Gulf Emigration and Changing Socio-demographic Status of Muslims: A study From Bishnupur 2 Block, South 24 Parganas, West Bengal

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Abstract

International migration has been an important issue of discussion for researchers across the world. India, as a developing nation is experiencing huge emigration flows into different developed nations in the last few decades. Less educated and less skilled or semi-skilled labours across different parts of the country have emigrated to different Gulf nations to join better jobs. Workers from different states like Kerala, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal etc. were involved in the emigration process mainly into the Gulf. Muslim workers from different parts of West Bengal have been in the Gulf for a long duration also. The status of these workers and their families is changing dramatically due to out-migration into the Gulf. Muslims are known to be backward in India and in particular West Bengal in almost every sector. Recently, involvement in emigration into the Gulf and joining high-salaried jobs suddenly made changes in the socio-economic status of Muslims. Different areas under the Bishnupur II block of South 24 Parganas are Muslim-dominated, from where bulks of migrants are going into the Gulf for the last few decades. The present study has investigated the impact of out-migration on the social and demographic status of the households of Muslim emigrant workers and interpreted the difference between emigrant and non-migrant households in the area. It is a quantitative study and is based on primary data collected through household surveys with semi-structured questionnaires. Collected data are analysed through descriptive statistical techniques and are depicted by tables and cartograms. The study reveals that emigration to the Gulf or the GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) countries has a huge impact on Muslims both in their social and demographic sectors.

Key Words: Gulf Emigration, Muslims,Social and demographic Status, South 24 Parganas, West Bengal,

1. Introduction: Migration is the act or process of moving from one place to another with the intent of staying at the destination permanently or for a relatively long period (Jhonston, 1990). Migration is a dynamic process and the root of migration is as deep as human existence. Lots of factors determine the migration process but financial issues are the prime determinant of migration. As per the lows of migration, the absolute and most significant reasons for migration are economic factors. Migration can be classified into different categories. But in a broad sense, scale-wise migration is mainly of two types- international and internal migration. International migration is further classified into two different sub-categories, namely in-migration or Immigration and out-migration or emigration. The difference between these two is known as net migration. There are dozens of factors assessing the process of emigration or immigration. Some of these factors are known as push factors which are associated with the place of origin of the movement. These include lack of employment, poor standard of living conditions, regular or excessive physical or climatic hazards like cyclones, and earthquakes; lack of educational facilities, lack of fertile land/agricultural land; religious, racial or gender intolerance; lack of political or religious rights etc. Pull factors on the other hand, refers to those issues which are associated with the area of destination. Examples of pull factors are better living conditions, favourable and quality job opportunities, availability of cheap land, social-political and democratic freedom, pleasant climatic and favourable physical environment, freedom in political issues, sufficient or better wages of labour etc. (Sen, 2008).

Migration affects the socio-economic status of both the origin and destination places. Socio-demographic status refers to the factors related to employment, education, marriage rate, birth and date rates, literacy rate, work participation rate and more. All these factors are responsible for making the nature and characteristics of an individual family or a community. It is assumed that if a community is doing better in all these sectors, they refer to be progressive and developed. The above indicators are dynamic and can be changed in times to come. Moreover, factors can be varied on a community and environmental basis. Socio-demographics refer to a combination of social and demographic factors and the data related to it are collected by the researchers using different tools like interviews, surveys and observation (https://www.formpl.us/blog/socio-demographics).

The number of international migrants is continuously increasing for decades. The global migrant stock increased from a 92million in 1960 to 258 million in 2017. North America, particularly the United States remains the most preferred destination for the migrant in the world. In 2017, the United States (USA) hold a 49776970 migrant population which shared

more than 19 % of the total international migrants. Russian Federation, the UK and different GCC countries like Saudi Arabia, UAE etc. are significant in terms of the total number of international migrants concerned. Presently they are on the list of the top ten destination countries in the World.

India is the country with the highest proportion of migrants at the world level after independence. Being a developing nation and 2nd largest population-based country, India remains the main source country of international migrants since its independence. As per the UNDESA report in 2017, about 6718862 Indians lived various areas of the globe in 1990. In 2017, the number of international migrants from India was 16587720 which accounted for 6.44% of total global migrants. That means there has been an almost 247% increase in Indian migrants in just 27 years. Table 1 shows the number of Indian migrants against total global migrants from 1990 to 2017. It indicates India's dominance in international migration for the last few decades.

Table 1: Number of international migrants in different years (1990-2017)

Year	Total Migrant	Indian Migrant	% of Indian Migrant
1990	15,25,42,373	67,18,862	4.4
1995	16,07,00,028	72,33,782	4.5
2000	17,26,04,257	79,78,365	4.62
2005	19,05,31,600	96,49,626	5.06
2010	22,00,19,266	1,33,21,332	6.05
2015	24,75,85,744	1,58,60,056	6.41
2017	25,77,15,425	1,65,87,720	6.44

Source: UNDESA, 2017 and computed by the author in 2021

A huge number of skilled and unskilled workers from India go abroad to get high wages or to join high-salaried jobs. About 84% of Indian migrants lived in high-income group countries in 2017, indicating the significance of emigration from India. India presently is the highest remittance recipient country in the world followed by China and Mexico. In 2019 India received remittances of 83,332 million dollars as per the data published by the World Bank.

Emigration from India to the Gulf region has a long history way back centuries to the time of Arab traders and travellers. Changes in economic conditions and immigration policies in the host countries determine the nature and trend of migration to GCC (Chanda and Gupta,

2018). Indian migrants in the Middle East, especially in the Gulf countries, are significant in number. Table 2 shows the percentage of Indian migrants in the GCC against total global Indian migrants from 1990 to 2017. In 1990, there were 29.19% of total Indian migrants present in the GCC. In 2017, the percentage increased to 53.68%, which indicates how Gulf migration is significant for India in their socio-economic perspective.

