
INTERSTATE MIGRATION IN KERALA: AN OVERVIEW

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Introduction

Kerala is a state with a long history of migration. Both international and inter-state migration has been going on since its formation in 1956. The state's economy and society have been greatly affected by this migration. Kerala's economy is significantly supported by the money expatriates bring in, which has resulted in the creation of a special development model that revolves around their revenue. The migration pattern of Kerala differs significantly from that of other Indian states. ¹It acts as a source of labourers for remote areas as well as a point of arrival for workers from other states looking to fill positions in the area. Workers from nearby Tamil Nadu and Karnataka first moved to Kerala, some 25 years ago, in search of job. However, in the past two decades, there has been a notable shift with a significant influx of workers from eastern and northeastern states of India migrating to Kerala. This chapter provides an overview of the Kerala's recent trends in internal migration.

Internal migration in Kerala has been a significant phenomenon with far-reaching implications for the state's economy and society. One prominent aspect of internal migration in Kerala is the movement of people from rural to urban areas within the state. This trend is driven by various factors such as employment opportunities, better infrastructure, and access to services like healthcare and education in urban centres.² As a result, urban areas in Kerala have experienced rapid population growth, leading to increased pressure on resources and infrastructure.

Moreover, internal migration in Kerala is also characterized by seasonal migration patterns, particularly in the agricultural sector. Many individuals from rural areas migrate to urban centers or other states temporarily during peak agricultural seasons in search of better-paying jobs or opportunities for casual labour. This seasonal migration plays a crucial role in meeting the labour demands of various industries, including agriculture, construction, and tourism.

¹ Kerala Migration Survey | Centre for Development Studies, <https://cds.edu/endowments/international-migration-from-kerala/kms/> (last visited May 9, 2024).

² N Ajith Kumar, *Interstate Unskilled Migrants of Kerala, South India: The Push and Pull Factors of Long Distance Migration within a Country*.

Furthermore, Kerala's internal migration dynamics are influenced by socio-economic factors such as education levels, income disparities, and social networks. For instance, individuals with higher education levels may migrate to urban areas or other states in pursuit of better career prospects, while those with limited education may engage in informal or unskilled labor within the state. Additionally, social networks and kinship ties often facilitate internal migration by providing individuals with information, support, and accommodation in destination areas.

In recent years, there has been a noticeable shift in internal migration patterns in Kerala, with increasing migration from rural to peri-urban areas. This trend is driven by factors such as land availability, housing affordability, and the desire for a better quality of life. As peri-urban areas continue to develop and expand, they attract migrants seeking employment opportunities and affordable housing options outside of congested urban centers. Overall, internal migration in Kerala is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon shaped by various economic, social, and environmental factors. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for policymakers and stakeholders to effectively address the opportunities and challenges associated with internal migration and to promote inclusive and sustainable development across the state.³

At its peak in the 1980s, when migration to the Gulf countries was expected to account for over 25% of Kerala's GDP, the share rose to 50% in the regions that produced a large number of migrants. The majority of the younger generation has been moving to Gulf and Western nations in quest of better jobs and incomes, following in their fathers' footsteps. Young, educated Malayalees have been heavily influenced by this trend to pursue white-collar careers, which are highly regarded in the local community. It's interesting to note that many Malayalees travel to Gulf countries (West Asian countries) in search of both professional and unskilled jobs, according to a study conducted by the Centre for Social and Economic Society (CSES, 2011).⁴ Kerala is regarded by many unskilled labourers from other regions of the nation as their "Gulf." Given the state's economy's apparent indicators of rapid expansion and the rise in activity, notably in the building and construction sectors, immigration is predicted to accelerate and surpass 30 lakh by 2017. But as more people left Kerala, there became less skilled and semi-skilled labour available in the state. Among the Keralite community, there is a proverb that goes, "It is easier to find a better doctor than a good carpenter in the state." This proverb

³ K. C. Zachariah, E. T. Mathew & S. Irudaya Rajan, *Impact of Migration on Kerala's Economy and Society*, Centre for Development Studies, Trivendrum Working Papers (1999), <https://ideas.repec.org/p/ind/cdswpp/297.html> (last visited May 9, 2024).

