

EMIGRATION AND REMITTANCES: COMMUNITY DIMENSIONS FROM KERALA

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Abstract

Among the states of India, Kerala is the leading state regard to the human resource mobility. This emigration network has been a key engine of economic, social, and cultural change in Kerala in the last forty years. Present study has been carried out with the object to know the trends in the community wise pattern of emigration and their remittances in Kerala for the period of 1998 to 2014 in detail. The paper is analytical in nature based on secondary data source. It is clear that the number of emigrants has increased steadily and significantly over the years, from 13.6 lakhs in 1998 to 24.0 lakhs in 2014, the proportion of households with at least one emigrant remained constant and the corresponding proportion varied widely by community. Correlation result shows that there exist the significant relationship between the number of emigrants and total remittances. The F ratio $1.35 > 1$, was significant at 5% level on the remittance, indicate that there exists significant variation in the remittance share among the Hindus, Christians and Muslims communities in Kerala.

Keywords:

Emigration;
Remittances;
Community dimension;
Household development;
Economic development.

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1. Introduction

The role of emigration or external migration in smoothing the development of the economy has attained recently the global attention. The current estimates of international migrants in the world are around 244 million in 2015 and it accounted as 3.3 percent of global population. (World Migration Report 2018). This number continued to grow in recent years and reached 258 million in 2017, up from 220 million in 2010 and 173 million in 2000. In 2017, India was the largest country of origin of international migrants (17 million), followed by Mexico (13 million). (International Migration Report 2017). Among the state of India, Kerala is one of the leading states in terms of the number of emigrants and their contribution to the household community as well as economy as a

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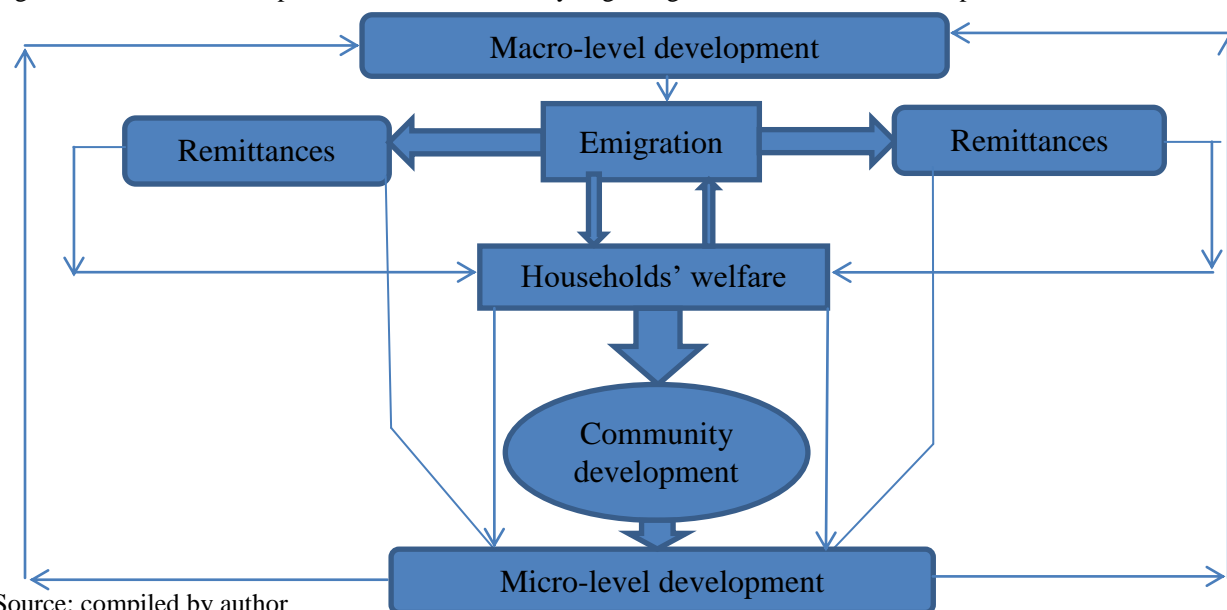
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whole. In Kerala, the periodic migration surveys conducted by the Centre for Development Studies particularly in 1998, 2003, 2008, 2011, 2013 and 2016, shows the real scenario about Kerala not only the migration pattern of internal and external but also other different aspects of the impact of migration on the socio-economic development on the Kerala economy. Hence, the emigrants and their communities in the home country are unavoidable actors in the development process of the state. The estimated number of the emigrants in Kerala as per the latest migration survey report is 22.71 lakh, and the survey in different periods shows that there was a fluctuations in the growth of the number of emigrants since 1998. In 2014, there were 24 lakh emigrants staying abroad and it is more than the 7.06% of the total population in Kerala. (IrudayaRajan 2015). Since the beginning of the external migration in 1970s, the community pattern shows that most of the emigrants are from the Muslim community, but their share in the total population is only 26% according to census data. The emigration history tends to hold this position in long period, but now there is an improvement in the share of other communities also. Therefore, the effect of emigration on the Kerala economy, the families in all the community those who emigrated abroad get its benefits and the economic activities made because of remittance have a multiplier effects experiencing in the economy. Most important aspect behind the migration is the contribution made by the emigrants in terms of the transfer of remittance. The large volume of remittance transferred by the emigrants into the families and communities in the country of origin and this helps to increase the standard of living of the family along with the economic development and open up the opportunities for human capital formation. Therefore, the constantly important aspect of emigration is to check the variations in the community wise both in the number of emigrants and the volume of remittance that need to analyses the community dimension of the remittances for understanding the changes in their share of total remittances over the period of last sixteen years. Hence, this paper would attempt to explore the community pattern of emigration and the trend of remittance by community in Kerala for the period of 1998 to 2014.