Table 2: Percentage of Indian migrant in the GCC against total global Indian migrant

Year	Total Indian migrant	Indian migrant in the GCC	% of Indian migrant in the GCC against total global Indian migrant
1990	**67,18,862**	1955742	29.19
1995	**72,33,782**	2290500	31.66
2000	**79,78,365**	2739058	34.33
2005	**96,49,626**	3713285	38.48
2010	**1,33,21,332**	6441256	48.35
2015	**1,58,60,056**	8249256	52.01
2017	**1,65,87,720**	8904781	53.68

Source: UNDESA, 2017 and computed by the author in 2021

Among all the six GCC countries, UAE and Saudi Arabia are in the dominant positions, holding the maximum number of Indian migrants in 2017. They jointly comprised 33.62% of total global Indian migrants followed by Oman (7.25%), Kuwait (6.98%), Qatar (3.97%) and Bahrain (1.87%). Table 3 shows the percentage of Indian migrants in different GCC countries against their total immigrants in 2017. The number of Indian migrants was higher than the number of migrants from any other country. As per the data, UAE and Saudi Arabia are the top two countries where Indian migrants are significant in number. All the GCC countries hold Indian migrants at a sizable number. Oman holds 57.98% of its total

Table 3: Percentage of Indian migrants in different GCC countries, 2017

GCC countries	Total immigrants	Indian Migrant	% of Indian migrant
Bahrain	7,22,649	3,10,591	42.97
Kuwait	31,23,431	11,57,072	37.04
Oman	20,73,292	12,01,995	57.98
Qatar	17,21,392	6,58,488	38.25
Saudi Arabia	1,21,85,284	22,66,216	18.59
UAE	83,12,524	33,10,419	39.83

Source: UNDESA, 2017 and computed by the author in 2021

migrants who are Indian. Bahrain, UAE, Qatar and Kuwait comprise Indian migrants of total foreign nationals of 42.97%, 39.83%, 38.25% and 37.04% respectively. Saudi Arabia obtained Indian migrants as low as 18.59% of its total immigrants.

Emigration from India to the GCC (Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates) countries is not a new phenomenon. It has a historical background and it increased remarkably since the 1970s due to the Oil Boom (Kumar, 2013). As per the annual report 2019, published by the Ministry of External Affairs (MOEA), about 3.34 lakh Indian workers migrated to different ECR countries. The majority of them migrated to GCC countries (See table 4). About 1.43 million workers emigrated from India to Saudi Arabia in 2019, which is the highest among all the ECR (Emigration Check Required) countries. A sizable number of workers also have emigrated to UAE (0.72 million), and Kuwait (0.42 million) from India.

SL. No.	Name of the countries	Year-2019 (30.11.2019)
1	**Saudi Arabia**	1.43
2	UAE	0.72
3	**Kuwait**	0.42
4	**Qatar**	0.28
5	**Oman**	0.26
6	**Bahrain**	0.09
7	Malaysia	0.10
8	Others	0.04
	Total	3.34

Table 4: Persons emigrated in ECR countries (in Lakh), 2019

Source: Annual Report 2019-20, Ministry of External Affairs, Accessed in 2021

State-wise number of Indian migrants is much more diversified and dynamic. Before 2010, Kerala was in the dominant position in sending migrant labour to GCC countries. Different South Indian states apart from Kerala were also very significant in sending labour migrants to the Gulf. Things have changed quickly as northern and eastern states like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan and West Bengal have emerged as major labour-sending states of India. Decreasing wages, unavailability of quality work with good wages, increasing frequency of unemployment and huge population growth are the reason behind it. The following figure shows the state-wise percentage of emigrants in ECR countries against the total in 2007 and 2018. The comparative chart (Figure 1) clearly shows the reduction in the

number of emigrants from Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra. Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal are currently the major migrant-sending states of India with a percentage of 31.5%, 15.3%, and 8.3% respectively in 2018.
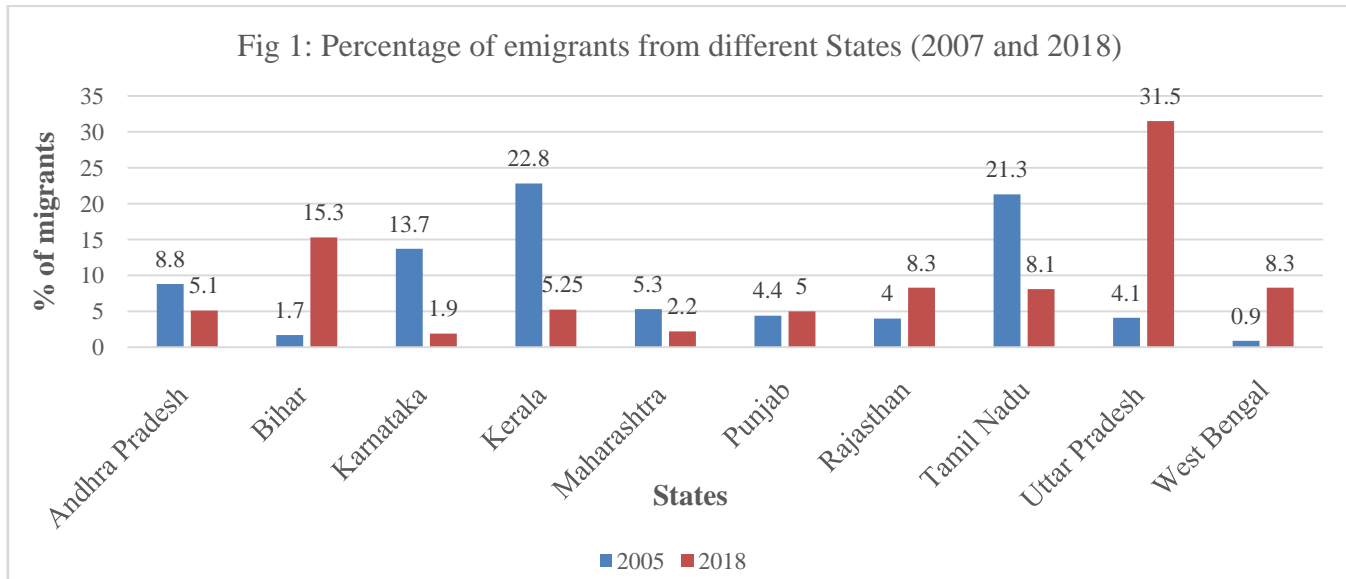

