

## **Indian Labour Emigration To The GCC Countries: A Case Study Of Gorakhpur District In Uttar Pradesh**

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### **Abstract:**

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century world, the GCC countries has become a hub of highest destination for the contractual labourers from the South Asian countries dominated by unskilled and semi-skilled workers. India is the core labourers producing country among the south Asian region. The reason is due to the India's huge proportions of unemployment, low wages, poverty and corruption. Earlier, South Indian states such as Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu were having highest emigrant workers to the GCC nations but the scenario is being changing gradually due to changing socio-economic conditions and employment opportunities. states like Uttar Pradesh and Bihar are emerging as alternative source of labourers to the GCC countries. In this context, the study tries to understand the socio-economic profile of the emigrant from the Gorakhpur. The objective of the study is to critically analyse the socio-economic impact of remittances and at the same time highlights the dynamic of problems in terms of their nature and the content of Indian labourers in GCC. The study has used both the Qualitative and Quantitative methods for the data collection.

**Key words: GCC, Remittances, Emigration**

### **Section-A**

#### **1.Introduction**

The GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council)<sup>1</sup> countries are the highest destination choice for the short-long term contractual labourer. According to the MOIA (Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs) report 2015, approximately 30 million Indians are living outside India, out of which 7 million migrants are living in six GCC countries. All these six GCC are oil-producing countries and they have been receiving the highest revenue from the oil export in the world market (Rajan, I. et al. 2015). Emigration from India to Gulf or GCC countries (Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, and UAE) are not a new phenomenon, it has a historical

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<sup>1</sup>GCC countries are the socio-economic alliance of six Arabian countries, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, United Arab Emirate, it was formed in 1981 to control the oil based revenue system

background, but the government of India or any other government agencies do not have any record. So, it is not possible to say, how many people have immigrated to these countries in the past. The migration began to take place following the oil boom in GCC countries in the early 1970s (Thiollet 2011). The oil boom attracted semi-skilled and unskilled labourer from various Indian states like Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan, and Gujarat. After the discovery of oil boom in 1973, the GCC was not able to decide what they have to do with the huge revenue from oil exports (Arnold 2012). Guy Arnold says that they made three development paths, first to build their infrastructure for the development, second to invest in their industries and agricultural sector and third is to improve or create new social services for their native people like health, education and other social welfare (Ibid). Therefore, these social and economic revolutions had required very extensive labour force, and their small native population of GCC countries was not able to fulfill this huge requirement. Consequently, all the GCC countries adopted a policy of attracting foreign workers and the aftermath they started to hire labourer from the South Asian countries like India, Bangladesh, Burma, and other Southeast Asian countries (Ibid)).

## **2. Objectives**

- To understand the socio-economic and demographic profile of emigrants of Gorakhpur district.
- To see the major factors responsible for the emigration flow and problems of emigrants in the GCC countries.
- To analyze the impact of remittances on the households.

## **3. Methodology**

This paper is mainly based on qualitative as well as quantitative primary research. All the primary data have been collected from the field survey along with participant observation. Research questions have been asked to the return migrants and the head of the household. Data also has been collected from the MOIA (Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs), Ministry of External Affairs, ILO (Indian Labour Organization) and IOM (International Organization of Migration). For the interpretation of data, I have used SPSS software and with the help of statistical mechanism like frequency distribution, percentage calculation, pie chart, and graphs inference are drawn. For the study, I have selected three villages of Gorakhpur

districts such as Jagdishpur, Ahirauli, and Sinhorawa of which 75 emigrant's households have been selected for the sample. The paper has been divided into two sections A and B, section A covers introductory part including objectives, colonial migration and demographic profile of labourers in the GCC countries followed by section B elaborates the socio-economic impact after migration.

#### **4. Indentured labour emigration from Uttar Pradesh to Fiji during colonial period**

After the end of the slavery system in the 1830s, there was a shortage of labourer in various colonies which have given the birth of indentured labourer. Since the 1880s to the end of indentured emigration in 1916, Uttar Pradesh provided 80% of the migrants; Bihar & Bengal 13% of migrants, and the rest coming from Madhya Pradesh, Punjab and somewhere else (Lal 2012).

