the job market and works they are doing in homeland mostly in agricultural field, driver or family business were not satisfying them and it is difficult to continue a proper livelihood. Irrespective of male and female, the migrants are married or widow/widower, very less numbers of migrants are unmarried as per samples. These migrants are aware of the system of migration as they are influenced by the family members and neighbours who are staying abroad (Gulf and Singapore) along with the financial support from Nationalised and Private banks or from some local organisations or from relatives and also from Co-operatives or Gramin banks or some local financial organisations. Apart from the better livelihood for their parents and next generation or good education for the children, there are few reasons behind the migration for both destinations. Female migrants (married) are taking the decisions of migration because of irresponsible, drunker husbands who are not earning money and just sitting at home ideally. Unmarried females are migration to earn money to fulfil dowry for their own and sister's marriages. These migrants are involving themselves as a construction worker, domestic worker, security guard, driver, hotel services and other occupations. In the ECR process middlemen or agents are having a great role, the migrants who are staying at a remote village and unable to come to the POE offices (these offices are in the city), few agents are taking advantage of their crisis and taking huge amount money to make it and on the other hand some agents are taking exact necessary amount of the process. Also they are making visas and contract with illegal papers, these migrants are identified as illegal migrants and facing troubles in the hostland. But the process of migration for Singapore is different, Ministry of Manpower (MOM) makes migrant's visas or contract passes for entering and staying in the country. Though for Singapore ECR is not mandatory but for the blue-collar job or for a post of a labour the companies of Singapore

are not hiring highly qualified persons. If they will hire highly qualified persons then they cannot recruit them for blue-collar jobs or hard working sector with less payment. For these groups of migrants there is no position for promotion in the same contract. After finishing a contract if they are eligible and willing to join for the next they may get promoted position, but it is very rare for both the countries. On the other hand, for Singapore it is dominated by Hindus and rests are Muslims and Christian accordingly.

If we look at the family back ground then they all belongs from an economical backward family where agriculture is the only source of income and females are mainly homemakers or widows or else victim of domestic violence by husband or other family members. They are not the first one to be migrated; they are influenced by the other members or neighbours. As they are economically not strong they are taking loan from bank or from the relatives, and it became burden for the migrants to return the money. Children of migrants are always neglected from the parental care and deprived in various ways. If both the parents are migrated children at back home cannot get care from others, they sometime left their schools and education to earn money which is ordered by the other family members at home. Because they remittances which their parents are sending that is used for others things like making a multi-storeyed marble house, maintaining status in the society as son/brother is in abroad, giving the huge amount of donations to the religious sector and rest for paying the lone. These kinds of cases can be a cause for raising the number of child labours in India. These children are also always not allowed to talk with their parents over phone and for few cases it can also be seen that these children of migrants are threatened by the other family member for not saying the actual scenario in back home. On the other hand, if mother/father, only one parent migrate then also mother has to face difficulties to survive, she also goes to work inside the country or locality. For the case of a father who is staying back at home and earning less than his wife had to face so many questions from the relatives and neighbours, because the concept of working mother/wife more or less is not happily accepted by the Indian society till date.

At the last sections of data analysis the question is about the status of migrant in the abroad. All the interviewers of two destinations replied in a very polite way. Some of them are having good relationship with their bosses or supervisors and some of them are not, but the standard of rented house is not good for Gulf countries and they are mostly cheated by the agent while making visas, on the other hand, the government of Singapore

has taken responsibility for their staying and visa making process. Both the migrants are facing same problem on language and cultural differences. With the communication gap, they cannot communicate with native. It is difficult to access local markets. And at the time of arrival local agents talk in native language. Lack of knowledge drags them to hell. At the time of arrival if they do not understand, their passports, visas and all other documents will be carried by agents and no documents will be there with the employers. These migrants will be treated as illegal migrants. Cultural differences or cultural dislocations help them to feel their identity crisis. They live as 'Other'.

At the time of interview when they were asked about their working condition in the host country, their answers were vibrant. Though they are going with the hopes but always it was actually not hopeful. First is the working hour. There is no stipulated working hour in both countries. Sometimes they work for 8 hours, sometimes it is more than 12 hours. For a domestic worker it is 24 hours. Second is salary. No fixed date of getting salary. There are handful numbers of companies who give salary to their employees in the proper time or date. Others are giving it quarterly, half yearly or for some cases after a year. They are taking their passports and visas to not allowing them to go home or to go for complaining to the embassy. During the time of data collection it was also found that sometimes they are not getting medical facilities as it was said in the contract. Because of these reasons a group of migrants are not satisfied with their companies.

Now-a-days, the situation is changing; the Government of India is taking care for these unskilled and semi-skilled migrants before they travel. They are getting pre-departure training regarding the problems they are facing and how to get rid of these. Language training is one of them. This section will be discussed in details in the Chapter Six, in conclusion.

This chapter is completely dealt with the primary data taken from interviews in various ways in different places as discussed in the beginning of this chapter. In the earlier two chapters Two and Three respectively I have discussed the issues and problems faced by the migrants from the literary reviews and also used few remarkable interviews as examples. From this data analysis I have observed that these migrants are really facing problems, sometimes unwanted and sometimes manmade. Middlemen/agents are often taken advantages of their illiteracy; they are taking more money and misleading them for illegal migration. Few companies are violating the Government laws, but in most of the

cases I have seen the harassments are occurring for the absence of proper documentations. Later part of this research work I shall discuss about what are the necessity steps taken by Government of homeland and hostland. Earlier we have seen Indian Embassies in Gulf countries and Singapore are unable to help these stringent migrants those who cannot produce the proper documents and their names are not mentioned in the payroll of the companies, so the companies are also helpless to help them. For these cases later it will be observed that in the present context how the Government is utilizing the policies and insurances to rescue these migrants and it is happening truly. In the next chapter I shall analyze the secondary data from the literary representations. There are very handful of literary works done in English or in regional languages; translated into English states the problems, reasons of migration to Gulf countries and Singapore. It will be discussed elaborately with the textual references to know the differences and similarities between primary and secondary data.

Representations of Labour Migration to Gulf and Singapore in Literature

Creative writing or literature cannot exist in isolation from life's intricacies. Through the centuries it has reflected life's complications, its ups and downs. A writer sub-consciously reflects the changing of the trends of society through his writings. The work, born with his creativity, becomes a mirror through which we may trace development in a society – literature is the reproduction and a part of the society.

This chapter will be dealing with the literary works on Gulf countries and Singapore, which tell us the stories about the labour migration and their problems in this present research context. To discuss it in a larger setting, the history and the intra-Asia migration procedures will also be discussed, located in novels, autobiographies, journalistic writings, poems and movies.

Representations of Gulf countries

As it is discussed in the Second Chapter, migrants from India are differently identified in the Gulf countries. They are known as 'incipient' diaspora which means temporary, not permitted for citizenship, not eligible for taking any of the family members and completely based on the signed contract. According to the history, statistics and data collected for this research (Chapter 4), it shows these migrants are mostly unskilled and semi-skilled labours, who are not educated. The Gulf migration from India had started with the spice-trading marketing system; there was no relation with the exchange of education, literatures, cultures and white-collar jobs, like other first world countries such as UK, USA etc. These Indian migrants are always having their positions under the privileged workers and labours. But, the recent trends of Gulf migrations are changing from the previous picture. People from the white-collar jobs, educated with general and professional degrees are moving towards these countries as IT professionals, officers of Oil Industries, media, teaching professionals, manager of the hotels. These groups of

migrants are also going on the basis of their signed contracts but they are not ‘incipient’. They can bring their family and stay for a longer period of time as they are qualified and skilled migrants.

Due to the development of the connectivity with India, literature from diasporic perspective is also improving. This genre of Indian Diasporic Literature is completely a new discourse. The subject matters of these literary works are about the lives of migrants from India to Gulf countries, especially from the Southern part of India – their lives before and after going, feeling, life in an exile and the problems they are facing is discussed in the form of Indian diasporic novel. In 2017, the novel *Temporary People* by Deepak Unni Krishnan got Restless Books Prize, a prestigious International prize in literature for the Middle Eastern countries. There is a poem by a Bedouin, named Abdullah Addindan who died in 1998 at his age of eighty. He wrote about the lives of migrants in the Gulf desert, the philosophy of their lives. It is treated as the medicine to the migrants to the wound of their lives which occurred by the devils of authorities. This poem was translated into English by Marcel Kurpershoek (1994), a Dutch Diplomat who was employed as Netherlands embassy in Riyadh.

“[W]e went through
A period of drought
Then I climbed
The mountain
And the rain-carrying
Clouds came
At the appointed time.
[W]hen I had climbed
The mountain
I said
My cries of woe are like
Those of a sick man
Drinking a bitter potion
But is not cured by the
brew of black herbs.”

For this research, I have chosen very few collective books as my secondary data sources on the Gulf countries. These books are *Goat Days* (2012) by Benyamin, *Dubai Gilded Cages* (2011) by Syed Ali and *Dubai Dreams: The Rough Roads to Riches* (2011) by Shamlal Puri. Particularly these three books were chosen because in these books I have found the condition of the Indian Migrants in the Gulf countries who are involved in

various fields as unskilled labour migrants. The reasons behind their migrations, the process, and way of living in the hostland and how they become deprived and cheated; all the stories and incidents are mentioned elaborately. In the later part of this Chapter, the information from these novels will help to make a good comparative study.

Goat Days (2012)

Here, I am introducing the first novel *Goat Days*, by Benyamin translated from a famous Malayalam novel called *Aadu Jeevitham* by Joseph Koyippally. This novel is also documented as a movie in Malayalam language with English subtitle. This describes the life of an Indian migrant in middle of the Saudi desert. From the critical point of view it could be read as an autobiography rather than a novel. This book is a story telling by a poor Malayali fellow Najeeb who went to Gulf to fulfil his dreams, but ended up as an unsuccessful dreamer, a life in the desert into a universal tale of loneliness and alienation. The book divided into four parts, as Najeeb's life was depicted in desert, like – Prison, Desert, Escape and Refuge.

The story actually starts from the second part, called 'Deser't. Najeeb, a poor, common Malayali village man, lived with his mother and wife. Like the Kerala trends one day he also felt to earn more money for better life and to see happy and smiling faces of his family members. During this phase he met with many persons, suddenly one of his friends suggested him "there was a visa for sale ... Tell me if there is anyone who wants to go. It is through my brother-in-law. He's here on vacation. If money is sent, the visa will arrive within two months." (p. 35-36) This visa was for the Gulf, the oil kingdom and everyone's dream place for making money. Najeeb thought for sometimes and decided that really he needs money for his health, his wife Sainu who was pregnant for four months, better life for his future child. As he already having a passport he gave money for visa and he got it. The journey was started from Kayamkulam by Jayanti Janata, a train to Bombay. At the station he met his fellow friend Hakeem with whom he was going to start his new journey – a new beginning of his life. On 4th April 1992, they had started journey for Riyadh from Bombay airport through Air India flight and after four and a half hour journey they had reached their destination – city of dreams and hopes. Both of them were unknown to Arab and Arabic culture, so it was very difficult to communicate with the local people and accommodated with the local culture. Usually agent comes to the airport to take their clients to the respective company. Unfortunately, there flight was one hour late and they thought agent was gone. They both were roaming around in the airport, and

met with a Malayali to whom they asked about the agent. He advised to wait for the *arbab*⁴⁷, it is the first Arabic word they had learnt. Najeeb and Hakeem both of them were hungry and thirsty, last food they have taken in the plane. Finally after a long wait one person came to them and said in Arabic and drag Hakeem's luggages and ordered them to follow him. That unknown person was their *arbab*, completely in Arabic dress, came with an old vehicle which does not have place to seat for two persons. *Arbab* howled and they scared, jumped into the backside of the vehicle, full of their luggage, grass and wheat. This journey was unending in the dark way. Najeeb realized this is called desert. From that time sixth sense came to their mind that this dream will not be easy, there was some mistake and for that they were afraid. Suddenly *arbab* came and ordered Hakeem to get down, Najeeb protested that they came together to go the same place and now why will he get down first. Actually *arbab* did not have any answer, he shouted. Though, language was not understandable, but with the gesture anyone can understand everything. Hakeem got down and Najeeb waited with bad thoughts and fear. After certain distance he also had to get down in the dark desert where nothing was visible except another *arbab*. They talked with each other and the first *arbab* left.

Najeeb saw a scary figure sitting in the cot and thousands of goats were roaming around. That time he was sure that he was going to be a shepherd. He was about to cry, without any food and water he slept. He felt lost and helpless. Next morning was his joining date. *Arbab* gave him cloths which smelt like anything. There was no option, he had to remove his clothes and forget about the new one which he brought from home. After wearing that the scary figure with the long bearded gave him milk, he drank it with *khububs*⁴⁸. First day somehow went. Second day morning *arbab* asked him to milk the goat. He was remembering that in back home he was happy and leading a lavish life. He didn't have any idea about goat, only he saw it to the neighbour's house. It was impossible work to milk the goat; already *arbab* came and threatened him for the delay. Then the scary figure came and taught him how to milk in Hindi language. His main work was to fill the water tank in the *masara*⁴⁹ with bucket. His back was about to break. He did not have to fresh himself. Somehow with all the difficulties he did but he could not clean himself, because the water in the *masara* was not clean for human being. To be in that way was impossible

⁴⁷'*Arbab*' in Persian means the master or the supervisor of the company.

⁴⁸It means Roti.

⁴⁹In Persian '*masara*' means well – a big place to keep water.

for him, but human being can adjust with everything. Day by day he had started forgetting the existence of the word ‘hygiene’; he became used to with the situation and understood why this old fellow became scary. He thought, “Lice, bugs and some other small insects from the goat’s bodies had settled there. They itched severely when I sweated at night. My body had become a pest reserve. Lice and bugs formed a crust on my skins. The goats were cleaner than I was.” (p. 160) In one hand, he was learning slowly how to catch goat, how to feed and treat and on the other hand punishment and torture from *arbab* was simultaneously going on.

Like a bolt from the blue, one day the scary figure was missing forever. He felt sorry and loneliness started. After a long period of time he felt nostalgic for home. Co-incidentally, there was one he-goat which took birth on his hand. He felt that it is his own son Nabeel. He gave him mother’s milk, but that was not rule in the *masara* and for doing that he was bitten by the *arbab*. He started liking his work in the desert. One painful incident again had changed his life when he saw how to cut the male organ from a goat.

“Pity! A he-goat had lost its maleness. A maleness that was for the *arbab* just a small piece of meat and a little blood. I had noticed that not all male goats were allowed to live with their virility. Only a selected few were lucky. After a certain age, they were made to live among she-goats. They could mate as they pleased and enjoy all the male pleasures.” (p. 113)

In that group, his son Nabeel was there, he could not resist himself. He shouted on the *arbab*, but no result came out. “The cry that came from Nabeel when he was cut! Even it echoes in my heart. It felt like my heart was being lacerated with a piece of flint. I only remember Nabeel whining and running into the *masara*.” (p. 115) All the time he has one thing to do to get at least some relief and satisfaction, blaming his almighty, his Allah for any bad things and praises for the good things. He had started telling himself as a goat.

He was ordered to roam with the goat. One day he was hit by a big goat. His hand was swollen and it was paining like a hell, but *arbab* did not care about anything except his work. Finally with the help of the other *arbab* he was cured. Suddenly, one day he saw Hakeem after a long time. He called him; with few conversations he proved that it was Hakeem. Najeeb was very happy to see that Hakeem was alive, though he became like a scary figure. They expressed their story, and it was same. Najeeb did not know that this time his *arbab* observed him with binocular. Again he got punishment and kicks on his

back. After that he wanted to kill his *arbab*, but he could not, when he heard that *Arbab* was praying to God and saying that “My Allah ... you kept us safe. Had Najeeb not been here, I would have died of fear now.” (p. 134)

Meeting with Hakeem helped him to think about the home again. He took his pen and paper from his bag, which was under the dust for three years, started writing a letter to his loving wife Sainu with the false and fantasising words. He was not allowed to talk with anyone, even not with the person who gives wheat and grass to the goat. But Hakeem somehow managed to talk with a Pakistani named Ibrahim Khadiri. They planned to escape and informed Najeeb. Najeeb’s *arbab* went for his brother’s daughter wedding ceremony and he got the chance. He said good bye to every goat with very the nostalgic tone. He became accustomed with all of them, they were the only who loved him in the desert. He said, “Goats, my friends, my brothers, my blood, good bye.” (p. 185)

The second part of his life escaping was also not easy in the trap. Reaching to the highway was very difficult. Three of them did not know how many days they ran, walk without food and water in search of highway. In this difficult journey he learnt many things from Ibrahim, who came to the desert before, like desert storm, insects, life and all. This time he lost his dearest friend Hakeem forever. Finally they found an oasis where three days were spent only with water and dates. At the last moment when the light of hope for getting highway was seen Ibrahim left him. Najeeb stayed “one more night orphaned by Allah”. (p. 234) Till today he does not know the reason. When he got the highway he praise to Allah. “The wheel marks were not of a vehicle belonging to any human being. It was the mark made by the wheels of Allah’s vehicle. A pointer to escape. Allah, thank you. A thousand thanks. A billion thanks”. (p. 230) He tried to stop many cars, vans, lorries, but no one stopped, may be for his scary figure. Finally one luxury car stopped and dropped him in the city. Najeeb called that person as the symbol of ‘God’.