1.1.Theory

The importance of remittances in compensating the human capital loss of developing countries through migration and their potential in boosting economic growth was already recognized in the beginning of the 1980s. There are some unquestionable welfare effects of migrant remittances. First, remittances are an important source of income for many low and middle-income households in developing countries. Second, remittances provide the hard currency needed for importing scarce inputs that are not available domestically and additional savings for economic development (Ratha, 2003; Taylor, 1999; Quibria, 1997). Remittances could be regarded as a stable and predictable source of external finance for developmental processes, when properly invested. The impact on development varies according to the volume of remittances. The theories had expressed optimistic and pessimistic views. However, the current surge in remittance inflow worldwide had led to resurgence in the optimistic view that remittance is a tool for development. Over the 1980s and 1990s, the most crucial innovation to the debate came from the New Economics of Labor Migration (NELM) and it emerged as a critical response to neo-classical migration theory (Massey et al., 1993:436). "It was particularly Stark (1978, 1991) who revitalized thinking on migration in and from the developing world by placing the behavior of individual migrants in a wider societal context and by considering not the individual, but the family or the household as the most appropriated decision making unit. This new approach also increases the scope for integrating factors other than individual utility maximization as affecting migration decision-making." (Haas, 2010). In particular, through international remittances, migration can be a household strategy to overcome such market constraints by enabling households to invest in productive activities and to improve their welfare (Stark, 1980). While remittances are ignored in neo-classical migration theory, within NELM they are perceived as one of the most essential motives for migrating. Conceptually, this theory implies that the development contribution of migrants is not necessarily linked to return migration. Still-abroad migrants, permanent settlers and their descendants can contribute to development by remitting money. (Haas, 2010). The general conceptual frame work of the analysis of emigration and remittances are given in the figure 1.1.

Figure: 1.1-General Conceptual Framework for Analyzing Emigration-Remittance-Development Interactions.



Source: compiled by author

1.2.Review of Literature

In the literature, there are many studies related to migration and particularly the different dimensions of emigration by the economists, sociologists, researchers and so on. The Investment Perspective of Remittances for Economic Development (Thanh Le, 2011) is studied detailed based on the economic theory of the family, which constructs a model of remittances where the migrant, besides sending money to his family, also invests in his home country.

Azeez& Begum (2009) studied the economic impact of gulf migration to Indian economy; this international migration contributes to the development of both sending as well as receiving countries even though the contribution to sending country is significant. In addition, this study also made to study the volume of remittances and its impact on the economic development and to bring out the consequences of migration on social conditions and its impact on labour market. Khan.A. (2014) in his work, “Gulf Migration and Development of Malabar: Re-visiting the Development of Malabar and Muslims”, evaluated the impact of gulf migration on the Kerala society in general and Malabar region in particular. The study assumed in the public perception that the Muslims of the state have shown higher development in this particular stage, big two story houses with luxurious facilities and most expensive vehicles as well as the other symbols of luxuries have started to be seen with Muslims now.