⁴ Socio Economic and Caste Census (SECC), <https://secc.gov.in/> (last visited May 9, 2024).

illustrates Kerala's current labour scarcity. The building industry and other related sectors in the state have flourished as a result of the Gulf money, as contractors were compelled to hire labour from far-off states like West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, and Bihar in addition to the closest ones. The higher wage rates among Kerala workers (for sustaining a better life with their family members) and the reluctance of physical work among the local workers for longer periods. All these have created an era of replaced migration in Kerala. Kerala has been more and more popular as a migration destination for Indians living in other regions in recent times. While there has been talk about international migration out from Kerala, academics have paid far less attention to the significant influx of migrant workers into Kerala. In 2011, it was estimated that Kerala was home to about 25 million migrant labourers from other Indian states; that number has since increased to nearly 34 million. This significant amount represents about ten percent of Kerala's overall population.

1. Population Mobility in Kerala

Kerala has a high Human Development Index and is considered to be one of the performing states in India. It is one of the states in the union with the highest out-migration rates. Since Kerala is the subject of the current study, it would be interesting to observe the patterns of in- and out-migration within the state. For many years, Keralites have been leaving their home country to seek work in other states of India. Kerala had a net inflow of immigrants until the 1940s as a result of its strong draw of laborers and traders from the surrounding region, particularly the Madras Presidency. During the Second World War, when many young people were recruited from the state for war-related jobs and sent to other areas of the country and even to foreign countries like Burma, Malaya, and Singapore, it turned out to be a net out-migrating state. This stream, along with the coastline region and certain areas of South India, is primarily populated by people from disadvantaged castes and groups.

Up until the 1940s, Kerala had a net inflow of immigrants due to its popularity among the impoverished residents of its neighboring states. Many Tamilians from Madras found work in the tea and rubber estates of Travancore and Cochin; they were especially adept at plantation labor. In the course of and following World War II, Kerala saw a shift in population from one of net inflow to one of outflow. There were several variables that led to this change. With the Second World War, Keralites' views on leaving the state started to shift. This shift in perspective came at the same time as the state's population grew due to a high and stable birth

rate and a falling death rate. This was also influenced by the state's secondary school system's phenomenal growth and the absence of comparable trends in other states across the nation. The percentage of the people with higher education was rising quickly at the same time that the state's capacity to employ them was gradually eroding. But opportunities were also emerging in the nation's quickly expanding public sector projects and the private sector's proliferating enterprises, particularly in the major cities of Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, and Chennai. The youthful, educated Malayali population took full advantage of these chances. Thus, the traditionally in-migrating state of Kerala became a key hub for out-migration to other Indian states.⁵

The population mobility of Kerala, characterized by both internal and international migration, plays a pivotal role in shaping the demographic landscape and socio-economic dynamics of the state. Kerala has a long history of migration dating back several decades, and this mobility continues to influence various aspects of life in the region.

Internal migration within Kerala involves the movement of people from rural to urban areas, as well as seasonal migration for employment opportunities in sectors such as agriculture, construction, and tourism. Urbanization has been a significant driver of internal migration, with rural residents seeking better economic prospects, education, healthcare, and infrastructure in urban centers. This influx of migrants has contributed to the growth of cities and towns, leading to challenges such as housing shortages, congestion, and pressure on public services.

In addition to internal migration, Kerala has also been a significant source of international migrants, particularly to the Gulf countries. The Gulf migration phenomenon, which began in the 1970s, has had a profound impact on Kerala's economy, society, and culture.⁶ Remittances from Keralite expatriates form a substantial portion of the state's revenue, fueling consumption, investment, and development projects. However, Gulf migration has also led to social disruptions, such as family separation, cultural changes, and the feminization of certain occupations within the state.

