Chapter 8

Summary of Findings and Conclusions

Migration is a universal phenomenon and it exists in all countries of the world. It is a movement of people from one place to another mainly for better employment opportunities and income. Migration is of two fold – the former occurs within the country whereas the latter is movement of people from one country to another. International labour migration has enormous implications on the socio-economic status of the people in the origin countries as it brings valuable foreign remittances in to their countries. There are evidences about migration of Indians to different parts of the world. For example, Indians were once recruited and sent to Sri Lanka, Burma, Malaysia, Mauritius, West Indies and South Africa as plantation workers. During 1950s and 1960s, there was brain drain type migration from India whereas from 1970 onwards there was large scale migration of skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled workers to the Gulf countries due to the rapid increase in the petroleum price. Among the Indian migrants to the Gulf, Kerala occupied a prominent place as about two third of the Indian migrants to the Gulf were from Kerala. Out of the total emigrants from Kerala to the Gulf, vast majority of them were the poor Muslims of coastal areas. The emigration from Kerala to the Gulf countries and the consequent inward flow of remittances has been making dynamic changes in the economy of Kerala. The literacy rate and the standard of living of Kerala Muslims are much better than that of the Muslims in other states of the country which is considered as a beneficial effect of emigration on Muslim community in Kerala.

There are various theories that explain international migration and the most prominent among them are classical migration theories and theories that explain the perpetuation of migration. The prominent classical migration theories include the neo-classical theory, the situation oriented approach (Push-Pull Hypotheses), the world system theory, the dual labour market approach, the liberal choice and structural theories; and the theory of development in a dual economy. The important perpetuation theories of migration are the migration network theory and the theory of cumulative causation. A review of migration theories shows that there is no single theory that can
explain emigration from Kerala to the Gulf countries. There are a large number of studies about the impact of emigration on the economy of Kerala. Our review of the important migration studies shows that most of these studies have examined the different dimensions of migration from Kerala to the Gulf including the socio-economic changes on the migrant families. There is no scientific and reliable study about the impact of migration on the Muslim community. More specifically, there is not a single study that examined the impact of migration on the educational achievements of Muslims in Kerala. Hence, there is a need to examine the effect of migration on the educational attainments of Muslims in Kerala and this study is an attempt to fill the existing research gap in Kerala migration studies.

In this context, the study aims to review the socio-economic profile of Muslim community in Kerala. The effects of emigration on the economic and educational status of Muslims community have been taken for the study. The major determinants of higher education of Muslim community and their inter-regional variations were also examined. Finally, we have assessed the impact of educational infrastructure on the educational qualifications and skill formation of Muslims and the effects of improved skill and educational qualifications on the emigration of Muslims to the Gulf.

The study is based on both primary and secondary data although the major thrust of the study is primary data. The secondary data have been collected from various published and unpublished sources like Reports, Journals etc. The primary data was collected with the help of a structured questionnaire. Our sample consists of emigrant and non-emigrant households from rural and urban areas of Malappuram district of Kerala. Malappuram district was purposely selected for the study as the proportion of Muslims to the total population was 70.9 percent and the fraction of Muslim emigrants to total emigrants was 86.5 percent. We have limited our total sample to 300 households 150 each from rural and urban areas. Rural sample households were selected from three panchayaths of Tanur of block - Tanur, Valavannur and Thanalur. From the 3 selected panchayaths, one ward each was selected and they are ward 17 (Tanur Nagaram) from Tanur Panchayath; ward 07 (Nerala) from Valavannor panchayath and ward 5 (Parengath) from Thanalur panchayath. From the 31 wards of urban Malappuram, three
were randomly selected -- ward 5 (Alinchode), ward 8 (Chembra North) and ward 17 (Kallingal). Then the households were categorized as emigrant households and non-emigrant households and these 150 rural households and 150 urban households were distributed according to the proportion of emigrant and non-emigrant households. For analysis, we have used bivariate tables, percentages, averages, t-test, analysis of variance (ANOVA) and multiple regressions.