Zachariah, et.al (2000), in their work, “Socio- Economic and Demographic Consequences of Migration in Kerala”, explained demographic impact of emigration, gender issues in migration and their impact on gulf wives and also impact of emigration on the elderly population in detailed manner. The study pointed out that even though the Gulf wives suffer psychological stress, loneliness and added responsibilities, the migration of their husbands has improved them into self-confident managers of their households. Zachariah. K.C. (2016) studied the religious denominations of Kerala with respect to the population size, growth, demographic and socio-economic characteristics etc. about general population with the census and KMS data.

The previous review of literature highlight that there are large number of studies related to Kerala migration especially external or international migration on the diverse extents of emigration and its impacts on the home country as well as destination economy. Even though, the lessons from Kerala about the emigration scenario, there is least in the literature about the community scopes of emigration. In addition, there is no study so far together which is to examine the community wise pattern of emigration in Kerala and the trends in remittance to Kerala by community for the period of 1998 to 2014. Therefore, the study will helps to fill this gap in research.

1.3.Research Problem

The expatriates of the state as being constituted by people dispersed among different destinations outside their home country, they carried out the employment practices there, and such practices may enhance the life chances of emigrants’ family members in developing countries as well as having wider developmental impacts. Among the states of India, Kerala is one of the leading states in terms of both the number of emigrants and remittance receiving, and had sent 2.2 million workers at abroad in 2016, which is lesser as compared with the 2.4 million in 2014. The main reason for the declining trend of emigrants is that changing labour market situations in both countries, changes in the age structure of Kerala population, people are more aware about the cheating and fraudulence at the time of emigration etc. (IrudayaRajan, 2016). The question is that how the decreasing and the fluctuating nature of emigration move among the different communities in both the pattern of emigration and the

remittance inflows in to the home country. In this juncture, there is a necessity to study the community dimension of emigration in both pattern and the trend of remittances by community in Kerala.

1.4. Significance of the Study

The World Bank classifies India as one of the top emigrating countries where migration is a reality for a large section of population: stock of 11.4 million Indians from India in 2010(World Bank, 2011). In 2017, India was the largest country of origin of international migrants (17 million), followed by Mexico (13 million), (International Migration Report 2017). International Migration to the Gulf began in 1970s and gained momentum over the years. The reward of the emigrants as in terms of remittances constitute a major source of external financing for India; these flows are far in excess of external sector aid and foreign investment (FDI) flows, and a major factor accounting for the improvements in India's balance of payments.(IrudayaRajan, 2014). Among the states of India, Kerala is the most one regard to the human resource mobility. That is, external migration has been a key engine of economic, social, and cultural change in Kerala in the last forty years. Emigration patterns and their socio-economic impact have significantly influenced the culture and developmental process in Kerala. Different patterns of migration from various communities also shaped the changing views about the economic welfare in Kerala. "Household remittances in Kerala for 2014 were estimated to be Rs.24, 374crores. Comparable figures were Rs. 15,129 crores for 2011, 12,511 crores for 2008 and Rs.7,965 crores for 2003. In spite of the constancy at the state level of the proportion of households that receive remittances, the corresponding proportion varies considerably by community. The total remittances to Kerala in 2014 are estimated to be Rs.71,142 crores. It was Rs 49,695 in 2011, and Rs.43,288 crores in 2008. Remittances per household were Rs 86,843 in 2014 compared with Rs. 63,315 per household in 2011 and Rs. 57,227 per household in 2008. The total remittances to Kerala in 2014 are estimated to be Rs71,142 crores. It was Rs 49,695 in 2011, and Rs.43,288 crores in2008.Remittances per household were Rs 86,843 in 2014 compared with Rs. 63,315 per household in 2011 and Rs. 57,227per household in 2008. Benefits from remittances are accrued to individuals, families, communities and states."(Zachariah and Rajan, 2015).In contributing to the development of household economy as well as economy as a whole, it of high relevance to examine the community pattern of emigration and the trend of remittance by community in Kerala.

1.5.Objectives

The specific objective of the study is to examine the community pattern of emigration in Kerala and to assess the community wise trends in remittances for the period of 1998 to 2014.

