

**Return Migration of Non Resident Malayalees to Kerala: A Study During
COVID-19 Period**

M A SOCIOLOGY

ABSTRACT

For many centuries migration has been a global- social phenomenon. Today, more people live in a country or a state other than the one in which they were born. **Migration** is the voluntary or forced movement of people from one place to another due to various reasons such as economy, occupation, sustenance, war; riot etc. Since earliest time's people is in move for various reasons in order to survive. India has shown an increasing trend in migration for a long period of time. Kerala is one of the states in India, which have witnessed a large scale migration and large number of Keralites resides outside Kerala for their livelihood. The lives of nonresident malayalees are very much affected because of the pandemic situation called Covid-19. It has forced the people to return back to their home country. The uncertainty caused by Covid-19 across the world is very drastic and uncontrollable. It is multidimensional in nature. This research was an attempt to develop knowledge about the experience undergone by the nonresident malayalees on their return journey to Kerala during Covid-19 period. The researcher tried to analyze the major questions like the difficulties undergone by different members within the family during the journey, the reasons for return migration and their expectation about future. The researcher employed a qualitative case study design to collect in-depth subjective data and develop a deeper understanding about their experiences and expectations.

This thesis is divided into seven chapters starting with introduction and review of literature where the researcher has identified the research gap in existing literature and tries to shed light into those overlooked areas. Later chapters include methodology used in the study, case presentations, analysis of the data and findings of the study and conclusions. The researcher through this study could understand that the return journey was not so easy for the respondents and it involved very risky and unexpected dimensions during this pandemic situation. The reasons which made them return back was the sudden loss of job and fear and insecurity they had to face at their location of current residence. The experiences of the family differed based on their social conditions and the mode through which they travelled. The future living for the returnees is a question mark which includes different challenges to overcome by them for the livelihood of their family. As the study is of inductive nature, it is difficult to generalize the findings of this study and it is not attempted at all.

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Chapter- 1

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Since earliest times, people have been on a move. Some people move in search of work or economic opportunities or for educational purpose. Others move in order to escape from conflict, persecution, terrorism, or human rights violations. Still others move in response to the adverse effects of climate change, or natural disasters or other environmental factors. In short for many centuries migration has been a social-global phenomenon. Today, more people live in a country or a state other than the one in which they were born. **Migration** is “a form of geographical mobility or spatial mobility between one geographical unit and another, generally involving a change in the residence from the place of origin or place of departure to the place of destination or place of arrival” (**United Nation, 2013**). In simple terms, **migration** is the voluntary or forced movement of people from one place to another due to various reasons such as economy, occupation, sustenance, war, riot etc. The **International Organization for Migration** defines a **migrant** ‘as any person who is moving or has moved across the international border or within a state away from his/her habitual place of residence, regardless of: (1) the person’s legal status;

(2) Whether the movement is voluntary or involuntary;

(3) What the causes for the movement are; or

(4) What the length of the stay is’.

Factors for migration

Many individuals migrate out of choice and many others out of necessity. Migratory process may occur in response to changing economic, social, political, cultural or environmental factors. The reasons for migration varies and broadly it is being conceptualized into two; **Push and Pull Factors**. Generally *Push factors* are associated with area of origin and *Pull Factors* are associated with the area of destination. To be specific, *push factors* are those which force the individual to move voluntarily from their place of residence due to many reasons. The major push factors are:

- Extreme physical conditions such as hills, mountains.
- Over population

- Mechanization leading to machine labour which replaces human labour
- Pressure on land
- Natural disasters and calamities
- Starvation and hunger deaths due to famine
- Forced eviction due to manmade calamities such as war, disputes
- Lack of services such as schools, hospitals
- Economic and physical insecurity.

Pull factors are those factors in the destination country that attract individual or group to leave their home. These factors are also known as *place utility*, which is the desirability of a place that attracts people. The major pull factors are:

- Better economic opportunities
- Improved and standard quality of life
- Centre that excels in providing higher standards of opportunities
- More reliable food sources and other basic needs.
- Attractive environments such as mountains, seaside and warm climates.
- Social reasons like principles of religious tolerance.

Types of Migration

All forms of human population movements are considered under ‘migration’ or more appropriately ‘population mobility’. Migration is a shift in the place of residence for some length of time and it excludes short visits and tours. It includes different types of voluntary and involuntary movements. Involuntary movements occur under abnormal situation which forces individuals to leave their place for survival. This type of migration includes under crises such as, war, famine, riots and natural disasters like flood, drought and earthquake. Voluntary movements can happens under normal situations as part of people’s earning a livelihood. Generally migration is classified into two; **Internal** and **International Migration**.

Internal Migration refers to migration within the nation-state (Azrael & Zaionchkovskaya, 2001). Generally, internal migration refers to the movement of individuals or population within a social system. According to **United Nations** definition, internal migration is permanent change

in residence from one geographical unit to another within a particular country. It involves both *in-migration* and *out-migration*. In-migration refers to the migration within an area only, while out-migration means migration out of the area. For example, migration from Bihar to Bengal is *in-migration* for Bengal and is *out-migration* for Bihar. The common designation of internal migration includes:

- Rural-Urban
- Rural-Rural
- Urban-Rural
- Urban-Urban

As per 2011 census, there were 21 crore rural-rural migrants which formed 54% of classifiable internal migration. Rural-Urban and Urban-Urban movement accounted for around 8 crore migrants each and there were around 3 crore urban-rural migrants (7% of classifiable internal migration). As of 2011, 70% of intra state migration was due to reasons like marriage and there were variations between male and female migrants. While 83% of females moved for marriage and family, the corresponding figure for males was 39%. Migration in terms of employment was higher among interstate migrants (Kawoosa & Jha, 2019).

Another type of Migration is ***International Migration***. This refers to a migration where a person moves across the nation's borders for futuristic and economic prosperity. It results in a change in legal status of the individual concerned. It is generally defined as the change of person's usual place of residence from one country to another. The United Nations recommended that a time element of at least one year be added to this definition in order to differentiate international migrants from international visitors. International migration mainly deals with two main processes: *Immigration* and *Emigration*. International migration becomes immigration or emigration, depending on how the place of destination or place of origin is considered.

- **Immigration** deals with people who are pulled towards a country. Such people are called immigrants. When people from India move to America they are called as immigrants in USA.
- **Emigration** deals with people who are leaving a country. Such people are called Emigrants.

Today most international migrants can be classified as refugees, labour migrants, institutional migrants (Kritz: 2007).

According to the office of the **United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)**, refugees are people who are “fleeing armed conflict or persecution” and “for whom denial of asylum has potentially deadly consequence”. Refugees leave their home countries because it is dangerous for them to stay.

Labour Migrants include documented and undocumented, semiskilled and unskilled workers and may be temporary contract workers or blue collar labourers (World Migration Report, 2003). They are mainly driven by economic inequalities between countries as workers seek to improve their incomes and conditions that are better than their homelands.

Institutional migrants include highly skilled migrants who are hired or transferred by corporations, governments and other entities to another country for work purposes. Institutional migrations include a number of migrant flows that have increased during the globalization era.

Migration as a social phenomenon

Migration is a social phenomena and a continuous process. The phenomenon of migration has been indispensable to human histories, cultures and civilizations. For example, the connection between religion and migration is a hotly debated issue throughout the history of major religions such as Christianity (e.g. the spread of Catholicism by Portuguese and Spanish during the 11th and 12th centuries), Islam (e.g. the first and second migration during Prophet Mohamed’s time), and Judaism (e.g. the migration of Jewish from Eastern to Western Europe and overseas, and to the United States of America during the 19th century). Religion has been playing an important role in both triggering massive population movements but also in influencing the lives and conditions of migrants in their displacement. Today, the intersection between religion and migration or what is called ‘**transnational religion**’ is at the heart of contemporary migration debates. During 15th-17th century, that is the age of discovery many Europeans, with the Portuguese and Spanish leading the way, undertook maritime travels and explored the Americas, Africa, Asia and Oceania. This transoceanic migration led to the discovery of new lands, the expansion of trade relations and the development of the economies of both the countries of origin and destination. Commercial and strategic factors influenced migration in that period as many

European countries were competing to colonize strategic regions and territories. At the same time, slave trade was introduced in order to tackle labour shortages at various times throughout history, and subsequently abolished in the mid 19th century. A second wave of labour came from Europe, especially England, Spain and Portugal, to what was then called “**the new world**” (i.e. USA, Canada, Australia, and southern Africa). A great wave of migration took place subsequently at worldwide especially at Central Europe after World War 1 when populations resettled after the creation of many new States. All these situations clearly state that migration is a social and global phenomenon. Currently, a large number of individuals migrate in search of a better place, changing regions, countries or even continents. This witnesses the events that transcend the people all around the world, and consider migration that generates economic, social and cultural, but also political profound changes. These major changes require the involvement of the political actors, namely the governments, in creating a favorable and reliable framework so as the society and decision makers to understand that immigrants represent an opportunity for the emerging economies and not a phenomenon that should be criticized.

India has shown an increasing trend in migration for a long period of time. It comprise of both internal and international migration. The total number of internal migrants in India, as per the 2011 census is 45.36 crore that is *37% of the country's population*. This includes inter-state migrants as well as migrants within each state. The reason for migration varies and it is mainly characterized in terms of employment, education, marriage, moving with family and so on. Kerala is one of the states in India, which have witnesses a large scale migration. Until 1971, most Keralites were migrating within India, mostly to emerging cities such as Chennai, Delhi, Mumbai and Bangalore. The main reason for such migration was due to the demand for skilled, educated persons, which Kerala could contribute due to its high literacy rate. Kerala's migration to the Middle East began in the 1970's, as rising oil prices and the economic boom in the gulf nations created the need for overseas labour. Now every fourth Indian in the gulf is a Keralite. Most of the migrants to the gulf were often semi-skilled workers without long-term contracts or visas who made money and came back, though middle-class professionals and business people have also been part of the Diaspora. Non-resident Keralites play an important role in the development of the state. To a great extent it has reduced the poverty among the migrant families. The study shows that nearly 1.5 million Keralites now live outside India. Many of them have come back and they live mostly on the savings, work experience and skills brought with

them from their migrated region. More than a million families depend on internal migrant's earnings for subsistence, children's education and other economic requirements. According to the Inward Remittance surveys conducted by Reserve Bank of India, Kerala accounts for about 19 percent of the inward remittances coming to India. India is the largest remittance receiving country in the world and Kerala indeed the largest remittance receiving state in India (Centre for Development Studies: 2018). These remittances have proved very helpful to smoothen the consumption pattern and have contributed in number of ways to the growth of the economy. At the same time, Kerala population have migrated within different states of India and contributed to the workforce of the country.

Migration always has an effect on population growth of the state. Migration from Kerala always includes more males than females. It has reduced the working age population in the state and consequently increased the proportion of children and elderly. Migration results in postponement of marriage and prolonged post marital separation of couple during the critical phase of life cycle when the couples are more fertile, fertility behavior is bound to be affected negatively (Gulathi: 1993, Zacharia et al 2002 and 2003).The flow of large amount of remittances has resulted to unprecedented economic changes and also led to the generation of more savings to the poor and industrially backward economy of Kerala.

Covid-19 and return migration of Keralites

At present entire world is undergoing a pandemic situation called **Corona Virus Disease** and its outbreak has posed a serious challenge to the entire world including India. At global level, till date (May 10, 2021) it has reported around **15.7crore** as confirmed cases leading to the death of **32 lakh** people, which has affected more than 210 countries and have disrupted the economies. It has created a real damage, both in terms of loss of lives and economic loss, and is expected to be much more than what is being observed at present. Scientists cannot foresee the disease's outcome, the control of it, the duration of the outbreak, or the magnitude of the deaths it might cause. The COVID-19 has led to many current challenges in various areas of society: health; transport; economy; finance; employment and unemployment; price levels; emigration and remittances; the economic situation, etc. Whole India has faced the brunt of the problem to varying degrees. Till date India has reported **12,303,131confirmed cases** of which approximately **11 lakhs** people have been recovered. **163,428 deaths** have taken place in India

due to Covid-19. This pandemic has affected the lives of migrant workers where they are subjected to lose their jobs. The entire world got shattered and shocked at the extent of the disaster. According to the **Centre for Monitoring Indian Economic** (CMIE), India's unemployment rate was 24 percent for the week ended May 17, 2020. The rural unemployment rate was 23%, and the urban unemployment rate was 27%. Various reports from Kerala indicate that COVID-19 was responsible for the unprecedented economic recession of the state. The absence of remedy in the form of vaccine or drug has a great impact on the uneasiness of the world, especially because of the extent of suffering is expected to touch surprisingly high levels though the exact damage will depend on severity, intensity and the duration of the pandemic. Some countries are being appreciated in terms of handling the situation better than any other countries. There can be number of factors that have played a significant role in better management or governance of the crisis situation. New Zealand is one among them where it has become free from Covid-19 cases. The governance of different countries adopts different methods to cope with the pandemic. It provides efficient medical services to the infected people, enforcement of medical advice, ensuring social distancing, sensitizing people about the problem and personal health. . The government of India has been responded to this situation by breaking the chain through initially going for one day *Janata curfew* and thereafter taking the course of complete *lockdown* from March 24. After that some states continued with the lockdown and some withdrew it with certain restrictions. Different states of the country responded to the situation based on the degree of the virus affecting the state.