Fig: 1

Source: Annual Report of Ministry of External Affairs 2018 and Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs 2005, Computed by the author in 2021

Figure 2 shows the percentage of emigrants who got clearances to move into different ECR countries from 2007 to 2019 from west Bengal against total Indian migrants into ECR countries. The percentage has been constantly increasing and moves to 7.89 % in 2019 from just 3.89% in 2007. So it can be said that West Bengal is emerging as a major labour-sending state of India along with UP, Bihar, and Rajasthan.
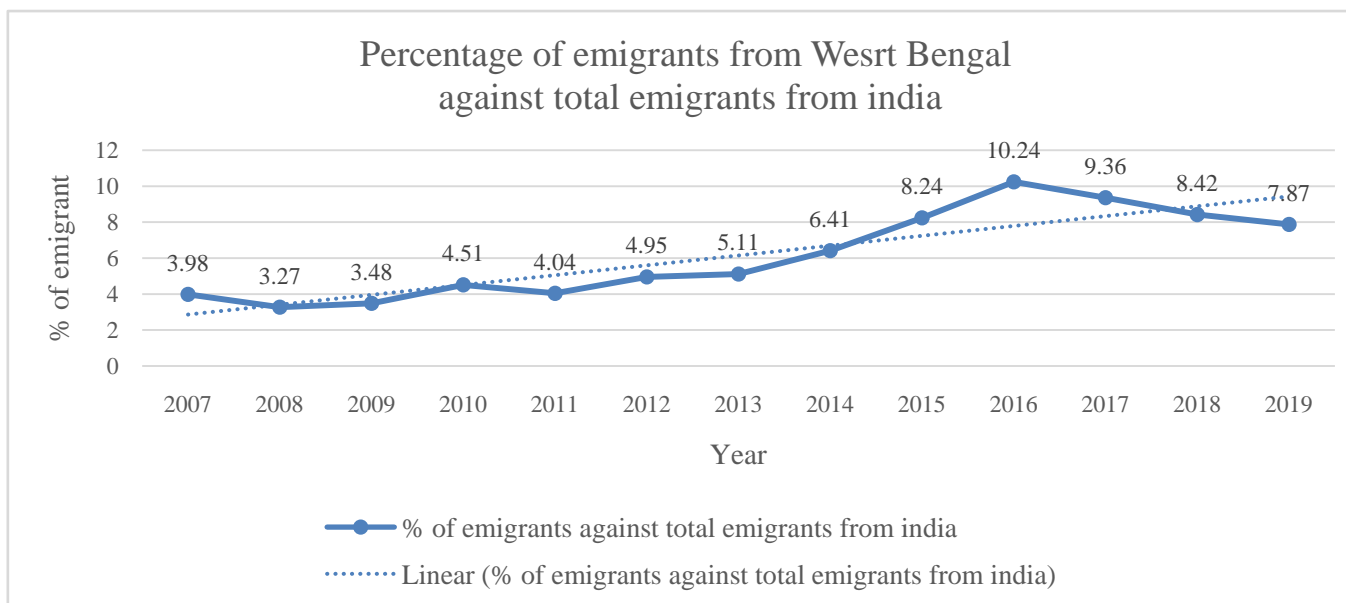

Fig: 2

Source: e-migrate portal, Ministry of External Affairs. Accessed in 2021.

As per the PEW Research Centre, minorities are more likely to migrate from India compared to the majority group (Hindus). Muslims constitute only 14% of the total Indian population while they represent 27% of total migrants from India. The majority of Muslim emigrants from India presently reside in different GCC countries. The majority of the migrants in the GCC are estimated to be Muslims. As per the Global Religion and Migration database in 2010, there were 10590000 Muslim migrant workers present in the GCC countries. This accounted for more than 70% of total migrants.

Different Muslim-dominated or oriented districts of West Bengal from where migrant workers are much involved in emigration into the GCC countries. Murshidabad, South 24 Parganas, North 24 Parganas, Burdwan and Nadia are a few of the districts which are very significant in terms of sending migrant labour to the GCC countries concerned. Interestingly, all these districts are having a sizable number of Muslims in their total population. Murshidabad and South 24 Parganas are the top two Muslim numbered districts in West Bengal as well as in India with a total of 4707573 and 2903075 Muslim populations as per the 2011 census. As per the data of MOEA all the districts presently are in the list of top 50 migrant sending districts in India. As per the reports of the e-migrate portal of the Ministry of External Affairs (MOEA), from 2015 to 2018, more than 20000 workers migrated from South 24 Parganas district to the Gulf countries. Various Muslim-dominated CD blocks, such as Magrahat I, Magrahat II, Falta, Bishnupur I, and Bishnupur II, are significant in terms of sending migrant labour. As block-wise data on migration is not available, it's not possible to figure out the exact block-wise number of Migrant workers.

Muslims of West Bengal live in both Rural and Urban areas. The majority of them concentrates in the rural area. Both the rural and urban Muslims suffered from poverty, illiteracy, unemployment and other social problems. But the situation is critical in rural areas where the Muslim population share majority of the West Bengal population (Biswas, 2015). Muslims are the principal minority and second-largest religious group after the Hindus in India and West Bengal in particular. According to the Census of India 2011, they Constitute 14.64% in India and 27.0% in West Bengal. Murshidabad district has the largest Muslim community with 66.27% of the total population followed by Maldah (51.27%), Uttardinajpur (49.92%), Birbhum (37.06%) and South 24 Parganas (35.57%). Muslims lack a share of political power and social status. Their numerical strength of population is still lower than the majority community in Indian society. In West Bengal,

Muslims are in a disadvantaged position in terms of getting facilities or infrastructure, even though they constitute the majority population of a district. (Mainuddin, 2011).