After reaching the city when he had to get down the third phase of life in desert had started which is called as ‘Refuge’. He was terribly hungry and he did not have a single penny. He begged for food at every store but got only refuse. Finally he found a “Malabar Restaurant.” He was praised by Almighty; at least he can speak with his own language. But when he got conscious he saw he was in a hospital. For a good person there should be a banyan tree. He fainted near the stair and Kunjikka took him to the hospital treated him. Najeeb felt that he is very fortunate for getting a friend like Kunjikka. To him there was

nothing to give him except tears. After three years he saw his face in the mirror. He talked with his wife, heard about his son Nabeel who started going to school and got the news of his Mother's death. Many people had come to meet him and they listened his stories; some of them believed and some did not. Kunjikka and his friend decided that Najeeb had to go back to home now, but he could not go. He did not have visa and passport with him; everything was with the *arbab* who took it at the very first day from the airport. So, there was no option except going to the prison and faced the Embassy rule.

Now Najeeb's last phase of life 'Prison' will be discussed, which is the first part of the book. Najeeb and Hameed another person met in Kunjikka's place were roaming around in front of police station to get attention, but no one was taking care of them. Police officers and constables were busy with their personal works. After three days without any hope, they entered inside the police station by themselves. Then they were asked for Pathakas and the answer was simply no. It seems police officers got work after a long time. They were talking in Arabic which was again not understandable. They caught them and put them in a van. Najeeb and Hameed were very happy. After finishing certain procedures they entered in the last step of the prison where many cells named for the different countries. They had started staying there, food and life was very good without any tension and work. Sometimes they felt neglected by the Arab, staying in the same cell even. There was a parade day in the prison and every week they were afraid to be identified. The next day of it was Embassy day and people used to wait for the happy moment. Suddenly one unfortunate parade day came when Hameed was recognised by an Arab and he bit him like anything and took him to his old hell. Again another unwanted parade day came and Najeeb was recognized by *arbab* but he was surprised that *arbab* did not say anything. Then he asked to the police why it happened. Police repeated *arbab*'s answer that "It's just that he is not under my visa, otherwise I would have dragged him back to *masara*!" (p. 251) Najeeb was really fortunate. But he felt sorry for his own fate, he suffered for "someone else's fate." (p. 251) And the next day unbelievably he got the embassy pass for coming back to India.

And the story ends with the actual fact which says that later Karuvatta's brother-in-law disclosed that he had not arranged for a shepherd's visa for Najeeb. It was actually the visa for a helper of the construction company. "Lord only knew who spoke the truth. I am not going to lose my sleep thinking about it. ... That day eighty of us got a 'free out pass' to India. It was part of a government project to deport unauthorized residents to the

countries of their origin. ... Our return flight was at night.” (p.252) The Indian embassy officers organised and distributed the boarding passes for all these stranded migrants.

This novel is portraying a picture of a person and says about the real Gulf in the middle of Saudi desert. There are many Indians, especially Malayali who wants to go to the Gulf to earn more money. All the ‘Gulfy’ diaspora are not in the same condition, some are rich and good enough like Kunjikka. It could be a controversial novel from philosophical and religious perspective. For each and every reason Najeeb either praised or blamed his Allah. Though he is very poor and not having that much education, but he compared the beauty of desert to a poor man and a literary person in a very good way and also life of a man in desert. “If I am asked about the most beautiful sight I ever saw in the desert, I must answer: the sunset. The sun seems like a tortoise diving down into the sand. Slowly, it sinks into the sandy jungle.” (p. 159) For the writers of every language and religion, the desert has a beautiful impact on their lives. For them desert is a space for the enlightenment and the spiritual revival. There are writings that suggest life spending in a desert can create an explosion and expand of knowledge in the mind. On the other hand, making visa and agents can make life heaven to hell. Najeeb said, at the end of his terrible journey he himself did not know who is saying the truth. He believed one person and gave money for making visa. Also, he was unknown about his company and work. If he could have known it, he could go by himself rather than waiting in the airport for the whole day and kidnapped by a wrong person. Migrants before leaving homeland or migration should be enquired about the company and work to save them from harassments and should contact with the Embassy for any situation in further. Discrimination is also seen everywhere throughout the novel. *Arbab* though is not a rich man but he could discriminate and torture his employee at any level to show his power and position. In the road or outside the police station not being an Arab they were neglected for many days. Inside the prison, all are criminals but those are native they were taking advantages for the good place; good food etc. Language problem was another issue. Najeeb was completely unknown to the place and language. Not only with *arbab* but also he could even communicate with anyone there until he could not find the “Malabar Restaurant”. Before leaving at least people should learn the basic of the native language of the going country.

Dubai: Gilded Cage (2011)

The second textual representation will be from a non-fiction *Dubai: Gilded Cage*, which includes histories, interviews, data and personal experiences of writer's first visit to Dubai in June 2006, by Syed Ali, a sociologist and researcher. As it is a research document in a broad sense, for this study, it will not be studied as chapter by chapter. First few important arguments will be discussed from randomly chosen quotes as textual references from this book with the references from the author collected, and then directly it will focus on the labour migration and problems.

This book was published in 2011 with the influence of writer's first-hand experience with never-ending construction and construction workers, also the extravagant consumerist excess with the prostitutes, maids, cleaners and others of the working class as well as high class skilled people of the society. These are the things either for the good reasons or for the bad reasons, which make the Dubai as 'Brand Dubai'.

“In the less than two decades, Dubai has transformed itself from an obscure Gulf emirate into a global centre for business, tourism, and luxury living. Its rulers have succeeded in making Dubai into a worldwide brand, publicizing its astonishing hotels and leisure opportunities while at the same time successfully moderating its complex policies towards the guest workers and their suppression of opposition.”
(Ali, 2011, p. 23)

He portrayed Dubai from the history to present. The 'gilded cage' of the subtitle is a direct reference to these middle-class and professional workers and their families in Dubai.

The author further researched that, there is another important reason which makes Dubai as well as Gulf countries as an attractive destination to a certain class people, like, local citizen merchant families (not all the families were involved, but those that were are still prominent day) and expatriates,⁵⁰ particularly of Indians and Iranians, is Gold Smuggling. “The import and export of gold to and from Dubai was perfectly legal, importing with India and Pakistan was not – hence the term used as ‘smuggling’.” (p. 30) Most of the gold was shipped in fast, motorised dhows, some mounted with guns, and the dhow captains engaged in fantastic cat and mouse games with the Indian Coast Guard, often

⁵⁰ An expatriate is a person who is living in a foreign overseas country on a temporary basis, but for more than year.

ending in gold being dumped into the Indian Ocean so as to avoid the authorities and sometimes in shootouts with deadly results. In the early 1970s, one smuggler supposedly had killed eighty-two Indian Coast Guard and naval personnel in his career (Dickey, 1990). By the early 1970s Dubai was the third largest buyer of gold in the open market, and it was believed that there were 130 sterling millionaires active in the gold smuggling trade Anthony (1975). This was largely come to an end in 1973. The price of gold at this time was rising dramatically, and quickly went beyond the reach of the ordinary Indian families, at the end purchasers of the smuggled gold. At the same time, the then Prime Minister of India, Indira Gandhi cracked down on the smuggler's agents in Bombay, imprisoning many of them. By June of the same year imports of the gold hit zero. While there was a minor revival in the late 1970s, the gold smuggling trade never fully recovered.⁵¹

This book has started with few words which describes how Dubai actually is –

“Manhattan-on-speed”

“A skyline on crack”

“Capitalist dream on steroids”

“Part Disney, part Scheherazade”

“A hallucinatory pastiche of the big, the bad and the ugly.”⁵² (Ali, 2011)

This book is divided into seven chapters, each chapter is describing from various perspective. As this study will mainly focus labour migration (both male and female), the analysis will start from the chapter three of this book, titled “Iron Chain”. The title itself has a metaphorical meaning. The word ‘iron’ refers to a hard metal which symbolise the tough and hard life of migrants in their new destination. On the other hand, ‘chain’ could be a pattern of migration, Chain Migration means “the movement of people tends to leave to those places where they have contacts and where the old migrants serve as links for the new migrants; and the chain which is thus formed is usually termed as chain migration.” (Ali, 2011) Also, it could be said that the hard life which continues from the early period till twenty-first century. Iron and Chain is co-related. These migrated labours are not only construction workers, they includes store clerks, security guards, taxi drivers, hotel staffs, restaurant workers, hawkers and car cleaners and the domestic workers. They are the

⁵¹ Sources were given from the Author's Field Work report.

⁵² These lines were taken from a journalistic view on Dubai city and how it becoming as globally attracted to everyone of every field of work, especially from 2001-2008. The economic exposure, oil productions are highlighted here.

factors of production. They are bonded labours – which is easily available in a very cheap rate. “Workers in Dubai lead highly exploited work lives, and are socially degraded. Their wages are poor, when paid, and their rights under the law are limited, and rarely enforced.” (Ali, 2011, p. 109) To continue with it, he said discussed about the labour exploitation which had become a serious problem with the result of the economic boom of the mid- 2000s. Construction workers were regularly working six-days in a week of eleven-hours duty in a day, and often another half day on Fridays. This is violating the labour law. Along with this violating of rules they work in dangerous conditions which already occurred more than seven hundred deaths in the work place and according to statistical information ninety suicides per year. They have not only the problem with working hours or danger in work place, this death ratio also include the long working hours at the day time in the scorching heat like 50 degree Celsius. For these labours, living condition is also not good, unhealthy and unhygienic.

The first argument is about the visa procedure at the time of recruiting. When the labours landed on the Airport, the first thing the authority does is collecting their visas and passports and other legal documents, only drivers can keep their driving license which is also issued by Gulf government. These documents will be returned at the time of contract over. He quoted from an assistant director at the Dubai Naturalization and Residency Department told Human Rights Watch (HRW) that employers ‘should not hold passport’, but the authority justifies that ‘sometimes workers lose their passports so the safest place to keep it is at the company offices.’ Further the author added,

“One large-scale study of Indian migrants in the UAE found that employers often refuse to release passports back to their workers because of minor labour problems or disputes regarding payment of wages. And they even found that 11 per cent of employers refuse to give workers their passports back in order to return home.” (p. 84)

In the fifth chapter, which is named as “Guests in Their Own Homes”, here writer further included a sub-chapter ‘Fear of banishment’ where he found that to maintain social control there is different rule for labour and skilled migrants. For skilled, they do not have fear of abandonment, but on the other hand, the labour has three years visa system, which works effectively through the possibility that the visa may be revoked. There are two main fears that all expatriates must at some level of considerations for being summarily

deported. To acknowledge this situation as an example he took an interview by Manoj, an Indian entrepreneur in his mid-thirties.

“I don’t know what difference it’s going to make in your day to day life, you know? Even permanent residency can be ... I mean this is not a democracy ... what difference is that going to make? Simply because you don’t know what can happen tomorrow, simply because the nationals run this place and what they say is law. You can’t live in a country knowing in some sort of sub-conscious level that you aren’t safe here. I don’t mean that you are going to be mugged in the street. It’s that you can’t make this your home.”(p. 141-142)

In the chapter Six, named “Strangers in Their Own Land”, he discussed about the indent crisis where he mentioned that, “identity among nationals tiptoes around the broader issue: “not whether nationals are losing their identity or culture, a dubious claim, but rather than their social significance in their own place is declining in the public sphere.” (p. 15) The identity ‘crisis’ is not simply a matter of demographics; if all the expatriates were labourers and maids, it is doubtful that there would be such psychological against. The need to distinguish between nationals and expatriates is heightened because there are more expatriates who are, *socially and economically*, relatively equal to nationals. Labourers and maids, while physically close, are socially and economically subordinate” (p. 184).

In the above mentioned discussion it was either about construction and labour workers or about as a whole. But, he also discussed about the situation of domestic workers. Though getting information and interviews from them was very difficult, but still he managed to do that. He found dual results here. There are some cases for them the relation with their masters is very impressive and good and on the other hand it is very pathetic for some cases. As he said, “Many maids have good relations with their employers; they are treated as members of the family, are paid adequately and in a timely fashion, and have acceptable time off during the workday, a day off once in a week, and holiday’s. Some maids actually do quite well financially and choose to stay in Dubai for extended stays.” (Ali, 2011, p. 95) On the other hand for some cases, “The visa status of maids contributes to their insecurity. Maids who are hired legally are on two-year contracts, and, even more than other classes of lower-level workers, are truly bonded labour. No matter their complaints, they have hardly any rights in the UAE legal system; as household labour, maids are not even given the bare minimum protection that construction workers are

accorded, indeed are not even covered under the UAE's labour law." (Ali, 2011, p. 97) These maids are also facing the same problems like the construction workers. They are underpaid or not paid, over worked. These maids are attempting to escape from their abusive employers.

During his research findings, the writer of this book, Ali, had raised a question to the interviewees. If in Dubai and as well as in the Gulf there are so many problems to survive, but still why they are very much eager to migrate and come over here to stay. And the responses he got were fairly simple and twofold:

"workers arrive saddled with debt, and they need to support family back home. Whatever they earn, they remit the bulk of it. While there are a staggering number of newspaper and magazine articles about the exploitations of construction workers, they contain buried within their pages the basic truth for labourers, that is the remittances to family (and to the agents to whom they owe thousands of dollars) that keeps them in Dubai. ." (Ali, 2011, p. 91)

And till the end the answer is in confliction and unsolved in a way.

Dubai's Dream: The Rough Road to Riches (2010)

Dubai's Dream: The Rough Road to Riches is a 'petro-fiction' or it can be said as quoted from Amitav Ghosh (2009) "Representation of oil Encounters". Being a journalist, Shamlal Puri, stayed in Middle Eastern countries for his careers of long 30 years and he observed the lives of blue-collars workers. According to Puri, "*Dubai is very much in the news now and 'Dubai Dreams' is a timely reminder of the rough lives and shattered dreams of Indians who are paying a heavy price in the current credit crunch that has also touched this Middle East emirate*"⁵³. (Puri, 2010, p. 2)

Dubai, a global melting pot, brings together six Indians in search of reaches. Four taxi drivers (Uday Chacko, Maqbool Ahmed, Binu Menon and Gabriel Mathew or Gabby) and a junior manager from Southern part of India and a construction worker from Punjab (Hazara Singh) lived under the same roof with their bed-sit lodgings. There was a time when all the flights used to depart for Dubai from India and those Indian migrants were ready to pay any amount of airfare to fulfil their dreams in Dubai.

⁵³From an interview with Shamlal Puri.

The book is divided into 35 chapters and each chapter makes different incidents and experiences of Dubai. The first chapter named 'Kerala to Dubai' identifies about a Keralite village man named Uday Chacko who went to Dubai and became a taxi driver there. In India, Uday had paid Rs. 200000 to get visa for Dubai. His employer confiscated his Indian passport and held it in his custody just in case Uday decided to abscond. Due to overworked and unpaid job, also unnecessary abuse and foul from the company made Uday frequently thought of packing up and returning home, but the realisation of having spent several hundred thousand rupees to get to Dubai in the first place, calmed him down and he decided to renew his visa and continue working in this country that gave him no joy except the joy of earning salary and remaining in a job.

Maqbool Ahmed, a thirty-five year old Muslim from Secunderabad, India, recruited as taxi driver as soon as he had arrived in Dubai with his visitor visa. Maqbool preferred Dubai as he had no prospects of a good job in India. Leaving home without the family is always difficult to maintain a healthy married life and it was also not trustful. His wife Afsana had eloped with Amjad Chaoudhary, the owner of the tobacco and betel nut shop down the street. Maqbool was upset from his first marriage life and one day he got a passenger from U.K., who had suggested him to get a new wife the from matrimonial sites and gifted him a new computer. Following his instruction he found his new wife Maya from Mumbai. After his second marriage he became more loyal husband than the earlier. He tried to get dependence visa for his wife, but as a blue-collar worker he is not allowed to get this. Maqbool brought Maya for few days with tourists' visa and arranged a new rented flat for staying together. Day by day, during her visit in Dubai, Maqbool found her suspicious and she also started blaming him for every simple reason. All of a sudden one day she told Maqbool that she wanted to go back to India for some personal urgency. Maqbool did not stop her. In the meantime, with the very short span of time she took signature for his Secunderabad house for the ownership and finished almost of his savings. At last, Maqbool found that she is a fraud, drug addicted woman and again he became alone.