In order to control the spread of disease, national wide lockdown had been imposed which have affected the lives of people. The disruptions caused during the national lockdown in India were very damaging to state and federal governments. The lockdown has led to an exodus of migrant workers struggling to reach their home states. Government took necessary steps to help the migrants to reach back their home states. Large influx of Kerala people were from Middle East and other countries. The Gulf countries have already began to see the effects of the COVID crises, with oil prices sinking to an all time low. Most sectors will likely incur heavy job losses amid changing domestic policies. The aspect of return migration of Keralites is not a new issue. There are different situations which have subjected for such migration. Iraq-Kuwait invasion in 1990s, the enforcement of the Nitaqat Law in Saudi Arabia and the recessions in Dubai has forced Keralites to come back. The current pandemic situation COVID-19 is another such

situation. The COVID-19 was sudden and unexpected and for the first time in history of migration, the Gulf Malayalees has been forced to return with nothing. The number of return emigrants estimated by Kerala Migration Survey 2018 is 12.95 lakh, about 60 percent of the number of emigrants. This has increased further by the crises caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. Many lose their jobs and they were forced to come back. Some came back to their home and continued their work. A large number of nonresident malayalees have undergone a tremendous experience in course of this. Those who came from foreign countries have undergone a different experience with regard to the issues relating to travel. On the other hand nonresident Keralites within different parts of India have undergone different experience on the return journey to home state. This study tries to understand and explore the experiences undergone by them during Covid-19.

Statement of the Problem

Migration is a global phenomenon which exists over period of time. Migration is the voluntary or forced movement of people from one place to another due to various reasons such as economy, occupation, sustenance, war, riot etc. Many individuals migrate out of choice and many others out of necessity. At present entire world is undergoing a pandemic situation called Corona Virus Disease and its outbreak has posed a serious challenge to the entire world including India. Covid-19 has affected the lives of migrant workers where they are subjected to lose their jobs. In order to control the spread of disease the government of India has been responded to this situation by breaking the chain through initially going for one day *Janata curfew* and thereafter taking the course of complete *lockdown* from March 24, 2020.

The lockdown has led to an exodus of migrant workers struggling to reach their home states. Government took necessary steps to help the migrants to reach back their home states. Large influx of Kerala people came back to Kerala from Middle East and other countries. Many lose their jobs and they were forced to come back. Some came back to their home and continued their work. Nonresident malayalees are one among them. In this context it is necessary to know the difficulties undergone by the non-resident malayalees on their journey back to their home states. Their experiences are subjective which varies from individuals and to their respective families. Experiences and difficulties undergone by nonresident malayalees vary. Those who came from foreign countries have undergone a different experience with regard to the issues relating to

travel like availability of flights, ticket charges and so on. In terms of interstate travel due to the limited access of public transports like train; many were forced to come back by road from different parts of India. The long journey by road has created them many problems. The lockdown brought the public transportation system to a halt and made it impossible for them to cross the state borders on their way to native places. Interstate travel by road could have created problems for different categories in a family, especially for women and children. Problems can be related in terms of health, food, toilet facilities and more over the travel expenditure. In recent times, we have even witnessed the accidents that have taken place to Keralites, in their returned journey to home. At the same time people who came by public transport during this time have undergone a different experience. Once they have reached their home states, they have to stay for quarantine. Returned journey have created tremendous experiences for the nonresident Keralites and it varies.

This study tries to understand and explore the experiences undergone by them during Covid-19. This pandemic situation called Covid-19 has created a lot of difficulties to the entire humanity. In such a context this study helps to understand the issues, experience and problems undergone by a marginalized section called migrants. Here the researcher mainly focuses on nonresident malaylees who returned from other states and countries. On the course of study, it will also focus on the future plan of the respondents.

Significance of the study

The current global pandemic Corona Virus disease (Covid-19) outbreak has posed a very serious challenge to the entire world, including India. In this course of pandemic and lockdown, large section of nonresident Keralites has been forced to come back to their home states. The study is important to understand the tremendous experiences undergone by the family in their return journey during this pandemic situation. But there are no research studies that are available regarding the experiences and challenges faced by the nonresident malayalees in their return journey to their home states for any further references. There are only studies which focused on the issues of migrants in general. It is necessary to address a social problem which needs to take an action. The study tries to explore the problems of the victims and to understand their future plan. Thus this study is exploratory in nature would help as a base for many other studies relating to this topic. This study would also help the future researchers and academicians interested in

this area to get to know the challenges and experiences undergone by a section of people in our own society. Finally, academically it is a relevant sociological study to understand a phase of modern society and the situation it is undergoing.

CHAPTER-2
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A literature review surveys books, scholarly articles and any other sources relevant to a particular issue, area of researcher or theory and by doing so, provides a description, summary and critical evaluation of these works in relation to the research problem being investigated. Literature reviews are designed to provide an overview of sources you have explored while researching a particular topic and to demonstrate to your readers how your research fits within a larger field of study (Fink, 2014).

Rajan had conducted a study on Kerala migration which looked on the trends and possibilities. He led the Kerala Migration Survey 2018 and is a **member of Kerala Government Expert Committee on Covid-19**. In a future projection of Post Covid-19, Kerala stares at the prospect of large scale return migration from the Gulf. Once the lockdown is lifted, Kerala will face a new challenge with the expected return of a large section of Keralites from the Middle East. This throws the spot light on the importance of out-migration in Kerala's economy and raises question about its future. Migration both internal and international has been the single most dynamic factor in the development of Kerala since its formation in 1956. Until 1971, most Keralites were migrating within India, mostly to emerging cities such as Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Bangalore. This was due to the demand for skilled/Educated persons which Kerala contribute due to its high literacy rate. However the trend began to change when Gulf economies open its platform to foreign workforces in 1970 are in the wake of a spike in oil prices. This led to a transition in Kerala migration from internal to International. Initially there was only one international airport in Kerala and continues migration led to the development of four international airports. The people who have migrated have improved their life style of their families. At the same time, Kerala migrants had also been subjected to a widespread return due to external shocks on at least three occasions- **Gulf war, global economic crises and Nitaqat policy of Saudi Arabia**. The top destination is the Gulf region with 89.2 percent of the total emigrants. The U.A.E has remained the favorite destination for Keralites from the beginning. About 1.89 million emigrants live in the Gulf Countries. **Rajan**, at the end of his study makes some predictions with regard to the future of emigration to and return emigration from the Gulf. As of now, Kerala has 1 lakh return emigrants who could not go back due to the closure of airports in the Gulf earlier and in India later. The gulf countries are already beginning to see the

effects of the Covid-19 crises, with oil prices sinking to an all-time low. Most sectors will incur heavy job losses amid changing domestic policies. One more factor also plays a major role. 10 percent of Kerala migrants are undocumented workers. Very recently Kuwait announced amnesty allowing undocumented workers to leave the country without fine. Overall it is a major challenge for the government that has to take into consideration when deliberating over the future of migration from Kerala. As stated in the report of Expert Committee on strategy for easing Lockdown restrictions of Kerala, “A comprehensive Kerala Migration Survey should be undertaken immediately after the normalcy is restored for more effective policy formulation for this category in the State” (Rajan, 2020).

Babu wrote an article which tries to draw insights on the issues faced by the state with regard to the return of Kerala migrants. The weakening of oil prices coupled with the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the oil- dependent economies in the Persian Gulf countries have led to uncertainties, as out of 1.8 million workers from Kerala in West Asia at least 200,00 are desperate to come back home after losing their jobs. The article also tries to show the difficulties undergone by the authorities in planning to repatriate the migrant workers in batches and lodging them in quarantine facilities for a mandatory 14 days. The government worked overtime to create accommodation for these gulf returnees (Babu, 2020).

‘**Caritas India**’ conducted a small study on the distressed situations undergone by migrants during Covid-19. In the study, it shows the travel difficulties undergone by the migrant workers. The lockdown brought the public transportation system to a screeching halt and made it impossible for migrants to cross the state borders on their way to native places. Hundreds of thousands of migrants had to flee their workplaces, some of them walking thousands of kilometers carrying all their belonging as head loads. The return journey however was not free from risks for migrant workers. Hundreds of them died in tragic accidents on their way back homes. Even a Kerala family met with an accident on the way coming back to home state. Many who were walking long distances to their homes died due to scorching heat and acute dehydration. Accidents on roads and railway lines too claimed several more lives. Key findings of the study are as follows:

- 23% of migrants spent more than Rs.5000 on their return journey.
- 16% of migrant workers travelled for 6-10 days to reach home

- 52% migrant workers travelled more than 1000 kilometers to return home.
- 47% of workers didn't have enough to eat during return journey.
- 28% of migrant workers were disallowed from entering villages on their return (Moonjely, 2020).

In the journal '**Reverse Migration Due to Long Lockdown in India- Is it Sustainable?**' focuses on the problems of migrants who came back to their home state due to the pandemic situation called Covid-19 (Joarder, 2020). It highlights different avenues of migration ranging from its origin to the contemporary pandemic situation. The first part of the article focuses on the reasons for rural to urban migration. The people migrate to urban areas due to both push and pull factors. The major push factor attributed here is agriculture. In India agriculture largely depends on monsoon. As a result, production of food-grains fluctuates year after year. Due to the growth of population and breakdown of the joint family system, there has occurred continuous sub-division of agricultural land into smaller and smaller plots. At times small farmers are forced to sell a portion of their land to repay their debt. This creates further sub-division of land. The conditions of most agricultural laborers in India are far from satisfactory. There is also the problem of surplus labour or disguised unemployment. The contribution of agriculture to GDP has declined considerably over the years but this fall was not accompanied by a considerable decline in agricultural employment. As per the NSSO survey, 49% of the workforce was still employed in agriculture in 2011-12. This shift of workforce from agriculture to the other sectors is commensurate with economic progress.

A major reason for the migration from rural to urban area is the wage gap, mainly in terms of the low wages in the rural areas and higher wages in non-farm jobs. Though a significant positive impact of the MGNREGA been observed in boosting rural income and incentives but further stimulus to the programme might significantly help in reducing the migration away from agriculture. Next part of the article focuses on the conditions of migrant workers especially during the Covid-19 period. As per Pradhan (2013) over 50% of the increase in urban population was attributed to rural-urban migration and reclassification of rural settlements into urban. The living conditions of migrants are miserable which forced them to stay in unhygienic living conditions. As per the census data majority of the migrants possess education level below metric/secondary level and as a result they are engaged in low-paying hazardous jobs. Majority are engaged in construction and manufacturing sectors. At the same time their living conditions

are miserable. Migration is expected to improve the socioeconomic status of the households and benefit the region they migrate to but the migrant policies are unfriendly in many parts of the country. This results in extreme poor conditions of the migrants. The migrants though contribute to the economic growth of the state to which they migrate but do not have access to healthcare and social security.

The conditions of migrants during this pandemic situation were not in a good state. Government of India adopted different methods to control the spread of virus and its initial stage was the introduction of national Lockdown. The migrants living in slums were forced to live in congestion and in such a situation the aspect of social distancing is a question mark. The government adopts certain ways to control the pandemic but it's not possible for all sections of the society. This is like two sides of a same coin. Dharavi, one of the biggest slums in Asia with a population density of 277,136/km² has reported about 1028 cases with 40 deaths (as on May 15, 2020). This indicates that lockdown can't be the only remedy for controlling the spread of the virus in a country like India which has huge population density. The number of Covid cases is high in metropolitan cities like Mumbai, Bangalore, Chennai, and Kolkata. The metro cities are also the places with maximum number of migrants, particularly from the rural areas within the state. Last part of the article dealt with reverse migration which happened during Covid-19. The experience faced by the migrants during this lockdown period has forced them to go back to their native and currently they are not willing to return to these urban cities for job. But the question is will it be possible for these workers to make a living in their villages and not return to their earlier place of work. That is highly questionable and employment generation in the rural and adjacent semi-urban area is expected to take time. Majority of the migrants who came back are likely to belong to the group with low education level and insignificant ownership of assets. But these migrants possess some specific skill sets which they have gathered during the period of their stay in the urban cities. Other than construction work, they are observed to work as electricians, plumbers, and drivers and also employed in the hospitality sector. Formal education is not a requirement for non-farm sector but it requires different skill sets. This skill sets can be taken as an opportunity for the development of rural areas. The author concludes it by stating that it takes time and government policies are necessary for the future wellbeing of the migrants (Joarder & Choudhury, 2020)

Vadakepat focuses on the issue of exodus of nonresident Malayalees from UAE back to their native. The United Arab Emirates has witnessed an exodus of long-term non-resident Indians, especially Malayalees, due to unforeseen impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020. The pandemic have created the fear of virus, falling of job and financial insecurity which resulted in the return migration of Nonresident Keralites back to their home state. According to the Kerala Migration survey, 90% of Kerala's Diasporas is in the Gulf, out of which 39% lives in the UAE (World Asia 2014; Database for Business 2020). As nearly a tenth of Kerala's 34.6 million population lives outside India (Premkumar 2020) and the journal explain the causes, benefits, and higher level values that are associated with Malayalee migration to the UAE and their current mass reverse migration from the UAE. In the present state of desperation, UAE-Malayalees' reverse migration will profoundly impact India's economic and demographic structure (Vadakepat, 2020).

As per the 2019 United Nations report, India is one of the leading countries of origin for international migrants with 17.5 million strength Diasporas. Since the mid-1990s, India has ranked as the top recipient of worker remittance (World Bank 2020). NRI remittances are a viable source of development revenue to the nation (Connell and Brown 1995), especially to the state of Kerala (*The Economic Times*, 2020).

In Kerala, the main reasons for the flow of the semi-skilled workforce are unemployment after graduation, relatives' influence, and inspirations to acquire administrative positions (Zachariah, Prakash, and Rajan 2002). The major reasons that motivate unskilled labour migration to the Gulf could be identified as lack of a degree or diploma and its consequences in the home country such as low wage and increasing unemployment, consequent poverty, burdens of dowry systems and heavy marriage expenses, expensive housing loans (*The Economic times*, 2020).

Rajan, focuses on the importance of migration survey and other secondary sources which helped for formulating policies for the welfare of the migrants. It mainly focuses on Kerala Migration Survey and its importance in the current scenario. The article highlights the role of the Kerala Migration Survey (KMS) which has provided data on stocks of emigrants, return emigrants, cost of migration, use of remittances and migration corridors since 1998. The article also shows how the Government of Kerala effectively utilized these kinds of data to manage the spread of the pandemic and its subsequent socio-economic impact on individuals, communities and society and organize policies and programs as well as to prepare for eventual return migrants

for their integration and rehabilitation. Kerala Migration Survey has been replicated in many states of India and should be to be replicated nationwide as an India Migration Survey and globally, given the challenges to come in terms of new emerging trends and patterns of migration in post-pandemic world. Over long period of time migration emerges as the focal point of various economic, social and political debates in many countries around the world (Rajan, 2020).