1.6.Hypothesis

1. H_0 : There is no relationship between the number of emigrants and their share of remittance.
2. H_0 : There is no variation in the share of remittance in Kerala among the three communities.

2.Research Method

The paper is analytical in nature and based on secondary data source mobilized from the World Migration Report (WMR) by UN Migration Agency, International Migration report(IMR), working papers, articles, books and other reports related to migration published by the Centre for Development Studies, Trivandrum. Percentage growth rate, compound annual growth rate, trend lines, graphs, correlation and ANOVA are the tools used to analyzing the data. The period of the study taken up from 1998 to 2014, because of the recent data available both in community wise number of emigrants and their share of remittance in Kerala for last sixteen years.

3. Results and Analysis.

3.1.General population

A picture about the nature of the general population by community will be useful to analyzing the trend of emigration and their remittance pattern in Kerala. The community wise general population as per 2001 and 2011 census given in the table 3.1.

Table: 3.1-Percent of general population of Kerala by community (2001& 2011 census)

Community	2001	2011	CAGR
Hindus	56.3	56.8	0.08%
Christians	19.0	16.7	-1.28%
Muslims	24.7	26.5	0.70%
Kerala	100	100	-

Source: compiled from census reports.

The table.3.1 shows the percent of the community wise population in 2001and 2011.The Christian community in Kerala represents lowest number of population, and their share to total population declined in 2011 as compared with 2001. The large number of people belongs to Hindu community and the compound annual growth rate is 0.08% over the period of 2001 to 2011. Muslim community clamps second position with respect to the number of population and their share to total population increasing as 0.70% as compared with the 2001. The overview is

that except the Christian community, the number of people has increased. However, the declining share in the Christian community is more than that of the rate of increase in the other two communities.

3.2.Emigrants of Kerala.

Kerala is one of the state experiencing the proprietor of large number of expatriates in the abroad especially in Gulf countries since 1970s. The clear-cut picture about the emigration scenario in Kerala periodically conducted and published by the Centre for Development Studies as Kerala Migration Survey (KMS). The results revealed that in the number of emigrants from Kerala has changed over the period. This is shown in the table 3.2.(1)

Table: 3.2(1)-Number of emigrants in Kerala, 1998-2014

Year	Number of emigrants	Increase/decrease(between consecutive survey year)
1998	1361919	
2003	1838478	476559
2008	2193412	354934
2011	2280543	87131
2014	2400375	119832

Source: compiled from different KMS report published by CDS.

The table 3.2.(1) expresses the number of emigrants from Kerala for the last sixteen years as highlighted in five periods. It shows that Kerala's emigration scenario from its starting point had increased until 2014. Actually, the number of emigrants in 2014 was higher than that in 2011. In addition, the highest increase in the emigration is between 1998 and 2003.

Table: 3.2.(2)-Percent of community wise Emigrants in Kerala, 1998-2014

Community	2014	2011	2008	2003	1998	CAGR
Hindus	36.3	37.4	37.7	31.5	29.5	1.37%
Christians	22.4	18.3	21.2	25	19.8	0.77%
Muslims	41.3	44.3	41.1	43.5	50.7	-1.27%
Kerala	100	100	100	100	100	