Binu Menon, another taxi driver from Kochi was a barber in India. He had completed high school in the Malayalam medium without any professional qualifications. He was not enough confident to read or write English, except for snippets of the language picked up from foreign-returned Keralites coming to his uncle's salon.

Gabriel Mathew “Gabby”, a twenty-six years old Keralite hard working person was yearned to go to the Middle East because of the success stories from Kerala people who are settled there and the potential of better earnings. So, he was very happy when he managed to get a job as a taxi driver in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. He was the best driver in his company. He was also a religious man who went to the church whenever he had free time and never missed Christmas and Easter mass in whatever form or shape it was held in the Middle East.

From the above mentioned characters of this novel, it can be analyzed that, the Indians who are migrating to Dubai to fulfil their dream and the most wanted dream is to earn more, for that, they are ready to pay a high amount of money, even to the fraud or an unknown agent. There is a hidden question asked everywhere. Are they really happy in Dubai? With the critical appreciation, it is notified that, they are not actually happy. They live there as a money making machine. They work almost all the day. Over time works help to make more money. The workers do not stay in the proper accommodation. Usually, the area called Sonapur is assigned for the worker’s living area – mostly, the uneducated labourers from the poor rural villages of the Indian subcontinent. They live in a bed space, a room with four double bunk-beds shared by six other men. Gabby said:

“We cannot work like this. This company issues fines for every minor thing; they take money for visas, health insurance and accommodation. Their accommodation is not good, so most of us get our own accommodation.” (puri, 2010, p. 206)

On the other hand, especially the taxi drivers get fouls and cases for not following the traffic rules. Many times these are false cases and they get less amount of salary. This humiliated situations made the Dubai taxi drivers union to give a statement like “We, the taxi drivers of Dubai, are stressed out even more than the pilots of the Emirates Airline!” For this hard life, these taxi drivers go for protests. “Each group usually functioned in its own circle, discriminating against people from other nationalities. This protest brought them together as they were fighting for the same cause.” (p. 205) Binu Menon was an award winning driver in his taxi company; still he joined in the protest with his fellow colleagues. He said from the protest platform,

“We are standing by our own men. Our working conditions are unfair and the system is rotten. We are prepared to continue for as many days as it takes to find a solution. They think that we are needy people they can use us like tissue paper – clean your face and throw us away.” (Puri, 2010, p. 206)

Uday Chacko also added,

“No wonder a large number of trained old taxi drivers have resigned and left to work for competing companies. How can work for a company that does not care for its drivers? We are the heart of the company’s business and we are the ones who rake in their revenue. We are the ones who make pay day possible for the top bosses in our company and we are the ones who are ignored by them! We work seven days a week without paid leave.” (Puri, 2010 p. 206)

Maqbool also shared his own experience along with the others,

“We are treated like dogs, not human beings. We’re not allowed to even keep a bottle of water in the car. If we have an accident, whether it is our fault or the other driver’s fault or whether we get the green or red paper, we still get fined 2,000 dirhams no matter how little the damage. I got fined for going to the mosque to pray while on duty.” (Puri, 2010, pp. 206-207)

With all these problems, exploitations they spent their whole lives in Dubai for earning money till their last breath. Binu and Maqbool had finished their lives. Their bodies were brought to India for their family members.

“Dream chasers continued to take their flights to Dubai, the Shangri La of the Middle East. Another batch of guest workers entered the city in the sand to take over the jobs of those who had left or gone to their makers. Life continued as it always did. New names replaced the old ones.” (Ali, 2011, p. 332)

The situation has been changed. This book also stressed the crisis moment of Dubai which had hit the global deadliness for the contemporary. It has historical values and importance for the present scenario. Construction workers who had headed to the Indians sub-continent for their holidays found their employers had hidden behind mobile phones to advise them that they had been sacked. Overdue pay, no job guarantee, lonely life without family, expensive livelihood, burden for repaying the loan, remittances held the workers towards so many illegal works. Many of them were arrested by the local police and spent their rest of the lives in the jail. Today they had realised the situation, ironically, some of them are trying to go back to their homes, leaving their unfulfilled and horrified dreams behind, and the recent statistic of going to Middle East has been decreased.

Representations of Singapore

Indian diaspora in Singapore is enriched and renowned. It is an old diaspora community. The process of migration to Singapore had started from the colonial era as a slave trade and indentured labour system for sugar plantation and military services. After the colonialism and independence of India, the relationship between these two countries is continuing and developed. Being an Indian diaspora community, people are carrying their cultures, education from their homeland and spreading it in the host land. The Indian diasporic literature of Singapore is also established in the field of world literature. The subject matter of these writings are based on their nostalgic feelings about home and family, the life in Singapore, advantages and disadvantages of the migration, missing and loss and how life has become in an exile. The characters of these literary works are mainly those indentured labours, migrated labours from the recent trends and very few discussions about the people belonged to the white-collar community. During the field work, short stories, poetry collection, used as secondary data, are collected from the library of National University of Singapore (NUS). For this thesis I have chosen *Me Migrant* (2016) a poetry collection by Md. Mukul Hossine and *The Fictions of Singapore* (1993) a short stories collection edited by Yoon Wong and Thumbog. These literary texts are describing the process and reason behind of migrants from the colonial time to contemporary period. It gives us the notion of caste, religion problems during colonial period among the Indian migrants and on the other hand, it gives us the idea of psychological and physical problems of migrants, homeland nostalgia and the recent condition of the Indian migrants to Singapore. Detail discussions are following:

***Me Migrant* (2016)**

Me Migrant is a poetry collection by Md. Mukul Hossine, who himself a migrated worker, works in construction sector in Singapore. After completion of his B.A. degree from Bangladesh, he has started working here. These poems are based on male workers lives, because female domestic workers are unable to come out and say about their condition. They will be at home and tortured. Their stories cannot be written. We can get them through oral histories or personal interviews at back home. Here the migrant workers are poet's surrounding people, fellow workers at site, neighbour and inmates in

Singapore and their feelings about homeland nostalgia. For this study, there was an interview session with the poet Mukul, where he said, “Life in abroad is really in jail”.⁵⁴

Having being deprived like other workers in the site, he has starts writing, which is a way of forgetting pain to him. He wrote in Bengali and these are translated by Cyril V, with the help of Fariha Imran and Farouk Ahan. Also, this book was unable to publish without the help of Health Serve in a non-profit organization, which meet the needs of migrant workers and give them the provision of medical care, counselling regarding problems and facts. He portrayed these conditions in a few lines:

“Labourers rush through the night and days,
Wearily working, dripping sweat,
Still, I do not get valued for my life.” (Source from a poem titled:
“I Stand at the Red Light”)

Through his poetry writing he wants to be at the heart of each and every poor migrant worker. Further he said:

“I want to stay alive
Happy for the poor day labourer on this side of sorrow
I want to stay inside helpless people’s minds
The light of hope.” (Source from a poem titled: “A Piece of
Memory”)

Editor Cyril Wong, a critic of this book *Me Migrant* said and appreciated that, “The life of a migrant worker has its certain challenges. To his credit, Mukul had striven to leave out their more predictable banalities and focused on poeticising emotions or projecting them into the realm of the mythic and the imagined universal.” (Introduction, *Me Migrant*) For this research work, there will be a critical analysis of few poems and some quotations will be taken from the book to look into the situations of workers critically.

In the first poem, “Today My Mind’s Sky”, in the last stanza, he said:

“Walking forever
Don’t know where it is I’m lost
Don’t know the destination.”

These above mention lines are saying the worker’s state of mind, when he will be in a complete critical and traumatized conditions of discrimination with the authority, then he will feel loneliness. Migrant workers come to the developed country to earn more and get

⁵⁴ This line was taken from his poem “Mother”.

better lives, but when there will be no money for saving and sometime no money for his own surviving, he feels that he is lost and there is no hope for further destiny.

With the continuation of the mind phase from the first poem, he named the second poem as “Loneliness”. Here again the poet is describing the fate of a worker. He mentioned them as ‘Birds fly across a sky of dreams’. On the other hand, most of the times, these dreams did not give happiness. Not sending money to back home makes ‘mother’s teary eyes’ and simultaneously for better family life leaving wife and children is like,

“Love immured is torture. Any life without love
Is that of an immigrant, a loner.”

After this mental condition, the migrant will question to their own mind about their own existence,

“...who am I? Just an immigrant fleeing
Such cries from friends and lovers
Arising from time to time.”

In this ‘lonely’ condition for a migrant to another migrant from the same sector or same country having same condition could be a good inmate or a friend, who has also mistakenly choose this life and can actually understand it.

“Mistaken inmate,
Another immigrant.
Sometimes, love’s laughter
Swims across my thoughts
Like an echo in the soul.”

This is a chain of poetry; each and every poem is related to each other. The third and fourth poem is related to the second one. In the third poem “Golden Mother”, where the Son is portraying a letter to his mother saying about his the then recent condition.

Also, he has described about overtime works without any holiday in the heat of Tropic of Cancer, how terrifying to a migrant worker. At the end of the day, he feels like he is in the blank desert where no one is like mother who can see the pain and tear drops.

The fourth poem, “Old Age Home”, is a response to the earlier one. Here, mother feels alone without his son. Due to the contract or some false cases workers cannot visit their own homes in a regular gap. Sometime they come after two years when they have

finished their contracts and sometime they are in an illegal trap with the agent, and then it is a big question when and how they will be back to their own country. During this gap period, the old left alone mother at home eagerly wants to see his son, she does not want lavish life anymore and she writes:

“Child, come back.
I don’t need anything else
But you.

Not splendid food
But just fistfuls of plain rice.
Not soft mattresses, only the rocky floor to rest beside my
own.

Just to keep seeing you
Is this small heart’s wish.
Then on that last day
To carry away a picture of your smile.

There is a poem which itself named as “Me Migrant”, where the poet wanted to draw a picture of one migrant’s life, especially his own life at the construction site, other than being a poet. The word ‘me’ refers it. He said, a migrant stays ‘thousands and thousands miles away’ from home and lives in overseas for money and to see the smile and happiness to the family member. This is the only reason he does not care about the borders between two or more than that countries. He works from ‘dawn to dusk’. He forgot the pain, sighs, cry, love, happiness for himself and considers him as a lonely person in an unknown planet where no one is there to help or to understand such pain. In another poem, “I Will Be a Firefly”, he said, though a worker forgets everything for himself but still he could not find actual happiness,

“All my wants and needs
Never fulfilled
A dense darkness descends”

It is very painful to everyone who stayed outside, whatever the working status, during the festivals. If the person is happy with work and circumstances, it will be less. While for a labour, there is no ray of hope for happiness, the festival and family occasion for him is a

sorrowful event. Being a Muslim writer, his important religious festival is Eid he is missing it. The conditions are also same for the migrants who came from other religious background. There is a poem “Eid Abroad”, where he says his celebration and feelings without family and beloved.

“Mother’s eyes full of tears
I also feel
Father’s deep sigh, brother’s emptiness
Sister’s amazing smile
Everything taken
By this life away
A life in silence.

My beloved’s laughter stopped
I don’t know when
Loving or liking had to be given up
I’ve forgotten to dream
I’m becoming restrained everyday.” (Hossine, 2016, p.25)

All these above mentioned lines discussed conditions which are created only for illegal migrants, fraud agents, negligence among authorities both the home and host land. As for these migrants of Singapore as a host land it is ‘a place of hope’, ‘a place of earning money’ and they give respects like goddess. At the end, in a poem, “Singapore’s Golden Jubilee”, he praised about Singapore on behalf of all migrant foreign workers.

“Oh, praiseworthy Singapore,
You’re rooted in the heart of citizens;
You’re the home of pride;
You’re a dreamland;
You’re shelter
For all us foreign workers.” (Hossine, 2016, p.27).

The Fictions of Singapore (1993)

This is a short story collection by all the community writers who had stayed in Singapore – Chinese, Malay, Indian, English and others and edited by Edwin Thumboo and Was

Yoon Wong. For this study, only the Tamil Short Stories section will be taken, where five short stories related to study will be discussed.

Among the Singaporean Tamil community writing fictions and short stories have a prominent place. After Raffles founded modern Singapore in 1819, many Indians and Sri Lankan Tamils came to Singapore in search of a livelihood. The growth of Tamil literature in the latter part of the 1880s is due to these immigrants. In those days, immigrants were normally economically backward and poorly educated. Further, those were the years when only the rich had access to the fine arts and literature. Yet the Indian immigrants to Singapore showed an extraordinary interest in language and literature. Considering that there were only 12,000 Indians then, the intensity of their literary effort in this phase of surprising.⁵⁵

‘A Dialogue between a Singaporean and an Indian’

This is a short story uses the conversational approach by Makadoom Saiboo, published in 3rd September, 1888, as first ever Tamil short story and translated by Elangovan. Using two characters – a new immigrant from India and a local (who is also from India, but for a long he was here and got the citizenship and became Indian Diaspora) – the author weaved a story with plenty of local colour without it seeming contrived or stilted. This story is different from the other which is mentioned for this study. It is more or less related to all who came to a new land. It is kind of an introduction to ‘New’.

A new immigrant is bewildered by the new place, different cultures, languages and life style. He comes across a Singaporean Indian and they have started a conversation. The Indian said: “I came to earn a living in Singapore. I like to know about the lifestyle and trade here.” (p. 638) via this conversation the new immigrant learns about what is expected of him by way of behaviour and life styles. As Singaporean said:

“... the languages spoken here are Malay, Javanese, Bugis, Boyan, Chinese, Tamil, Hindustani, Bengali, Gujerathi, Kannadam, Telengu, Marathi, Arabic, Portuguese, Dutch, Turkish, French, Spanish, Italian and English... Singaporean Tamil has a sprinkling of local Malay, Chinese, English and other language words.” (p. 639)

⁵⁵ Source: Introductory note by Naa. Govindasamy.

After knowing a bit of culture, he was confused about the identity of Indian in Singapore and had a question, why they are generally referred as *Keling*. The local person described him about the identity of Singaporean Tamil. Especially *Keling* is referred to the Tamil by the other races.

“Probably because they arrived from a place called ‘Killai’ in India ... and it is also believed that when the first Telengu convict labourers were brought in the local Malays called them ‘Keling’ instead of ‘Teleng’.” (p. 639)

To extend this story also said that the Indians did not have many opportunities to make money. There are also passing remarks about descendants of convicts. He also used such Malay and Chinese words as *susah*, *senang*, *towkay*, *tuan*, *inche*, *nonya* and *barang*. At the end, the Indian learnt few new words from the first conversation. As said: “Okay ‘*Inche*’. I will come another day.” (p. 640)

‘Wedding’

This is a story about two friends, Sreemaan Singaravelu Chettiar and the author Palanivelu, as a narrator. Originally it was written by Naa Palanivelu in Tamil and translated by K Sulosana which was published in Tamil Murasu, 1936. They were childhood bosom friend. One day the narrator stated calling his friend as ‘Chettiar’, which is the identity of his caste. Sreemaan liked it and further he said, “If we do not maintain caste identities, the Indian community will disappear.” (p. 642) These days were well passed. After failing in the matriculation Chettiar decided to work for earning money, but he was unable to get it in India. He started his journey to Malaya, the undivided Singapore. He got a job in a rubber estate and started family life there. Life was smooth with a baby girl. Simultaneously he used to send letter to his friend and never revealed that his wife belongs to a lower caste. Also until the day came no one from his family and village did not know about this matter.

After a long gap he wrote a letter to the narrator that he is coming to India with his wife and six children for his eldest daughter’s marriage. He was busy for arranging an elaborated wedding ceremony. On the other hand, his heart was feared for his hiding about the caste. It is a big issue in Tamil Nadu. On the day of marriage, when everything was going well, suddenly the village elder raised his voice and shouted,

“You rascal! Singara Chettiar, do you think you can deceive us into accepting an outcaste through marriage. We are not blinded by all this grandeur and pomp. Come on! Tell these people what caste your wife belongs to! You think you can fool everyone so easily?” (p. 643)

The wedding hall became pin drop silent and Chettiar had nothing to say. He tried to confess, but there was no way of hope. Suddenly it became a challenge to him. He asked his would be son-in-law directly, “Son ... my daughter is indeed of low caste. So are you going to marry her or listen to these people and cry off?” (p. 644) And his wife also started crying. In this situation, the groom played an important role to save a girl’s life and respect in front of those people who believes in nasty caste system. He started saying,

“My dear relatives, friends and well-wishers, most of you feel that I shouldn’t marry this girl. Your objections are not because you think she and I are not well suited. You are against our liaison because she is of a low caste. But how can this be justified? The days when one had to pussy-foot around such social codes and mores for fear of offending so called society’s norms are gone. If there is such a thing as caste, then there is that of the Tamil race. As for me, I see us all as sharing one Indian origin. I see no other difference. I resent anyone calling my wife a low caste.” (p.644 – 45)

After this long speech by the groom, he became humiliated. Still he did not care and married her. That day was a lesson for all Tamils. As poet Bharathi said, “There are no castes in the world. To say that there is a sin.” (p. 645)

This story is a remark of pathetic condition of an immigrant. Firstly he had to stay away from home to earn money and better livelihood where caste does not matter, what matter is love and partnership bondage, which makes a person happy. Secondly when he came back with lots of money and became a proud father, started leading ‘happy’ life and think about to stay back for a long vacation or not to go back again, the social norms and regulations came and took his all ‘happiness’. Ultimately the immigrant became lonely and unhappy whether he had money or not. In a certain extend he is in the same position.