To understand migration in totality has led to the need for more comprehensive data on migration and which has in the recent past led to the advent of exclusive migration surveys around the world. There have been a good number of large-scale surveys held around the world, whether it to be a country-specific survey or a multi-sited survey over a period of time. It was Kerala who proved a perfect staging ground for India's first large-scale migration survey given its decade's long history with international migration. The Kerala Migration Survey was first held in 1998, was the first large-scale household survey to exclusively focus on the issue of migration in India. Initially held in all 14 districts in Kerala over 10,000 households, the Kerala Migration Survey was the first study to provide reliable estimates of the population of Keralites residing out of India, which at the time was 1.36 million. The study highlighted on the diverse topics such as the quantum of people living abroad, the major destinations and the amount of remittances they sent back home, the utilization of those remittances and the change in social and family structures owing to migration in terms of children, women and elderly (Rajan, 2013). The Kerala Migration Survey has been regarded as the bedrock of many programmes and initiatives of the Government of Kerala, with the state gaining a clear understanding of the issue of migration of its residents. Traditionally Kerala has led the way in initiating Diaspora outreach programmes including the formation of department of Non-Resident Keralite Affairs (NORKA). NORKA is a department of the government of Kerala to redress the grievances of Nonresident Keralites and provides clear information on how many of its residents live outside and where. These migration surveys have led to a more detailed understanding of the migration process and how migration affects people's everyday lives in these places. However, the COVID-19 pandemic crisis has shown another advantage which led to the timely collection of migration because every day we can witness the exodus of migrants back to their home state.

In the last part of the article, the author concludes by focusing on the biggest challenge that is the rehabilitation for migrants who returned to their home state due to the pandemic. While the trend

of return migration was already an ever-increasing one in due to labour market changes in the Gulf economies, the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the trend and the return of migrants has been on an increasing rate day by day.

Purayil gives an overview of the growing trend of gulf migration among Keralites and its changing scenario. He also explains about gulf migration by relating with different types of occupation mainly in terms of skilled and unskilled occupation. Over the years, Kerala has recorded significant changes in the overall numbers, educational levels and job statuses of its Gulf migrants. At one point, almost 50 per cent of migrants to the Gulf regions from India were Malayalees and a vast majority of them being unskilled, manual labourers. Later the number has come down drastically over the years (Srivasta 2017; Prakash 1998). Currently, the states of Utter Pradesh, Bihar, Tamil Nadu and Rajasthan send more migrants to West Asia than Kerala (Duttagupata, 2019). The series of migration surveys conducted since 1998 by the Centre for Development Studies (CDS) records a significant improvement in the educational levels of Kerala emigrants and the nature of their jobs. Currently, **37.8 per cent** of the emigrants hold at least a higher secondary education certificate as their primary qualification, and almost 30 per cent are degree holders (Rajan and Zachariah 2018). While similar data from other leading migrant- sending states are rarely available, the overall trends suggest that Kerala sends more skilled migrants to the Gulf regions than any other state in India. As per ECR (emigration check required) data from the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, the number of unskilled workers migrating to the Gulf countries from Kerala has drastically come down by over 90 per cent – from 1,63,737 in 2008 to 14,496 in 2018 (Duttagupta 2019; e Migrate GOI). Thus, a large section of Kerala migrants is now working in the skilled sector, moreover in professional sectors. While the unskilled sector being dominated by emigrants from northern India and neighboring countries such as Nepal and Bangladesh (The Asian Foundation 2013; Rajan and Saxena 2019).

In the next part of the article, author points out that, over different period of time, migrants including Keralites in Gulf are being subjected to different situations which forced them to return back to their home state. This has become a *culture of Gulf Migration*. Over the years, Malayali emigrants have withstood many storms, including the periodic price fluctuations in the value of oil (such as the 1980s oil glut and the great plunge in oil prices post 2014), wars and domestic turmoil (such as the Iraq-Kuwait war, Arab Spring, Saudi-Yemen conflict and the Qatar

blockade), global economic depression (such as the financial crisis of 2007–2008), the economic nationalization policies such as *Nitaqat*, Emiratisation and *Tanfeedh* which led to the loss of job for many people. Beyond the labour market logic of demand and supply, the social connections nurtured and maintained by the Malayali emigrant community make sure that their economic interests—in the form of jobs and businesses—are generally protected. A social connectedness is being maintained in between the regions and also among other migrants in order to protect their personal interests. One of the resident's says that, "*The Keralites know the ins and outs of the Gulf. After having been here for many years, we know the pulse of this region. Even if we lose our jobs, it would not be that difficult to find decent work here. You will get help from someone. That's how it works. Gulf Malayalis have a strong sense of solidarity.*"

The Keralites have successfully built and maintained a strong network base through multiple forms of interactions and reciprocal engagements between migrants and return migrants. The recent pandemic situation Covid-19 has led to the return migration of Keralites back to their home state. This return migration varies between the people working in different categories of job sectors. The people working in professional sector with high income are not much affected when compared with people working in informal sector. But there are cases where former have also been affected by this pandemic situation. Rajan argues that on the onset of COVID-19, around 5,00,000 emigrants have registered with the NORKA-ROOTS portal to come back, it should be read as a panic-reaction in the wake of the pandemic (Ethiraj 2020). In fact, based on his yearly estimate of 'Gulf-return' migrants to Kerala, Rajan claims that only up to 3, 00,000 would be returning (Rajan 2020). Among them, one-third would have come back even in normal circumstances (Rajeev 2020). Additionally, the total number would also consist of many who have visited the Gulf States on a visit visa (or free visa as it is known in Kerala) to find jobs. Since many Gulf States have announced amnesty to undocumented migrants, the returning migrants would also consist of visa defaulters and illegal migrants. Professor Rajan centers his predictions based on the migration trends he has been observing and documenting as part of the periodic Kerala Migration Surveys for more than two decades. Pandemic and the uncertainties can undoubtedly challenge the status quo, a mass exodus of Malayali emigrants and the subsequent downfall of Kerala's 'Gulf dream' (Purayil, 2020).

Srivasta, in his recent article focused on breaking the stereotype that exists over period of time. That is, generally it's assumed as people from Kerala and Andhra Pradesh immigrate to Gulf

countries in more number. Recent statistics breaks this stereotype. In the last two years, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Bihar, West Bengal Punjab and Rajasthan have been the top six states sending people to the Gulf. In this period, emigration from India is increased by 24% (Srivatsa, 2017).

NORKA and other agencies have reported a significant number of emigrants to Kerala. As of May 3, 2020, the total number of international students registered, including refugees, their dependents and short-time tourists, students and so on, was 4,13 Lakh. It also includes a cumulative number of emigrants who have lost jobs, 41,236 who have visited visas, 27,100 who have expired visas, or revoked visas. Keralite immigrants have to go back to Kerala because the number of Keralite deaths due to COVID-19 (186 ending June 6, 2020), shortage of medical facilities, lack of hospital beds to admit pain to COVID-19, failure in private health care facilities to receive expensive treatment, lack of room and quarantine facilities in labour camps, etc. The drop in crude oil prices to a low level at all times and the economic shutdown triggered by the lockdown in the Gulf countries contributed to a significant loss of jobs. However, conditions are supposed to change until the lockout is eliminated. During the COVID-19 crisis in the Gulf, two to three lakh migrant workers are expected to lose employment and return to Kerala (Sreejith, 2021)

A report published by **Migration Policy institute**, highlighted the general view of return migration and the difficulties undergone by them during the pandemic situation called COVID-19. Because of COVID-19 and the closure of the many destination countries' economies and borders, an unprecedented number of migrants returned to their origin countries in just a few months. This sudden, large-scale return migration, along with the rapid increase in the number of migrants stranded abroad, constituted major disruptions to international migration (Kathleen & Coz, 2021). Three major trends were noted in the return migration due to COVID-19 crises;

- Large Scale Migrants
- Stranded Migrants
- Forced Returns

Large Scale Migrants: From the beginning of the pandemic to October 2020, India assisted more than 600,000 migrants in coming home. Between March and July, more than 100,000 Cambodian migrants returned from Thailand. In April, thousands of Zimbabweans crossed the

border from South Africa and in Latin America, more than 110,000 Venezuelans had returned from Colombia as of October. Comparable trends could be observed in high-income countries as well; in Europe, for example, the pandemic and border closures drove tens of thousands of migrants to return to Eastern Europe (Kathleen & Coz, 2021). Sudden return migrants to home states created difficulties for the government to accommodate and arrange required medical facilities for them.

Stranded Migrants: On the onset of large-scale returns and on other hand an even greater number of migrants have been unable to go home, despite deteriorating conditions in abroad. In mid-May 2020, International Organization for Migration (IOM) estimated that more than 200,000 Indian migrants were stranded in the United Arab Emirates alone, along with more than 60,000 Pakistani workers. In July; IOM estimated the number of stranded migrants worldwide at 2.75 million. This magnitude had created a range of new challenges for international cooperation among border authorities around the world. The migrants who don't have necessary documents are largely affected because of this crisis. They are unable to come forward for assistance with the fear of getting defamed. The situation has proved particularly challenging for migrants who did not have legal status prior to the crisis. Some countries announced amnesties for unauthorized immigrant workers (as Kuwait did for Nepalese workers), waived overstay fines, and paid for return tickets.

Forced returns: The third major disruption brought by the global health crisis was the suspension of forced returns from several countries, with travel restrictions interrupting air travel and origin countries pleading for a moratorium on deportations (Kathleen & Coz, 2021). Loss of job, anxiety, and many other factors has forced the people to return back to their home country. Not all states agreed to suspend forced returns in the first place, despite many calls urging them to do so for public-health reasons, including a formal statement from the UN Migration Network. Among high-income countries, only a few, including the United States, Sweden, and Saudi Arabia, carried out deportations during this period. Several low- and middle-income countries also continued to forcibly return unauthorized migrants, generating diplomatic tensions as well as aggravating health risks for migrants and border communities

Later part of the report dealt with how states finds difficult to accommodate the return migrates to their country. Returning migrants have also encountered more difficulties than usual in

accessing health services, given the strain on health-care systems in many countries. Few places were as prepared as the Indian state of Kerala, which, with a comparatively decentralized and robust health-care system, prepared quarantine facilities for returning migrants and prepared around 250,000 hospital beds. In the history, this is first time, where globally people migrate to their home country at same period.

Choolayil & Putran in their recent study offers a cross-sectional exploration of the COVID-19 containment strategy in Kerala. Continuous return of migrants to Kerala had increased the cases of Covid cases. This necessitated the government of Kerala to control the wide spread of the diseases. People were instructed to undergo quarantine for a time period and similar kind of confinement strategies were being adopted by the government. Across the globe, the transmission pattern of this particular pandemic implicates the interlinked nature of the global and the local through various forms of migration and travel as a major risk factor. There were, however, other elements that had a critical negative impact. Due to COVID-19 spread, Indian migrant labourers working in the Middle East were often deprived of medical care and sometimes even basic needs. Suffering job losses, pay cuts, risky crowded accommodations and poor treatment facilities during the pandemic (Amnesty International, 2020), many migrant labourers became desperate to return home. This resulted to a large -scale return migration to India, with Kerala receiving the highest number of repatriated citizens. Since Kerala has a population density of 859/sq. km, more than twice the national average, and has the highest number of emigrants in India (Rajan, 2014), local healthcare systems which could earlier effectively manage the low number of infections were now overwhelmed by this sudden large influx of citizens from overseas, which also forced the state to relax its containment and isolation strategies. This soon led to rising numbers of cases that were undiagnosed or discovered late. Through such carriers, the state then gradually slipped into the community-level transmission stage which is a huge risk for the government. The initial cases reported were all expatriates, but gradually, the clusters of infected persons expanded to people who came into contact with these expatriates, and, later on, this escalated to community transmission. This situation underlines how the global and the local are inextricably intertwined in ways other than the economy and shows that this connectedness of the global and the local necessitates more robust ethical benchmarks in need of humanitarian and medical emergency. Better treatment, not only in the host nations but also within some parts of India itself, could have avoided panic among migrant

labourers, resulting in lower returnee rates, which could have prevented local pandemic control measures in Kerala from being overwhelmed.

Kerala's approach could be considered much more effective when compared to other Indian states. As reported by the *New York Times*, the number of positive cases per 100,000 people in Kerala was as low as 297 on 11 September 2020, leaving Kerala in 20th rank in India in the number of cases per million. Despite conducting many more tests per million people than the national average (*The Wire*, 2020); the relatively low infection numbers in Kerala reflect the effectiveness of the state's model, even in an escalated situation. If there had not been such large numbers of returning expatriates, the situation would have been much better. This observation, too, confirms that the effectiveness of transmission control in Kerala is fatally interlinked with parallel efforts of infection control in the Middle East and Europe, which were less effective than local processes in Kerala. These connections further point to global impacts on local developments, ruining in this case the earlier achievements of infection control in Kerala. Such linkages not only involve migration but also evidently concern economic factors (Choolayil & Putran, 2021).

From the above literature, we get a clear picture about Migration, its types, factors leading to migration and its global statistics. We were able to know that migration is an ongoing social-global phenomenon. Kerala is one of the states in India, which shows a growing trend in migration. It includes both internal and international migration. In this course of pandemic and lockdown, large section of nonresident Keralites has been forced to come back to their home states. The study is important to understand the tremendous experiences undergone by the family in their return journey during this pandemic situation. But there are no research studies that are available regarding the experiences and challenges faced by the nonresident malayalees in their return journey to their home states for any further references. There are only studies which focused on the issues of migrants in general. This is the main research gap and the researcher through this research wants to focus on the experiences and difficulties undergone by the nonresident Keralites on their return journey to Kerala. Thereby it will be focusing on different aspects including the expectations about future of the respondents

CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

According to Alen Bryman (2012), a **Research method** is simply a technique for collecting data. It can involve a specific instrument, such as a self- completion questionnaire or a structured interview schedule, or participant observation whereby the researcher listens to and watches others.