Moreover, Kerala's population mobility is influenced by various socio-economic factors, including education levels, income differentials, and employment opportunities. The state's high literacy rate and emphasis on education have contributed to a skilled migrant workforce

⁵ K Srinivasavan, *India: Towards Population and Development Goals*.

⁶ K. C. & S Irudaya Rajan Zachariah, *Migration and Development: The Kerala Experience*.

that seeks employment opportunities both within and outside the state. Kerala's healthcare system and social welfare programs have also attracted migrants from other Indian states seeking better healthcare facilities and quality of life.

Overall, the population mobility of Kerala reflects a complex interplay of factors such as urbanization, globalization, economic development, and social change. Understanding and managing this mobility are essential for policymakers to address the opportunities and challenges associated with migration and to promote inclusive and sustainable development in the state.

Kerala is the best-ranked Indian state in both the Human Development Index and the Rural Social Development Index because it prioritizes human development over economic development. With rates of 13.7 percent in rural and 14.7 percent in urban regions in 2004–05, the state has shown effectiveness in reducing poverty. This is in stark contrast to the same national statistics for India, which were 25.9 percent and 28.7 percent, respectively.⁷

With a 100 percent literacy rate, it's a common occurrence for residents of Kerala to seek employment opportunities beyond state and national borders, notably in Gulf countries, a trend that has persisted for many years. Statistics indicate that approximately 1.85 million Keralites have migrated abroad with an additional 0.97 million relocating to various regions within India. Conversely, concerning migration to Kerala, inter-state movements constitute a significant portion of the overall migration pattern. "Migrant labourers reaching Kerala in unreserved compartments need not worry about issues like huge international air fares, shoddy labour camp accommodation and extreme weather conditions that are prevalent in Gulf countries," said Dr. S Irudaya Rajan, chair professor, Ministry of Overseas, Indian Affairs, Research unit on International migration who coordinated the first-of-its-kind study. According to a survey by the Centre for Development Studies, thousands of migrant workers from other regions of India, especially North and East, can make up to Rs. 350 per day in Kerala, which is six times the average daily wage of Rs. 50 to Rs. 70. The survey also shows that the majority of migrant workers are employed in a variety of industries, including food processing facilities, small-scale manufacturing, construction, jewelry production, and hospitality services. According to *The Times of India* the average wage for unskilled and semi-skilled laborers is Rs. 350 per

⁷ Tendulkar Suresh D. (2009), Report of the Expert Group to Review the Methodology for Estimation of Poverty, Government of India: Planning Commission.

day, or approximately Rs. 10,000 per month.

According to The Hindu Business Line (2007, October 23)⁸, migrants make up 1.3% of Kerala's population, with the majority coming from Tamil Nadu and Ernakulam Districts (almost 60%), followed by Maharashtra and Karnataka. The article also disclosed that migrant workers have greater opportunities due to the lack of local labour and the state's increased wages for unskilled labor. A noteworthy observation made in the paper is that women get paid Rs. 196 and men Rs. 226 due to prejudice.

The report on NDTV on July 11, 2012⁹ revealed that a total of 63,200 workers from other states have registered with police in Kerala as per the new guidelines issued by the Government.

In the meantime, Rishi K. Manoj (2013)¹⁰ reviews the Gulati Institute of Finance and Taxation (GIFT) study report and discusses the problems associated with migrant labour in his piece "DML: We Know Little, Care Little, and do Little for Them." The GIFT report's main topics include a closer look of the state's migrant labour force. Among the highlights are:

- It is estimated from the survey that there are about 25 lakh Domestic Migrant Labour (DML) in Kerala with an annual arrival rate of 2.35 lakh
- The remittances to their home states by the DML are over Rs. 17,500 crores
- As per the study, it is observed that 75 per cent of the DML are from five states namely West Bengal, Bihar, Assam, Uttar Pradesh and Orissa and most of them are males falling under the age group of 18 – 35 years
- Most of the migrants are working under contractors and get employment either for six or seven days.
- Construction, hospitality, manufacturing, trade and agricultural sectors are the major

⁸ The Hindu BusinessLine ePaper | Latest Business News and Financial Updates, <https://epaper.thehindubusinessline.com/reader> (last visited May 9, 2024).