‘Homecoming’

‘Homecoming’ is a short story written by P. Krishnan in Tamil and later translated by K. Sulosana and published in Tamil Murasu, 1953. This story has been started with a

conversation between two friends and the protagonist Kannuswamy is an immigrant, who worked as a Manager in a leading local bank. Like others, he came ten years back during the Japanese War. “With the hope of finding a better life to support his parents back home. Unfortunately, the war had broken out soon after and he had been unable to return home to India.” (p. 647) In this crucial political situation everything was going to a wrong direction, even the respect of a woman. He met with a Malay woman who has lost her family members in the War and decided to marry her. She became an orphan with no relatives to speak of. It was so urgent that he could not inform any one in India. Kannuswamy’s friend was surprised and shocked when he knew that the marriage will be between an Indian and Malay. But the protagonist gave a good response to it,

“Why are you surprised? These days, one should not marry among his relatives. It is far better to marry someone unrelated. Do you know why? Because relatives are only around if you have money. Countless aunts and uncles will seek your friendship or your hand in marriage for their daughter. But the minute they know that you don’t have a penny to your name, they disappear miraculously.” (p. 647)

After knowing all the causes of urgent marriage with a different caste his friend was agreed and happy and felt proud for him. He said:

“I had no doubts that he would protect her from the evils of war and keep her away from the men who behaved more like barbarians than the men they were supposed to be. I therefore took the lead in his wedding arrangements and saw them happily married.”(p. 648)

Japanese had stopped, British returned to Malaya in triumph, Japanese withdrew their forces and slowly Malaya returned to normal. Surrounding situations became calm and quiet; they decided to go back to India. One day Kannusway told to his bosom friend:

“Just wanted you to know that I will be leaving for India next month. You know that I came to this country when I was ten years old. Now I am twenty-two. I haven’t seen my parents all these past twelve years and I miss them terribly.” (p. 648)

With all the curiosities and fear, out of the bloom he asked about his wife and the response he got what exactly he wanted, “I am not like other men who leave their wives behind when they return to their homeland. She will definitely come with me. Wherever I go, she goes.” (p. 648) There were many immigrants who married local girls and started

family life, but when they return home, just left them away. And these unfortunate women and children would be left to fend for themselves without their husbands and fathers to provide for them. Kannuswamy and his wife started journey together to India.

For the two long years there was no contact between two friends except the after reaching letter. He also thought that they are fortunate and happy to stay back with family. But, one day in the deck, he saw Kannusway is coming back again without his wife as a sad, disillusioned and painful person. He was shocked and immediately took him to house. What he heard was terribly pathetic. As they went to India, everything was normal and happy. Suddenly, Kannuswamy's parents came to know the history of his son's marriage. From the next day onwards they started misbehaving to their daughter-in-law. Both of them were quiet, and thinking that the situation will be handled after some days. The day did not come ever after. One day Kannuswamy was returning from other village and got the news of his wife's committing suicide. She could not tolerate it anymore. Now, he feels ashamed for his parents and said,

“Though my wife was Malay, she had understood our ways, and culture and had adapted well to our way of life. But my parents – I am ashamed that even though they are Tamils, all our good virtues seemed to have deserted them. I wonder why?” (p. 651)

He came back to his workplace and will join in a rubber estate. Probably, he will be there for his life time.

There is no word to console him. This is a common factor among all those people who migrated from India to undivided Singapore, the Malay during colonial period. They had to face the caste problem at home either for their own marriage or for their children marriage. Among the immigrants in the same ship there was no difference between caste and religion. They used to mingle with each other in a same way. War and colonial punishments made them united. But in the country where they actually belonged – India, they are still cannot accept it. At the end, the immigrant's life remains unhappy from the entire corner and he became alone.

‘New House’

This is a story about a migrant's family written by S Mohamed Rafiq. How the wife survives at home when husband migrates with these disbelieves and the tortures by the other family members and local people also. Ibrahim Maraikairs was a famous migrated

construction worker in Singapore. He was happy and earning sufficient money to survive in a good position with some savings also. First time, when he left for a contract his wife Balkish was pregnant. He could not see his son Bashir until three years. After finishing the contract, he was back to India with lots of hope and excitements. He stayed at home for a long time and enjoyed a lot. In the meantime he got another contract for next two years. This time everyone from family came to Airport to see him off and Balkish started sobbing. Ibrahim said, "You mustn't cry when I am leaving. Come on, I'll be back in two years." (p. 654)

His life was going happy and successful in this contract also. Out of the anything, one day he got a letter from his mother informing that his wife and neighbouring Musa started mingling in suspiciously, may be they have an illegal relation. She further added that, in the dark night Musa was holding Balkish at outside. At that moment Balkish had no word for explanation, to take that as a chance mother told her "I will deal with you after writing to Singapore about your disgusting behaviour!" (p. 657)

After receiving this strong letter, Ibrahim could not control himself and came to India to sort out the matter. Ibrahim also did not give any chance to Balkish to know what actually happened. His mother's letter made him disbelieve to his beloved wife. There was village Panchayat who proved Musa's fault. But with the blinded love and believe to a mother, Ibrahim could not accept the actual truth. Balkish had to leave the house and stay with her parents. On the other hand, in Singapore Ibrahim was also working in a textile shop with some fellow villagers. "He felt that everyone was talking about the incident, laughing behind his back. That's why he had decided to leave his friends and his work place and join the construction industry, away from anyone who knew him. The work was difficult and strenuous, but at least he had peace of mind." (p. 659)

After twenty years he became millionaire, still he could not forget that shocking incident and forgive his wife. He was alone till the end day of his life and died asleep. There are many stories and incidents about marriage broken due to migration. When husband and wife stay apart for long time, at the end of the day disbelieve started in between them. Very small or false incident can make a bigger issue which could make the end of a healthy relationship. They are not even bothered about their children. Here Ibrahim and Balkish had a son, no one knows at the end what happened to him and where he is. These children faced the parental crisis and their life become difficult.

‘Losses’

“Four in the morning and already the bustle was being initiated in Upper Dickson Road, one of the main thoroughfares of Singapore’s Little India. Five foot way shopkeepers were briskly trading cigarettes and betel leaves. Daily rated contract workers trooping into Kamala Vilas to buy their packed lunches. Newspaper vendor worked under the street lamps to sort out the bundles of paper that would have to be delivered very soon. Car washers whirled past them on their bicycles, their feather dusters, plastic pails and rags clearly identifying their occupation.” (p. 704)

This was the surroundings of Kandaswamy, a *kachangputeh*, Peanuts in Malay, vendor. He was staying in a dormitory with fellow workers. “The rooms filled as they were with heavy breathing, punctuated with loud snores, and the sweat of bodies lying close together under emasculated ceiling fans was just too stuffy for him.” (p. 705) His day used to start at morning four O’clock and the whole day he worked to earn a good amount, that he could sent some for his brother and family. Before he joined anywhere, he met Appu who helped him to get this job. He never sent any money separately to his wife Meenakshi. Rarely, she wrote to her husband personally. “He did not even dare to broach this wish to his brother – it was a society where the head of the family was the only one who could write to him. And these letters had news only of money or the lack of it. There was no word of his wife.” (p. 709) He usually sent secret messages through his returned inmates, which did not work for his shy wife. In between his son was born, named Rasu, and started missing the family life. “Tinges of frustration began to build up. Increasingly he questioned the meaning of life. Yes, he had married a loving woman and fathered a son, but could he ever live with them? Was he not just a golden goose to his relatives?” (p. 709) He found himself as a money making machine. One day one of his fellow mates Veer came back from his village and said, “Kanda, don’t be shocked at what I have to tell you. I heard a lot of stories circulating in the village. It seems that your brother has bought land in your sister-in-law’s name, with your money. He has also become a money-lender. The way things have been set up, it would appear that you may never see a cent of your hard-earned money.” (p. 710)

Hearing this he was unable to anything in this situation, also he could not ask any question to his elder brother. “The following week news reached him about the death of

his son. Rasu had died from the bite of a scorpion.” (p. 710) and now finally he got a long letter from his wife, saying that:

“I cannot get over the loss of our son. His death was so unnecessary too. They refused to take him to the town hospital for treatment. They resorted to exorcism, claiming that the bite was due to witchcraft. All this while our son was writhing in pain foaming at his mouth. I saw him go to his death with such agony. I can no longer bear how they treat me. I just have to write to you in secret. They treat me like a servant. Whom do I have to call my own, except you?” (p. 710-711)

This letter was enough lessons for him, without any consult he flew back to India and asked directly to his elder brother Ruthrapathy about the money he has sent as remittances and his son’s death. Now the village drama started.

One day, Ruthrapathy called the Panchayat where he was doing all the dramas and false crying to prove him correct. He said,

“Dear elders ... my brother here has asked me to account for the money he has been remitting home. How could I have kept accounts when it was matter between brothers? ... As you are all aware, most of the money *Thambi*⁵⁶ sent me in the early years was lost. The bicycle shop failed. The new house was built from subsequent remittances. Since *amma*’s death, the house belongs to both of us. However Kandasway is without heir. My two daughters, on the other hand, will surely need a home. I had therefore hoped to take full ownership of the house. Thambiwill of course be compensated sufficiently – in lieu of his share of the house, he will be given a portion of the land. I am forced to have to note my generosity in this. For really, I were to calcite the expenses of his marriage, and the food and other things I have provided his wife and child with all these years he is not entitled to anything at all.” (p. 711-712)

Kandaswamy did believe a word even from this dramatic speech.

Within next few days Kandaswamy had to leave again, as he did not inform anyone. His wife Meenakshi started begging to him for not going again, these twelve years of long separation and the mishap with son is the enough loss. But Kanda had to go and he cannot stay with his brother. He promised that he will do all the necessities as soon as possible to

⁵⁶Younger brother in Tamil.

take her to Singapore. They will settle there forever. Again there was a curse in their destiny. After returning back he started doing all immigration procedures and simultaneously he was very absent minded. Unfortunately, he was crossing the inattentively and one car came and hit him and it was spot dead. Meenakshi had nothing to do with her fate, she became alone in India.

This incident is a common feature to a migrant family. They left their family with others and ultimate did not get any benefit, most of the time they are the one who become looser. Left behind wife will be tortured or neglected. No one cares about her new responsibilities and loneliness. They use it as opportunity.

A Comparative Study from the Literary Representations

After completing the study of literary representations as secondary data analysis from Gulf countries and Singapore, a comparative study is required to discuss thoroughly. Though literatures from the both destinations are based on unskilled and semi-skilled labours, low profile people from blue-collar jobs, slaves, indentured labours but there are many differences among them. From the historical perspective as it is discussed in the chapter Two and Three respectively that Gulf migration had started from ninth century, pre-oil booming period with the spice trading and merchants were supplied from India and the recent trends of labour migration has started flourishing from twentieth century when in 1960 the price of oil and natural gas has been increased. On the other hand, migration to Singapore was started from the colonial period and it is continued till date, only the trend and pattern of migrants has changed. Earlier it was titled as ‘slaves’ and now the modernization of this term is ‘labours’; now people are going for white-collar jobs and taking citizenships also. They are comparing Singapore as the First World country.

First difference comes from the theoretical perspective that Gulf migration in the earlier stage was not based on any theory, it was just a way of business and making cultural enrichment, but first phase of migration to Singapore was happened by forced migration, the theory of ‘pull’ factor was implemented from the hostland perspectives, whereas the second phase or recent trends of migration for both the destinations are based mainly on ‘pushed’ factor from the homeland perspectives. Second is the community identification.

Migrants of Gulf countries are known as ‘incipient’ diaspora and immigrants of Singapore are known as Indian Diaspora. At the time of analyzing these literatures it is found that literatures of Gulf are New literatures and literatures of Singapore are old and new both. Apart from these basic differences it is also notified that, writers from the both are describing about the struggle for existence and life in an exile of the migrants.

From the description of Chapter Two, the process of migration for the Gulf countries is different and there are chances of illegal migrations. In this chapter, in the novel *Goat Days* by Benyamin it is clearly portrayed how the protagonist Najeeb, a poor village boy, was trapped by the wrong contract, how pathetic life he had survived with the feelings of missing home and country. At the end of the novel the author is describing the toughest method of being rescued from the trap and he mentioned a restaurant which named as ‘Malabar Restaurant’. Though it is a fictional restaurant but naming of a fictional character always has a meaning. Here this name again suggests the nostalgic feelings about the country and people who are staying abroad and trying to continuing their own identity when it is in crisis, they try to carry all the possibilities they can. Here the situation was same. It can also be explained this way that with the identity of naming, the people from Kerala, a Southern State of India, will visit to get traditional country/home food or people like Najeeb in trouble will come and easily explain in mother tongue and for the rescue.

On the other hand, from the other two fictions *Dubai: Gilded Cage* and *Dubai’s Dream* it shows that the reason behind migration. Sayed Ali in his work *Dubai: Gilded Cages* used two metaphorical words like “iron chain” and “chain migration” which means the life is hard and tough like irons and the word chain stands for the influences by the relatives, friends and neighbour for migration and making own community in the new land to reduce identity crisis and cultural dislocation. The name itself says it is a cage. (See the data from Chapter Four) Throughout the first section of this chapter where the literature from the Gulf is discussed, it starts with reasons of migration as dream or brand or believes, if you are in Gulf, you will be out of all crises. But after the analysis of the texts it could be said that it is a new trend or fashion – a city of dreams. Before the migration they do not think about their future in the new and unknown land. The data we got from these literatures are like misleading by the agent/middleman with wrong papers and contract, even the false signature in the contract cannot enroll them in the company payroll, at the end who is identified as illegal migrants, struggling for surviving at home

and dreaming for better life with more money, but ultimately nothing comes out happily and truly, facing problems with accommodation systems, not getting salary at time, extra working hours and not paying money for that, not fulfilling the issues which were mentioned in the contract paper (medical, tickets for going home during holidays and other facilities), misbehave from the masters/companies is common. As a taxi driver said in the cruel summer of Dubai, they cannot switch on the Air Condition (AC) of the car without having a passenger and if he was traced that he has switched on the AC without passenger by companies he will be punished. He may lose his job also. For the female migrants safety issues are also included along with the above mentioned all the issues. For the male migrants also sometime security questions come. If the female migrants are wrongly trapped they will end up their lives as prostitutes. In these wrong chains of migration and with the greediness of earning more money, they ended up their lives as smugglers. These migrants are unable to run away, as their passports and all valuable documents are kept by the company, they cannot go to the Indian Embassy for complain, even they are unable to make a phone call, always under the surveillances by the masters. Due to all the hazardous, they are just being as a voiceless person and surviving in a painful problematic and traumatised life. Getting rid of this situation is very difficult. Apart from all, migrants are facing identity crisis in the new land from the cultural and language perspectives also.

At the second part of this chapter, literatures from Singapore, it is seen in the poetry collection *Me Migrant* by Md. Mukul Hossine, which is based on the life of labours their feelings, conditions and struggles as it is shown in the literatures of Gulf. In this collection, there are two poems “A Letter to Mother” and “A Letter from Mother” where the poet is describing the feelings of himself and feelings of his mother during the time of vacation and festivals when her son is unable to come back to home. This situation is very common to the labour migrants of Singapore. The holidays are not common for the two different countries and getting holidays is depending upon the supervisor of company. Here, the poet is not only describing his own feelings but through the other poems he is describing about his fellow colleagues, labours who are in the same state of livelihood in the hostland. Like the Gulf, the condition of the unskilled and semi-skilled labours, workers are same. On the other hand, *The Fictions of Singapore* is completely different from the above mentioned all the texts. This is a collection of short stories based on old Indian diaspora in Singapore and people are mainly the migrants of pre-colonial period

and during the colonial period. The conditions of these migrants were different. Though they are also facing financial crisis, deprived in a new land, language and cultural problems, misled by the masters etc. Along with all these problems there were difficulties among themselves. Caste systems were highly mentioned. Irrespective of male and female they came by ship after crossing the *kalapani*. In these ships decks were divided according to the class and caste. Lower class and caste people are always in the lower level and the upper class and caste people will never share the levels. If unknowingly happened that person from lower class will be punished and person from upper class will be sacked from the community. In these short stories like “Wedding”, “Homecoming”, “Losses” these effects are clearly mentioned. From the name itself it is understandable that it is mentioning about the quest for going home and homeland nostalgia. From the name “Losses” says that those migrants are completely lost in the new land. In the working place also they could not raise their voices. They are always marginalised. Working under the British rule was very difficult. The belief about caste was very pathetic. As the large number of people are migrating from India and settling there, the people were speaking in Indian languages like Tamil, Hindi, Gujarati, Bengali, Telugu; and they are maintaining Indian traditions, creolisation of languages, Indian cuisines and cultures are very much visible. Still unfortunately, at the time of visiting home they are ‘Strangers in their Own Land’ with their hybrid culture and hyphenated identity as Indo-Singaporean. They are started feeling crisis in the home also. The caste system was not there in Singapore, as everyone was slave or sepoy and struggling for surviving. They were mingling with each other irrespective of caste and marrying between inter-castes. Sometimes these marriages were to rescue a woman or friend’s sister or daughter of a poor old fellow from a social trap. It was not accepted by the people of then India. They are rejected by their own family members, neighbours, villagers; they are not talking to them, not allowing them at their houses. They became as socially segregated. As they have done social crimes.