Agriculture is the major source of livelihood for both the Muslim and Hindu communities as they work as cultivators or agricultural labourers. Muslim participation in the Government sector is very tiny. The share of migrant workers is quite sizable in this district. Almost 65 % of migrant Muslim workers are involved in long-term migration. The majority of these workers migrated within the district or state. So it is expressed that there are no pull factors for attracting migrant labour into the city of Kolkata as the city has become less attractive to job seekers from the villages (MCD Project, South 24 Parganas).

2. Study Area: The present study investigated the status of Gulf migration and its impact on Muslim workers of different areas of Bishnupur 2 block of South 24 Parganas district, West Bengal. Bishnupur 2 CD block is minority-influenced and it lies in proximity to the city of Kolkata. Different areas of the blocks are purely Muslim dominated from where a bulk of Muslim workers are continuously moving to Gulf or GCC countries for the last two decades. It is hard to find a household of other communities rather than Muslims with migrant workers working in the Gulf. ChackEnayet Nagar census town, Amtala, Chandi, Mirpur, and Kriparampur are a few of the areas from where Muslims are involved in the emigration process to be settled mainly in the Gulf countries. Muslims are less educated and less technically solid in West Bengal as per the Sachar Committee Report, published in 2006. They are involved in Jory or embroideries works, agricultural and allied activities, and different other household activities, mostly on a daily wage basis. Recently, a number of workers from the Muslim community migrate to various Gulf countries to get a job with high salaries.
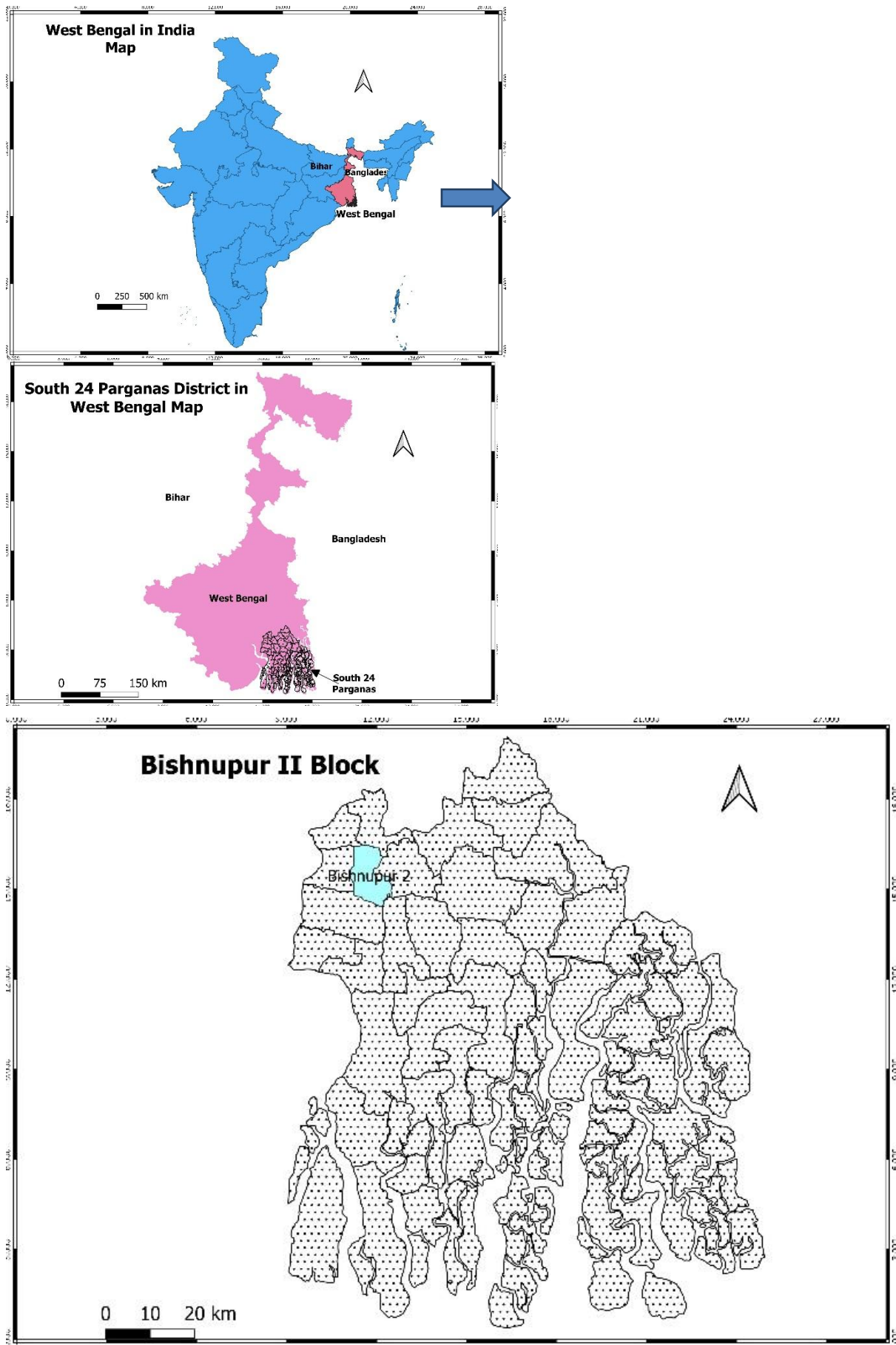
Figure 3: Location map of the Study area. (Prepared by the authors)

Objectives: The study was incorporated with the following objectives-

1. To observe the nature of Gulf migration from the study area.
2. To incorporate the impacts of emigration on the social and demographic status of Muslims in the study area.
3. To compare the socio-demographic status between emigrant and non-migrant households.