The study is in eight chapters. The first chapter contains an introduction followed by the significance of the study, statement of the problem, objectives, data source, sampling methodology, methods of analysis, concepts of migration, scope of the study and limitations of the study etc. The second chapter is a review of migration theories and review of literature. The different dimensions of Gulf migration are included in the third chapter. A historical evaluation of the economic and educational status of the Muslim community in Kerala is examined in the fourth chapter. The fifth chapter analyses the impact of emigration on the economic and educational achievements of Muslim community. The determinants of Muslim higher education are examined in the sixth chapter. Seventh chapter is about the impact of educational infrastructure on the educational achievements and skill formation of Muslim community and its impact on emigration. The last chapter is a summary of findings and conclusions.

The third chapter examined the different dimensions of emigration from Kerala to the Gulf countries. Emigration of workers from Kerala to the Gulf region has made significant impact on the economy of Kerala for the last four decades. It has contributed significantly to the reduction in poverty and unemployment in the economy. Emigration decisions are influenced by the conditions at home in comparison with the conditions prevailing in the destination places. High density of population, high rate of unemployment and low rate of growth of productive sectors pushed the emigrants to the Gulf countries. Rising demand for labourers and relatively high rates of wage were the most important pull factors behind migration. Vast majority of the emigrants from Kerala were of coastal region, the poor Muslims who do not possess high educational qualifications, technical skill and enough work experience. A major share of remittances was utilized for the construction of houses, for the purchase of consumer durables, for
acquiring gold and for meeting the marriage expenses. Emigration has helped to reduce incidence of poverty and unemployment in Kerala although it has created labour shortages in some of the sectors of the economy. The adverse impact of emigration has mainly reflected on as hike in the price of land, building materials and other consumer goods which have affected the society differently. Even though emigration has not made any positive impact on the productive sectors of the economy; it has increased the investments in the tertiary sector especially in education, health and communication. Although emigrants have contributed a lot to the development of Kerala, the return of emigrants and their rehabilitation have become a major problem in the state.

A review of the economic and educational status of Muslim community in Kerala is presented in the fourth chapter. During the pre-colonial period, Muslims of Kerala were a trading community and education among them was an integral part of religion. The educational institutions were managed by the managers of the mosque and the Muslim leaders without any government support. The Muslim community considered the British administration as anti-Islamic and they started the anti-colonial struggle. Hence, they did not welcome the system of education introduced by the British as they thought that the British education would destroy their religious and cultural values. Even after independence, Muslims continued to be backward socially, economically and educationally. Emigration of Muslims to the Gulf countries and the consequent economic upsurge and social exposure they had in the Gulf changed their attitude towards modern education and even the orthodox Muslims have begun to start educational institutions under their management. Hence, emigration has made a favourable impact on the educational status of the members of the Muslim community. The emergence of self-financing educational institutions and starting of job oriented professional and technical courses under the private sector during the liberalisation period has also resulted in the development of educational achievements and skill of the members of the Muslim community.

An intra-community analysis of the impact of emigration on economic and educational status of Muslims was the major objective of the fifth chapter. The impact of emigration on the economic status of Muslims shows that emigration has
considerably improved the economic status of emigrant households. The household income has significantly increased as a result of emigration and the average monthly income of 90 percent of the emigrant households were above Rs.5000 whereas only 26.0 percent of the non-emigrant households have a monthly income of above Rs.5000. The results of the analysis of variance (ANOVA) also shows that the nature of households (F=71.216**) has a significant influence on the monthly income as there was considerable variation in the monthly income between emigrant and non-emigrant households. The interaction between nature of households and region was also significant (F = 5.586*) indicating that there is considerable difference in the income between rural emigrant and urban emigrant households and between rural non-emigrant and urban non-emigrant households. Again there is also difference between emigrant and non-emigrant households with regard to their savings as the emigrants save 3.1 percent of their total income while it is only 1.5 percent in the case of non-emigrants.