During indentured labour migration, approximately 1.3 million indentured labourers have migrated from different Indian states to other colonies (ibid). In this system, a large amount of the indentured labourer migrated from Western Bihar, Eastern Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Orissa, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, and Bombay. In this system, each indentured labourer has to serve a five-year contract. During this period, Uttar Pradesh was in the highest position to supply indentured labourer. The colonial record and the documents also indicate that the majority of indentured labourer both male and female were from lower caste Hindus including Untouchables, although there were very few populations of Brahmins and other higher caste Hindus (Pirbhai 2009). Table no.1 shows that Basti was the richest in the supply of indentured labourer (6,415) and Mirzapur (527) in the bottom, while Gorakhpur (1,683) district maintained the steady level in the recruitment of indentured labourer.

Among the 2,8012 indentured labourer, *Chamar* was 6087, whereas *Brahmin* was 1,535, *Rajput* was 652, and other castes were also migrating like *Kurmi*, *Ahir*, *Kori*, *Kahar*, *Pasi*, *Koeri*, *Gadariya*, *Kewat*, etc (Lal 2012). During the indentured labour emigration, whole colonial plantation and colonial economy depended upon indentured labourers and Eastern Uttar Pradesh was the highest supplier of labourers.

**Table No.1**

| <b>Name of the District</b> | <b>No. of the Emigrants</b> |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Basti                       | 6,415                       |
| Goda                        | 3,589                       |
| Faizabad                    | 2,329                       |
| Sultanpur                   | 1747                        |
| Azamgarh                    | 1716                        |
| Gorakhpur                   | 1683                        |
| Allahabad                   | 1218                        |
| Jaunpur                     | 1188                        |
| Ghazipur                    | 1127                        |
| Rai Bareilly                | 1087                        |
| Pratapgarh                  | 894                         |
| Barabanki                   | 769                         |
| Bahraich                    | 750                         |
| Banaras                     | 672                         |
| Lucknow                     | 613                         |
| Kanpur                      | 583                         |
| Unnao                       | 556                         |
| Agara                       | 549                         |
| Mirzapur                    | 527                         |
| Total                       | 28,012                      |

Data Sources: Lal, B. V. (2012), *ChaloJahaji: On a Journey Through Indenture in Fiji*, Canberra: Australian National University Press

Therefore, emigration from Gorakhpur to across the continent is not a new phenomenon although it has a long history which is presently going on. There is an increasing number of Indians, especially from Eastern Uttar Pradesh have been seen migrating to United States, Canada, Arica, and other European countries, but now this pattern has changed. Now, a huge Indian population has been moving towards the GCC countries for seeking job opportunities and high wages.

## **5. Demographic profile of emigrants**

In the Indian labourer and the societal context, we can say that labour migration is a strategy for socio-economic survival and always migrate for livelihood and existence of their family (Adams and Page 2015). When people migrate from one place to another place, they affect both countries, place of origin as well as the place of destination in terms of socio-economic,

political, and demographic aspects (Boyd 1989). Migrants from Gorakhpur district belong to different caste, religion, gender, and different age groups which have been explained below (see the table no.2). Indian emigrants to the GCC countries come from rural as well as urban areas, but in the case of Gorakhpur district the highest proportion of labourer from rural areas.