⁹ Over 60,000 migrant workers register with Kerala police, NDTV.com, <https://www.ndtv.com/south/over-60-000-migrant-workers-register-with-kerala-police-492091> (last visited May 9, 2024).

¹⁰ GIFT | Gulati Institute of Finance and Taxation Thiruvananthapuram, <https://www.gift.res.in/> (last visited May 9, 2024).

areas that provide employment opportunities for the migrants workers

- On an average they may remit Rs.70,000/- per person annually and work for long hours, sometimes say 8 – 10 hours per day
- As they are working for long hours, generally these migrants are hard workers and dedicated to their work and there are hardly complaints from their employers
- It is highlighted in the report that the migrant workers do not get the benefits of social security schemes as they are unaware of labour rights and obligations and are not unionized.

3.2 An Estimate of Migrant Labourers

It is unknown how many migrant workers there are in Kerala and where they came from. Governments have found it challenging to precisely monitor the movements of internal migrants. Because these individuals are nomads, attempts to make sense of their existence had only recently produced patchy results. According to the 2001 and 2011 Census, the total number of ISMs in Kerala is 4.5 lakh and 6.54 lakh respectively. In the post-1990s, Kerala witnessed an increase in internal migrants from different parts of the country instead of labourers from the neighbouring states. This is manifested to its maximum in the construction industry.

In terms of the quantity of individuals involved possibly even in terms of remittance volumes—a growing nation like India with significant regional differences in general migration may be even more crucial than interstate labour migration. According to the most recent government data available, migration in India has increased by around 7% since 2001. Migration is a phenomenon of great importance. The proportion 37.64% of the 455 million people in the population were classified as migrants, compared to 30% of the 307 million people in the 1028 million overall population the population of India in 2001. It is important to note that around 12% of the 54 million state migrants in the 2011 census were migrants (Office of the Registrar General and Census Commission, 2011). Of these, 23 million people—or over 50%—had relocated in search of employment. Large numbers of labour migrants from the Far East and North Eastern states, including Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Assam, West Bengal, Odisha, and a small number from Manipur, arrived in Kerala.

3.3 Characteristics of Inter-State Migrants in Kerala

Though the report appreciated the efforts taken by migrant workers, the problems in connection with the migrant workers are also highlighted in the report and some of the major issues are;

- The living conditions of the migrant workers are not even up the mark. It is observed that the migrant workers are often staying in the work site, factories, overcrowded rooms with poor water supply and sanitation facilities
- The poor living conditions of the migrants would not only affect their health but also create questions over the health of local people
- Exceeding migrant workers also lead to making demand for cheap labour to the productive sectors in Kerala.

The report on Domestic Migrant Labour in Kerala (15 Feb 2013), Government of Kerala is also reviewed and the major highlights of the same are;

- At present the state has migrant labour from all the states of India and other countries such as Nepal
- The largest population are from West Bengal (20%), followed by Bihar (18.10%), Assam (17.28%) and Uttar Pradesh (14.83%)
- An on average, migrant workers are staying in Kerala for a minimum of 3 years
- One of the notable point is that the migrant workers are always moving around almost across the state and undertake various works in various places
- Friends (54.69%), contractors (28.16%), relatives (10.61%) are the major sources of information for the migrant workers to know about the job opportunities
- The report revealed that 69.52% of migrants have been engaged as unskilled works while 18.50% of migrants are employed in skilled works
- Regarding the periodical remittance 42.18% have informed that migrant workers remit their salary occasionally or every month

- It is found that 38.50% migrant workers are remitting an average amount of Rs.5000 to 10000/-