Source: compiled from different report of Kerala Migration Survey

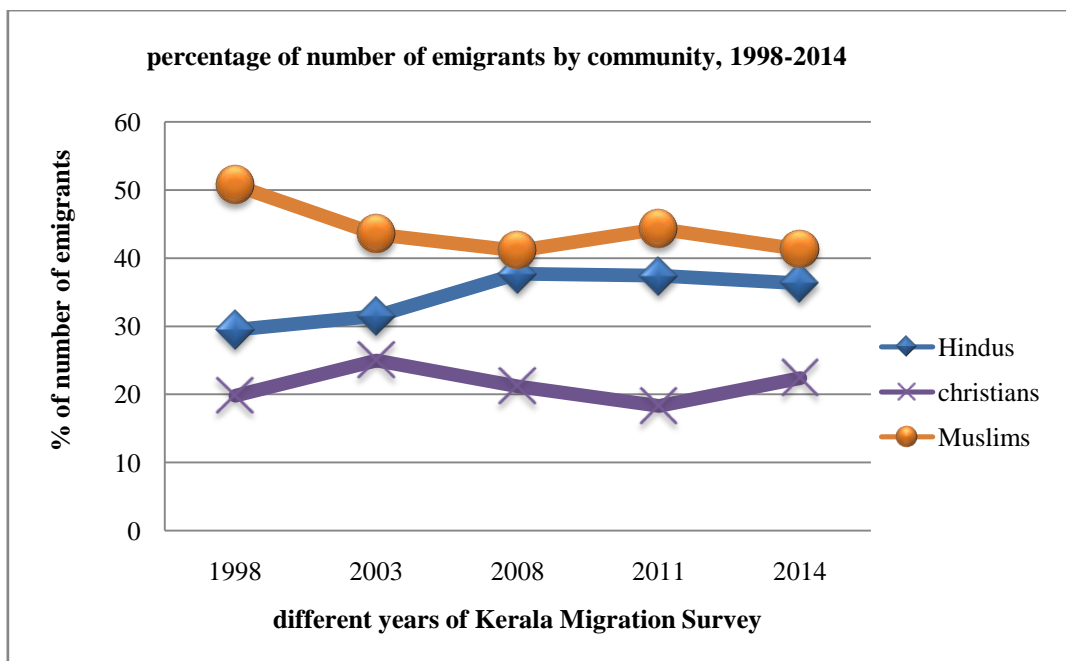
Example for calculating the Compound growth rate of the community wise number of emigrants in Kerala

$$CARG(t_0, t_n) = \left(\frac{V(t_n)}{V(t_0)} \right)^{\frac{1}{t_n - t_0}} - 1$$

$$\begin{aligned} T_0 &= 1998, T_n = 2014, t_n - t_0 = 16 \\ &= (36.3/29.5)^{1/16} - 1 \\ &= (1.23)^{0.0625} - 1 = 0.0137 \\ &= 1.37\% \end{aligned}$$

The table 3.2.(2) depicts that the percent of inter-community emigrants in Kerala during the period of 1998 to 2014. In Kerala, since the emigration starts in 1970s to till this period, the Muslim community holds rank first in terms of number of emigrants abroad, but their share to general population is only 26.5% and third in the position according to 2011 census. The percent of the number of emigrants in Hindus, Christians and Muslims shows unstable trend over the last sixteen years. It indicates that the share of emigrants in the Hindu and Christian community is increasing trend and in the case of Muslim community is decreasing over the years. The CAGR of Hindu, Christian and Muslim community is 1.37, 0.77, and -1.27 respectively. This is clearly revealed in the figure 3.1.

Figure: 3.1- trends in the percent of community wise emigrants in Kerala, 1998-2014



The community wise percent of households with one or more emigrants in Kerala over the last three survey periods are shown in the table 3.2.(3). The variation exists in the households having with one or more emigrants widely among the community groups. Generally, the more percent of households having one or more emigrants is in Muslim community, but the rate of increasing during from 2008 to 2014 indicates that more number of households having one or more emigrants in Christian community successively large in recent years and their growth rate is 3.12% is highest than other community.

Table: 3.2.(3)-Percent of households with one or more emigrants by community

Community	Percent of one or more emigrants per household			CAGR
	2008	2011	2014	
Hindus	12.4	12.3	12.8	0.53%
Christians	16.3	15.7	19.6	3.12%
Muslims	36.4	37.5	36.5	0.04%
Total	18	18.2	19.2	1.08%

Source: KMS Report, 2014

3.3.Destinations of Kerala emigrants

In 1998 Saudi Arabia was the first position in terms of having more Kerala emigrants chosen their country of residence at abroad. After that all the KMS results shows the UAE holds first destination belongs to more emigrants from Kerala, but the growth rate is 1.6 percent over the period of 1998 to 2016 is lower than the growth rate of Qatar 3.4 percent is the highest among the gulf countries. Moreover, around 90 percent of the emigrants emigrated in the West Asian countries especially Gulf countries. Additionally, other ten percentages includes all other South East Asian and European countries. This explores in the table 3.3.