The mean expenditure of the emigrant households (10092.12) was very much higher when compared to that of non-emigrant households (6341.67). Similarly, the pattern of expenditure of emigrant households is also significantly different from that of the non-emigrant households especially in the case of food, health, education and conveyance. The emigrant households spent about 32.0 percent of their total expenditure on education while this expenditure of non-emigrant households is only 16.5 percent.

The study found that emigration and inward remittances have improved the asset possession and housing conditions of emigrant Muslims. More than three-fourth of them (79.7 percent) acquired land for house construction and other purposes and vast majority of them (76.4 percent) built houses with the income received from abroad. Hence, Gulf migration has a positive impact on the economic status and standard of living of the emigrant households. The examination of the impact of migration on the socio-economic conditions, thus, establishes that emigration and inflow of foreign remittances have significantly improved the economic position of emigrant households. The wealth, income and asset position of Muslim emigrant households are much higher compared to the non-emigrant households. The difference is more obvious in the case of
quality of housing and possession of consumer durables. Hence, emigration has definitely brought positive economic changes among the emigrant Muslim community.

The analysis of the impact of emigration on the educational status of Muslims shows that at the school level, the children of the emigrant households are attending expensive English medium unaided schools. This is because of the feeling of the emigrant parents that English language would improve the educational attainments, employment prospects, social mobility and respectability of their children in future. Emigrant parents also consider it as a symbol of status to admit their children in expensive unaided English medium schools and it has a cumulative effect as admission of a child by one parent in such a school would persuade his friends and relatives to follow suit.

At the higher secondary level also, there is a tendency among the emigrant households to send their children to unaided institutions which charge huge amounts as capitation and tuition fees. Our analysis also shows that emigrant households spent huge amounts on entrance coaching to enable their children get admission to professional courses. The mean expenditure of emigrant households on education was much higher than that of the non-emigrant households irrespective of the regions. It is evident that the emigrant households are ready to spend liberally on the higher secondary education of their children as they think higher secondary education as a stepping stone to higher education.

At the higher education level, although Muslim community was backward, there are lots of improvements in the case of children from emigrant households. The gender inequality in higher education is comparatively lower in the case of emigrant households. The students from emigrant households have a preference for the professional degree courses like engineering and medicine and the chances of students from non-emigrant households to pursue these courses are less. Thus, the children from emigrant households choose professional or job oriented courses while non-emigrants select general degree courses. The students from the emigrant households are utilizing the higher educational facilities generated by unaided self-financing institutions
although these facilities are not affordable to the students from non-emigrant households. The analysis also reveals that emigrant households are spending much more on higher education compared to non-emigrant households. The results of the t-test and the ANOVA also expose that the educational expenditure of emigrant households is very much higher than that of the non-emigrant households. The Gulf migration and the subsequent socio-economic changes have aroused the Muslim community to attain better and higher education to their children which will definitely help the community to overcome their economic and educational backwardness. Thus, Gulf migration has encouraged the members of Muslim community to increase their participation in higher education.

The analysis of the educational status of the non-students in the age group of 16-25 reveals that the status of emigrant households are far better than that of the non-emigrant households as 26.7 percent of the emigrants have an educational qualification of degree and above whereas only 9.0 percent of the non-emigrants have a qualification of degree and above. Among the reasons for discontinuing education, financial difficulty (29.9 percent), marriage (38.6 percent) and migration (14.6 percent) are the important ones. While analyzing the intra community differences in the reasons for discontinuing education, early marriage (38.0 percent) and migration (47.5 percent) are the main reasons in the case of emigrants while financial difficulty (49.2 percent) and marriage (39.3 percent) in the case of non-emigrant households. This infers that migration is one of the reasons for discontinuing study especially among male persons while marriage is the reason among female persons in the case of emigrant households; but in the case of non-emigrant households’ financial difficulty is chief cause for break in their education.