The research design has three possible methodologies and that is quantitative, mixed method and qualitative. The quantitative methodology tends to have a more deductive approach and frequently aims to test what the theory says using a number of factual information items, whereas qualitative methodology is more likely to generate theory rather than to test any existing one (Greener, 2008). Creswell (2003) mentioned that qualitative researchers often rely on the methods of gathering information like structured interviews, semi-structured interviews, participant observation, non-participant observation, field notes or reflexive journals.

The researcher is employing a qualitative research methodology for this study.

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

The experiences of Nonresident Malayalees on their return journey to Kerala during Covid-19 period are very subjective to each of them and it is different from one person to another. The way each of them perceives their situation is unique to each person. Therefore, the best way to understand and capture their experiences, difficulties undergone by them, a qualitative study is preferred by the researcher.

TITLE: Return migration of Non Resident Malayalees to Kerala: A study during Covid-19 period.

General Research Question

What are the experiences undergone by the Non Resident Malayalees on their return journey to home during Covid-19?

Specific research questions

- **What are the difficulties undergone by different categories within the family (intra family) during their travel to the home state?**

- **What are the major reasons which made them to come back to their home state?**
- **What all procedures and instructions were given to them after reaching their home state?**
- **What is their future plan for living?**

RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Alen Bryman (2012), a research design provides a framework for the collection and analysis of data. A choice of research design reflects decisions about the priority being given to a range of dimensions of the research process.

For this study, the researcher has used a **Case study design**. Case study design is a method of studying social phenomena through the thorough analysis of an individual case. The case may be a person, a group, a process, an episode, a community, a society, or any other unit of social life. It provides an opportunity for the intensive analysis of many specific details that are often overlooked by other methods. The case study research is concerned with the complexity and particular nature of the case in question.

This study demands an in-depth analysis of the cases for a better understanding and to capture the rich and subjective essence of the cases. It will bring out the experiences and perceptions of the individuals under study. The researcher is trying to understand the experiences of Nonresident Malayalees on their return journey to Kerala during Covid-19 period. Each individual's experiences and difficulties undergone by them are unique and there are multiple factors and reasons that influence people to come back to their home state. Therefore the researcher is trying to develop knowledge about these factors.

CASE SELECTION PROCESS

Return migration of Nonresident Malayalees was a serious issue on Kerala society on the outbreak of Covid-19. The researcher identified the cases through convenient sampling. The researcher knows 2 families and with the help of them he identified the other cases.

TOOL FOR DATA COLLECTION

The researcher used an interview guide for the data collection purpose. The research progressed during the course of the interview leading to the collection of detailed information from each case. The researcher spent an average of half an hour with each case for collecting the data.

Data Collection

Data collection during this Covid period was a major task for the respondent and was the major limitation for the study. The data was collected by the researcher through telephonic interview method. The interviews were recorded using voice recorder of the phone. In few cases, the researcher requested the respondents to give the phone to their family members and they were also interviewed. It helped the researcher to get a complete picture of the family and understand the difficulties undergone by them. The interviews were fruitful and raw and the researcher was able to collect very subjective and personal data from the cases.

Primary data

Primary data was collected using an interview guide. The researcher enquired about the areas relating to the research questions and collected rich and subjective data from the subjects. Researcher used the voice recorder of the phone to capture the interview.

Secondary Data

Secondary data was collected from books, journals, websites and newspaper articles.

CHAPTER 4
CASE PRESENTATIONS

Case -1

Name: Family Y

The respondent 'Y' aged 40 years has been residing in Qatar along with his family for last 10 years. The family comprise of wife aged 36 years and a daughter of age 11. The respondent is a native from Thachampara of Palakkad district and wife hails from Ernakulam. The respondent worked as an assistant purchaser for Safari group functioning at Qatar. The respondent was an assistant purchaser cum mediator who purchases goods for the company. The respondent joined in this company at the age of 30, soon after his studies. The respondent is a MBA graduate. Wife is not working and daughter is studying in 6th STD at MES Indian School, Qatar.

The respondent said “everything was going smoothly, until the outbreak of Covid-19. My main job is to meet the companies directly and purchase the goods at low cost for my company. Safari group is a MNC, which has hypermarket, and electronic shops throughout Qatar. We were staying in a rented apartment. I was fully satisfied with the job and everything was fine”. On the outbreak of Covid-19, Qatar had not declared a complete lockdown like other countries. If anyone was tested positive, they will be isolated in a big tent which is considered as a ward. Educational institutions were closed down. The whole Qatar economy was badly affected during the pandemic situation called Covid-19. Even though complete lockdown was not imposed, but people were anxious about to go out. Despite the time of uncertainties, mainly two industries were not much affected; that is Hypermarkets and hotels. The common factor between these two institutions was delivery of items at the door step. As people were anxious to go out, but on the other hand they got the provisions at the door step. Although over the course of time, Qatar had to face difficulties in terms of shortage of food items. The respondent narrated a clear picture of Qatar during the pandemic situation. Later restrictions were imposed in terms of travel. Travel to the companies was the main task of the respondent. But this situation restricted such travel. The other companies didn't allow the purchaser to meet them due to the fear of this situation. The respondent's company started to face economic uncertainties. In such scenario, the company started to terminate its employees. The respondent Y was one among them. The company firstly asked the family to go back to their home state. It was a decision taken by the company. The respondent got the termination on March last week. The termination of the job created difficulty for the family. Then they decided to leave the place, which includes lots of formalities like

getting TC from the school, vacating the apartment and so on. Finally the respondent decided to move away from there. At the initial time of Covid-19, globally whole flight services got cancelled. The respondent and his family got stuck and had to stay there for another two months.

On the course of time, they decided to pack their things with the hope that flight services will be resumed soon and with a mindset of not coming back. It was not a usual situation of leaving just like going for a leave. The packing the whole things was a big task for the family, because such a situation was not anticipated. The respondent says, “As our life was so smooth, we didn’t expect such a situation and before this situation we brought many new household items. But when this pandemic occurred unexpectedly, it was a real shock and packing whole items was a hectic task. There were no workers to help us and moreover, due to the fear of Covid, we didn’t encourage outsiders to help us. As we have a small child, it was not safe to allow outsiders to get into our home. So wife and myself packed everything and it took almost one month for the same”. On the month of April, the family was fully engaged in terms of packing their luggage and also getting TC from their daughter’s school.

On May 7th, 2020, **Vande Bharat Mission** was introduced where flight services was resumed. The respondent’s passport was already with the company and he gave his families passport to the company. The officials from the company visited the passport office to get the Exit Visa. Simultaneously the respondent applied for Vande Bharat Mission through the official website of the Ministry of External Affairs in association with the Indian Embassy. After applying Indian embassy will mail you the details with regard to the availability of flights. But there was a huge delay for its confirmation because first preferences were given to elderly people and disease affected ones. There was a huge delay for it confirmation. The family couldn’t get its approval in the first phase of Vande Bharat Mission. This delay created financial difficulties for the family mainly in terms of house rent. The family had to pay the rent for their apartment with all things gets packed. The second phase of Vande Bharat started on May 17, 2020 and finally his application got approved. But this time, it got approved only to his wife and daughter. The respondent again approached the Embassy to enquire about the confirmation. But there was no response. Then it was decided that let the wife and daughter leave the place first. At the same time, the respondent approached a private cargo company to travel their commodities to their home town. The cargo company charged 5000 Riyal per container. The respondent had a

luggage which occupied full container. It cost round RS.1, 05,000 for shipment alone. After one week of time, the exit visa of the wife and daughter got approved and their flight was on May 27. The sad part was that it was not a direct flight rather a transit. The transit was from Qatar to Bahrain and to Bombay and to Kannur.

The flight was scheduled at 12:30 am on May 27. They have to report at the airport three hours before the departure for check in purpose. On the way to airport, there was heavy checking where they have to show their Exit Visa, Covid-19 negative certificate. The respondent dropped his wife and daughter at the airport by 10 pm. The wife said, “Once we reached airport, it was a long procedure for check in, because we had to follow Covid protocols. As we had the relevant documents like Exit visa, Covid-19 negative certificate, there was no much issue. But the flight got delayed, where it departure only by 1:30 am instead of 12:30 am”. The wife and daughter reached Bahrain within one hour. The real difficulty starts from there. They missed the connection flight due to the delay of flight from Qatar. This created difficulty for the wife and the other passengers. The daughter was so sleepy and was restless. The airport officials assured them to arrange flights and they were made to settle in lobby. All the passengers were instructed to maintain social distance and seating arrangement was made in such a way. The wife says, “Usually in transit they will be provided with free food and accommodation. But they didn’t provide us anything due to this pandemic situation and were settled in lobby. The daughter was so sleepy, restless and we were hungry. There were limited restaurants at the airport and others were closed down. We had only Qatar Riyal and not Bahrain Dinar. So the main task was to get the exchange. There was a huge queue at the exchange counter. My daughter was so restless and she didn’t stay at lobby alone, when I went to the exchange counter. She came along with me and stands in the queue. She started to scream which created difficulty. It took almost one hour at the exchange counter”. After that they bought food. They waited at the lobby for 5 hours for their flight. This whole situation created a hectic feeling for the wife, daughter and for other passengers. Their transit flight arrived only by 8 am and got departure by 9 Am. The next transit was at Mumbai. They reached Mumbai at 1pm. In Mumbai transit, they were provided with free food, which was a great relief for the wife, daughter and other passengers. They had to wait there for two hours to get their next connection flight. Here they didn’t face much difficulties and started from there by 3:30pm. They landed at Kochi International Airport by 5:45pm. Once they landed, officials from the health department collected their details from the airport. The wife

chose for an institutional quarantine. The wife said, “I chose for an institutional quarantine, because in my native place, there are aged parents, where I don’t want to risk their life. They provided us accommodation for quarantine in a hotel near to the airport. The whole journey was so hectic where myself and daughter felt so tired. Once we reached the room, it was great relief for both of us”. The daughter was so tired and was having a slight fever. It was due to the hectic travel. The tiredness was the main health issues faced by both of them. They had to undergo a paid institutional quarantine for 28 days. After 28 days, with accompany of health officials, both of them went for the test and it was negative. After the result was negative, the wife and daughter went to home on June 26. After reaching home, they again had undergone quarantine for 7 days as self precaution. The whole quarantine expense was Rs 40,000.

This was the experience of the wife. On the other side, the husband after dropping the wife reached home and was looking for his confirmation on the availability of flights. The third phase of Vande Bharat Mission began on June. Again with the same proceedings done before, he applied for it. After one week he got the confirmation from them through Indian embassy. Immediately after getting the confirmation, he contacted the cargo company to collect the commodities from his home. During that time only workers entered to the house to collect the commodities. The flight was scheduled on June 26 by 12:30 am. On the course of time he settled the payments of the cargo and the rent of his apartment. He vacated his apartment and his friend dropped him at the airport on June 25, by 10 pm. There were no much difficulties with regard to the documents, but it took long time for check in due to Covid protocols. The flight departure at right time and there was no much delay. The connection flight was from Qatar to Mumbai and to Kannur. The respondent reached Mumbai by 3:30 am. There was a delay of one hour for the next connecting flight to Kannur. Respondents and other passengers were made settle at lobby and were provided with food. The flight departure from Mumbai by 5A.M and reached at Kannur International Airport by 7: 30 am. It took long time at the airport to finish the procedures with the health officials. The respondent has to provide all the necessary information about their location and he chose for an institutional quarantine. After one hour by completing whole procedure, he travelled back to his native place. A taxi was arranged for the respondent to Palakkad. It was a 6 hours journey which cost around Rs 9000 for the taxi charge alone and it was met by the respondent. Then he reached at Thachampara, his native place and has to undergone a paid institutional quarantine for 28 days. The respondent said, “The 6 hours of

travel in taxi and also the flight journey made me so tired and once I reached room, took full rest. I felt slight fever during my quarantine days and informed the health officials. Then they gave me some medicines as precaution. After 28 days, the health officials took me to do the test and was tested negative”. The whole quarantine expense was Rs 32000. On July 25 he went to his home where his parents and elder brother and family were staying. During his quarantine time the respondent’s commodities has reached at Palakkad. After the quarantine he went to Palakkad and settles the remaining payment and directed them to load it in his house. The commodities were loaded at an old shed near to his ancestral home. Then the respondent went to Ernakulam to his wife’s house to collect them.

At present the respondent and his wife with daughter is staying with respondent’s parents at his native place. The respondent says, “Future living is a question mark, and I have to do something. This pandemic situation has created a hectic experience with regard to the return travel. Moreover it has incurred a huge expense for me. For the flight alone, I had to pay around 24000, and for Cargo it cost 1, 05,000 and quarantine expenses was another one. The whole return travel was expensive (laughing). A kind of discomfort is experienced now because of jobless where I had a good job in past. Our house construction got stuck due to this situation and I have to complete it, which is my dream. My wife is in search of job, but this pandemic restricts her for the same and at the same time she wants to look after our daughter, where she doesn’t want to give burden to my parents. I want to admit my daughter to a new school. At present she is not admitted anywhere. So there are lots of plans in my mind which I have to fulfill for my family. I am looking for an alternative and if I get chance, still I am ready to go out”.

Case 2

NAME: Family X

X is a 37 year lady and her family had been residing in Mumbai for last 12 years. The family comprise of 4 members- Husband of age 42 and two children- one boy and girl. Their age is 11 and 7 respectively. The family hails from Calicut and they have been settled in Mumbai for work purpose. X worked as a guest faculty in an aided college in Mumbai and her husband is working in an Oil company as a service manager. At the initial stage of Lockdown, entire economy was affected and all institutions were closed down. Educational institutions were one among them. On this scenario the educational institution in which the respondent was working have to terminate its guest faculties and as a result the respondent 'X' lost her job. Initial time of Covid-19 the family had a difficult time at the place of their residence due to the increase in Covid-19 cases. If any case is being reported, their housing area will be closed for the time being. Huge restrictions were imposed in terms of access and going out for the purchase of essential commodities and grocery. Home delivery was only relief for them. So initial time, they had to face lot of difficulties. Later husband's company was closed down and instructed the employees to work from home.