Table: 3.3-Country of Residence of Kerala Emigrants, 1998-2016

Country	percent in 2016	percent in 2014	percent in 2011	percent in 2008	percent in 2003	percent in 1998	CAGR
Saudi Arabia	22.5	21.8	25.2	23	26.7	37.5	-2.8%
UAE	41.5	37.5	38.7	41.9	36.5	31	1.6%
Kuwait	5.5	7.6	5.6	5.9	6.2	5	0.53%
Oman	7.6	7.9	8.6	7.6	8.3	10.2	-1.62%
Qatar	8.4	4.4	6.5	5.5	5.4	4.6	3.4%

Bahrain	3.8	6.2	4.5	4.6	5.9	5.5	-2.03%
Other West Asia	0.3	0.9	0.5	0	0.1	-	8.8%
Sub-Total	89.6	86.3	89.6	88.5	89.1	93.8	-0.002%
USA	3.8	2.9	3	4.7	5.3	2.2	0.03%
Canada	1.2	0.5	0.4	0.6	0.3	-	11.25%
UK	1.5	1.6	2	1.8	1.2	-	1.73%
Other Europe	0.4	0.8	0.6	0.4	0.8	-	-5.2%
Africa	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.9	-	-4.42%
Singapore	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.8	-	-3.55%
Malaysia	0.3	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.3	-	0
Other South East Asia	0.6	2.2	0.8	0.4	0.4	-	3.16%
Australia	0.7	1.6	0.9	1	0.3	-	6.73%
Ireland	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.4	-	-	-3.53%
Other countries	0.7	2.6	1.1	0.6	0.6	4	-0.09%
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	-

Source: compiled from different report of Kerala Migration Survey

3.4. Remittance to Kerala

There has been a separation of household's remittances from the total remittances in Kerala as per KMS 2014. The household remittance means that the private transfers of the emigrants to their families and utilized these for subsistence and other households expenses and total remittance is that household remittance plus remittance received to state from other channels such as banks, stock markets etc. (report of KMS 2014). The household and total remittance in the period of 1998 to 2014, are depicted in the table 3.4.(1).

Table: 3.4 (1)-Household remittance and total remittance, 1998-2014 (rupees in crores)

Year	Household remittance	Total remittance	% of household remittance to total remittance	Annual change
1998	3530	13652	25.85	-
2003	7965	18465	43.13	3.45
2008	12511	43288	28.90	-2.84
2011	15129	49695	30.44	0.51
2014	24374	71142	34.26	1.27

Source: compiled and calculated from KMS Report, 2014

Total remittances as well as household remittances are increasing steadily over these periods. The surge in the percent of household remittance to the total remittance is highest in the year 2003 and in 2014. The negative annual change in the percent of household remittance to total remittance in 2008 means that household remittance is increasing but not as much increase in the total remittance in 2008. Change in their contribution is higher in the period of 2011-2014. This is clearly depicts in the figure 3.4.(1).

Figure: 3.4.(1)- Trends in the household and total remittance in Kerala, 1998-2014