Characteristics	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Channel used to reach Kerala		
Friends	2351	41.1
Relatives	1505	26.3
Contractors	1165	20.4
Directly	664	11.6
Others	35	0.6
Total	5720	100.0
Travelling expenses spent to reach Kerala		
0-500	209	3.7
501-1000	643	11.2
1001-1500	664	11.6
1501-2000	1724	30.1
Above 2000	2480	43.4
Total	5720	100.0

Channels of migration

Except for traveling directly to their destination state, the majority of migrant workers rely on various channels or networks to reach there. In Kerala, three primary channels facilitating their arrival are 'relatives' and 'friends' who have previously migrated to Kerala, as well as 'contractors'. Among these, 'friends' serve as the primary channel, aiding 41.1 percent of migrants in reaching Kerala for work. Additionally, 26.3 percent are assisted by relatives, while 20.4 percent utilize contractors' services. Interestingly, only 12 percent of migrant workers travel directly without external assistance. It's noteworthy that the majority of laborers secure employment opportunities in Kerala without relying on contractors.

3.4 Socio economic profile

Kerala's social and economic status is superior to those of other Indian states.

With a high literacy rate of 93.91 percent compared to the nation's 74.04 percent literacy rate as reported by the 2011 Census, which also has a male literacy rate of 96.0 percent and a female literacy rate of 92.0 percent, it has the highest quality of life index in the nation¹¹. Kerala's life expectancy and health statistics are practically on par with those of wealthy nations. With 835 primary health facilities, 24 dispensaries, 237 community health centers, and 5403 sub-centers, the state boasts a strong healthcare infrastructure. Other well-known social and economic infrastructure in Kerala includes banking, schools, post offices, telephones, and road transportation. Large-scale emigration, which started in the early 1970s, has encouraged near-revolutionary changes in purchasing patterns, living conditions, educational attainment, and health status while also keeping Kerala's economy stable.

Kerala's socio-economic growth has had a significant impact on interstate migration patterns within the state. As Kerala has developed economically and improved its social indicators, it has become an attractive destination for migrants from other states in search of employment opportunities, better living standards, and access to quality education and healthcare.

One of the key drivers of interstate migration to Kerala is the state's emphasis on human development and social welfare. With high literacy rates, strong healthcare infrastructure, and various social welfare schemes, Kerala offers a conducive environment for migrants looking to improve their socio-economic status. Additionally, the state's vibrant service sector, including industries such as tourism, IT, healthcare, and education, provides employment opportunities for migrants with diverse skill sets.

Furthermore, Kerala's success in reducing poverty and improving living standards has made it an aspirational destination for migrants from economically disadvantaged regions of India¹². Many migrants are drawn to Kerala by the promise of better wages, working conditions, and social protection compared to their home states. This influx of migrants has contributed to the state's socio-economic growth by filling labor shortages in various sectors and supporting economic activities.

However, interstate migration to Kerala also presents challenges, including pressure on infrastructure, housing, and social services. As the population of migrants continues to

¹¹ Zachariah, Mathew, and Rajan, *supra* note 3.

¹² James Lizy (2016). "Social Integration of Migrant Workers in Kerala: Problems and Prospects", Kerala Institute of Labour and Employment

increase, particularly in urban and peri-urban areas, there is a need for effective planning and governance to ensure inclusive development and address issues of social integration, access to basic amenities, and protection of migrant rights.

3.5 Kerala Model of Development

With a number of developmental laws pertaining to healthcare, education, and agricultural reforms, the Kerala government established policies that sought to propose a convergence of the levels of development throughout all the regions. Kerala State, encompassing 1.18 percent (38863 square kilometers) of India's total land area, is home to 3.1% of the country's population. Kerala's experience with development is marked by a higher degree of social development relative to economic growth. The experience is known as the Kerala Model of Development, and academics and development organizations have taken notice of it globally.

Kerala's Human Development Index is exceptionally high in regards to health, income, and education. The actual ranking of Kerala's districts in terms of per capita health and education is shown in the table. According to the table Thiruvananthapuram, Kottayam, and Ernakulam have the greatest per capita incomes.