There is another reason to be segregated at the own place which is common for the migrants of Gulf countries and Singapore, the reason behind is money. People who are migrated earning more money than the villagers, making big houses, getting better educations and became a reason of jealous. People are seeing it just from the outside, they are not seeing these migrants after earning a lot still facing the problem of casteism when they are going to find grooms for their own daughters, the questions arise for the caste of

their mother (as he did not follow it at the time of his own marriage in Singapore, just married an Indian woman). These are the problems are seen today also among the few diaspora families, whereas the Gulf migrants are safe from this aspect. Because, there is no option of marriage to a woman from Gulf countries, but they can go for an extra-marital affair. So they have to come back to India for marriage and have to follow the customs and rules of the native. Whereas, in Singapore it is possible to get illegal marriage to any other Indian woman labour migrant. Female migration to both the countries is problematic. It hampers their family lives and till today Indian society believes that mothers are the maker of the home and children. If the mother is outside of home for a long time the house become indisciplined and in the meantime if any children are not growing up in a correct way then the mother will be blamed in the presence of the father.

To conclude it is argued that the labour migrants, workers and slaves from India wherever they are going across the world the situations are almost same. They are in the same boat, living as voiceless heroes who are always struggling in the every step of their lives. Based on the primary and secondary data analysis, the result showed that the situation of the migrants selected as sample for this research are more or less same. It is also said that these literatures are the documented representations of the actual conditions of the labour migrants. The differences which are seen it is only for the geographical, social and political differences of homeland and hostland.

In this chapter, I have studied in detail the literary representations of the Indian labour migrants to Gulf countries and Singapore through the literary textual representations from both the destinations. After this detailed study I have found the situations and conditions of the labour migrants which are seen in the Chapter Four at the time of primary data analysis. After this critical observation of the textual references I have tried to make a comparative study between the two different countries, where I have seen the similarities and differences of the migrant's condition of work, accommodation, health hazards, problems with the work place, misguided by the agents which cause the illegal migration, salary issues etc. are represented in the literatures of both. In the next chapter, I want to conclude my research work with a brief analytical conclusion. There I shall discuss about the rescue processes from these above mentioned problems and what are the methods, policies are taken by the Government of India and the Government of hostland as well.

Conclusion

At the end of this research work, here in this concluding chapter the discussion will start from the description of the word 'Subaltern'. It comes from the British militancy, where a person works with lower grade or subordinate to the officers, referred as 'Subaltern'. This term has become famous in the Postcolonial time, mainly in the academic sphere. It was first used by Antonio Gramsci, in his book *Prison Notebook* (1971). In this research, the term 'Subaltern Diaspora' from title of this research refers to those migrant labours who are sacrificing their lives in the making of modern 'state' and society from the colonial period to till date. Though, they are voiceless, oppressive, deprived but these 'Subaltern can speak'. In the present scenario, they are raising their voices for every equal right and struggling for existence against the capital power and structure, utilitarian society and de-humanizing approaches. The data (primary and secondary) for this research gives the outcome that unskilled and semi-skilled labour migrants from India to Gulf countries and Singapore are really subaltern, deprived, under privileged and marginalised.

The role of Foucauldian 'power-politics' and the concept of 'State, subject and power' are clear among the lives of migrant labours. The master of the company or head of the family member for a domestic worker is always playing a role of power. A power structure is between white-collar and blue-collar, between slave and boss. Being voiceless, migrants are bound to follow their orders. A clear picture of eighteenth century's 'master-slave relationship' is portrayed when these migrants are either over worked and less paid or they are not getting proper salary at proper time, their families at home are completely depending upon them. Family members are proud that their husbands/sons/daughters/brothers/sisters are in the foreign land, which is 'Brand Dream' for them, earning more money for better life. With that money at back home, family members are repaying loans, living their lives, giving better education to the next generation, saving for dowry. Still they are unable to raise their voices; they are always under the light of the lamp.

On the other hand, when it comes to the point of State and Power, it shows that the host countries are always unaware about these problems consciously and unconsciously. The Governments of host countries are always not willing to take the complaint, because of

the power and goodwill of the companies (as they think). In this point, one question is arising to the migrants, whether they are legal or illegal migrants. The legal migrants are having their correct documents which are their voices and through that they can make a complaint and go to Indian Embassy for rescue and companies are also cannot refuse them. On the other hand, those migrants who are not going through proper channel, they are introduced as illegal migrants. Failing of the proper documents at the time of joining or middle-men/agents are hiding it for getting extra money and harassing those migrants. The names of these migrants are not in the pay role or not in the employee list. For them the company, if they want to protect their employee also, still they cannot due to absence of proper documents. The present data of Government of India says, Gulf countries, Singapore and India are very active to rescue the migrants who are in troublesome problems. But the case is difficult for the illegal migrants, due to lack of necessary documents they cannot go to the authority and trapped in this 'spider's net'. If these migrants are proved as illegal then -

- “They are liable for prosecution both in the country of employment and in India for committing offences. The punishment can range from heavy fine to imprisonment and deportation.
- They are not recognized by sending, transiting and receiving countries. They are also no entitles to the facilities which are available to the legal migrants, may be subjected to travel ban in Destination countries.
- They cannot avail welfare and protection measures. There are also possibilities of being arrested or jail or lose all savings, passport etc.”
(emigrate.gov.in/static/English_pre_departure_orientation_for_migrant_workers)

The concept of 'Power and Knowledge' is also visible. From the data analysis (Chapter 4), it is found that migrants are not well educated or uneducated. They need ECR permission. So, the supervisor of the company and the agent involved for making visa, those who are having better qualifications, are taking them to the upper hand. These poor migrants believe them blindly. Role of these agents or middle men are very vital. For their own benefit, taking more proceeding charges from the migrants they are not making proper papers. As a result of it, after reaching in the new country migrants are caught by the police, hijacked by unknown persons and joined in some other project which were actually not mentioned in the contract (as it is described in the Chapter 5 from the novel *Goat Days*), passport, visas are taken by the authorities. There is another problem for the

female migrants. Apart from the above mentioned problems their bodies are used as commodity for the business purpose. Those who are illegal women migrants or trapped in bad companies, at the end of their journey they become as a prostitute or a smuggler. They have to hide the truth to their families. To protect themselves and avoid these problems they should avoid all these agents or middlemen. All the Protector of Emigrants Offices, Visa Offices, and Passport Offices are in the main city capital. For some people it is difficult to come by themselves to make their visas. For these kinds of migrants it is better to find a renowned agent who is reliable and already done for many previously without any complaint. Now-a-days, there are many Recruiting Agents (RAs) who are authorized by Government of India, with their registration numbers. Government started this to reduce the visa making crime. There are some Government recruiting agencies which are available in the e-migration portal, like:

- Kerala: Overseas Development and Employment Consultants (ODEPC).
- Kerala: Roots- Non-Residential Keralites Affairs (NORKA).
- Tamil Nadu: Overseas Manpower Corporation (OMC).
- Uttar Pradesh: Alpa Sankayak Vittiya (ASV).
- Uttar Pradesh: Uttar Pradesh Financial Corporation (UPFC).
- Punjab: Ex-Servicemen Corporation (ESC).
- Andhra Pradesh: Andhra Pradesh Non-Resident Indian Investment Corporation (APNRIIC).
- Centre for Training and Employment of Border Youth (CTEBY).
- Andhra Pradesh: Overseas Manpower Company A.P. Ltd. (OMCAP).
- Telangana: Telangana Overseas Manpower Company Limited (TOMCOM).
- Emigrants Welfare Forum (EWF).
- Overseas Workers Welfare Fund (OWWF).
- Central Manpower Export Promotion Council (CMEPC).

Those who are processing from those above mentioned Government agencies, they will also get any one of these **Pre-Departure Orientation and Training (PDOT)**, **Pravasi Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PKVY)**, **Nation Skills Development Corporation (NSDC)**; undertaken by Government of India, which will cover some necessary safety measures, awareness about rules and regulation, dos and don'ts before they leave their homeland. All these trainings are available in various States of India with various regional languages to easily spread and understand the methods towards the all levels of emigrant workers.

There should not be a complaint for not understanding the language of the trainers. After attending the scheduled training program the migrants will get a copy of booklet in which language they prefer to carry with them and read at home for better understanding. If someone missed this program for genuine causes, it is available online in Government of India's e-Migration portal. Trainings are divided into sections. First section is addressed to the migrants, such as:

A. Safety Remembrances:

- “Before migrating to GCC countries, migrants need to clear at the GCC Approved Medical Centres Association (GAMCA), their medical tests prior to obtain visa.
- Keep the copy of the medical test and receipt from the test centre.
- Always travel with legal documents and work visa.
- Rules at the country of employment shall be applicable.
- Migrate through Recruiting Agencies registered on e-Migrate.
- Cannot return without Exit Visa by Employer.
- Restrictions on change of Employer during period of contract.
- Keep a copy of the Employment Contract. It specifies the rights and responsibilities, salary, working conditions and other assured facilities by the foreign employer.
- All the migrants are governed by the laws of country of the employment. Respect local laws, customs and traditions.
- Not to change the employer/sponsor without authorization from the local authorities.
- Not to indulge in any strikes and protests.
- Not to involve in human trafficking, drugs, alcohol and any other punishable offences.”(Rajan and Saxena, 2019)

The Second section of the training gives some basic instructions, like:

B. Basic Training:

- “For domestic workers how to use modern electrical elements such as electric cooker, kettle, dish washer etc.
- For electrician and plumber how to use modern technologies.

- How will they negotiate their salary.
- How to behave with the master.
- Awareness program on rights and responsibilities. If there is any problem in office or with the master then what should be the necessary steps and where will they go for complaining.
- Awareness program on language and soft skills.
- In the pre-departure orientation program there has to be a class on the legal rules and regulations of the host country. So that, the migrant should not face any problem or legal issues, harassments in their daily life. Such as for the migrants who will go to Singapore they should learn the country's regulations such as not to smoke publicly, not to eat in the public vehicle etc, for the migrants to UAE how to behave with the local people in the market, then they will be less penalized.”(Rajan and Saxena, 2019)

Here is a statistics which show how the consciousness among the migrants is increasing. They are following the rules of Recruiting Agents and processing through them not to be illegal and untrained. Top 10 categories National Figures during the years 2012 to 2017 is given below, where maximum emigration clearances were granted to these categories of workers.

Sl. No.	Category	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
1	Driver	158262	182938	165024	138823	23745	12481
2	Mansion	75488	106334	91323	99969	63388	52883
3	Carpenter	24004	23236	29839	80942	47036	41588
4	Labour	17359	12108	14724	44572	48804	28511
5	Steelworker	8978	19361	27468	36070	13424	10224
6	Electrician	16274	28565	26531	30535	21174	17703
7	Plumber	19302	21025	23787	28380	9717	7596
8	Welder	21015	21794	19749	23165	13235	9290
9	Cook	13975	27695	24231	16387	4952	2605
10	Housemaid	17022	16717	12138	557	1056	859
11	Others	374674	359928	327926	282682	243953	207280
Total		746326	819701	762740	782082	490485	391020

*Data Source: Pre-Departure Orientation and Training (PDOT), English Manual, Government of India, 2017. Pg. 44.

Insurance Policies for Migrants

Since 2003, there is a compulsory regulation for giving insurance to the Indian workers who are moving overseas under ECR categories is the **Pravasi Bharatiya Bima Yojana (PBBY)**.

Further, the government has established a voluntary welfare fund, named, **Mahatma Gandhi Pravasi Suraksha Yojana (MGPSY)** for the overseas workers and negotiated joint agreements on the transferability of their social security and contributions to the society. The welfare fund includes the boarding and lodging for the distressed overseas Indians who are involved in the domestic sector/household duties and for the unskilled labourers. But this project was not encouraged and could not run successfully. And it was closed w.e.f. 1st April, 2017 with the approval of the Union Cabinet ministry.

Migration towards GCC countries and Singapore is not a new thing. It is historical from the colonial era. In the very beginning it was under British Rule and slavery and misleading was there and in the very recent context it was also misled by the agents and also for the negligence of following the proper rule of the Government. Indians in the Gulf countries are major contribution to the Indian economy, **Indian Community**

Welfare Fund (ICWF), visited Gulf on behalf of Government of India to give safeguard to the migrants. They have given a regulation on 2011.

Following the regulations, Government of India has been taken measures, implemented Insurance Policies; improved the relationship among irrespective of all overseas countries, training and awareness programs, more offices to make visas, starts doing camp for ground level work and to talk with migrants regarding problems and issues. But unfortunately, there are many migrants who are not following all the steps and facing the problems. Government is not stepping back to them. They are also helping them and their family members to rescue them from the troubles. Here is a table of statistic which shows how many emigrants were rescued by the Recruited Agencies in 2016.

Sl. No	POE	No. of Emigrants Rescued	Total Complaint Resolved
1	Delhi	287	287
2	Mumbai	2297	3557
3	Chennai	31	31
4	Kolkata	17	17
5	Jaipur	08	08
6	Chandigarh	01	02
7	Thiruvananthapuram	31	14
8	Cochin	01	05
9	Hyderabad	35	35
10	Raebareli (U.P.)	01	01
Total		2709	3959

*Data Source: Pre-Departure Orientation and Training (PDOT), English Manual, Government of India, 2017. p. 45.

After the data analysis for working on this research, from the primary and secondary data what are the problems and issues are found from the primary data which were collected through questioners, interviews, mails and the secondary data which were collected from the literary representations. My view is that the Government from the both side has already been taken a good step for the development of the process of migration. But I suggest few changes could make it better, stronger and more valuable. Like,

- Involvement of the Ministry of Labour to prevent malpractices by unauthorized recruiting agents in India.

- Make more awareness camps and help the migrants to be digitally strong. So, they can access the Government portals to find out the agents, POE offices, proceeding, training centres, brochures, and contact details of the Indian Embassy of the employed country and so on.
- State Governments also take initiatives along with the Central Government. They should set up more appropriate number of agencies, awareness camp seven at the every district from the very grass root level, mainly at the remote villages where more people are eager to be migrated for financial crisis and give advises to the Indian workers about their rights, positions and obligations in the theoretical and practical ways.
- The consular officers in the Gulf countries and Ministry of Manpower of Singapore should pay the frequent visits to the labour camps to be more accustomed with themselves with the difficulties faced by the Indian workers. They also should take initiatives to improve the accommodation system for the both destination. Unhealthy accommodations are making migrants physically ill.
- For the migrants of Singapore not to go to any agents, they will directly apply for work permit visa which will be approved by the Ministry of Manpower (MOM), Singapore. MOM has to take care of those migrants, not to contact any agents for false permission.
- More initiatives on health check-up before leaving and after returning. Before going to the employed country as it is very important to know about physical fitness and about any chronic contaminated diseases which can spread in the country and make a harmful situation for the migrant and country people both. In the same way, after returning also health check-up is more important because to stop spreading any harmful diseases in India.
- During the pre-departure training, the lectures and materials are distributing in the different regional languages for the easy understanding of the migrants. But this has a problem also. Migrants are unwilling to learn English or other local languages of the host country. As a result of it, they are facing language problem and unable to communicate with the natives. For this reason, I suggest that during the pre-departure training there has to be a mandatory course on basic English and the language of the host country, so that, these migrants at least can have less communication gap with the natives at the very beginning stage of journey.