On this scenario, the family found difficult to stay there during this pandemic situation and necessitates them to go back to their home state. The respondent says, "The situation was like a complete restriction where we have to confine in our own home. We had a neighborhood of around 10 Kerala families and we had discussion around this situation". Finally they thought of moving from there and to go to their native places. They decided to travel by road through car because at that time the services of flights and train were not being restored. Five families were ready for the journey. The main task was to get the travel pass. In the beginning they have to face a lot of difficulties to get the travel pass. They registered in NORKA (Non-Resident Keralites Affairs) which is a department of the government of Kerala to redress the grievances of Nonresident Keralites. It took lot of time because first preferences were given to those who went to other states for medical treatment and residents of other states who seek to get specialist treatment in Kerala. In the website they entered the basic details and have to provide the address and ward number of the house where you will be quarantined for 14 days. The wife says, "Within 24 hours, a health care member from our ward contacted us and asked whether our

home in Kerala meets the requirement for quarantine. They asked our ward member's name also". Once the Kerala pass is approved, then only they can apply for Maharashtra exit and Karnataka transit pass. The travel date and time should match for both. So it was a long procedure and once the pass is being issued the information will be passed to the respective panchayat, then only they can arrange quarantine for the people. The respondent got Kerala pass within two days. After getting Kerala pass, they register for Maharashtra exit pass and Karnataka transit pass through **NORKA Website**. They have to enter the details of Kerala pass along with their scheduled date of expected journey. There was a delay for getting these two passes. After 2 weeks they could acquired travel pass which comprise of three- **Maharashtra Exit Pass, Karnataka Transit Pass and Kerala Entry Pass**. After acquiring the pass, before the journey, the family had done IRTPCR test and was tested negative. The journey was schedule on May 7, 2020.

The current family along with other five families started their journey in five cars each which includes a total of 18 members on May 7 2020. They started their journey from morning 5 am. The entire duration of the travel was 30 hours and it was a one stretch travel. In between there were no hotel facilities for accommodation and toilet. This was a difficult task for the entire families. The respondent says, "We rely on petrol pumps for toilet facilities and halt in our own car for sleeping. The availability of the toilet was the main issue for us. As there were total of 5 women including children, we depend on petrol pumps for toilet facilities and in some places it was not so clean. We were so precautious about this pandemic and carried food of our own for the entire travel. In between we stopped our car in a lonely place to have our food". As they had correct travel passes, there were no much issues at the border. When they reached at Maharashtra Check post, as we had Kerala entry pass, they instructed us to stand in the second line. Only problem was that, it took long time at check post for checking, as there were lots of vehicles. One main issues faced by the family was that their Fastag was not activated which forced them to pay huge money at tolls. The husband says, "Before the journey we had activated our fastag, but when we reached the toll, it was showing as insufficient balance. As it was a toll, we were not in a situation to argue with them. We paid the money and after that we informed the customer care and raised our complaint. The problem got resolved only after a week which forced as to pay money for the toll". This was the main burden for the family. They didn't expect this situation. The family quoted "we were so precautious of this situation, so that after handing

over the money in each toll, we used to sanitize our hands”. They have paid around Rs 7000 for tolls alone. Travel expense was a major expense for the family in this course of travel. On the course of travel none of them experienced any major health issues rather they were so tired. They reached at Calicut on May 8, evening 4 pm. The husband says, “When we decided for this journey, I was so enthusiastic to drive. Even though it was hectic task during this situation because it’s not like normal travel, where there was no hotel and restaurants. More over we have to carry our own food, which was a main task for my wife. We also had to carry emergency things while travelling. We had to incur huge travel expense; especially the issue of fastag was really unexpected. At the beginning despite of this situation, children were thrilled. But over continuous travel, my wife and children became so tired. Children became more restless due to the one stretch travel. The main task was to find a suitable place to park our car for sleep and early morning to find a petrol pump for toilet facilities. As it was a one stretch travel, without any halting facilities, I was so tired. In normal case one stretch travel was not possible, but this lockdown situation necessitated traveling for the same. Once we reached our home, we took complete rest. Myself and wife had a body pain for 2 days”.

Once they reached at Kerala-Karnataka border, they had to face lots of procedures. The wife says, “At the check post, we had to get out from the car and report in person to the officials at the check post. We have to carry our Kerala pass and remember the address of the taluk given in the form. When we reached, there were around 20 people across three to four counters. The officials have face shields and masks and a glass partition between us and them. They will ask for our name, Taluk and phone number. We also have to hold up our form against the glass partition and undergo a temperature check. So it’s important to be fully prepared with disposable gloves and a mask. After that they will hand over another pass through a circular hole in the glass partition. Once that process is over, we disposed the gloves immediately and sanitizes our hands. Soon after the check post, there will be another police checking. Here fire force department will disinfect every vehicle to ensure safety. This took long time, because there was large number of vehicles in the queue. They will ask for the pass that we received, verify it and we are allowed to go. During this entire process, children became so restless, as they had to stand for the long queue”.

Once they reached their home, they informed their health inspector and undergone quarantine for two weeks. The family stayed near respondent’s native parent’s house where no one was

staying there. So availability of food was not a great issue. They didn't face much difficulty in terms of stigmatization from their family members and neighbors. There was stigmatization from the Husband's neighbor side, which forced them to stay at the native place of his wife. This stigmatization from Husband's native place shows the anxiety of the people in this pandemic situation. The family was happy once they reach their home state and they had feeling that it's our home and problems won't be there from their neighbor side. After 2 weeks, they informed the health inspector and went for the test. It was tested as negative. When they completed the quarantine, they requested for a quarantine completion pass from NORKA website. They got it within 2 days. At present husband is working from home and children have online classes. They are living in the same house, where they stayed for quarantine.

In this case, in terms of livelihood this family is self sufficient because they are able to continue their work. The respondent that is the wife lost her job due to this pandemic situation. At present the respondent is not looking for another job. She is busy looking after the household chores and the children. They have not yet decided to go back to Mumbai. X said "if schools are reopened, we might be going back, but at present we have not decided anything regarding the return to Mumbai. Anyways we have to go there, when situation becomes normal, because we have lots of commitments". This family had to face a hectic travel experience on the course of Covid-19 with regard to get travel pass, toilet facilities, accommodation and so on. They are with a hope to go back when the situation becomes normal.

Case 3

Name: Family Z

Z aged 54 years has been residing in Qatar for last 15 years. Z has a wife living with him and his son is pursuing degree first year at his native town Perinthalmanna, Malapuram district. The wife has been staying with him in Qatar for 3 years. Z was working in a construction company under marketing wing. The respondent has been working in this company for 7 years and before that he has done many jobs in Qatar. It was a company with 1000 employees, but due to Covid-19 company didn't have much work and business which led to the termination of employees. Z was one among them. Now the company has only less than 100 employees. This necessitated Z and his wife to come back to their home state. As they were staying in the company rented apartment, they informed the company and prepared themselves to vacate it. At the initial time of Covid-19, the respondent booked the ticket to go to his native place. But very next day, globally whole flight services got cancelled. The respondent got stuck and had to stay there. The main difficulty faced by them was the availability of flights. They informed the company and got the permission to stay in the apartment till the flights get resumed. In such a pandemic, the respondent was not in a situation to search for another apartment. The flight service got restored only on May. 'Z' came back to Kerala only on September, due to delay in flights. Till September, the livelihood of the respondent and his family was a question mark. The wife says, "It was so hard to stay there during this pandemic situation. We got the groceries from the nearby super markets and we managed to stay. But huge restrictions were imposed to go out. So we stayed inside our apartment and were thinking about when we can leave this place. One positive aspect was that company took after us when we were in need of help".

On April last week the wife suffered from severe fever and he informed his company HR about this. Then she underwent the test and it was tested negative. The husband said that his wife was so tensed about this situation and that might be the reason for this fever. The wife was so anxious about this situation and she wants to reach her home as soon as possible.

The family had to undergo a miserable time to get the flight. When government introduced Vande Bharat Mission on May and Z registered for it through the official website of the Ministry of External Affairs in association with the Indian Embassy. Here they provided their details,

priorities and reasons for the travel. In the column for reason they typed it as loss of job, and the dates they are looking forward for travel. After that Indian Embassy will send them mail for the confirmation. But there was no quick reply with regard to its confirmation. The respondent had to wait for two months for the final reply and confirmation. The respondent frequently checked the mail for the same. He even decided to visit the embassy in order to enquire about this. But due to Covid protocols, restrictions were imposed in terms of access and directly it was not possible to enter the embassy. Then they applied with the same proceedings for the 2nd and 3rd phase of Vande Bharat. But there was no response. The family had to stay there till the confirmation and had to pay rent. They were helpless and frustrated in this situation and were forced to stay there. All these made them to go back immediately to their home and could not handled the situation.

After 2 months that is on July, fourth phase of Vande Bharat was started and they got the confirmation. Again they have to wait for another one month for the final fly. In that time period, the company officials collected the passport of the wife. The respondent's passport was already with the company. The company officials got the exit visa for them. Before the journey, they have done the RTPCR test also and was tested negative before their journey. So till September the family resided at Qatar. Their journey was scheduled on September 15, 11: 30 pm. The flight charge was taken by the company. They reported at the airport by 8:30 pm. It took long time for check in process because there was long queue. The officials took more time for each passenger. This long procedure created giddiness for the wife, as she was not so well. As they had the right documents, there were not many issues with regard to this. The family reached at Kannur airport by 4 am in the morning. Once the family reached at Kannur airport, there was lot of procedures where they have to meet the health department officials at the airport. They have to fill a form issued by health department, where they have to fill the home details including the ward number, ward member's name. The family chose for home quarantine and gave the number of the health inspector of their area. They were asked to report at their native Angadipuram Panchayat at Perinthalmanna Taluk. It took around one hour to complete the entire procedure. It was early morning and there was no taxi to their area during that time. They were asked to wait at the airport, till the taxi was arranged to them. The wife was already tired and the family waited for three hours at the airport. Finally by 8 am taxi was made available and they started their journey. It took around 4 hours travel from Kannur to Perinthalmanna town and another 15 minutes to their

Panchayat Angadipuram. Once they reached their native place, they immediately called the health official as per the direction from the airport. It is from the panchayat, they are directed for Quarantine. The health officials came and instructed them to undergo quarantine for a period of 28 days. The journey from Kannur to Perinthalmanna around 4 hours travel after the flight journey was hectic which cost around Rs 7000. Prior to their journey, the respondent had made arrangement to clean the house. Once they reached home, they took complete rest. In the quarantine period, the food was prepared by them and they successfully completed their quarantine period.

In this case Z is an example for joblessness that lost his job due to Covid-19 which forced him to return to his home state. Future living is a question mark and only he has a savings which he had acquired of his 15 years of living in the Qatar. The respondents say, “Only thing I have done is that I have constructed a home in my native, while I was working in Qatar. This was a great relief. At present future living is a question mark. The most difficult thing is the continuous enquiry from neighbors and relatives about my future plan. This creates difficulty. I have little savings and have to do something. At the moment I have not decided to go back, and planned to settle here. Let’s see.”

Case 4

Name: Family C

The respondent 'C' aged 45 years resides at Perambur, in the Chennai district along with his wife and children. The age of wife is 40 and the age of daughter is 15 and 12 for his son. They have been residing at Perambur for two years. The respondent has a diploma in Mechanics. He had worked in Dubai for 6years, doing many jobs related to the mechanical field. He went to Dubai by taking loans from his friends and relatives. But he could not survive for long time and came back to Kerala. Then he started to do minor jobs and took loans for his survival. Two years ago he went to Perambur, in search of job. In Perambur, there was a friend of the respondent who had a business of selling automatic motor. It was motor, which can be fixed in well, underground tank and when the water level is low, with the help of this motor it will automatically gets activated and fill the tank. This was the business done by the respondent's friend. Friend helped the respondent by entrusting him with the duty of marketing cum installation. The respondent has to market the product and has to do the installation work. Respondent visited the companies, houses for the same and it was going smoothly. Meanwhile wife and his children were staying with respondent's parents at Ernakulam. In the same house, there were respondent's elder brother and family. Due to some issues with in-laws, respondent took his wife and children to Perambur. Then they have been residing at Perambur for two years and took a small house for rent. Children were admitted to a school near to their home. Wife was an M. ED holder. She applied for job, but the vacancies were available only in schools, which was too far away from their home. So in order to look after the children, she didn't go for job.

The respondent says, "Everything was going smoothly and I was able to work well. It was a hectic job, because frequently I have to directly visit companies, houses for marketing the product. For this purpose, I bought a second hand scooter by mortgaging some of my wife's gold. A vehicle was necessary for my job. Even there were situations, where I had to spend late night for installation in certain houses. Besides these difficulties I enjoyed this work a lot, because it was my need (laughing). My friend gave me 50% share for the each product which I sold. I was able to meet all my expenses".

The respondent resided at an interior part of Chennai, where drinking water facility was an issue. They depend on bore well for other purposes. For drinking purpose, the family depended on sealed container water which cost Rs.60 per container. Two months before the pandemic situation that is on January the situation began to change. The friend decided to stop the business, because there was no much profit for him. He informed this to the respondent and it made discomfort to him. But respondent understood the situation very well, because he was into it. Finally by mid of January the company was close down. The family was confused of what to do next. As the respondent was expert in the mechanic field, he had a thorough knowledge about the motor, which he had sold earlier. So he decided to create the motor of his own, because he was aware about its parts. For this purpose, he was able to manage for buying the tools and materials required for the same. The respondent worked late night for creating the motor at his own home. To an extent he succeeded in it. He was able to create around 30 motors. For this purpose, he had to take loans in order to purchase the materials. It had incurred huge money for the respondent. He took a personal loan of 2 lakhs with high interest. Next issue was to get a patent for his product. Through long procedure, somehow he acquired a patent. After getting the patent, he slowly started to market the product of his own. He was able to install it to some houses out of his personal contacts. He was alone and worked hard, but there was no much progress. During this difficult situation, comes another issue of pandemic called Covid-19. The family had to confine at their own house due to the restrictions imposed by the government.