4. Methodology: The study was carried out with quantitative methods and is mainly based on primary data. A few secondary data are also needed to collect to reach the objectives of the study. Different areas in the block were selected to conduct the household survey. A total of 70 Muslim migrants' households were chosen for the household survey with the help of the snowball sampling technique. A total of 70 households of non-migrant Muslim workers (no workers never had been in GCC) were also selected for the household survey. A semi-structured questionnaire was prepared with both open and close-ended questions to gather various types of socio-economic and demographic data from the households with face-to-face interviews with a member of the sample households. The questionnaire was then pre-tested to test the validity of the questions. After that, all unwarranted questions were removed and final questionnaires were prepared. The author and a group of 3 students were involved in the data collection process and it was done from January 2021 to March 2021. All the data are converted into percentages and compared with different secondary data as and when needed. Descriptive statistics are used to analyse the data. The comparative data of migrants and non-migrant households are depicted through a comparative bar graph. Various cartograms are also prepared to represent the overall data.

5. Result and Discussion: After the households survey all the collected data were scrutinized and verified. All the data is converted into percentages and depicted by different cartograms as follows.

5.1 Family members: The families of migrant workers seem to be small as 45.7% of the family has less than 4 members, whereas only 2.86 % of the family have more than 8 persons as their members. Non-migrant families tend to be bigger than emigrant households. 20% of non-migrant households are having family members of more than 8. Only 21.42% of non-migrant households have less than 4 members in their family. Family with 5 to 8 members are significant in both emigrant and non-migrant households as per the data. The study revealed that there is an intensity of migrant workers being separated from their parents and to be lived with their spouses and children.

Table 5: Family members of migrant and non-migrant households.

Status	Less than 4	5-8 persons	More than 8	Total
Migrant	32 (45.7)	36 (51.43)	2 (2.86)	70
Non-migrant	15 (21.42)	41 (58.57)	14 (20)	70

Source: Household Survey, 2021. Numbers in the parentheses indicate percentage.

5.2 Age of the workers: Table 6 shows the difference in the age of emigrant and non-migrant workers. Most of the emigrant workers are aged 31 to 40. 29.92% of these workers aged more than 40 years, whereas only 14.1 % of migrant workers aged less than 30 years. The study shows that most of the migrants were very young when they got emigrated for the first time. Table 6 shows the percentage of such types of workers in different age categories. About 33.33% of workers aged less than 25 years when they got migrated to the GCC countries for the first time. More than 42 % of them migrated to the Gulf for the first time when they were aged 26 to 30 years. The mean age of workers when they emigrated first time to GCC is 27.68. It has been seen that a lot of students from the Muslim community don't want to lose time in the higher study rather they move to GCC countries to be settled. So, it should not be unfair to say that young and healthy workers from the area are mainly involved in emigration. On the other hand, non-migrant workers are more scattered in terms of their age. In every age category, non-migrant workers have a sizable contribution (Table 7).

Table 6: Age of the migrant workers (when first emigrated)

Status	20-25	26-30	31-35	>35	Total	Mean age
Migrant	26 (33.33)	33 (42.31)	17 (21.79)	2 (2.56)	78 (100)	27.68

Source: Household Survey, 2021. Numbers in the parentheses indicate percentage.

Table 7: Age of the workers (migrant and non-migrant)

Status	Less than 30	31-40	More than 40	Total
Migrant	11 (14.1)	46 (58.97)	21 (29.92)	78
Non-migrant	21 (24.14)	33 (37.93)	34 (39.08)	87

Source: Household Survey, 2021. Numbers in the parentheses indicate percentage.

5.3 Marriage age of workers: The age when an individual got married, has played an important role in the demography of the person's family. Muslim workers who are working in the gulf or have worked in Gulf erstwhile need to stay there for a long time. This eventually will affect the family planning of the workers. On the other hand, workers who don't want to be GCC and prefer to stay home have got ample opportunity to get married

in time or even quite earlier. Table 8 shows the number and percentage of workers in different age categories when they got married. As per the study, 23.19 % of migrant workers got married before the age of 25. 36.23% of them got married at the age of 26 to 30. More than 40% of migrant workers got married at the age of 30 or more. On the other hand, 50% of non-migrant workers have got married at the age of 20 to 25 and 37.84% of them got married at the age of 26 to 30. Only 9 out of 74 married non-migrant workers got married at the age of 30 to 35. The mean age of marriage of emigrants (28.87) is quite higher than non-migrant workers (26.01) as per the study.

Table 8: Age of marriage (migrant and non-migrant workers)

Status/ Age Group	20 to 25	26-30	30 to 35	Total	Mean age of marriage
Migrant	16 (23.19)	25 (36.23)	28 (40.57)	69 (100)	28.87
Non-migrant	37 (50.00)	28 (37.84)	9 (12.16)	74 (100)	26.01

Source: Household Survey, 2021. Numbers in the parentheses indicate percentage.

5.4 Fertility rate of migrant and non-migrant households: Fertility refers to the average number of children per woman in a population. The global fertility rate has reduced to 2.5 children per woman in 2014. (Roser 2014). The average number of children per Muslim family is quite a bit higher than any other community in West Bengal and India. For the study, workers who had been married for at least 5 years, are chosen to determine the fertility nature among emigrants and non-emigrant. As per the household survey data (table 9), Muslim emigrant families tend to stick with two children policy as 42.62% of emigrant workers have two children, whereas only 11.48% of emigrants have more than 3 children. As per table 9, non-migrant workers tend to have more children as almost more than 41 % of these couples have three or more children whereas about 28% of non-migrant couples have three children. About 27% of emigrant couples have only one child or no child. The mean child ratio of migrant couples is 2.2 compared to 3.35 for the non-migrant couple as per the study. From the study, it is assumed that migrant families tend to have fewer children compared to non-migrant families.