A binary logistic regression model has been fitted with 13 socio-economic variables like migration, sex, age, marital status, family size, family income, age of father, age of mother, education of father, education of mother, occupation of father, occupation of mother and locality to identify the major determinants of higher education among Muslims. Six variables like migration, sex, marital status, occupation of father, occupation of mother and locality are treated as dummy variables. The result shows that out of the selected variables, locality, migration status and father’s education have a strong positive influence on the participation of higher education of Muslims. Age,
marital status and family size are found to be negatively associated with the participation of Muslims in higher education. Among the significant variables, the coefficients of region, migration and education of the father are positively associated with higher education whereas coefficients of sex, age, marital status and family size are negatively related to participation in higher education.

The early emigrants have very low educational qualifications; the recent emigrants from Kerala have improved their educational qualifications to exploit the emerging opportunities in the labour market in Gulf countries. Our analysis of the impact of newly developed educational infrastructure during liberalization on the educational attainments and skill of Muslims shows that the liberalization policies of the Governments have facilitated the emergence of unaided self-financing educational institutions in the higher education sector which directly improved the educational attainments of educationally backward section of Muslim community. The analysis of the effects of the improved educational qualifications on emigration shows that improved educational qualifications have helped the Muslims to migrate and to acquire better employments in the Gulf countries. The early migrants transmitted their experiences in gulf countries to their family which helped their community to improve economically, socially and culturally. On the basis of the analysis, we can conclude that emigration of Muslims have facilitated the emergence of befitting educational institutions which have improved the educational performance of the new generation and the better educational qualifications have improved the employment prospects of recent emigrants which have contributed to the overall development of Muslim community in Malappuram.

Thus, it can be concluded that emigration has brought economic progress to emigrant Muslims of Kerala and the emigrant parents spend liberally on the education of their children and this has improved the educational status of the Muslim community in Kerala. It should be noted that the improvement in the educational qualifications also helped them to migrate and to get better jobs in the Gulf countries. The early migration has so positively influenced the educational attainments of the community that the consecutive generations of emigration, with a positive inclination has influenced the
educational attainments of the Muslim youth in Kerala. The Muslim community has been emerging in the educational field since emigration to the Gulf countries and the new educational institutions have also played a major role in their migration. Moreover, the improved educational standards change the prospects of recent emigrants which improve their occupational status and economic well-being and thereby the overall development of the community.

**Policy Implications**

There is a need for Government to increase the educational infrastructure under the public sector which will help the children of economically backward Muslims to attend and complete higher education.

There is a need to admit the economically backward Muslim children to self-financing educational institutions and they should be provided education free of cost. The Government may bear the expenses of poor Muslim children studying in these self-financing educational institutions.

The share of public expenditure on education in the total government expenditure has to be increased as it has been decreasing since liberalization.

**Suggestions**

Although emigration has improved the educational attainments of Muslim community, Muslims are comparatively backward educationally, particularly at higher education. Hence, the government and other non-government organizations concerned must take necessary steps to improve the educational status of Muslims at par with other religious groups.

The traditional and orthodox outlook of some of the members of Muslim community must be replaced by modern and progressive liberal views which will enable the Muslim students to attend higher educational institutions especially by the Muslim girls.

The prevalence of early marriage is one of the major reasons for the discontinuation of studies by female members of Muslim community. The community
has to change this practice which will help the girls to improve their participation in higher education.

**Conclusion**

The Gulf migration has brought significant socio-economic changes among the Muslim community in Kerala as bulk of the migrants from Kerala are from this community. Emigration has significantly improved the economic status of the migrant Muslims and brought positive changes in the attitude and perception of the emigrant Muslim households towards the education of their children. The positive attitude of the migrated Muslims has contributed to the educational development of the Muslim community in Kerala. The improvements in the economic condition of the emigrant parents also enabled them to spend liberally on the education of their children. The liberalization policies of the Governments have facilitated the emergence of unaided self-financing educational institutions in the higher education sector which has directly improved the educational status of educationally backward Muslims. In spite of the social rigidity and religious tenet, Muslim community has derived positive externalities from emigration. The benefits include improvements in income, perception and family circumstances which all have facilitated educational development of the members of the community which in turn helped them to migrate to the Gulf and to secure better jobs abroad.