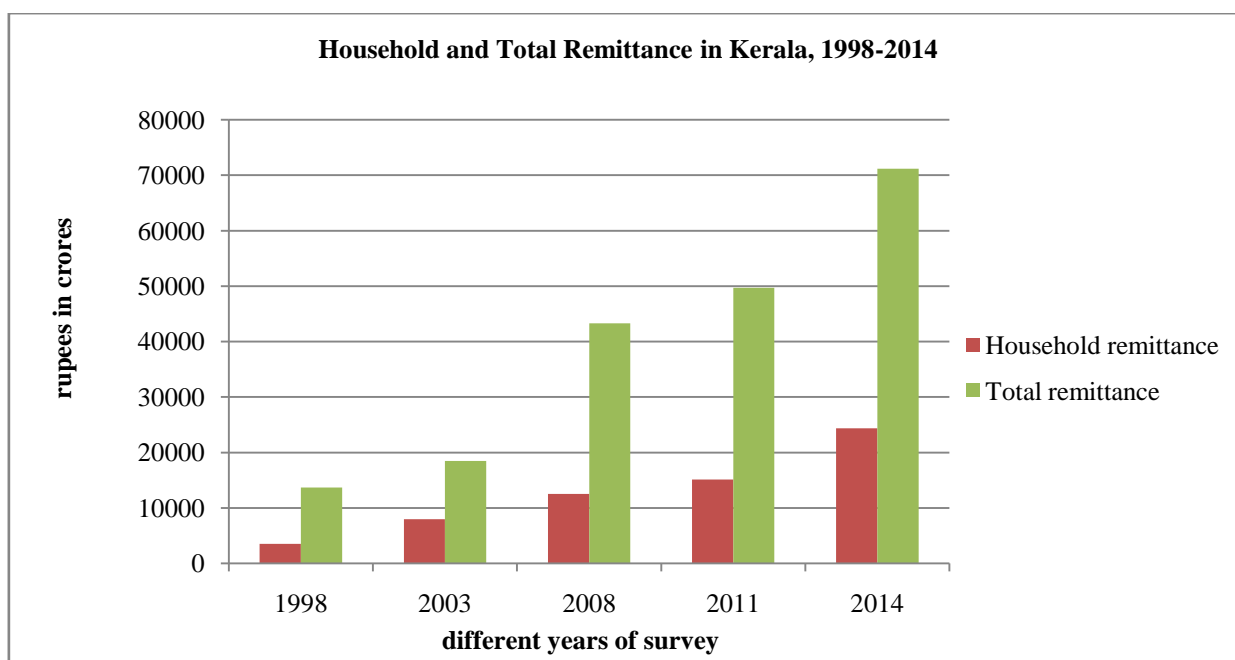


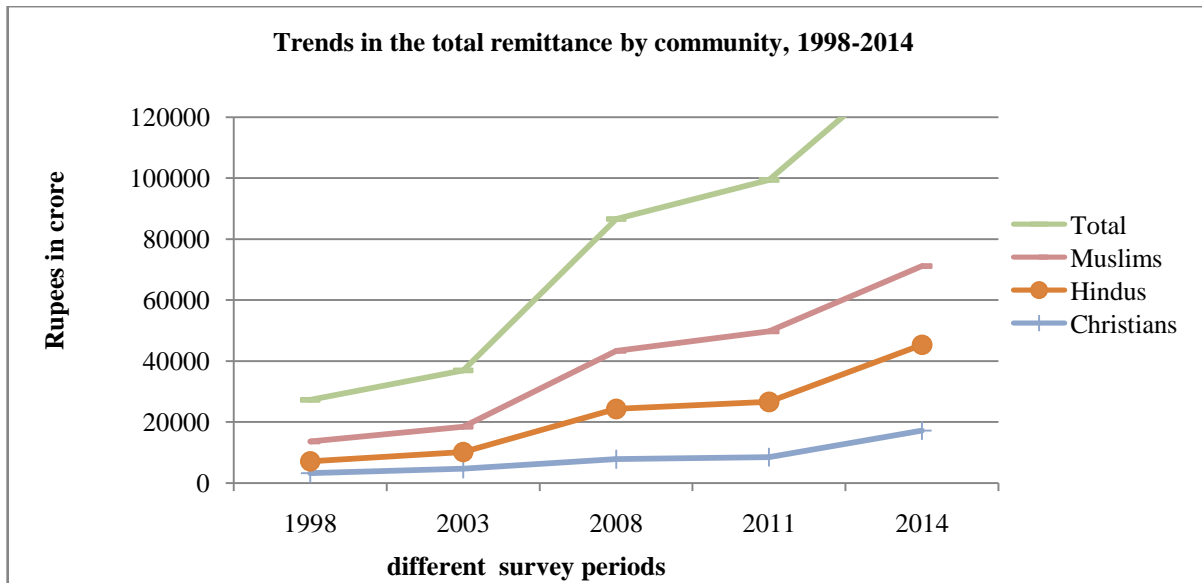
Table: 3.4.(2)-Total remittances by community from 1998 to 2014 (rupees in crores)

Community	1998	2003	2008	2011	2014	CAGR
Hindus	3921(28.72)	5475(29.65)	16493(38.1)	18099(36.42)	28137(39.55)	13.11%
Christians	3193(23.38)	4679(25.33)	7800(18.02)	8508(17.12)	17238(24.23)	11.11%
Muslims	6538(47.89)	8311(45.01)	18995(43.88)	23088(46.45)	25767(36.22)	8.95%
Total	13652(100)	18465(100)	43288(100)	49695(100)	71142(100)	10.86%

Source: KMS Report, 2014. The percentage of the share of remittance is shown in the parenthesis.