Table 9: Fertility rate of migrant and non-migrant workers (more than 5 years after marriage)

Status/ Number of Child	Nil	One	Two	Three	More than Three	Mean	Total
Migrant	4 (6.55)	12 (19.67)	26 (42.62)	12(19.67)	7 (11.48)	2.2	61 (100)
Non-migrant	1 (1.47)	10 (14.71)	20 (29.41)	19(27.94)	28 (41.18)	3.35	68 (100)

Source: Household Survey, 2021. Numbers in the parentheses indicate percentage.

5.5 Female workers: Muslims are known to be conservative and less developed. Muslim females are conservative and usually, they are asked to be at home for domestic work purposes. Non-migrant workers who work at home have to face difficulties in family finance. The females of non-migrant families have to take responsibility for earning money for the financial well-being of their family along with their male members. As per the survey data, almost 16% of non-migrant families reported that their female members are working in different unorganised sectors. Whereas, only 2 emigrants families out of 70, have female workers. That is only because of the financial saturation of the families with emigrant workers. Table 10: Household with female workers (migrant and non-migrant)

Status	Households with female worker/workers	Households without female worker/workers	Total
Migrant	2 (2.86)	68 (97.14)	70 (100)
Non-migrant	11 (15.71)	59 (84.29)	70 (100)

Source: Household Survey, 2021. Numbers in the parentheses indicate percentage.

5.6 School and Private tuition Status: There has been a significant difference in the trends and nature of school-going students from emigrant and non-migrant Muslim households. Due to the financial difficulties, maximum non-migrant families send their children to govt. school. Only two out of 151 students go to private English medium schools, whereas just 20% of children from non-migrant families go to private Bengali medium schools compared to 41.41% of children from emigrant Muslim households. The percentage of children from migrant families who goes to government school is just 55.55% compared to 78.15% from non-migrant households.

Table 11: Detail of school going students (emigrant and non-emigrant households)

Status	Govt. School	Private School (Bengali Medium)	Private School (English medium)	Total
Migrant	55 (55.55)	41 (41.41)	3 (3.03)	99 (100)
Non-migrant	118 (78.15)	31 (20.67)	2 (1.32)	151 (100)

Source: Household Survey, 2021. Numbers in the parentheses indicate percentage.

More than 91% of migrant families responded that their children take private tuition and they spend a portion of their income on this. Only 58.57% of non-migrant families send their children in private tuition as per the survey (table 12).

Table 12: Private tuition status of Child (migrant and non-migrant households)

Status	Yes	No	Total
Migrant	64 (91.43)	6 (8.57)	70 (100)
Non-migrant	41 (58.57)	29 (41.42)	70 (100)

Source: Household Survey, 2021. Numbers in the parentheses indicates percentage.

5.7 Medical facilities: As per the survey 66 out of 70 migrant families take their medical care or treatment from both government and non-government hospitals (table 13). On the other hand, 50% of non-migrant families can't able to take medical facilities from non-government hospitals as the cost is quite higher and their financial status is also not up to the standard. Therefore they need to take medical facilities from the government hospital.

Table 13: Medical Facilities enjoyed (emigrant and non-emigrant households)

Status	Government Hospitals	Non-government Hospital	Both	Total
Migrant	0	2 (2.86)	66 (94.28)	70 (100)
non-migrant	35 (50.00)	1 (1.43)	34 (48.57)	70 (100)

Source: Household Survey, 2021. Numbers in the parentheses indicate percentage.

5.8 Educational status of workers: Muslims are the disadvantaged community in India and in particular West Bengal. As per the Sachar Committee Report (2006), Muslims are less educated, especially in rural areas. As per the household survey educational qualification of both emigrant and non-migrant Muslim workers are not in good shape. As per table 14, almost 85% of emigrant workers in the Gulf have educational qualifications below the secondary level. Only 5 of 78 emigrant workers are having a Higher Secondary degree and only 3 out of 78 workers have a graduation degree. The situation is quite similar to the non-migrant workers as 35% of these workers have HS degrees and 37.93% of them are having a secondary level of education.

The status of technical qualifications of both migrant and non-emigrant workers is very poor in the present-day context. Only 3 out of 78 emigrant workers and 3 out of 87 non-emigrant workers are having a technical qualification which shows the lack of awareness among workers regarding the importance and capacity to hold a professional degree. The status of technical qualifications of both migrant and non-emigrant workers is very poor in the present-day context. Only 3 out of 78 emigrant workers and 3 out of 87 non-emigrant workers are having a technical qualification which shows the lack of awareness among workers regarding the importance and capacity to hold a professional degree.

Table: 14 Educational qualifications of workers (migrant and non-migrant)

Status	Primary level	Secondary	H.S	Graduation or above	Total
Migrant	11 (14.1)	59 (75.64)	5 (6.41)	3 (3.85)	78 (100)
Non-migrant	21 (24.14)	33 (37.93)	30 (34.48)	3 (3.45)	87 (100)

Source: Household Survey, 2021. Numbers in the parentheses indicate percentage.

5.9.Duration of Migration: As per the survey (table 15), a total of 55 migrant workers are working/ have worked in the gulf for 5 to 10 years. More than 20% of migrant workers have stayed in the Gulf for 11 to 15 years. Only 7 out of 78 workers have been working in the Gulf for more than 15 years. So from the survey data, it can be predicted that Muslims are compelled to go into Gulf due to their financial crisis but they don't want to be there for a longer period of their life. It has been seen that several emigrant workers have started small businesses after returning from the Gulf. Few of them bought new auto after their return from the Gulf.

Table 15: Duration of staying in GCC

5-10 years	11 to 15 years	more than 15 years	Total
55 (70.5)	16 (20.51)	7 (8.97)	78 (100)

Source: Household Survey, 2021. Numbers in the parentheses indicate percentage.

5.10 Nature of work of migrant workers: The workers who have emigrated to the GCC were previously involved mostly in embroideries and agricultural activities. As per the survey data (table 16), 23 out of 78 emigrant workers were engaged in embroidery work and 22 of them were involved in agriculture and allied activities before their emigration to GCC countries. A total of 22 workers out of 78 were previously engaged in different marginal activities like carpenter, tailor, auto driver etc. Their engagement in emigration suddenly made changes in the economic activity and status of their families.