At the initial period of the pandemic, much restriction was not imposed in certain areas. So the respondent was able to visit different places for marketing his product. But slowly it started to decline, because Lockdown was imposed by government in order to control the spread of diseases. This lockdown restricted the respondent to go out for his job and was forced to stay at his house. On the other hand people won't allow outsiders to enter the house. All these created difficulties for the respondent. When lockdown was declared the respondent and his family had to confine in their rented home. During that period they have to face lot of problems with regard to basic provisions like food, grocery and water. The family usually depends on sealed container water for drinking purposes. In usual days the water container will be delivered once a week. But when lockdown was declared the availability of such containers was difficult, because the restrictions were imposed for its access. The vehicles delivering cans get restricted to certain areas which have affected the family a lot. Similarly the family could not arrange necessary

groceries due to the sudden lockdown. After that availability of groceries was met with the help of nearby supermarkets. Availability of medicines was another major issue faced by the family. But overall the main problem was the availability of drinking water. The future living was a question mark for them. The respondent didn't have any hope and the motors which he created were lying in the room. He was not able to sell them. All these difficulties along with the loss of job forced the family to return to their home state. Even though the travel was an issue because train and flight services were stopped during that time and the return journey became a question mark. So the family stayed there till the travel facilities become normal. They tried to manage there by getting help from the friends' in order to meet the needs like paying the rent. The family managed to stay there for another 2 months. On May private tourist buses were started to Kerala. So the family booked the tickets for it. As they were 4 members it cost around Rs.2500 per person. But the family was in need to return, so they booked the ticket. Meanwhile, the respondent shifted the remaining motors to his friend's house because traveling with all these things was a difficult task and he settled the remaining rent of his house. He sold his scooter to a used vehicle shop and got some money out of it. The family had to do RTPCR test and was tested negative. Children continued in the same school, and they were having their online classes.

The journey was scheduled on June 5 at 8:30 pm. The respondent said that we had to show our test results to the bus officials before our journey. The bus was sanitized before the journey and proper care was taken by them. There were distance in between the seats and the births as it was sleeper class. As they maintained social distance only limited passengers were accommodated in one bus. The travel pass between the states and other documents were taken care by the bus operators. The duration of the entire travel was 14 hours. The wife quoted, "it was a hectic travel experience, because usually the bus will stop on the way for having food and it will be relief while travelling. But due to this situation, it was not able to stop. So we had to carry our own food for the travel. The long journey created nausea for me and my son. Many times, the bus stopped for us and we vomited on the way. Many passengers were anxious by seeing this because of this pandemic situation. My daughter was fine. We rely on petrol pumps for toilet facilities. As it was a serious situation, we had to wait for long time to get the toilet. Everyone was anxious about this situation and maintain social distance everywhere. Taking long time for toilet facilities created discomfort for bus operators because they had to reach the destination at

the right time. All these created a discomfort for us on the course of this entire travel”. It took long time at the check posts. In between the travel, police officials’ entered into the bus and checked whether Covid protocols are being followed or not. Once they reached at Walayar Check post, all the passengers were asked to get down and directed them to meet the health officials assembled there. The respondent said, “At the check post there were 3 to 4 counters and at the entrance there were two desks. At the fast desk they checked the temperature and in the next desk, we had to show our negative certificate report. From there they collected our house details, and gave the number of health official. They instructed us to call the health official once we reached there. The entire procedure took one hour because it had to cover the entire passengers. Then we started our journey again”.

The family reached their destination by 1:30 pm. They moved to the wife’s brother’s house which was vacant as he was residing outside India. Once they reached, they contacted the health official and were instructed to undergo quarantine for 14 days. They prepared food by themselves and groceries were made available to them by the wife’s parents. After 14 days, the family went for the test and was tested negative. After the quarantine period the family went to the respondent’s house where his parents and elder brother was staying.

In this case, the respondent is jobless at present and future living is a question mark. Moreover he had to repay loans which he had taken for the creation of the motors. As said earlier, before the lockdown he has installed motors in some houses. They have called him in many situations complaining about the damage of the product. The product got damaged due to their misuse. The respondent was not in a situation to go there. Once the lockdown was lifted, the respondent went to Perambur to replace the product to customers and came back. This was temporary. The respondent is searching for a better living now. At present the educational expense of his children are being met by the respondent’s parents. The wife has started to sell homemade snacks to the nearby areas. Despite she has issues with in-laws; this small business is a necessity for the family to survive. But still the respondent had to look for a great opportunity for the survival. At present the family relies on the respondent’s parents for their survival.

CHAPTER 5
ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

CASE ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

MAJOR THEMES

The researcher has identified following themes for analyzing the data

- Joblessness
- Fear and Anxiety
- Financial loss
- Covid-19-Travel Issues and problems.
- Health Problems
- Government instructions
- Expectations about future

Joblessness

Here researcher tries to analyze the main reasons for the return migration of Malayalees to Kerala during Covid-19. Joblessness is one among them.

Joblessness refers to the state of being unemployed. In the study all the four families are being subjected to joblessness. Out of 4 cases three cases have lost their job due to the pandemic called Covid-19. In second case it is the wife who lost the job in this pandemic situation and in other 3cases it is the husbands who lost the job. Joblessness was one of the main reasons which forced the families to come back to their native place. The intensity of experience and the reason for termination of job varies among the cases.

Case 1 and 3 have similar reason for joblessness. That is economic uncertainties faced by their respective companies. In Case 1, the respondent worked as an assistant purchaser cum mediator who purchases goods for the company.

“My main job is to meet the companies directly and purchase the goods at low cost for my company. Safari group is a MNC, which has hypermarket, and electronic shops throughout Qatar. We were staying in a rented apartment. I was fully satisfied with the job and everything was fine” case 1 said. Travel to the companies was the main task of the respondent. On the outbreak of Covid-19, there was restriction in such travel. The other companies didn't allow the

purchaser to meet them due to the fear of this situation. The respondent's company started to face economic uncertainties. In such scenario, the company started to terminate its employees. The respondent (Case 1) was one among them and thereby lost his job.

“A kind of discomfort is experienced now because of jobless where I had a good job in past”. Case1 said.

The respondent in Case 3 was working in a construction company under marketing wing. On the outbreak of Covid-19, the company didn't have much business which led to the termination of the employees. The respondent lost job in this scenario.

In the case 2, the husband is working as a service manager in an oil company. Here he didn't lost his job, rather gets confined to the system of work from home. In this family, wife is the victim for joblessness. There is no much issue to this family with regard to job, because husband is still working.

Case 4 is another example who lost job due to Covid-19, pandemic situation. The respondent runs his own business of selling motors. The respondent had to frequently visit shops and companies to sell his product. The pandemic situation restricted access which made him to sit at home. Loss of job due to lockdown made a delay in the repayment of his loans. More over his life became question mark with regard of the repayment of loans.

All the above cases show clear cut examples of people who lost job due to a pandemic situation. Joblessness is a major issue which affects the livelihood of the people. In order to survive and for other reasons people use to migrate to other areas, places and countries. The main aim is to get a better job for survival. When sudden pandemic situations like Covid take place, it can affect large number of people mainly in terms of job, rather than the health. As a result, it facilitates them to return back to their native place.

FEAR AND ANXIETY

Researcher identified fear and anxiety as another reason for the return migration of nonresident Malayalees to Kerala. Here it refers to the fear and anxiety among the families they have towards the pandemic called Covid-19. The intensity of the anxiety faced by the respondents varied sharply.

In Case 1, the family was very much anxious about the pandemic. This anxiety and fear lead them to pack their things by their own. *“As our life was so smooth, we didn’t expect such a situation and before this situation we brought many new household items. But when this pandemic occurred unexpectedly, it was a real shock and packing whole items was a hectic task. There were no workers to help us and moreover, due to the fear of Covid, we didn’t encourage outsiders to help us. As we have a small child, it was not safe to allow outsiders to get into our home. So wife and myself packed everything and it took almost one month for the same”* Case 1 said. The family was much aware about their daughter and so they didn’t allow the workers to get in to their house for packing the things. The cargo company workers were allowed inside only after, when the wife and daughter left the place. The family stayed home and preferred door delivery for the groceries. The entire family was so aware about the situation and thinking about their old parents, they chose for institutional quarantine, rather going for home quarantine. The wife (in case1) said, *“I chose for an institutional quarantine, because in my native place, there are aged parents, where I don’t want to risk their life”*.

Case 2 and 4 have similar kind of anxiety because both of their modes of travel were through road.

Case 2, returned back to their native place through their own car. Restrictions imposed over their housing colony created difficulty, which made them to travel to their home. Throughout the entire travel, the family was so anxious about the current situation. This anxiety made them to be more precautious during the entire travel. The respondent said, *“We were so precautious about this pandemic and carried food of our own for the entire travel”*. The family also quoted *“we were so precautious of this situation, so that after handing over the money in each toll, we used to sanitize our hands”*.

In Case 4, the wife and the daughter had health issues while travelling which made the co passengers anxious of thinking that it is Corona.

In Case 2, the anxiety of the neighborhood from Husband’s native place created a small stigmatization, which forced the family to stay at Wife’s native place. Anxiety of people around us is one of the main issues that can be seen in this pandemic situation.

Anxiety among the family in Case 3 is of similar one, but little different. The family had to confine in their own home which created fear among them. The wife was anxious about the situation and she suffered from fever because of this. The loss of husband's job, restriction to go out, growing cases, created anxiety among the wife and found difficult to continue there. In this case, anxiety of the wife along with the joblessness of her husband is the main reason for the return migration.

The pandemic situation called Covid-19 has created a sense of fear among people and its intensity among people varies. The anxiety of this situation have made more precautions among few, some began to give importance for self care and few others found difficult to cope up with the situation which forced them to leave the place where they live.

FINANCIAL LOSS

Here financial loss refers to the financial difficulties and the expenses the families had to incur with regard and prior to their travel to native place. Each case has incurred financial loss depending on their situation and it varies.

In **Case 1**, the family had to spend money during different phases of this pandemic situation. The family spent on the following; apartment rent, cargo for the shipment of their commodities, flight charge, institutional quarantine expense, taxi charge from the airport to quarantine centre.

In order to transport the household commodities the family had to depend on Cargo services. The cargo company charged *5000 Riyal per* container that is it cost around RS.1, 05,000 for shipment alone. The respondent had luggage which occupied full container. The wife and daughter had to spend extra money at the airport to get food for a transit flight, where usually it's provided along with our flight charges. The quarantine expense for wife and daughter alone was Rs 40,000 and for the husband it was Rs 32,000. The respondent met Rs 9000 for taxi charge alone from Kannur International airport to his Native place, which was 6 hour travel.

“Moreover this pandemic situation has incurred a huge expense for me. For the flight alone, I had to pay around 24000, and for Cargo it cost 1, 05,000 and quarantine expenses was another one. The whole return travel was expensive (laughing)” **Case 1** said.

Case 2 had a different experience with regard to their financial expense during this pandemic situation. Here the family came through by driving their own car to the native place. So the financial expense was based on road transport. Mainly they had to spend on petrol and at toll booths. The expense at toll booth was not expected by the family. One main issues faced by the family was that their Fastag was not activated which forced them to pay huge money at tolls. The husband (in Case 2) says, *“Before the journey we had activated our fastag, but when we reached the toll, it was showing as insufficient balance. As it was a toll, we were not in a situation to argue with them. We paid the money and after that we informed the customer care and raised our complaint. The problem got resolved only after a week which forced us to pay money for the toll”*. They have paid around Rs 7000 for tolls alone. Travel expense was a major expense for the family in this course of travel.

In **Case 3**, the family was forced to live there till their flight gets confirmed. The respondent who worked in the marketing wing of a Construction Company lost his job, because company didn't had much business. This situation led to the termination of employees. The respondent lost his job on March and had to continue till September due to the delay in confirmation of the flights. This forced him to pay the rent without job. Only positive aspect was that, the flight charges were met by the company. The family had to incur a taxi charge of Rs 7000 from Kannur International Airport to his native place Angadipuram at Perinthalmanna District.

The situation of the family in Case 4 is entirely different when compared to other 3 cases. The respondent was working under his friend's company for marketing the motor. When the friend stopped the business, the respondent lost his job. Then he started to create motors of his own. For this purpose he had taken personal loan for Rs 2lakh with high interest. On the outbreak of Covid-19, he could not sell his product and was to stay at home. The repayment of loans was a difficult task for the respondent. The family had to stay at Perambur in Chennai till the transport facilities get resumed. They had to pay the rent, where the respondent was jobless. The respondent had to sell his scooter to meet the needs of his family. The family returned back through private tourist bus and it cost around Rs 2500 per person. They were 4 members. The respondent had to incur a huge financial loss and at present the family depends on their parent's money for survival.

The sudden outbreak of Covid-19 has created economic uncertainties among the people in different ways. Coming back to home became a necessity for the families and it has created huge financial difficulties for them. The degree of financial uncertainties varies, in terms of the occupation they had. The above cases are examples of such people, who had difficult times in terms of finance during this pandemic situation. Here in case 2, they had to meet the expense only in terms of travel. In other cases, it was not the same. It was the necessity and they had no choice rather spend money to come back.

Covid-19- Travel Issues and Problems

Return journey of the people during the pandemic period called Covid-19 was a major issue and a difficult task. Here the researcher analyses the travel issues and the problems associated with it by the respondents. The travel experience during the return journey varies between people. The members within the family had to undergo different experience on their return journey to home. They had their own difficulties and issues.

Case 1 and Case 3 came back to their native place through flight. Case 2 and 4 came through road.

Case 1 and Case 3 had to face similar issues, with regard to the flight confirmation. On the other hand issues and difficulties faced by the family members differ in these cases.