Not only the Government of India, but the other internationally recognised labour organisations involve themselves for the benefit of the migrant labours. It was discussed in Chapter two and three respectively about the Indian labour migrants to the Gulf countries and Singapore about their conditions in the hostland throughout the contract. And these two chapters also discussed about the stagnant conditions during Covid-19 pandemic. Migrants Forum in Asia (MFA) was realised that, There is a need to set up a “transitional justice mechanism will address grievances, claims and labour disputes of repatriates workers who have lost their jobs as a result of pandemic.” At the time of Covid -19 pandemic, ILO Director General Gun Ryder also said, “For millions of workers, no income means no food, no security and no future. [...] As the pandemic and the jobs crisis evolve, the need to protect the most vulnerable becomes even more urgent.” In the pandemic year of 2020, International Labour Organisation (ILO) has recommended policy on Covid-19. “This policy is divided into four pillars “supporting enterprises, employment and incomes; stimulating the economy and jobs; protecting workers in the workplace; and, using social dialogue between government, workers and employers to find solutions.” (https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_740893/lang--en/index.htm)

Apart from these, many NGOs from India and a very impressive initiative by Government of India called as ‘Vande Bharat Mission’ took place to rescue those migrants from their terrific situation occurred by the sudden pandemic.

If we see the recent trends of International Migration from India irrespective of any destination, it is increasing day by day. For this research as I have chosen two destinations Gulf countries and Singapore and number of migration has also increased for them. But my question is this process of migration had been started during the ancient time of Indian history with the spice trading and in the colonial period for the slave trading to Singapore. After that due to necessity of the huge labours during the oil-boom period labour migration was almost mandatory for the Gulf countries. But in the year 2022 why this migration is necessary? The answer is lack of job opportunity in India. Then again a question why the job market of India is very poor? After the survey it can also be said that the job market is always not poor in condition. India is an over populated country, sometime Government is unable to give job to the eligible and the crisis starts. On the other hand, these migrants are mainly from remote areas and from villages. They are less interested for education than they prefer to go to field for agriculture. But at the

right time they do not understand the necessity of education and think that this very few amount of land is not sufficient for them to survive, and at that time they lost the eligibility to get education. Lack of education is also one of the reasons for job crisis. These people are huge in number and the job market cannot fulfil their demand, so they have no option other than choosing the way of migration. This is why still in 2022 the migration is happening and it is increasing day by day. And it is completely an uncertain answer than when this migration process will stop or reduce. But we can reduce the problems and harassments of the migrants in the hostland. If the migrants themselves and the Government are concerned about the existing policies, rules and regulations; and they would follow the right procedures then they can overcome the distress conditions of the labours who are going to the Gulf countries and Singapore for earning money and making better living conditions for themselves. In this way we can stop the illegal migration also. Now a day, people are becoming more concern about their well-being, safety and security. They are conscious about what is happening around the world with the help of mobile phones, internet connection and social networks. So, before taking the decision of international migration they have to be more careful and choosy about the country where they are going. Money is a big factor, but it cannot be bigger than any one's life. The country where they are migrating whether any known person is there or not, rules and regulations of the country, language, culture etc. they should thoroughly know. If they are well equipped with the knowledge of above mentioned issues they will never be in trap. They can rescue themselves. Last but not the least; they have to be always aware of the Government policy primarily. They should remember everyday Government of India is changing policies for the benefit of the labour migrants; they are introducing many policies regarding health and insurance. Migrant can avail all these for the benefit of them along with their family members. So, migrants have to be more careful and they can only make a healthy migration procedure to build a developed nation and happy family.

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Questionnaire

Name:

Address:

Age:

Sex:

Marital Status:

Religion:

Caste:

Place of Birth:

Occupation in Homeland:

Education:

Where did you receive your education?

Family Background:

Relationship	Sex	Age	Education	Occupation	Income	Marital status	Place of stay

How many members of yours family are living outside India?

Relationship	Sex	Age	Education	Occupation	Income	Marital status	Place of stay

Did any of your family members influence you to migrate?

Yes/No

Migration and living condition in the gulf

Years of staying:

Occupation in the Gulf:

What influence to migrate?

How much money you spent for migration?

Did you receive any financial support for your travel to the Gulf?

Who helped you in getting visa?

Time for work permit:

Are you satisfied?

Details explanation of work:

Hours of working:

Monthly salary:

Do you send money home?

How much?

How often?

Is it satisfied for family?

What is frequency to visit country?

Type of accommodation:

Sharing with fellow workers:

Interaction with local people:

Any neighbour in work place:

Interaction with workers:

Relationship with master or supervisor:

Do you share problems or experience?

Leisure time in Gulf:

Discrimination in your work or personal life:

Thank you

Indian Labour Migration to Gulf Countries and Singapore: A Comparative Study of Marginalised Diasporas

by Malyashree Mandal

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Migration and Marginalisation: A Study of Labour Migrants from India to Singapore

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Abstract

Migration and mobility has changed the people's idea of the world, they are living today and connected with through their movements and activities. In the recent trends of globalization, it is mandatory to increase the economic, political, socio-cultural enrichment among various regions of the world and making a connecting bridge with each other. This research paper will focus on the unskilled and semi-skilled labour migrants (male and female), from India to the economically developed and advanced South East Asian country Singapore, who are helping these two countries to make a relationship of socio-economic development and giving the chances to be the prestigious country. This paper is aiming that the hierarchies of social order among migrants in origin and destinations which caused marginality, de-humanizing approaches. Behind the making of these negative situations, there are acts of agencies employed by the employers like recruiting agents, and the very involvement of regime in creation and exploitation of the networks to mold the migration flows as per their preferences and requirements and how these State structures determine the working as well as personal, social and cultural conduct of the immigrants over the system of migration and their livelihoods.

Keywords: Labour, marginality, hierarchies, exploitation, State

Introduction

This paper is objectifying from two dimensions - one is migration or diaspora and other is how it's becoming marginalized in the case of Indian migration to Singapore. Apparently, the words migration and diaspora look alike but theoretically the term migration and diaspora are different. The word 'migration' is derived from the Latin word *migrare*, which means to change one's residence. Migration is a movement by human being from one place to another where nation-state relation is always not necessary, but when the term 'Diaspora' comes, there are movements of people across territorial boundaries of colonies, nations and its continuity to connect with different spatial regions, people and culture. In the present context it means a movement or scattering of people away from an established ancestral land or people settled far from their ancestral homelands, sometimes 'pushed' by the authority and sometime 'pulled' by the necessity of the native land or themselves. As Tinker (1977) said, "there is a combination of push and pull: the push of inadequate opportunity in South Asia and the pull of the better prospects in the West."¹

But these migrants are different from the actual definition. The people who are migrating to the Singapore as a semi-skilled and un-skilled labour, they are 'incipient diaspora' as Myron Weiner² said. They are defined as a relatively sizeable group of foreign workers/guest workers in industrial economics that are ethnically distinct from the host population who are allowed to remain in their host country only to work but not entitled to become citizens, also irrespective of gender they cannot bring their family members. These workers are mainly construction workers, carpenters, masons, steel-fixers, fabricators, fitters, equipment-operators, welders, painters, pluck-smothers, bar-benders, drivers, cleaners, electricians, plumbers, mechanics, air-conditioning mechanics, blacksmiths, tanners, shoemakers, goldsmiths, waiters, domestic workers and so on. In 1856, the Governor of the Straits Settlements, Edmund Augustus Blundell gave a speech about the temporality of the migrants and how they feel among themselves with this situation which is very much appropriate till date. He said, "No feeling of citizenship, no common desire to co-operate for future and general benefit, animates the mass, which like the trade, ebbs and flow bringing with it new and crude materials for the established institutions of the land, to exhaust their energies upon." There is a new

concept called 'transnational family' and 'global house-holding'. These terminologies have been developed within the periphery of migration scholarship of Asian scholarships. Particularly, for Singapore, they have earned another status which called 'transient' workers. They perform the essential '3D' (Dirty, Difficult and Dangerous) jobs and contribute to the nation-state of Singapore in many ways.

Methodology

For this paper, researcher will use both primary and secondary data along with Qualitative and Quantitative research method. To collect the primary data, interview method is used via face to face interview method and through email with a pre-decided questioner during May to July 2016. On the other hand, for the secondary data analysis of the researcher will focus on the literary works like historical documents, newspaper reports, and archival sources from both destinations. The untouchability and marginalization among the migrants to Singapore are in significant number in the nineteenth and twentieth century. These migrants are not always untouchable by caste system but on the basis of identity crisis. They are left with unanswered questions and absent in popular narratives. These data analysis of this paper will give a new idea and finding to this research topic which will be concluded with a study of Singapore migration where the migrant's everyday experiences in an overseas multi-ethnic environment will be discussed in detailed and the role of state to give them facilities for their betterment and recuing from the hazards.

Indian Migration to Singapore

India and undivided India has historical relation with the undivided Singapore since colonial era. As both the countries got their independence and started developing themselves, along with they are improving their connection through the system of migration in every sector. This paper will be dealing with only labour migration strictly. The whole Southeast Asia was, and continues to be, a major destination of mass long distance labour migrations. Singapore is an island between the two countries - Malaysia and Indonesia with 269 square miles just about 3.5 times the size of Washington D.C. and one of the smallest countries of the world. The approach to the Harbour of Singapore Island is one of the most beautiful in the world. This is a land-locked island known as 'The gateway of the East'. This country got a status in 2006 as 'Global City, World of opportunities.' Also, in the year 2009, Singapore ranked first in the world for having globalized economy and seventh in the world for social globalization.

Due to limitations and conditions of the research, the specific study of this research will only focus on Indian migrants and the States which will be studied are Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and West Bengal. These migrants are on short-term contract, they are mostly belongs to the low income family from the very rural and agricultural background. At times, they invest their own money to obtain their loan or sale their property to make their journey to the new land. History says, as a British trading colony established in 1819, most of the city's population growth until the World War II was due to immigration. Supported by a fledging colonial economy, Singapore drew in large numbers of labourers from China, India and Malay Archipelago. There were fewer millionaires and traders among them and their emigration to these territories was largely regulated by law. They were mainly convicted indentured labourer or rubber plantation workers for the Strait Settlement. Indian migration was started with the Lascar and Sepoys of the Second Battalim 20th Regiment of the Bengal Native Infantry from Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh under Hasting's charge as Governor General of India. The specific political and economic relationships between the Colonial Office in London and these territories determined recruitment patterns and influenced employment relations and working conditions. Mainly they worked in garrison, but other than this they were survived in 'bazar contingent' as domestic servants, chaiwallas, grooms and dhobis, largely lower caste Hindus and Muslims. Tamil Migrants from Coromandal Coast were in Sepoy. Immigration temporarily ceased during the Japanese Occupation of 1942 to 1945, and Singapore's road to self-governance in the 1950s and 1960s saw the passing of new ordinances that limited immigration to only those who could contribute to its socio-economic development. From this discussion, Indian migrants in Singapore could be divided into three sections – firstly, Indians who have migrated to Singapore for more than two or three generations earlier,

are belonged to 'Old Indians' community, secondly, highly skilled Indians professionals and entrepreneurs who have sought employments, residence and citizenships and the third one is migrant workers.

Historical works on the Indian diaspora in Singapore during the Japanese war have focused mainly on the development of the Indian National Army (INA). These elements comprise important components of the Indian experience, the 'voices' of subalterns affected by these developments has received less attention. Their testimonies suggest that while many were indeed saturated with a sense of mission to free India from British rule, there were also some who saw the demands imposed on them as excessive, and felt that the pan-Indian unity that was raised was not necessarily the outcome of a genuine transformation in consciousness but rather forced upon. Large numbers of Indians were forced to work on Japanese projects like the infamous Thai-Burma 'Death' Railway from which many did not return.

Stricter citizenship and immigration law were imposed following Singapore's independence from Malaysia in 1965, leading to the dwindling of the city-state's non-resident population to 2.9 percent of the total population. In 1980s when Singapore became more industrialised, the question of migration returned. The non-residential people started increasing again, beginning of a trend which continues till today. In 2016, the Singapore census categorized 237,473 Singaporeans and 110,646 permanent residents are into a number of 'dialect' groups, which includes Sikhs, who are a religious rather than a linguistic group, virtually all of whom are Punjabi, which was also captured as a separate 'dialect' category. Sikhs were 12,952 and Punjabis were 5,672 total 53.5%. Tamilians are major 54.18%, though it includes Tamils from Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka (Ceylonese), other 29.68% was from Telugu and Bengali community and Hindustanis. According to Rajesh Rai (2014), the social hierarchy comprised four main groups: the educated professional elite (over 0.5% of the Indian community), mercantile groups (under 10%), the white collar middle class (5-7%) and the uneducated laborers (over 80%).

Reasons for migrating to Singapore

For this research, researcher had taken interviews with migrants who are living in Singapore. Samples migrants were/are working as a security guard, plumber, construction workers, and domestic workers in the various places of Singapore. For the small country like Singapore is an attracted destination among migrants and it has also various reasons, like -

- First reason of migration is basically happening because of the lack of job opportunities in home country and not getting satisfied salary. The foreign companies are paying them S\$30 to S\$50 in a day, which is a very big and satisfactory amount to the workers comparing to the Indian salary.
- The second main reason for migration is better livelihood and children good education in India. The migrants are coming from the very rural and poor background, mainly agricultural. They are unable to give proper education to their children or other small members in the family. That's the reason they think if they will earn a good amount in Singapore and save something from salary which they can make a good remittances for better future. One migrant gave response, "My children said to me, father, all my friend's dad have gone to some country for work and good money. Why don't you go too? I wanted them to be proud of me, so I came here in Singapore and sending money to my family and my elder son is studying in class 10 and the younger one is in class 6. They do not have burden of earning money and I am happy of it."³ From this statement, it also denotes that now-a days, migration have become a tradition. If at least a member of a family is migrated irrespective of any country and job, it seems the family status is also increased. To maintain this status, migrants are sometimes bound to send good amount of remittances to their family and without knowing the actual conditions, migrant's family members are spending money to maintain social formalities, good health treatment, build a big multistoried house, spent huge amount in the religious purpose.
- Sometimes women or some men are migrating to earn huge money for herself or for daughters and sometimes for sister's marriage and dowry. "I used to work overtime in the store. I was so economical .I never used to spend any of my money. I thought this was the only way I could save enough money to get all of my sisters married. Till that day I won't have coffee, tea or soft drinks. I will drink only plain water"⁴.

- Female migrants are migrating themselves due to male's abnormal alcoholism; domestic violence for widow is also found in Singapore case.

Problems Faced by Migrants

The number of migration to Singapore are increasing day by day, but at the same time there are problems among them with the procedures, companies, even with their own country. Some problems are recovered and some are still going on. The problems which are founded those are mainly among the illegal migrants. If legal migrants will face a problem he/she can go to the Indian Embassy, they provide very good services to Indian migrants. On the other hand, illegal migrants cannot go to complain for the lack of proper documentations throughout the process. In many cases, it was found that, migrants are not having their original documents like passport, visas, work permits, and not even a single copy of those. Indian Government and Embassy are reluctant to seek any change in the status of migrants. They are concerned about wages and working conditions, which is stipulated by contracts and properly adhered by employers. But the Embassy is not equipped to monitor contracts not to investigate complaints.

On the other hand, Singapore is also taking steps for the benefit of migrants. Ministry of Manpower (MOM)⁵ Singapore is very reluctant to seek about the conditions of migrants. They are concerned about wages and working, which is stipulated by contracts and properly adhered by employers. Though the illegal migration towards Singapore is very difficult and ratio is very low, but sometimes it happens very carefully. The new immigration law passed on 1 April, 1989 and by May of the same year 68 illegal Indian workers had been arrested and 500 has registered for assisted repatriation with India's diplomatic mission in Singapore. Also, one newspaper reporter wrote that, "Hundreds of illegal Tamil workers clutching small bags and bedrolls have pitched camp in ... [the Indian High Commission's] sprawling grounds." (Nation, 1989) Those illegal migrants cannot get any help or permit clearance from the State and authority, so they face many problems which cannot be recovered. For Singapore scholars use the term 'irregular migration' instead of illegal migration or it can be said as 'migrant workers are in irregular statuses'.

Problems faced by migrants are discussed below

With the Companies:

- The domination system to the deprived it is continuing in Singapore from the pre-colonial time. British East India Company started slavery process to the indentured convict laborers. People are migrating for high wages but sarcastically it is true that from history to present the low wage or unsatisfied wage issue is one of the main problems among the migrants. Salaries are often not paid and sometimes not paid at all for several months towards the end of the contractual period, resulting in workers being repatriated without full payment of their dues. This is a common factor for a domestic worker also. Still in some point Indian labors are in a better position than the other laborers from other countries. One shopkeeper said⁶, "If you see, most of the Indians in their positions, it is because of hard work and dedication. Otherwise, it is impossible. Because, always preference would be given to the other nationals. Indians can do sacrifice a lot. I know few people like this, or else they won't be here."
- Employers or Ministry of Manpower sponsoring agreements and visas for labor sometimes do not receive them on arrival and leave them to fend for themselves.
- Work permit fees are deducted from their combined salaries.
- Working hours are usually much longer than the generally recognized eight hours work in a day sometimes without any holiday (though Sunday is a holiday for whole country). In an interview session, construction workers said, "We are working daily. There is no such thing as leave. If we take a day off, they will cut our wages. So because of that we have no desire to go anywhere. Room to work and room to work that's all."
- Singapore government provides health, education, medical and housing facilities to the migrants. They usually stay in a small dormitory room/mass-housing with 20 members or more than that, but there is no option to go anywhere.