Migrant workers are unskilled and less educated. Their involvement in different sectors in GCC countries also reveals a similar nature as they are mostly involved in low-skilled activity in different construction sites. As per the study, a total of 28 out of 78 workers are working as helpers on construction sites and 21 of them are working as duct fitters. Few of them work as AC technicians and fabricators as per the survey (table 17). One worker is presently working as Foreman and two others are working as supervisors on construction sites as they are highly experienced in their field.

Table 16: Nature of existing work (emigrant workers)

Status	A. Labour	Embroideries	Cultivators	Students	Others(others marginal activities)	Total
Migrant	10	23	12	11	22	78 (100)

Source: Household Survey, 2021. Numbers in the parentheses indicates percentage.

Table 17: Nature of works and designation (emigrant workers)

Duct Man	Fitter	Helper	Supervisor	Foreman	Fabricator	AC technician	Carpenter	Total
15	21	26	2	1	5	7	1	78 (100)

Source: Household Survey, 2021. Numbers in the parentheses indicates percentage.

5.11 Problem faced by the workers: Due to the long-term staying of their male members in the GCC countries, families of migrant workers are facing some difficulties in their daily life. As per figure 4, a total of 45 out of 70 households are facing social insecurity. Most migrant families are facing problems in their child care. 72.85% of them replied that they are facing difficulties in their child care because of the absence of their male members. Women or female members have to take a huge responsibility for the rest of the family members and they need to have a big adjustment in their personal life also. Their financial problem is mostly resolved. Simultaneously some other social problems have arisen.

Non-migrant workers' families, on the other hand, face financial problems in most cases. As per survey data (figure 4), 75.51% of non-migrant families have to deal with a financial shortage. Due to the lack of funds, the families are unable to get a quality education and medical facilities from non-government hospitals for their children and other members. As the male members are always present, these families don't have to deal with social insecurity. On the other hand, emigrant families have to deal with social security during the absence of their male members.

Emigrant workers have to face initial hassles to be settled in GCC countries. They need to accumulate a sizable amount of funds for getting emigration to GCC. As per the household survey (table 18), more than 46% of workers needed to pay Rs.60000 or more for their emigration into GCC countries. About 39.74% of workers had paid Rs.40000to 60000 during their emigration to GCC. Only 4 out of 78 emigrants spent Rs.20000 or less while emigration into Gulf. Only 8.97% of total emigrants had to pay Rs.20000 to Rs.40000 when they get emigrated first. So, it can be said that maximum workers had to go through financial difficulties while accumulating the initial funds that are needed for emigration.
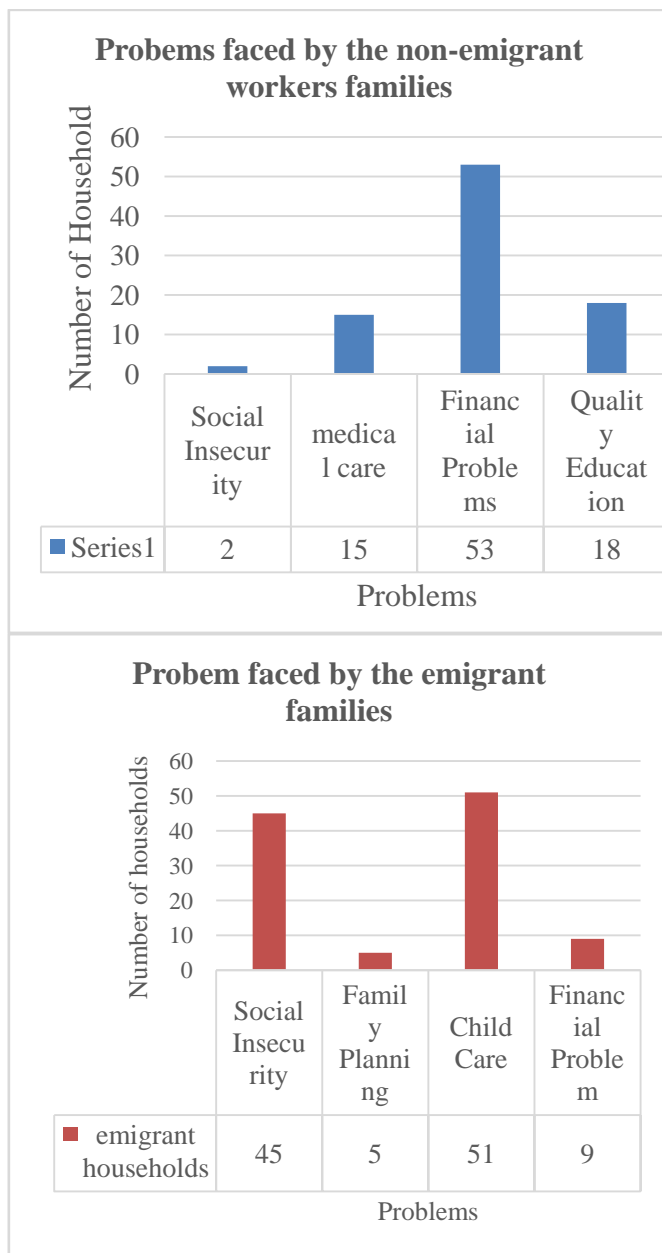
Probems faced by the non-emigrant workers families

	Social Insecurity	medical care	Financial Problems	Quality Education
■ Series1	2	15	53	18

Problems

Probem faced by the emigrant families

	Social Insecurity	Family Planning	Child Care	Financial Problem
■ emigrant households	45	5	51	9

Problems

Figure: 4

Source: Household Survey, 2021.

Table 18: Amount needed for emigration (migrant workers)

Amount	Less than 20000	20000-40000	40000-60000	More than 60000	Total
Number of emigrants	4 (5.13)	7 (8.97)	31 (39.74)	36 (46.15)	78 (100)

Source: Household Survey, 2021. Numbers in the parentheses indicates percentage.