In the education index, Kottayam was first, followed by Wayanad and Pathanamthitta. Idukki is ranked second among the fourteen districts for health care, after Kottayam and Thiruvananthapuram. Social development and interconnectedness are symbolized by the per capita income index, health, and education. Improved per capita income is implied by improved health and education combined.

(Table 3.1 District-wise distribution of education, health, and per capita income)

SL No:	Districts	Per capita Income	Education Index	Health Index
1	Trivandrum	57563	0.941	1.222
2	Kollam	48795	0.924	0.921
3	Pathanamthitta	56994	1.259	0.928
4	Alappuzha	53535	0.978	1.188
5	Kottayam	61668	1.391	1.541
6	Idukki	51367	1.187	1.634
7	Ernakulam	79553	1.031	0.997
8	Thrissur	56087	1.032	0.964
9	Palakkad	49825	0.966	0.686
10	Malappuram	33783	0.772	0.647
11	Kozhikode	50389	0.936	0.854
12	Wayanad	38341	1.122	1.314
13	Kannur	50623	1.037	0.759
14	Kasargod	44588	0.920	1.364

Source: Census of India- 2011, secondary data source from ABHYUDAYA Newsletter of UGC-UPE Focus Area II, Volume 2, Issue-4, University of Mysore, April-June- 2014

The development model of Kerala offers a picture that is not evident in states or countries with lower per capita incomes. A number of significant socioeconomic indices, including a high life expectancy, a low birth rate, high literacy, access to healthcare, a low infant mortality rate, and a low maternal death rate, serve as evidence of the state's high degree of development. a group of high material quality of life statistics that are spread over almost the whole population of Kerala and that correlate with per capita earnings.¹³ The excellent material quality of living indices are mostly the result of a number of wealth and resource redistribution programs. High degree of public engagement and activism, as well as a sizable number of devoted leaders at all levels; Kerala's mass activism and devoted cadre were able to operate inside a framework

¹³ Haseena, V.A. 2015. "Welfare Scheme for Domestic Migrant Workers in the Analysis of Kerala", Public policy and Administration Research, Vol. 5, No. 2

that was primarily democratic, which their activism has helped to sustain.

Amartya Sen says” *India does not need to look elsewhere for development pointers. However, there is much that India can learn from Kerala's development experience.*”¹⁴

Data on migration has been recorded in Indian Censuses since 1872. Initially, this data solely focused on gathering information about individuals' birthplaces until 1961. However, starting from 1961, additional details such as whether the birthplace was rural or urban and the length of time spent at the current place of residence were incorporated. From the 1971 Census onwards, migration data expanded to include inquiries about individuals' last places of residence, in addition to their birthplaces. Furthermore, reasons for migration began to be documented as well.

Table 3.1: Percentage share of interstate migrants in Kerala population, 2011

	Population of Kerala in 2011	Number of Interstate migrants in Kerala 2011	Percentage of Interstate migrants in Kerala 2011
Total	3,34,06,061	615849	1.9
Male	1,60,27,412	318237	2.0
Female	1,73,78,649	297612	1.7
Rural	1,74,71,135	287000	1.6
Urban	1,59,34,926	328849	2.0

Table 3.1 presents the percentage breakdowns of interstate migrants within the population of Kerala in 2011. According to the Census of India 2011, individuals who migrated to Kerala from other Indian states constitute merely 1.9 percent of the state's population in that year. Interstate migration to Kerala is driven by various factors, such as employment opportunities and marital reasons. Some of these migrants have established long-term residence in Kerala. In this analysis, migrants of all durations are considered. Additionally, it's noted that compared to females, a higher proportion of males are engaged in interstate migration. The Census of 2011 states that 6,15,849 interstate migrants were counted in Kerala. Of these, 53.4 percent

¹⁴ Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom*.pp.no 284

reside in the State's cities and 51.7 percent are men. The majority of interstate immigrants in Kerala are from the neighboring state of Tamil Nadu, followed by Karnataka. The oddity observed in the migration data of the 2011 Indian census is the emergence of West Bengal, Odisha, and Assam in the regions of Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra as the primary contributors of interstate migrants in Kerala. According to gender-specific data, there are more women than men among the interstate migrants from Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Puducherry, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, and Gujarat who arrived in Kerala.