At the initial time of Covid-19, globally whole flight services got cancelled. The respondent and his family in both cases got stuck and had to stay at Qatar for two and five months respectively.

In both cases (1 and 3) respondents lost their job and decided to return to their native place and they waited till the flights got resumed. When Vande Bharat mission was introduced both of them applied for it through the official website of the Ministry of External Affairs in association with the Indian Embassy. They waited for its confirmation for long time. The delay was due to that the first preferences were given to elderly people and disease affected ones. They enquired and checked the mails from Indian Embassy frequently.

In case 1, the family got the confirmation of Vande Bharat mission in its second phase. But in second phase, the wife and daughter only got the confirmation and the husband had to wait for the third phase. Wife and daughter had a difficult time in the entire travel. They had to face lot of

difficulties at the airport. They got only a transit flight which was from Qatar to Bahrain and to Mumbai and finally Cochin. They had to report at the airport 3hours before the departure for check in purpose.

“Once we reached airport, it was a long procedure for check in, because we had to follow Covid protocols. As we had the relevant documents like Exit visa, Covid-19 negative certificate, there was no much issue. But the flight got delayed, where it departure only by 1:30 am instead of 12:30 am” wife said. Once they reached at Bahrain they lost the transit flight to Mumbai, due to their delay in flight from Qatar. The child was so hungry and became so restless. The free food availability usually provide in Transit flight was not there. They had to depend on restaurants at airport, where they had to exchange their Qatar Riyal to get Bahrain Dinar. All these were the major difficulties faced by them at the airport.

“Usually in transit they will be provided with free food and accommodation. But they didn’t provide us anything due to this pandemic situation and were settled in lobby. The daughter was so sleepy, restless and we were hungry. There were limited restaurants at the airport and others were closed down. We had only Qatar Riyal and not Bahrain Dinar. So the main task was to get the exchange. There was a huge queue at the exchange counter. My daughter was so restless and she didn’t stay at lobby alone, when I went to the exchange counter. She came along with me and stands in the queue. She started to scream which created difficulty. It took almost one hour at the exchange counter”, wife said. They had to wait for 5 hours to get their next transit flight. In this case the wife and daughter had a tough time at airport which was not their mistake, rather mistake from the airport officials. These difficulties had made the daughter restless. The husband before the travel, he had to settle the payments of the cargo, and vacate his apartment. After that he had to face only the long procedure at the airport for check in purpose. As he had the right documents, he didn’t have much issue. He had to undergo another 6hours journey from Kannur Airport to his native place that is in Palakad. After his quarantine, he settled the remaining payment for the cargo to unload the materials. In this case, the family had difficult time prior to their return journey, which involved of packing things, getting confirmation of flight, difficulties at the airport.

In case 2, they got the confirmation of flight only in the fourth phase of Vande Bharat Mission. It took long time at the airport for check in purpose; rather there were no much issues at the airport.

Once they reached at Kannur, the family couldn't get taxi to their native immediately. They had to wait another three hours at the airport to get the taxi. After that it took around 4 hours 15 minutes travel from Kannur to their native place. Here they had to face difficulties in terms of confirmation of flights, where they waited till 4th phase and small difficulties from airport with regard to check in and to get taxi to their native place.

In **Case 2**, the family came by road by driving through their own car because at that time the services of flights and train were not being restored. There was delay in getting the travel pass. It took lot of time because first preferences were given to those who went to other states for medical treatment and residents of other states who seek to get specialist treatment in Kerala. They needed to get three passes; Maharashtra exit pass, Karnataka Transit pass and Kerala entry pass. They registered in **NORKA** and had to wait for 2 weeks to get 3 passes. It was a long procedure, where they have to fill their details including ward number and ward members name. The family had to face lot of difficulties while traveling. They relied on petrol pumps for toilet facilities, because there was no hotel for accommodation. The family slept in the car.

“We rely on petrol pumps for toilet facilities and halt in our own car for sleeping. The availability of the toilet was the main issue for us. As there were total of 5 women including children, we depend on petrol pumps for toilet facilities and in some places it was not so clean. We were so precautious about this pandemic and carried food of our own for the entire travel. In between we stopped our car in a lonely place to have our food” case 2 said.

Inactivation of fastag was another issue. There was total of 30 hours travel in one stretch for the family.

“Before the journey we had activated our fastag, but when we reached the toll, it was showing as insufficient balance. As it was a toll, we were not in a situation to argue with them. We paid the money and after that we informed the customer care and raised our complaint. The problem got resolved only after a week which forced as to pay money for the toll” Case 2 said.

Another major difficulty was that it took long time at Check posts for checking.

Case 4 had a different experience when compared with case 2. In case 4 the family came by road through private tourist bus. The family had to wait for two months to get bus service for their

return journey. Before the journey they had to do the RTPCR test and carry the certificate. The family had difficulties while traveling like they had to depend on petrol pump for toilet facilities carry food of their own and the entire travel time was 14 hours. The bus operators arranged the seats by maintaining proper social distance.

“It was a hectic travel experience, because usually the bus will stop on the way for having food and it will be relief while travelling. But due to this situation, it was not able to stop. So we had to carry our own food for the travel.... We rely on petrol pumps for toilet facilities. As it was a serious situation, we had to wait for long time to get the toilet. Everyone was anxious about this situation and maintain social distance everywhere. Taking long time for toilet facilities created discomfort for bus operators because they had to reach the destination at the right time. All these created a discomfort for us on the course of this entire travel” wife (Case 4) said.

From all the above cases, it clearly shows that return journey had created lots of difficulties for the respondents and their experiences differ. Prior to travel, especially in this pandemic situation, it has become mandatory to follow certain things and it's not so easy to travel like a normal situation.

Health Problems

In this study the concept of health problems refers to the major health issues the respondents had suffered during their return journey to Kerala. In the return journey, the health issues faced by the respondents vary, according to the situations and the mode through which they travelled.

In **Case 1**, the long hours of journey through flight created tiredness to the wife and daughter. It was not a direct flight rather a transit. The transit was from Qatar to Bahrain and to Bombay and to Kannur. The flight from Qatar was late and they lost the transit flight from Bahrain to Bombay and they had to wait for 5 hours to get the next flight to Bombay. It took 4 hours to reach Bombay and they had to wait there for two hours to get their next connection flight to Kannur. It took 2 hours to reach Kannur. The wife and daughter had to travel around 12 hours including the delay and waiting for transit. The whole journey made them tired and daughter experienced slight fever during quarantine days.

“The whole journey was so hectic where myself and daughter felt so tired. Once we reached the room, it was great relief for both of us”. My daughter was so tired and was having a slight fever. It was due to the hectic travel”, wife said. On the other hand husband had the similar issue of tiredness and fever. He didn’t have much issue at the airport as of his wife and daughter experienced. His transit was from Qatar to Bombay and to Kannur. The respondent had to travel another 6 hours from airport to his native place.

“The 6 hours of travel in taxi and also the flight journey made me so tired and once I reached room, took full rest. I felt slight fever during my quarantine days and informed the health officials. Then they gave me some medicines as precaution. After 28 days, the health officials took me to do the test and was tested negative” respondent said.

Case 3 have a similar health issue. Prior to the journey, while they got locked in Qatar, wife experienced a heavy fever but was tested as negative. The long procedures at the airport created giddiness for the wife.

In **Case 2**, the family came by driving their own car. The continuous 30 hours travel has created tiredness to the entire family. They didn’t suffer from any other major health issues.

“When we decided for this journey, I was so enthusiastic to drive. Even though it was hectic task during this situation because it’s not like normal travel, where there was no hotel and restaurants.... At the beginning despite of this situation, children were thrilled. But over continuous travel, my wife and children became so tired. Children became more restless due to the one stretch travel..... As it was a one stretch travel, without any halting facilities, I was so tired. In normal case one stretch travel was not possible, but this lockdown situation necessitated traveling for the same. Once we reached our home, we took complete rest. Myself and wife had a body pain for 2 days”, Case 2 said.

The experience and health issue faced by case 4 is somewhat different. They travelled through a private tourist bus. The continuous 14 hour travel has created nausea and vomiting to the wife and son.

“The long journey created nausea for me and my son. Many times, the bus stopped for us and we vomited on the way. Many passengers were anxious by seeing this because of this pandemic situation”, case 4 said.

Travelling in this pandemic situation is a big task and continuous travel can create different types of health issues. This is same in the case of normal travel, but more precaution is needed in this pandemic situation.

Government Instructions

In this study the government instructions refers to the procedures and instructions given to the respondents after reaching their home state. He researcher also identified the government procedures the respondents had to follow before their travel.

In all cases they were instructed to undergo quarantine once they reached their native place.

Case 1 and 3 have similar experience with regard of getting flight confirmation, government procedures and the final procedure of undergoing quarantine. Both cases applied Vande Bharat Mission for the flight and had to wait a long time for its confirmation. But there was a huge delay for its confirmation because first preferences were given to elderly people and disease affected ones. In case 1 the wife and daughter got confirmation only in second phase and for husband on 3rd phase. In case 3, the family got confirmation only on 4th phase of Vande Bharat Mission. Both the cases have undergone quarantine for 28 days. Case1 chose for institutional quarantine and Case 3 undergone home quarantine. Health officials at the airport collected the information from them and arranged the institutional quarantine facilities for Case 1.

In Case 3, once they reached the airport at the native, they filled a form issued by health department, where they have to fill the home details including the ward number, ward member’s name. The family chose for home quarantine and gave the number of the health inspector of their area. Once they reached their native place, they immediately called the health official as per the direction from the airport. It is from the panchayat, they are directed for Quarantine. The health officials came and instructed them to undergo quarantine for a period of 28 days.

Case 2 and 4 came by road but the government proceedings they have undergone vary. Case 2 came by driving their own vehicle, so they had to register in NORKA to get the travel pass. They

had to acquire 3 travel passes; Maharashtra exit pass, Karnataka Transit pass and Kerala Entry pass. There was delay in getting those passes. First preferences were given to those who went to other states for medical treatment and residents of other states who seek to get specialist treatment in Kerala. In the website they entered the basic details and have to provide the address and ward number of the house where you will be quarantined for 14 days.

“Within 24 hours, a health care member from our ward contacted us and asked whether our home in Kerala meets the requirement for quarantine. They asked our ward member’s name also” wife said. Once the Kerala pass is approved, they applied for Maharashtra exit and Karnataka transit pass. The travel date and time should match for both. So it was a long procedure and once the pass is being issued the information will be passed to the respective panchayat, then only they can arrange quarantine for the people. After 2 weeks they could acquired travel pass which comprise of three- **Maharashtra Exit Pass, Karnataka Transit Pass and Kerala Entry Pass**. After acquiring the pass, before the journey, the family had done RTPCR test and was tested negative.

Once they reached at Kerala Border, it took long time to complete procedures and they were instructed to go for quarantine. The family undergoes home quarantine for 14 days.

“At the check post, we had to get out from the car and report in person to the officials at the check post. We have to carry our Kerala pass and remember the address of the taluk given in the form. When we reached, there were around 20 people across three to four counters. The officials have face shields and masks and a glass partition between us and them. They will ask for our name, Taluk and phone number. We also have to hold up our form against the glass partition and undergo a temperature check. So it’s important to be fully prepared with disposable gloves and a mask. After that they will hand over another pass through a circular hole in the glass partition. Once that process is over, we disposed the gloves immediately and sanities our hands. Soon after the check post, there will be another police checking. Here fire force department will disinfect every vehicle to ensure safety. This took long time, because there was large number of vehicles in the queue. They will ask for the pass that we received, verify it and we are allowed to go. During this entire process, children became so restless, as they had to stand for the long queue” said by Case 2.

Case 4 had similar experience of case 2 but little different. The family in Case 4 came through a private tourist bus. They had to carry Covid-19 negative certificate while traveling. At the border they faced long procedures similar to case 2 and undergo quarantine for 14 days.

“Once we reached at Walayar Check post, all the passengers were asked to get down and directed to meet the health officials assembled there. The respondent said, “At the check post there were 3 to 4 counters and at the entrance there were two desks. At the fast desk they checked the temperature and in the next desk, we had to show our negative certificate report. From there they collected our house details, and gave the number of health official. They instructed us to call the health official once we reached there. The entire procedure took one hour because it had to cover the entire passengers. Then we started our journey again” case 4 said.

Expectations about future

A major question that the respondents face is about their future. What is next after coming from the migrated place? Future is something unpredictable. It is a matter of Fear, anxiety, optimism, inspiration, sacrifices and new challenges.

In all the 4 cases expect the second one; future living is a question mark. In case 2, the husband still has a job and he is working from home. Only his wife has lost the job and at present she is not searching for anything. She likes to engage herself with the household chores and by taking care of her children. The family is self sufficient.

For case 1, the future living is a question mark. He has lots of things to meet and do. The respondent has to complete the construction of his house, wants to admit his daughter to a school, wife is in search of job and at present they are living with the husband’s parents. The respondent is still ready to go back if gets a chance, because his duties to be fulfilled for the family made him to think like that.

For case 3, the respondent is another example for jobless due to this pandemic situation. He has decided not to go back and want to settle at his native place. Future living is a question mark for his family, where he is the only earning member in his family. The continuous enquiry from the neighbors about his future plan creates difficulty for him. The respondent has some savings

which he has made in his 15 years of life at Qatar. Planning to do some business and at present he has not decided anything.

“Only thing I have done is that I have constructed a home in my native, while I was working in Qatar. This was a great relief. At present future living is a question mark. The most difficult thing is the continuous enquiry from neighbors and relatives about my future plan. This creates difficulty. I have little savings and have to do something. At the moment I have not decided to go back, and planned to settle here” case 3 said.

Case 4 is the most affected person among all 4 cases and his future living is a big question mark. The respondent have lots of burden over him, repayment of loans, education of his children, and construction of house. At present the family relies on Husband’s parents for their needs. The education expense of the children is met by the respondent’s parents. The wife has started a small homemade snacks service, but progress is slow. Here the respondent is in a great struggle for his survival.