Sometimes these houses are situated in a very dirty place, which is very unhealthy. Living room crisis is also present here like the Gulf countries. Workers get the dormitories which are aided by the Singaporean Government under Housing and Development Board (HDB), but the beds are not sufficient according the number of migrant workers. They are using the same bed in a shifting sleeping process which could bring the health issues, questions of privacy. 200 thousand workers are housed in 43 large dormitories building, in the large dormitories can accommodate 3000 to 25000 workers and these are designed for communal living, with common recreational facilities, mini grocery stores and remittances services and managed by operators which is regulated by MOM under the Foreign Employment Dormitory Act, (FEDA) 2015. These dormitories are divided into three types. First type is 'large dormitories' which often purposely built and looks like a barracks. These houses are accommodating at least 1000 people per site. Second type called as 'medium dormitories', it is a typically housing for a few hundred residents per site often converted from industrial buildings. Third types of residential complexes or 'temporary dormitories' are company quarter, the crisis is also there. These rooms are often related minimally by occupations or caste backgrounds. The idea of making these rooms are not new, it was started from the colonial era among the old migrants. It was known as 'Kepala'. The first homes were made in Serangoon road. These were set up and run y patron bosses. This tied in with the dominant system of employment whereby employers personally selected their workers from their own villages. This meant that the group that lives together often shared similar village backgrounds and the boss himself usually had important village connections and status. Thus was instituted a system that borrowed from village rules – binding employees to paternal authority that included overseeing the men's daily living needs. Often food was cooked on the premises in the communal kitchen, although cooked food stalls were also utilized.

Due to excessive dependency on migrant workers, state cannot maintain the proper arrangements sometimes, 20 people stay in 960 square feet room. In 2015, HOME⁷ surveyed on the dormitories under their social work scheme and they had stated,

"Migrants workers who approach HOME for assistance often live in conditions which are crowded, dirty and full of pests such as cockroaches, bed bugs and rats. It is ironis that migrant workers are housed in such appalling conditions while building luxury apartments and bungalows for Singapore."

After the report given by HOME, Ministry of Manpower also made a surprise inspection in the dorms. They had also found cockroaches, damaged lights and fixtures, faulty shower taps, corroded railings and stair cases. After looking at these conditions Ministry had charged the Directors of the dormitories. A Commissioner, a Deputy Commissioner and an Assistant Commissioner for Foreign Employee Dorm are responsible to maintain rules and if there is any punishable offence, the punishment is very hard; it could be charges as affine from SGD 50,000 to be in jail up to 12 months. As a result of this strict rules and punishments migrants are always afraid, they cannot open their mouth, they become voiceless and marginalized. Guardian, reported on 16th May 2020 an interview of a migrant, where he said,

"Migrant workers are invisible community and their voices are also unheard in Singapore. Their dorms are located on the outskirts of the city and on their rest days, they congregate in districts like Little India and Chinatown, where ethnic food shops and money remittances are located. Due to fear of losing their jobs, many do not complain about their living and working conditions."

On the other hand, the living room crisis is not common for the female domestic workers. All the apartment and house of Singapore are having a separate room or quarter for their servants. The migrant who stays for 24*7 services, they are staying at their separate, private rooms.

- In Singapore, domestic workers are not protected under labour laws as their employment is within private domestic sphere, and thus conceived of as beyond the jurisdiction of the State. Singapore is a region of 'maid-trade'. Sometimes female migrants are facing the human trafficking. Being in a poor family and less educated, they are not

aware about the reality and crime. People take this weakness as their own benefit. Agents or illegal recruiters sometimes give them the false ideas of achievements and wrong way to earn money. If these female migrants are trapped in this way, either they will be sold by the agents or they have to work as sex workers.

- To control the human trafficking, MOM has given charges to some agents, particularly for recruiting female migrants as domestic workers. Most of these maid/ domestic workers recruitment agencies make video recording of maids who has been registered with them. For the most cases, the maids talk about themselves, usually in broken English or some of them use their mother tongue, particularly for the house which speaks or originate from her native place. For a few minutes they explain their reasons for wanting to work as maid in the overseas. These recordings are shown to the employers to help them to select their maids. During the time of applying, the women are asked to give their preferences according to choices like household work, looking after children, taking care of invalids or the aged. There is another story of domestic worker's recruitment. In the few cases it shows that employers want to recruit a maid from their own mother tongue community, so that they could easily communicate with their maids. Also, they want maid from their own religion. In these cases, employers are always afraid of when they will not be in the home, maids may want to impose her religious customs and habits to children and this is very sentimental issue. This mentally also saves racial problems. On the basis of this, the statistic of migration says, Indian maids are working in Indian houses and it is same for other countries.

Natives:

- As a minor community, Indian labour migrants faced problem of nativism from the colonial period. It was well known to the other communities that a high proportion of crimes among Indian laborers were committed for the reason of sex. In community where men were outnumbered than women and marriage became a flimsy institution. Marital identity, enticement of marital women and prostitution became frequent. The officers of the Labor Department took up with the Government the possibility of a system of registration for Hindu marriages solemnized in Malaya (the undivided Singapore). They were supported by the planters, whose General Labor Committee of 1920 had recommended such a scheme, so the Hindu Marriage Registration Act was passed in 1924, providing for voluntary registration of marriages among Hindus.
- In the present context problem with the natives are not stick in one field, it became complicated. Unskilled or semi-skilled labor cannot participate in local programs as well as in their own religious rituals also with the skilled labors and their family. They feel identity crisis and cultural displacement. Also working as a labour or low-wage worker make them feel insecure among the own countrymen, so they cannot associate with the other people who is also coming from India.
- The natives or other nationals are becoming educated in English and technical knowledges is the another reason of clash. Local people are trying to get into job in their own country from lower level to upper level. Because of this, job crisis started for the migrants. And in very recent Singapore Government had started the anti-foreign policy which will affect these transit migrants as well.
- Language problem is also another issue. Major used and official language of Singapore is English. People faced this problem sometimes for their own negligence. They cannot communicate with others. This situation becomes harassing for the migrant.

At Home:

Migrants are moving themselves to a new country for the betterment of family, but they are facing problems at home also.

- Children are neglected by the parental care (either father or mother migrated, sometime both are migrated). This gap cannot be fulfilled by any other member of the family. For a growing child it become a psychological issue.

- For female member migration male has to maintain all the household duties. There will be a question of 'family values' and 'tradition'. The migrant family constitutes the first social area where 'gender', 'mobility' and 'tradition' get defined. The existence of 'ethnic enclaves' in society where these traditional models are encouraged and perpetuated gives members a sense of security.
- For male migration female has to maintain all the household duties. For many cases female member is ill-treated by the others whether it is aged or young. And then there will not be any question of ethics and traditions. This is simply said as women's work. After receiving the money from husband or other male migrant at regular intervals through banking channels, then the second cycle of important interactions for the woman starts. These new financial agreements consists of dealing with the institutions of the society have been started which she could not do until the date.
- So many divorce cases and extra marital affairs can be seen in the migrant's family. Both husband and wife are not loyal to their relationship. They do not come back for a long time or starts a new relationship in the foreign land as well as in the hometown.
- Gender discrimination is also very prominent. If an unmarried girl will migrate to earn, some time she will be addressed as 'impure' while coming back to homeland. And when an unmarried boy migrates he will not be addressed with anything. He will get a good recommendation in the marriage market, and unfortunately, with this he is eligible to get more dowries.

Paying Respect to the Migrants by the Singapore Authority

The above discussed sections are giving a pictorial view of problems faced by the labour migrants. They are becoming xenophobic, marginalized, living life in exile in the homeland, host land and even at their homes. But every bad thing has a good impact. Singapore Government has already started realizing that they cannot survive as a best globally developed country without the help and sacrifice of the migrants. Indian nationals are among the largest foreign working labour-intensive industries. They are praising about the contribution of migrants labours in every field like, building construction, shipyards, marine, domestic services and all. In the open International platform the Government and the Governing body are also paying respect and saluting their hard works to develop and making a pride about Singapore in front of the Global world. On International Migrant's Day in 2016, the Ministry of Manpower shared an album to its Facebook page entitled 'Unsung City Makers', a tribute to "Foreign Workers who left their homes to help build ours", "Migrants who literary built the Singapore of today", "They built our Nation". In 2018, also MOM featured a very different campaign which involves a group of youth who helped to paint a wall with the picture of migrant's dormitories to know their life style and a process to understand their 'mutual appreciation, trust, tolerance and respect.' On this year migrants were also got another respect from the intellectual world. In the Global Migrant festival, 2018 had a weekend discussion performed with a film screening organized by a travel writer Shibaji Das, where Singaporeans and migrants are referring each other as 'brothers' and 'sisters'.⁸

Findings and Suggestions

There are few major protective programs had taken by the Government of India and had already been implemented, but the problems are there till now. As a researcher during field work in various places in India and Singapore, it was found there are few gaps in the policies. Migrants are mainly coming from the extreme rural village, so the awareness programs which are conducted by the respective authority they are always not reachable for all the migrants. There is a rule that migrants have to be present physically during the issue of visa or emigration clearance, but many times they are relying on the recruiting agents or middle man. Though, Singapore labour migrants are coming through the Employment Pass by Ministry of Manpower (MOM) of Singapore. For the case of Singapore the victimized migrants do not go to complain to Embassy, they go directly to MOM office. Here, Embassy works for Indian Diaspora and Permanent Residents.

Briefly, it can be said that there should be some restrictions and changes in their policies, like:

- Effective measures should be instituted by the Ministry of Labor to prevent Malpractices by recruiting agents in India.
- State Government should set up appropriate agencies, even at the district level, to advise prospective Indian workers about their rights and obligations.
- Government should negotiate a 'Standard Labor Export Agreement' with all countries taking migrant labours prescribing such things as a minimum wage, free housing, medicine, a weekly day off, a limit on daily working hours, overtime allowance rates, return air tickets and compensation for on the job death / injury.
- Ensuring regulatory compliance.
- Providing services to the migrant workers at destination.
- Introduction to the E-Recruitment process.
- More policies to build the capacity of migrant workers. Such as, Pravasi Bharatiya Bima Yojana (PBBY), Mahatma Gandhi Pravasi Suraksha Yojana (MGPSY) etc.
- The practice of employers taking into their custody the passports of their employees immediately on their arrival should be discontinued. This practice renders our workers helpless. An alternative system which meets the requirements of the local laws should also be explored.
- In the pre-departure orientation program there has to be a class on the legal rules and regulations of the host country. So that, the migrant should not face any problem or legal issues, harassments in their daily life. Such as for the migrants who will go to Singapore they should learn the country's regulation on not to smoke publicly, not to eat in the public vehicle etc.
- ILO⁹ recommends avoiding the use of unregulated and un-licensed sub-agents.
- Employers must have ensured that they are dealing only with fair, ethical and complaint recruitment agencies that do not charge workers and monitor their activities.

Conclusion

At the end of this research paper, here in this concluding section the scenario of the migrants are related to the word 'Subaltern'. The word comes from the British militancy, where a person works with lower grade or subordinate to the officers, referred as 'Subaltern'. This term has become famous in the Postcolonial time, mainly in the academic sphere. It was first used by Antonio Gramsci, in his book *Prison Notebook* (1971). In this research, the term 'Subaltern Diaspora' from title of this research refers to those migrant labourers who are sacrificing their lives in the making of modern 'state' and society from the colonial period to till date. Though, they are voiceless but these 'Subaltern can speak'. In the present scenario, they are raising their voices for every equal right and struggling for existence against the capital power and structure, utilitarian society and de-humanizing approaches. Though this study is based on a small sample and secondary sources that offers limited basis for generalisation, the everyday experiences of the respondents do exemplify the socio-economic reality faced by low-waged migrant workers in Singapore. They are in a "double whammy" situation as they receive the lowest wage economically, and at the same time are made abject, excluded and denied of dignity socially. The de-humanising aspect of work is what Marx identifies as one of the forms of alienation. It "mutilates the labourer into a fragment of a man, degrade him to the level of an appendage of a machine, destroy every remnant of charm in his work and turn it into a hated toil."¹⁰ Marx's conceptualization of the worker as instrument and their own description of themselves as "machine" effectively encapsulate the ways in which workers' bodily mobilities and organized. He also argued that a free labour system was imperative for industrial capitalism's growth and productive operation, as was the free movement of labour. This meant that the removal of obstacles to the free flow of labour was an economic imperative. The diversion of the population from agriculture is expressed in the growth towns, factories and commercial and industrial townships, as well as in non-agricultural migration. All processes are necessary components of capitalist development and

are profoundly progressive when compared to the old forms of feudalism. Also, migrants created a consumer's market for industrial products through the destruction of self-reliant rural industries.

This paper has revealed an incongruent reality faced by the low-waged migrant men and women who occupy the lowest socio-economic position themselves while they are raising the "global" position of host country. By involving the migrants in this study, it has repositioned their visibility. Despite facing various types of social injustice such as exploitation and marginalisation, these people are simply not victims but rather resilient "scale-makers" who shape the physical fabric of these countries and leave their imprint all over these global countries.

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³ Interview was taken at NUS from a construction worker who was involved of making new academic building, June, 2016.

⁴ Interviewed in Singapore, June, 2016.

⁵ Ministry of Manpower works under Government of Singapore. This ministry is responsible for the formulation and implementation of the labour policies related to workforce in Singapore. It was known as Ministry of Labour until 1988.

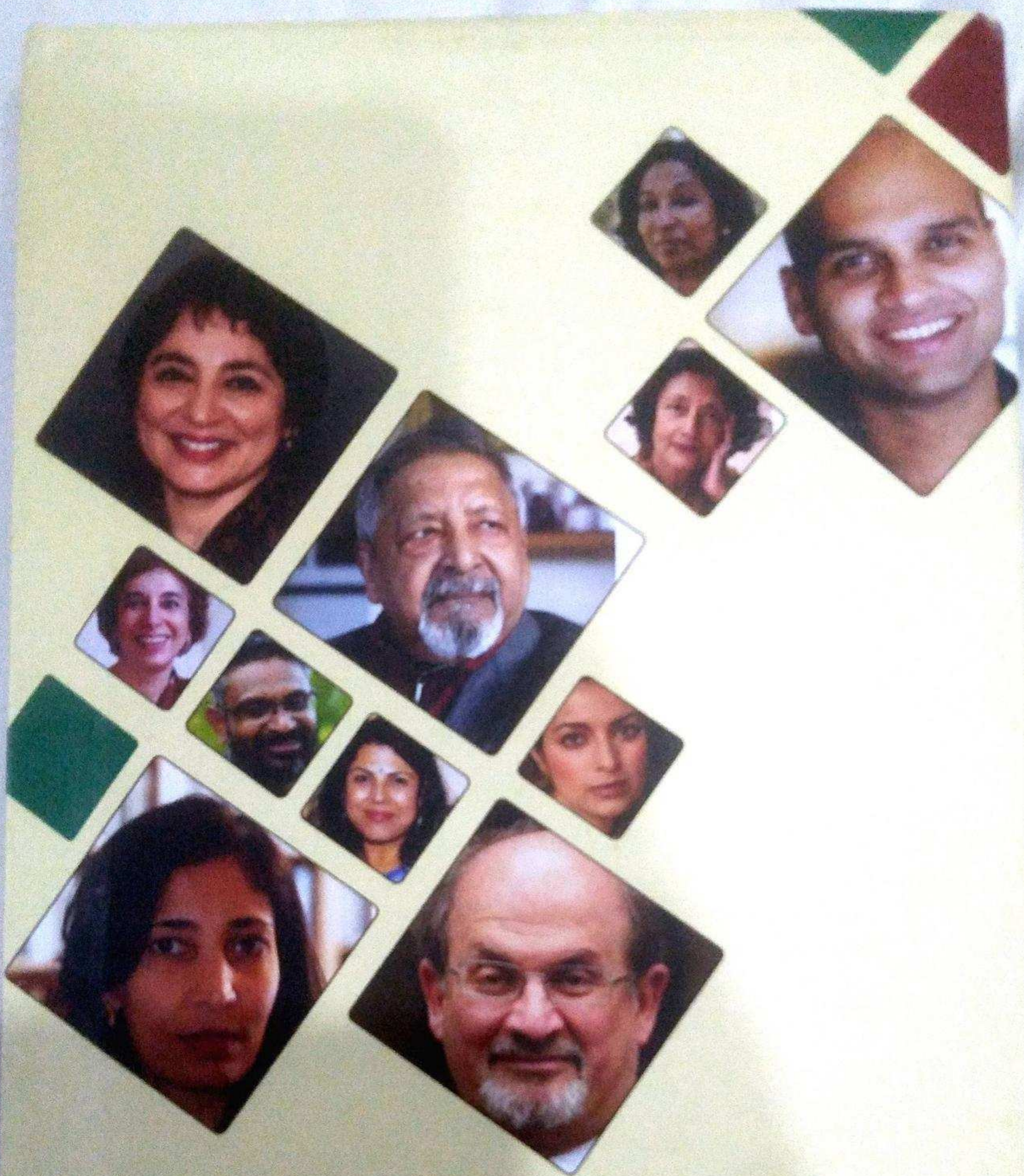
⁶ Interview was taken in June, 2016.