Table 3.2 : Percentage share of interstate migrants in the districts of Kerala, 2011

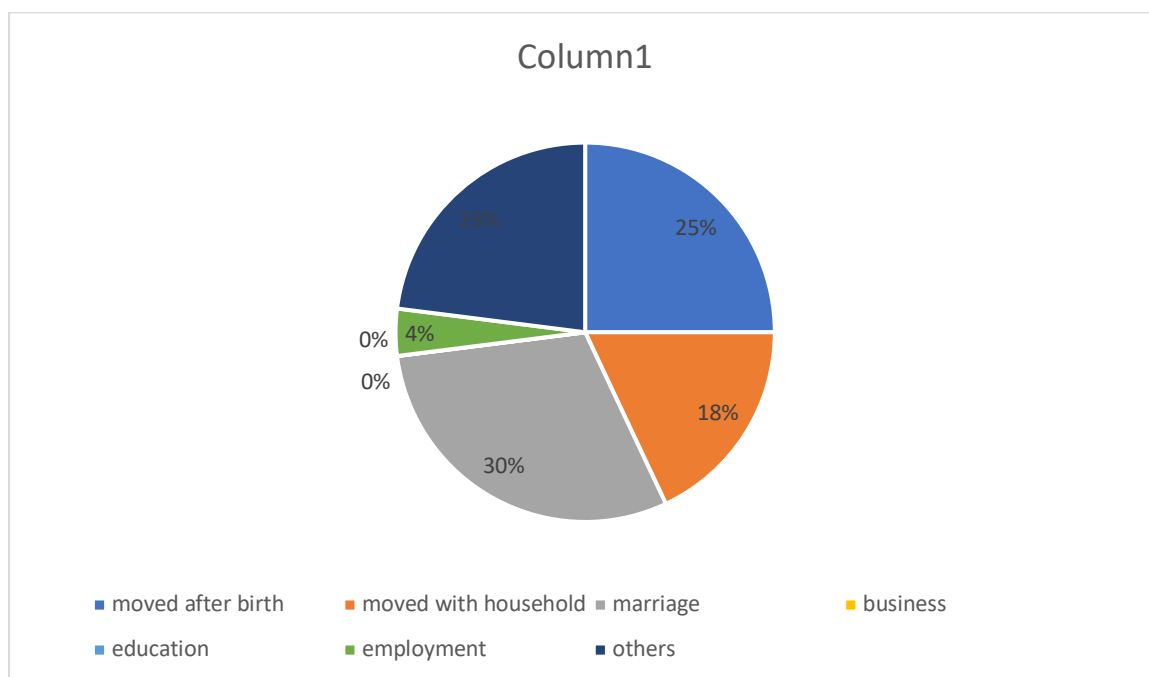
District	total	rural	urban	number
Thiruvananthapuram	11.9	6.9	16.3	73441
Kollam	4.2	4.1	4.2	25754
Pathanamthitta	3.0	5.3	1.0	18480
Alappuzha	3.1	2.6	3.5	19261
kottayam	4.3	4.9	3.8	26586
Idukki	8.1	17.2	0.2	49958
Ernakulam	12.1	3.5	19.6	74526
Thrissur	6.8	3.8	9.5	42157
Palakkad	12.0	16.9	7.7	73955
Malappuram	5.5	6.0	5.1	34140
Kozhikode	7.9	3.7	11.6	48842
Wayanad	3.7	7.3	0.5	22738

Kannur	6.7	4.0	9.0	40974
Kasargod	10.6	13.8	7.7	65037
Kerala	100	46.8	53.4	615849

The distribution of interstate migrants among the 14 districts is not uniform. It depends on a number of factors, including growth and employment opportunities brought about by fast urbanization, etc. The percentage of interstate migrants in each of the four districts Ernakulam, Palakkad, Thiruvananthapuram, and Kasaragod is greater than 10%. Higher levels of urban concentration are found in the districts of Thrissur, Kozhikode, Ernakulam, and Thiruvananthapuram. The rural areas of Idukki, Palakkad, Wayanad, and Kasaragod also had a higher number of migrants during this period.