5.12 Return Migrants: Migrant workers don't want to be in the Gulf for a longer period. They want to be settled in their homes after returning from their jobs in the Gulf. As per the study, among 28 Gulf returnees, more than 80% of them returned home after 10 years of their continuous service in the GCC countries. Most of the Gulf returnees want to join the small business. As they are less educated and less skilled, they can't involve in modern and quality businesses. Rather they prefer to start grocery and stationery shops, first food shops, tea shops etc. In some cases, workers get back into their previous activity in which they were involved before getting emigration.

6. Major findings: Some of the major findings of the study can be listed here-

1. Migration of Muslims of the area into the Gulf becoming quite conventional and significant. Fewer wages, inconsistency in the usual economic sector, desire to be lived with a high standard, and earning a sufficient amount of money within a short period, are the determinants of migration of Muslims to the Gulf countries.

2. Hindus of the area are not so interested to migrate to GCC. Their cultural belief and faith in their religion or some wrong concept about the Gulf nations is probably the reason behind it. The GCC countries also don't want to take non-Muslim workers on many occasions.

3. Muslim workers are less skilled and less educated. They don't have opportunities to go to different European countries or America.

4. Mainly, the workers aged below thirty are involved in the emigration process. After staying 8 to 10 years in their destination they return home permanently and start new businesses. They want to be with their family at mid forty.

5. Female workers seem to be more common in non-migrant Muslim Families than in migrant households.

6. Maximum workers are from poor backgrounds. They have to do a tremendous effort to accumulate the initial funds needed for the emigration.

7. Workers involved in emigration or working in the GCC usually get married quite late. They need to be established and back their families with financial support.

Moreover, they need to stay at their working site for 2-3 years at a time or even more. This can be the reason for the late marriage of migrant workers.

8. Migrant workers had been involved in different marginal activities like agriculture and embroidery before getting emigration. The transfer of workers into GCC countries made changes in the economic activity of the area.

9. Family members of Migrant workers tend to be limited. Financial wellness changes the mentality of the workers. Most of them want to be separated from their brothers or even from their parents as per the study. Yet more studies are needed on the issues to establish the fact.

10. Migrant workers get limited time to be with their spouses during their working contracts. This eventually reduced the fertility rate or child ratio among migrant families to the families of non-migrant workers.

11. The standard of living of migrant workers in the Gulf is way ahead of the non-migrant workers. Migrant workers can have modern education and medical facilities due to their secured financial status.

12. The kind of problems faced by the non-migrant workers or their families differs from the emigrant families or workers. Financial problem is common in most families of non-migrant workers.

7. Conclusion: Like all the migrations in the globe, Gulf migration has similar impacts on the society and demography of both the source and destination area. As per the PEW research report, Muslims are more emigrating in nature than Hindus from India. Moreover, gulf countries prefer Muslim workers on most occasions. Gulf migration is becoming popular among less skilled and less educated workers of developing countries including India. South Indian states dominated the Gulf migration from India before 2000. Presently unskilled and semi-skilled labour from UP, Bihar, Rajasthan and West Bengal emigrating more into GCC. About 70% of these workers are from peripheral regions of India (Kumar, 2012).

Muslims of West Bengal especially of South 24 Parganas are backward. They are mainly involved in agriculture and other marginal activities. Insufficiency of wages and inconsistency in these fields makes the workers move to GCC countries to join quality jobs with high wages. All the Gulf countries are Muslim-dominated and are known as high-income group countries. They are always in need of such kinds of unskilled labour in

different sectors including domestic sectors. That is why Muslims are interested to migrate to various GCC countries.

Emigrant workers and their families are socially and economically strong as compared to non-migrant workers and their families. The children from migrant families are studied in private schools mostly. They can have access to quality medical facilities because of their financial consistency. The demographic structure of the migrant families is improving as compared to the rest of the Muslims. Marriage age of migrant workers, fertility rate, female empowerment, health care and education of children, all these issues are affected by the out-migration of Muslim workers in the Gulf. The economic activity and the nature of the occupation of the study area, are influenced by the long-term staying of Muslims in the Gulf. As Gulf migration brings remittances, this will eventually reduce the backwardness of Muslims in the area.

We should not ignore the problems faced by migrant workers during or after their emigration to GCC. As per the study, a sizable respondent replied about the fraud recruiting agencies. Workers have to face problems during the passport verification process. Sometimes duplicate or fake visa has been issued to the workers by the agencies. Government should keep a close eye on the issues and should take quick action if and when needed.

8. Suggestions: Being the second largest community in+ West Bengal, Muslims determine the socio-economic status of West Bengal to a large extent. The marginalized status of Muslims of West Bengal is not well documented though. The recent involvement of Muslims in Gulf migration, therefore, needs to be well observed by the government. Therefore the information related to Muslim migrants, their education, designation, problems and prospects are essential for the sake of their development.

The Government should keep a close eye on the emigration process from the area. Lots of fake agencies are active in the area and lots of cheating have been done by them. The government should take action for the welfare of migrant workers. A list of fraud agencies should be published by the government so that people can be aware of that. Verification of visas and passports should be easier and more familiar to the workers. Government should also have a close view of the consultants who are responsible for the emigration. As the major portions of labour are unskilled, the government should promote technical education in rural and remote areas. Religion-wise and trade-wise emigration data from India should

be recorded so that researchers can have access to those and brings new dimension regarding emigration and its sustainable nature.

As per the Sachar Committee Report, Muslims are the marginal community in India and West Bengal in particular. Among all the socio-economic and demographic indicators, Muslims are way behind others. Remittances from the GCC countries help Muslims to reduce their poverty and to progress and make changes in their socioeconomic status. The government should encourage workers, who want to emigrate to the GCC but don't be able to do so due to the shortage of initial funds needed. Short-term loans with minimum interest can be given to these workers by the government.

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