⁷ Humanitarian Organization for Migration Economies.

⁸ Kwek, Theophilus, *Love, Labour and Loss: Decoding the 'Migrant Workers'*. *Singapore Policy Journal*, Feb, 20, 2019.

⁹ International Labour Organisation.

¹⁰ Marx, K., *Capital*. Chicago, Charles H. Kerr and Co. 1906.



**IMMIGRATION AND ESTRANGEMENT IN
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A CRITICAL STUDY

Edited by **Dipak Giri**

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**GULF MIGRATION: A LITERARY
REPRESENTATION OF "GOAT DAYS"
BY BENYAMIN**

Malyashree Mandal

Creative writing or literature cannot exist in isolation from life's intricacies. Through the centuries it has reflected as life's complications, its ups and downs. A writer sub-consciously reflects society's changing trends through his writing. The work, born of his creativity, becomes a mirror through which it is easy to trace the development of the society.

This paper is focused on migration of un-skilled and semi-skilled labours from India to all the Gulf countries. Gulf migration is a well discussed phenomenon at the extended area of sociology, economics and politics since nineteenth century. Very recently it includes literary representations, along with English language; many regional

languages are also appreciated. Through a literary text *Goat Days*, by Benyamin translated from a famous Malayalam novel called *AaduJeevitham* by Joseph Koyippally, deals with the life of an Indian migrant in the middle of the Saudi desert, will be looked into the socio-literal perspectives. From the critical point of view it could be said as an autobiography rather than a novel. This is a story telling by a poor Malayali migrant Najeeb who went to Gulf to fulfill his dreams, but ended up as an unsuccessful dreamer- a life in the desert into a universal tale of loneliness and alienation. The novel is divided into four sections, like Najeeb's life was described in desert, like- Prison, Desert, Escape and Refuge.

The actual story starts from the second section- 'Desert'. Najeeb is a poor, common Malayali village man, happily living with his mother and wife. He had decided to earn more money for better life and to see happy smiles on the faces of his family members. In the meantime, one of his friends suggested him,

... there was a visa for sale... Tell me if there is anyone who wants to go. It is through my brother-in-law. He's here on vacation. If money is sent, the visa will arrive within two months. (pp. 35-36)

This visa was for Gulf, the oil kingdom and everyone's dream place for making money. The journey was started from Kayamkulam by Jayanti Janata, a train to Bombay. At station he met his fellow friend Hakeem with whom he was going to start his new journey. On 4th April 1992, they had started journey for Riyadh from Bombay airport through Air India flight and after four and a half

hour journey they reached their destination- 'city of dreams'. Both of them were unknown to Arab and it was very difficult to communicate with the local people and culture. Najeeb and Hakeem both of them were hungry and thirsty in the new land. Finally after a long wait one person came to them and said in Arabic and drag Hakeem's luggage and ordered them to follow him. That unknown person was their Arbab, completely in Arabic dress.

At the next section of the novel, Najeeb saw a scary figure sat in the cot and thousands of goats were roaming around. That time he was sure that he was going to be a shepherd. He was about to cry, without any food and water he slept. First day he spent with very difficulties. Second morning Arbab asked him to milk the goat. He was remembering that at the back home he was happy and leading a lavish life. He didn't have any idea about goat, only he saw it to the neighbor's house. It was impossible work to milk the goat; already Arbab came and threatened him for delay. Then the scary figure came and taught him how to milk in Hindi language. His main work was to fill the water tank in the masara with bucket. It was impossible for him he was forgetting the word hygiene; he became used to with the situation and understood why this old fellow became scary. He thought,

Lice, bugs and some other small insects from the goat's bodies had settled there. They itched severely when I sweated at night. My body had become a pest reserve. Lice and bugs formed a crust on my skins. The goats were cleaner than I was. (pp. 160)

In one hand, he was learning slowly how to catch goat, how to feed and treat and on the other

hand getting punishments and tortures from Arbab were common. He started feeling sorry and lonely for himself and family and became homeland-nostalgic. Co-incidentally, one he goat was born on his hand. He felt that is his own son Nabeel. He was ordered to roam with the goat. One day he was hit by a big goat. His hand was swollen and it was paining like a hell, but arbab did not care about anything except his work. Finally with the help of other arbab he was cured. Suddenly, one day he saw Hakeem after a long time. He called him; with few conversations he proved that it was Hakeem. Najeeb was very happy to see that Hakeem was alive, though he became like a scary figure. They expressed their story, and it was same. Najeeb didn't know that this time his arbab observed him with binocular. Again he got punishment and kicks on back. After that he wanted to kill his Arbab, but he could not, when he heard that Arbab was praying to God and saying that "My Allah ... you kept us safe. Had Najeeb not been here, I would have died of fear now." (pp. 134)

Out of the bloom, one day he met Hakeem. He was confused whether he was seeing the right person or not. But, meeting with Hakeem helped him to think about home again. It was blessing to him. He took his pen and paper from his bag, which was under the dust for three years, started writing a letter to his loving wife Sainu with the false and fantasizing words. He was not allowed to talk with anyone, even not with the person who gives wheat and grass to the goat. But Hakeem somehow managed to talk with another migrant from Pakistan, named Ibrahim Khadiri. They planned to escape and informed Najeeb. Najeeb's arbab went

for his brother's daughter wedding ceremony and he got the chance. He said good bye to every goat with very nostalgic tone. He became accustomed with them, they were the only who loved him in the desert. He said, "Goats, my friends, my brothers, my blood, good bye." (pp. 185)

Escaping was also not easy. Getting highway was very difficult. Three of them did not know how many days they ran, walk without food and water in search of highway. In this difficult journey he learnt many things from Ibrahim, who came to the desert before, like desert storm, insects and life. This time he lost his dearest friend Hakeem forever. Finally they found an oasis where three days spent only with water and dates. Last moment when the light of hope for getting highway was seen, Ibrahim left him. Najeeb stayed "one more night orphaned by Allah". (pp. 234) Till today he does not know the reason. When he got the highway he praise to Allah.

The wheel marks were not of a vehicle belonging to any human being. It was the mark made by the wheels of Allah's vehicle, a pointer to escape. Allah; thank you. A thousand thanks. A billion thanks. (pp. 230)

He tried to stop many cars, vans, lorries, but no one stopped, may be for his scary figure. Finally one luxury car stopped and dropped him in the city. Najeeb called that person the symbol of God.

After reaching the city when he had to get down the third phase of life started this is called 'Refuge'. He was terrible hungry and he did not have single penny. He begged for food every store but got only refuse. Finally he found a 'Malabar Resturant'. He was praised by Almighty; at least he can speak

his own language. But when he got conscious he saw he was in a hospital. For a good person there should be a banyan tree. He fainted near the stair and Kunjikka took him to the hospital treated him. Najeeb felt that he is very fortunate for getting a friend like Kunjikka. To him there was nothing to give him except tears. After three years he saw his face in the mirror. He talked to his wife, heard about his son Nabeel who started going school and got the news of his Mother's death. Many people came to meet him and listened his story some believed, some not. Kunjikka and his friend decided that Najeeb had to go back go back home now, but he couldn't go. He did not have visa and passport with him; everything was with the arabab who took it at the very first day from the airport. So, there was no option except going to the prison and faced the Embassy rule.

Now Najeeb's life is in the 'Prison', which is the first section of the book. Najeeb and Hameed another person met in Kunjikka's place were roaming around in front of police station to get attention, but no one was taking care of them. Police officers and constables were busy with their personal works. After three days without any hope, they enter inside the police station by themselves. Then they were asked for Pathakas and the answer was simply no. It seems police officers got work after a long time. They were talking in arabic which were again not understandable. They caught them put them in a van. Najeeb and Hameed were very happy. After finishing certain procedures they entered in the last step of the prison where many cells named for the different countries. They started staying there, food and life was very good without any tension and work. Sometimes they

felt neglected by the Arab, staying in the same cell even. There was a parade day in the prison and every week they were afraid to be identified. The next day of it was Embassy day and people used to wait for the happy moment. Suddenly one unfortunate parade day came when Hameed was recognized by an Arab and he bit him like anything and took him to his old hell. Again another unwanted parade day came and Najeeb was recognized by arbab but he was surprised that arbab did not say anything. Then he asked to the police why it happened. Police repeated arbab's answer that "It's just that he is not under my visa, otherwise I would have dragged him back to masara!" Najeeb was really fortunate. But he felt sorry for his own fate, he suffered for 'someone else's fate' (pp. 251). And the next day unbelievably he got the embassy pass for coming back to India.

And the story ends with the actual fact which says,

Karuvatta's brother-in-law later swore that he had not arranged for a shepherd's visa for me. It was the visa of a helper in a construction company. Lord only knew who spoke the truth. I am not going to lose my sleep thinking about it. ... That day eighty of us got a 'free out pass' to India. It was part of a government project to deport unauthorized residents to the countries of their origin. ... Our return flight was at night. The embassy officials distributed the boarding passes. Together, we were made to walk towards the plane. I could not help thinking how the sight was so similar to herding a flock of goats back into the masara!

I was one of the goats. Mine was goat's life.
(pp. 251-253)

Tough this novel is portraying a particular character of Indian migrant, but all the Gulf migrants who are unskilled and unaware of legal issues, just believe what the other says, are in the same condition till today. From the ancient time, Gulf has a history of slavery, but details about these practices are difficult to verify; no official records exist. It is common in Dubai that when the Emirate was still economically dependent on pearl diving and fishing, slavery was widespread, with slaves coming mainly from the African continent. They too, (like the Iranians), were an early immigrant population who have now been naturalized since slavery was abolished in the 1950s. In the past, slaves dived for pearls for their masters and did the domestic work of cleaning and other menial chores. This cultivated dependence on a slave population has been suggested as one reason for Emiratis' reluctance to take on unskilled jobs that involve manual labor. In this way, the current reliance on low wage migrant labor for low-skilled work across the Gulf is interpreted as a continuation of practices of slavery. Two public sectors Indian firms played an important role in the Middle East, Engineering Projects India (EPI) and the National Building Construction Corporation. The Government of India permits Indian companies to pay a lower wage to Indian workers so they can successfully compete for contracts in the Gulf against British, American, Cypriot, Korean and Japanese firms. Indian companies in the Gulf import some of their engineering equipment and construction supplies from India, while the Indian workforce in the Gulf

imports consumer goods from India, including Indian food, sarees and Indian films. People are migrating for high wages but sarcastically it is true that from history to present the low wage or unsatisfied wage issue is one of the main problems among the Gulf migrants. Salaries are often not paid when due, sometimes not paid at all for several months towards the end of the contractual period, resulting in workers being repatriated without full payment of their dues. This problem is same for a person who works with a company and a domestic worker. Another problem they are facing is, bringing family members for unskilled and semi-skilled labors irrespective of gender, whether a skilled migrant, who is in an administrative or upper level service, can bring their family. Also, working hours are usually much longer than the generally recognized eight hours work in a day.

On the other hand, Gulf government provides health, education, medical and housing facilities to the natives, not to the migrants. Construction companies or private agencies provide dormitories and medical services to their workers, usually near the construction site, which is always not satisfactory and healthy. They usually stay in a small room with 20 members, but there is no option to go anywhere.

Sexual harassments and physical abuses are another important factor for the female migrants, irrespective of their works, as a domestic servants or nurse. UNDP 2008 report says, the women who are migrating they are not happy in the Gulf. They report that physical and verbal abuse by employers is common in the daily life of a domestic worker in abroad. Sometimes reports can be so much

pathetic like children of the household were said to punch, kick or bite the domestic workers and even in provocations of such kind, parents seldom reprimanded the children.

Here in this novel also, we see how visa agents are making life difficult. Najeeb said, at the end of his terrible journey he himself did not know who is saying the truth. He believed one person and gave money for making visa. He was unknown about his company and work. If he could have known about it, he could go by himself rather than waiting in the airport for the whole day and kidnapped by a wrong person. This incident happens in the present day also. Due to the misguiding to migrants before leaving homeland they are facing these problems, even giving their life too. Migrants should enquire about the company and work to save themselves from harassments and should contact with the Embassy for any difficult situation in further. Discrimination is also seen everywhere in the novel. Not being a rich man Arbab was discriminating and torturing his employee at highest level. In the road or outside the police station not being an Arab they were neglected for many days. Inside the prison, all are criminals but those are native they were taking advantages for the good place, good food etc. Language problem was another factor. Najeeb was completely unknown to the place and language. Not only with arbab but also he could even communicate with anyone there until he could not find the 'Malabar Restaurant'.

To conclude, it can be said that there should be some restrictions and changes in policies of India, like:

- Effective measures should be instituted by the Ministry of Labor to prevent malpractices by recruiting agents in India.
- State Government should set up appropriate agencies, even at the district level, to advise prospective Indian workers about their rights and obligations.
- Government should negotiate a 'Standard Labor Export Agreement' with all the Gulf countries prescribing such things as a minimum wage, free housing, medicine, a weekly day off, a limit on daily working hours, overtime allowance rates, return air tickets and compensation for on the job death/injury.
- Ensuring regulatory compliance
- Providing services to the migrant workers at destination
- Policies to build the capacity of migrant workers
- The practice of employers taking into their custody the passports of their employees immediately on their arrival should be discontinued. This practice renders our workers helpless. An alternative system which meets the requirements of the local laws should also be explored.
- The consular officers in our Missions in the Gulf countries should pay frequent visits to the labor camps to acquaint themselves with the difficulties faced by Indian workers.

To stop all these problems the Indian Government has already issued some policies, like Joint Working Group (JWG) had a meeting with Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) and Oman during 2014 has been introduced and enforced and for

other category of workers has also been circulated. PrabashiBharatiyaBimaYojona Policy 2008, which covers migrants and family hospitalisations, maternity and insurance. Mahatma Gandhi Pravasi Suraksha Yojana, Overseas Workers Resource Centre (OWRC), Gender Budget Cell, Awareness campaign on the risks of illegal migration, e-governance in e-migration, Pravasi Legal Aid Cell (PLAC), Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) and so on.

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naturally born out of his rich experience in teaching Research Methodology. It contains all the guidelines recommended in Anderson and Poole and MLA 7th and 8th editions. He has got his six articles on various topics in different fields published in six printed anthologies. Two more anthologies are expected to be published with his two articles. He started his teaching career in June 1969 at Kandasamy Naidu College for Men at Madras. Since June 1970 till he has retired as a Selection Grade lecturer in 2004, he has worked at Kandasamy Kandar College, Paramathy Velur, Namakkal District in Tamil Nadu. Soon after his retirement, from June 15, 2004, he has worked as the head and Research Supervisor for M.Phil regular Students of Periyar University, Salem till he got relieved in December 2011. He has also worked as a Part time Professor at Coimbatore Bishop Appasamy College from June 2011 to March 2012.

2. **Malyashree Mandal** is currently an Assistant Professor in the Department of English at Diamond Harbour Women's University, West Bengal, India. She is pursuing her Ph.D. in the UGC-Centre for the Study of Indian diaspora at University of Hyderabad, India. She was achieved Asian Graduate Student Fellowship in 2016 from Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore. Her specialisation areas are English Literature, Diaspora and Cultural Studies, Post-colonial Studies and Critical Theory. Her e-mail: is malyashree007@gmail.com.

Certificate of Participation

**11th SINGAPORE GRADUATE FORUM
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12 - 14 JULY 2016**

Malyashree Mandal

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**International
Conference on Global
Diaspora**



CERTIFICATE OF PARTICIPATION

This is to certify that Ms./Mr. MALYASHREE MANDAL of UNIVERSITY OF
HYDERABAD presented a paper on TRACING THE STRUGGLE FOR EXISTENCE AMONG
THE MIGRATED WOMEN TO THE GULF in the 2nd International Conference on Global Diaspora,
hosted by Institute of Management, Nirma University, Ahmedabad on January 10-11, 2015.

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(Chairperson - Organizing Committee)