

Notification Date: 14-02-2024

Notification No: 554/2024

Name: Muskan Mustaqeem

Topic: Indian Migration to the GCC Countries and its impact on the Left-Behind Families: A Comparative Study of Siwan (Bihar) and Malappuram (Kerala)

Supervisor: Prof. Anisur Rahman

Depart/Centre: Centre for West Asian Studies, JMI

Key Words: GCC, LABOUR, MIGRATION, INDIAN, LEFT-BEHIND, WOMEN

Finding

This thesis places left-behind wives at the centre of the investigation, analysing what changes male-out gulf migration has brought into their lives, from socio-economic empowerment to autonomy, mobility, expansion of social circles, access to decision-making, and adoption of new roles and responsibilities. The Indian labour migration to the Gulf is of two types: blue-collar workers, who are mostly low-skilled, unskilled, and semi-skilled; the second category is skilled or white-collar workers. The living patterns of both categories differ due to the nature of their work; the blue-collar workers live in ghettoised and overcrowded accommodations without access to community living in the destination countries. While the white collar has the privilege to relocate their wives and has access to better living and community life. Therefore, it becomes necessary to investigate the lives of those left-wives of blue-collar workers who stay behind for home management and taking care of children, their in-laws, and themselves. In this process, the lives of these women are transformed significantly in terms of control over remittances, asset management, decision-making mobility, and the expansion of social circles, and in some cases, they engage in self-help groups for undertaking economic activities. Overall, the results shows that migration of husbands itself, longer duration of absence of husbands form the household, increased the number of decision making power, and mobility among the women left-behind. More can be seen in wives of unskilled worker of Siwan, where husband stays in the Gulf country for longer duration as compare of skilled worker in Malappuram. The study highlights that wives of unskilled migrants frequently visit various places, accompanied by female companions who may be their daughters, sisters, mothers, or other female relatives. This practice of visiting places with fellow women serves as a strategic approach for migrant wives to enhance their mobility and decrease their reliance on male family members, contributing to their increased independence within and beyond their community.