Hope for future is an important factor for the survival of the people. The pandemic situation called Covid-19 has adversely affected the livelihood of the people. The intensity to which they are affected depends on their lifestyle. Case 2 is an example for it, in terms of how merely it’s being affected. On the other hand case 4 is an example of people who are much affected because of this pandemic. Future living involves not only individual survival but also his family. The sudden outbreak has made the life hopeless. The humanity including the cases of this study is in a hope for a better survival of their future.

CHAPTER 6

MAJOR FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Major Findings

The major findings of the study explored the experience undergone by Non Resident Malayalees on their return journey to Kerala during Covid-19 period. It points out the reasons for return migration, difficulties, travel issues; government proceedings undergone by them and their expectations about future. The Covid-19 pandemic has affected the life of many people and the degree to which they are being affected differs. It also shed light on the hopelessness of the respondents towards their future living.

Challenges of joblessness due to the pandemic

Job or in other words occupation plays an important role in individual life. A job and the income generated out of it are essential for the survival on this human earth. In order to survive and for a better living people use to migrate. The reason for migration varies. Keralites have been on an increasing trend in migration. Kerala have witnessed both internal and international migration. Among them there is an increasing trend on gulf migration by Keralites and over period of time it has been expanded to other countries and also within Indian states. So all over the world, we can witness a Malayalee. The types of occupation they do differed based on their life situation, education and many other factors. Outbreak of Covid-19 has affected the lives of humanity globally. Nonresident Migrants including Keralites are one among them. Covid-19 has disrupted the whole country and economies. Due to economic uncertainties of different countries, it has led to joblessness and many Keralites are being affected because of this. Joblessness has become one of the reasons for the return migration of Malayalees to Kerala. All the above cases of this study are being subjected to joblessness. Only in case 2, wife is the victim for joblessness, but still husband has his job. The concept of joblessness and its challenges are related not only to job but also their future living. When they become jobless, they found difficult to stay at their host country and forced them to return back to their home country. Joblessness is one major issue faced by non-resident malayalees due to Covid-19. Many of them are trying hard to stay back at their host country even in the adverse situation. If they leave the country and return back, they might not get better jobs back at their country. Since pandemic affected the world in similar manner. They are clueless about the debts and financial responsibilities they have. This situation causes severe anxiety and fear in them. After returning the major crisis faced by non-resident malayalees was that they couldn't find a replacement job, many households depended upon a

single income from abroad. They had a burden of debts, house rents, house construction, educational needs, household expenses etc. This created an economic shock for them. The adversity and the magnitude of this crisis may vary with blue collar and white-collar employees. As World Health Organization (WHO) explained there will not be a fast return to the old normal. The difficulties undergone by them due to jobless varies depends on the type of occupation they do. The difficulties underwent by those who work in low sector job is different from that those who work in white collar jobs. The difficulties undergone by these jobless respondents vary according to the types of occupation they had. In case 1, the respondent is an example for jobless, and he had to incur huge expense on his return journey. He was able to meet those expenses because he was engaged in a white collar job. This is not the same for the case 4. Here the respondent had to sell his scooter and got the help from his friends to return back to his home. The case 3 had to undergo similar experience of case1, and at present he has some savings. So the impact of Covid-19 and joblessness varies among the people depending on their social situation and the types of occupation they had pursued. The return migration of Keralites can create difficulties for the state too. So there should be more focus on making new policies plans and strategies to safeguard the interests of the returnees.

Fear and Anxiety

The pandemic called Covid-19 has created a fear and anxiety among people. Fear of virus, fear of getting infected, fear of losing dear ones, fear getting isolated all of these fear and anxiety is very common among everyone during this pandemic situation. Globally all are so much affected in this extraordinary time. People are all locked up. Nobody is able to do anything. Only thing we can do to save ourselves is to stay indoors and help ourselves. The regular routines and habits got altered. There was stay at home advisory. The entire world got shifted to a virtual lifestyle. Even though such changes happened people were desperate and fearful. Fear is a new ingredient associated with the pandemic. The situation faced by returned non-resident malayalees is also not so different. All the cases in the study like everyone are very much anxious about the situation. This anxiety has created health problems and also made them to become more precautionous about this situation. During the entire travel, they were so careful. The anxiety has created a small stigmatization, which is evident in the 2nd case. The fear and anxiety can also be related to the future aspect too, rather confining it to virus alone. They are mainly having the fear of job loss,

they feel financial fears, they are afraid of future expenses. They are afraid of the new set of circumstances they have to face in homeland.

They are anxious about their acceptance in the local communities. The fear and anxiety they face are deep. The returned non-resident malayalees suffer social and economic turmoil's which creates uncertainties in their life. Thus make them anxious about future life. They fear that their interrupted jobs and salary will disrupt their family and households. They fear that they cannot go back to the countries where they had migrated and they can never get back their jobs. Covid-19 is the time of uncertainties for these returnees. The immobility, limited resources, sudden outbreaks of virus, different tensions, exclusion, etc makes their situation worse. These issues suggest that there must be an inclusive method to sort the socio political and economic fears the returned non resident malayalees faced.

Financial loss and Covid-19

The return journey to the home country has made the respondents to incur huge expenses. The return journey was not so easy during this pandemic situation. The sudden outbreak of Covid-19 has created economic uncertainties among the people in different ways. Coming back to home became a necessity for the families and it has created huge financial difficulties for them. The degree of financial uncertainties varies, in terms of the occupation they had. The above cases are examples of such people, who had difficult times in terms of finance during this pandemic situation. The people had to meet their household expense, cargo expense in case of shipping the commodities, travel expense, quarantine expense and so on. Here in case 2, they had to meet the expense only in terms of travel. In other cases, it was not the same. It was the necessity and they had no choice rather spend money to come back. Case 4 has to sell his scooter and got the help from his friends to travel back to his native place. Case 1 has to pack all his household commodities and arrange a cargo for its shipment. Case 3 had to stay at the apartment without job and pay the rent. All these incidents show that people had to incur huge financial loss prior to their travel and on other hand expense they had to incur for their travel. Once they reached back, all the returnees were instructed to undergone quarantine. Those who underwent an institutional quarantine had to meet its expenses. The pandemic has forced the people to return back to their homeland and in course of it a huge expense was a burden for the people. Most of the nonresident Keralites are in financial crises due to the loss of job and along with that, return

journey had created another set of financial difficulties for them. These difficulties and how respondents reacted to them are based on the types of occupation they pursued.

Travel issues and problems during Covid-19

The return journey of people to their home country is not an easy task during this pandemic situation called Covid-19. On the outbreak of Covid-19, globally entire transportation system was cancelled. The people got stuck into their own area of residence. There was a situation where people had to wait for the transportation system to resume. It includes every mode of transportation like flight, trains and by road. Once these systems got resumed, it was not easy task for the migrants to travel. There were lots of issues and procedures to be fulfilled by them. The experiences undergone by the respondents differ in terms of their mode of travel. Those who came by flight had a different experience and issues when compared with the people who came by road.

Case 1 and 3 came through flight. They had a hectic experience on their return journey to Kerala. There was a delay in confirmation of flights. Case 1 got a transit flight; where the family could not go together. Wife and daughter got the confirmation in the second phase and for husband it was in 3rd phase. The wife and daughter had a hectic experience at the airport in terms of delay of flight, unavailability of food at the transit, long procedures for check in, carrying relevant document like Covid negative certificates, long journey and procedure to be followed after reaching the native place; that is undergoing quarantine for 28 days. On the other hand husband came through 3rd phase and had to travel another some more hours to his native after reaching the airport. The whole journey was hectic for the family which created slight health issues like tiredness. Case 3 had to undergo long procedure at the airport and the whole procedure during the departure and arrival had created giddiness for the wife.

The people who came through road had to undergone a different experience and procedures. They have to register through official government websites for getting the travel pass. If its long distances interstate travel, it's necessary to get the exit and entry passes of different states. On the course of applying these passes, the information is being passed to the health departments of the native areas to arrange quarantine facilities and to contact the respective clients. There were long procedures at the check post and it is from the check post the health officials' direct the people

for quarantine. The continuous road journey can lead to many health issues to the people. There are no hotel facilities for accommodation. The people on the return journey had to rely on petrol pumps for toilet facilities. They had to carry their own food.

Case 2 came by road through driving their car and had to undergo a difficult time to get travel pass (Maharashtra exit pass, Karnataka transit pas and Kerala entry pass). The family relied on petrol pumps for toilet facilities and slept in their own car. They had to undergo a long procedure at the border and check post. Continuous travel of 30 hours leads to tiredness for them.

Case 4 came by road through private tourist bus. In this case, the tourist pass officials will take care of the travel passes. The passengers had to carry the Covid negative certificate. The continuous journey has lead to the health issues like nausea and vomiting by the wife and son and had to rely on petrol pump for toilet facilities. Similar to case 2, they had to spent long time at check posts for completing the procedures for further journey.

From all the above cases, it clearly shows that return journey had created lots of difficulties for the respondents and their experiences differ. This is clearly evident as problem faced by migrants during their return journey. Prior to travel, especially in this pandemic situation, it has become mandatory to follow certain things and it's not so easy to travel like a normal situation.

Role of government

Government officials play an important role during this pandemic situation. The duties entrusted to them vary depending on the departments. The entire travel of the returnees is being under the control of the government officials. The procedures vary in different cases depending on the mode of their travel. Same like the respondents, the government and its officials had to undergo a hectic task during this pandemic situation. In terms of flight, the procedures for ensuring the availability and confirmation of the flight, carrying necessary documents, procedures to be completed at the airport are some of the duties undertaken by them. In terms of road transport, there are police officials and other departmental officials at the borders and check posts for checking; the issuing of travel passes for interstate travel, assigning health officials at the check posts, railway station and at airports. The people with correct travel documents are allowed to enter the state. The health officials will direct the returnees to undergo quarantine and follow up them with regard to it. In terms of institutional quarantine, the health departments under

government in collaboration with hotels will arrange institutional quarantine centers and also convert certain centers to First Line Treatment Centre (FLTC). Arranging quarantine facilities for the returnees was the main task of the government thereby avoids direct contact of the respondents to the public.

Expectations about future

The expectation of future by each individual is different in their own ways. It is different from person to person. Their ideas about the future rests on a number of factors like the support they receive from family and friends, how they are being seen by the society, psychological elements like their views on future living, will power, fear, anxiety etc. Rebuilding a better future is the main issues faced by the returnees during this pandemic situation. Hope for future is an important factor for the survival of the people. The pandemic situation called Covid-19 has adversely affected the livelihood of the people. The intensity to which they are affected depends on their lifestyle and the type of occupation they pursued. Future living involves not only individual survival but also his family. The sudden outbreak has made the life hopeless. Future living is a question mark for the cases in this study expect the 2nd one. In case 2 only wife has lost her job and the family is self sufficient.

The aspect of future living involves many factors like; better jobs, household expenses, house construction, educational expense of the children, repayment of loans and more over become self sufficient without depending others. In some cases, the existing burdens have to be solved like repayment of loans. Case 4 is an example for this category. How the family members cope up with this situation is another concern. In case 4, the wife has started small business to revive the family. But when it comes to case 2, the wife who is the victim of joblessness, have not decided to do anything rather looking after the household chores and children. This shows the difference between how people expects about their future and it mainly depends on their social condition and life style. In case 1, the respondent is worried about the future living which includes lots of plans like to resume the construction of his house, find a new job, concerned about the education of the daughter and still he is ready to go back when situation becomes normal. . The views of case 3 is different, he is more of optimistic with a hope of starting new business out of his savings he has with him. At the same time, he is worried about how society views him.

All these case shows the expectations people have on their future during this pandemic situation. With positive and optimistic attitude, it can help the respondents to rebuild a better future. The way of attaining such attitude is not an easy task which depends on the life situations of the people.

CONCLUSION

Through the present study, the researcher attempted to develop an understanding about the experience undergone by the Nonresident Malayalees on their return journey to Kerala during Covid-19 period. Migration is an ongoing social-global phenomenon. People move to another area due to various reasons for their survival. From the study it is clear that Keralites have been migrated to different countries and also within Indian states over period of time. The lives of nonresident malayalees are very much affected because of the pandemic situation called Covid-19. It has forced the people to return back to their home country. The uncertainty caused by Covid-19 across the world is very drastic and uncontrollable. It is multidimensional in nature. The crisis created by the pandemic is deep and devastating in all aspects. It has made a constant threat to population health and individual existence in general. It shattered almost all welfare systems, economies and job structures all around the world. Non-resident malayalees outside and within India and their return journey in the period of stringent lockdown measures of pandemic was not that easy. Even though they wanted to stay back, the fear anxiety and pressure they faced in the host country forced them to return. On the course of their return journey they had to undergo a difficult time. It includes; the delay in confirmation of flights, long procedure for applying the same, long procedures at check post, continuous travel without hotel and restaurants, rely on petrol pumps for toilet facilities and so on. The experience undergone by the returnees differs from person to person. Each member within the family had to undergone a difficult experience on their return journey. Even after returning they face an uncertainty about life and future. They are trying hard to cope with the new normal in the context of pandemic. The returnees are facing issues in finding new jobs. Their dependents at home have to face economic and psychological distress. Returned Non-resident malayalees also faced aversion from neighbourhood as they had the fear of virus. The future living is a question mark for them. Rebuilding a better future has become the need for the returnees. Future living involves different aspects like household expenses, education of the children, finding new jobs and become self

sufficient. The pandemic have created a psychological distress among people. It's important to build an optimistic and positive attitude towards building a better future. The way of building such an attitude is not an easy task for everyone. This depends on the social condition of the people. Even if the people are ready to do new ventures during this pandemic situation, it's not so easy and lots of restrictions are being imposed to it. The support from the family and friends are important for the respondents in building a new hope for the future. All are in hope for the normal situation and there are people with a hope to go back to other places for their better future. Government have to take very careful measures for the inclusion of returned malayalees.

CHAPTER-7
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