3.5 Reason for migration

Fig 3.5 Graphical representation of reasons for migration, 2011



Census data offer insights into the reasons for migration among "all migrants," but it doesn't offer specific details for distinct categories like interstate migrants or internal migrants. Therefore, it's challenging to pinpoint the exact reasons for migration among interstate in-migrants in Kerala. Nevertheless, the Census remains the primary and authoritative source for understanding the actual motivations behind migration. Figure 3.3 sheds light on the diverse reasons for migration in Kerala. Approximately one-third of the mobility stemmed from

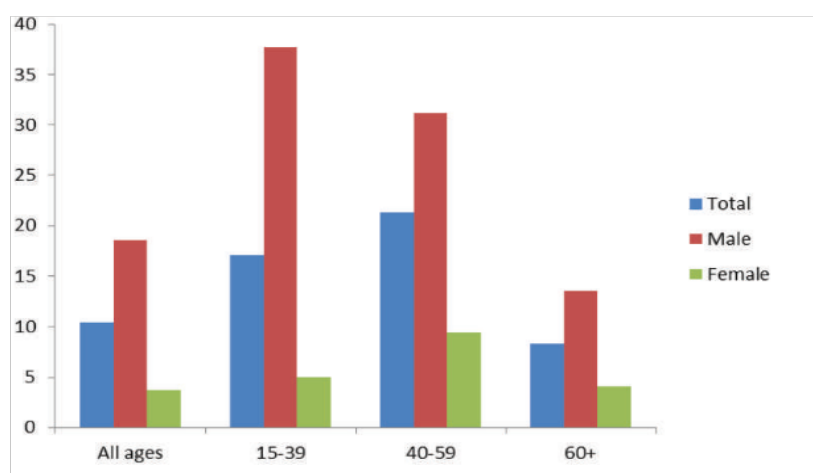
marriage, while employment accounted for only 4 percent of migrants in Kerala.

(Table 3.3 In-migrants in Kerala migrated within one year prior to the Census for work/employment classified by age and gender, 2011)

Age group	Total	Male	Female
All ages	10.4	18.5	3.7
15-39	17.1	37.7	5.0
40-59	21.3	31.3	9.4
60+	8.3	13.6	4.1

Table 3.3 presents data on migrants who arrived in Kerala within the year before the census was conducted, with the aim of finding employment or a job. This will help determine how the migrants' migration is dynamic in terms of age and gender. Kerala also exhibits the gendered aspect of immigration for employment. In the economically active age group of 15 to 39, almost 38% of younger adult males moved in search of employment a year before the Census. However, only 5% of women fall into this category. In cases of migration brought on by job, the 40–59 age group often makes up a larger share. Among Kerala's migrants, the proportion of women employed or working is small. The tempo of male migration to Kerala points a major lift in the number of migrants in Kerala which will be reflected in the next census data.

Figure 3.4 In-migrants in Kerala who migrated during one year prior to the Census, for work/employment classified by age and gender, 2011



The analysis of census, 2011 data of immigration in Kerala revealed that the conventional contributors of interstate migrants into the State have changed over the census period. Share of migrants from the States like West Bengal, Odisha, Assam and Uttar Pradesh are increasing in Kerala. However, Marriage remained the single most major reason for migration. Women interstate migrants are negligible in the work/employment sector. The Census data was collected in 2011 and increase in the flow of immigrants in search of work to Kerala has been documented by various agencies over the past 10 years, which is clearly after the Census in 2011. Hence a major uplift in the pattern and reason of immigration might have occurred in the State, during the last decade.