Table 3.4.(2) explores the community wise total remittance received in Kerala from 1998 to 2014 and the compound annual growth rate of total remittance of Hindus, Christians, and Muslim community respectively. Moreover, the percentage shares of each community to the total remittance given in the parenthesis. Muslim households received large share of remittance and is above their share in the total population of Kerala. Hindu households having second position in terms of receiving remittance since the emigration starts and in 2014, 28137 crores of remittance or 39.5% of the total remittance received. However, the share of Hindus is below their share to the total population of the state. In case of the number of emigrants in each period and their contribution as remittance to the economy, the Christian community occupies lowest position in both census and KMS report. Even though, the CAGR indicates that the rate of growth of remittance by Hindus, Christians and Muslims are 13.11 percent, 11.11 percent and 8.95 percent respectively. The overall growth rate of the total remittance in Kerala is 10.86 percent. The figure 3.4.(2) represents the trends in the total remittance among the different communities in Kerala.

Figure: 3.4.(2)- Trends in the total remittance by community during 1998-2014



Correlation performed to examine whether the number of emigrants and their share of remittance are correlated or not. The results revealed that the number of emigrants and their share of total remittance highly correlated, $r(0.91, 2)$, $p = 0.032$. It is highly correlated and significant at 0.05 levels. Moreover, it shows there existed strong relationship between the number of emigrants and total remittances. This result shown in the table 3.4.(3).

Table: 3.4.(3)-Correlation between number of emigrants and total remittance

variable	Pearson's correlation (r)	P value
Number of emigrants and total remittances	0.91	0.032

Source: framed from SPSS

For testing the hypothesis that whether, there exists the variation in the share of remittance among three communities. ANOVA regression model carried out by making community as a dummy variable and assigning D_1 is the dummy introduced for the community Muslim and D_2 for Hindus. The estimated model is given below:

$$Y = a + bD_1 + cD_2 + U$$

That is, $Y = 5283.6 + 8256.2 D_1 + 6141.4 D_2$

The above regression is tested for the significant variance among the communities in terms of remittances and the calculated value of $F(14) = 1.35 > 1$, and between group variation is higher than the within the group variation. So here conclude that there exists significant variation in the remittance share among the Hindus, Christians and Muslims communities in Kerala.

The theory of New Economics of Labour Migration implies that the development contribution of emigrants is connected to abroad migrants, permanent settlers and their descendants can contribute to development by remitting money. Therefore, the validity of the theory in the study pertains the number of emigrants at abroad and their remittance is highly correlated for the household as well as the socio-economic development of the nation.

4. Conclusion.

Kerala belongs to the third stage of demographic transition seeing general population. The pattern of the general population according to communities is 56.8 percent, 16.7 percent and 26.5 percent in Hindus, Christians and Muslims respectively to total population as per 2011 census. Regarding the emigrant population, it shows that since 1998 to until 2014, the total number is growing in corresponding survey periods. However, each succeeding period showed a decreasing trend in the increases in the number of emigrants. The number of emigrants has increased steadily and significantly over the years, from 13.6 lakhs in 1998 to 24.0 lakhs in 2014, the proportion of households with at least one emigrant remained constant and the corresponding proportion varied widely by community (12.7 percent among Hindus, 19.6 percent among Christians and 36.5 percent among the Muslims). The Muslim community retained their lead through all these years, i.e. 1998 to 2014. On the other hand, the Hindu emigrants were only 36.3 percent of the total, although their share in the total population is about 55 percent. However, over the years, the Hindus have improved their share, from 29.5

percent in 1998 to 37.4 percent in 2011. The Muslim's share receded somewhat from 44.3 percent in 2011 to 41.3 percent in 2014. With regard to remittance, the statistics indicate a very significant surge in remittances during 2011-14. While emigrants increased by about 6 percent, total remittances increased by 43 percent. Both these indices have been steadily and it is exponentially growing over the last few years. Statistical test were conducted in order to understand the significant relationship between the number of emigrants and total remittances. It revealed that there exists strong relationship between them. The F ratio $1.35 > 1$, was significant at 5% level on the remittance, indicate that there exists significant variation in the remittance share among the Hindus, Christians and Muslims communities. The conformity of the theory implies that there is high correlation between numbers of emigrants at abroad and their remittance and this leads to the household as well as the socio-economic development of the nation.

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