**Table No. 2**

| <b>Age</b>                                    | <b>Percentages</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| 18-25 years old                               | 10.7               |
| 25-35 years old                               | 50.7               |
| 35-45 years old                               | 25.3               |
| Above 45 years old                            | 13.3               |
| <b>Gender</b>                                 |                    |
| Male                                          | 100                |
| Female                                        | 0                  |
| <b>Religion</b>                               |                    |
| Hindus                                        | 96                 |
| Muslims                                       | 4                  |
| <b>Caste</b>                                  |                    |
| General                                       | 1.3                |
| Other Backward Classes                        | 61.3               |
| Scheduled Castes and Tribes                   | 37.3               |
| <b>Educational qualification of emigrants</b> |                    |
| Primary                                       | 5.3                |
| Secondary                                     | 21.3               |
| Higher Secondary                              | 25.3               |
| Graduation                                    | 1.3                |
| Post-Graduate                                 | 26.7               |
| Illiterate                                    | 2.7                |
| <b>Marital status</b>                         |                    |
| Married                                       | 89.3               |
| Unmarried                                     | 10.7               |
| <b>Structure of the family</b>                |                    |
| Joint Family                                  | 38.7               |
| Nuclear Family                                | 61.3               |

Data Source: *Data has been collected from the fieldwork*

**5.1 Age.** Age is a very important variable in defining how the surplus value of emigration is used. At the time of emigration, maximum emigrant was relatively younger than the general population. Table no.2 shows the age composition of the migrant from Gorakhpur district. Under 25-35 age groups, most of the emigrants have married. As per my observation emigrants from the 35-45 age group have lived 5-10 years at the GCC countries.

Younger generations are also motivated by the family to go to the GCC countries, especially those family members or relatives who are working at Gulf.

**5.2 Gender.** It has been noticed that majority of the respondent belonged to the male category in the GCC countries. There is a reason of male migration, in this region, the Indian social system where the male is dominant and women are marginalized. So, the head of the family member do not want to see women working outside the village, town, cities, and country. In this field survey, I have observed that during the field survey, maximum women from Other Backward Classes those who are uneducated, use to work in their agricultural land with her husband whereas women from Scheduled Castes are engaged as labourer in the agricultural land which belongs to upper castes.

**5.3 Religion.** As we know that religion influences individual behavior in destination countries (Hagan and Ebaugh 2003) like marriage, freedom of speech, education, deviance, interpersonal friendliness, etc. Emigrant from Gorakhpur district as per my research, highly belongs to Hindus (96%), very few emigrants from the Muslim (4%) community because they are largely self-employed in petty business-like tailoring, mechanic, bakery, hairdressers, grocery, provisional stores, etc. whereas Hindus are largely dependent upon agriculture for livelihood. Income gained from agriculture fails to satiate the demand of Hindu families and therefore they find enough reason to migrate.

**5.4 Caste.** Caste system as the subset of social stratification plays a significant role in Indian society. Ahsanulhaq made a critical engagement of how the Indian caste system locked the endogamous social group where the social position is hierarchically decided and recognized (Ahsanulhaq 2007). The perception and reasons for migration are regulated by the caste-based socio-economic disparities. The pattern of land ownership and the distribution of occupational and educational opportunities persist strictly lined through caste grouping in India (Borooah 2005). Consequently, different caste groups have a different degree or grades of access to socio-economic and cultural resources. Hence, caste discrimination pushes the process of emigration from Eastern Uttar Pradesh through the occurrence of the social basis of economic inequalities. Therefore, the highest majority of emigrants are OBC (61.3) (Other Backward Class) followed by SC and ST (37.3), and General (1.3). The reason behind migration lay in backwardness in terms of education and social status. That is to say, for being socially and educationally backward, which results in backwardness on the economic

front, people belonging to OBC, SC & ST feel obliged to leave for GCC nations to emancipate from their backwardness. The employment crisis caused by poor education coupled with lower social strata contributes to the day-to-day problem experiences by the emigrants, especially the Scheduled Caste. Similarly, there is considerable number of emigrations from Upper Caste Hindus; however, their migration remarkably differs from Scheduled Castes and Other Backward Classes.

**5.6 Educational status.** Emigrant's education plays a very crucial role for acquiring high wages. However, migration also affects educational attainments of those who do not choose to move, both in the destination and the place of origin (Dustmann & Glitz 2011). Migration may open up a space for skill reproduction in developed countries, affecting average levels of education and possibly generating education externalities and new incentives for human capital investment (ibid). According to my field survey, there is substantial variation in the educational composition among the emigrants. Most of the illiterate emigrants belong to Scheduled Caste and Backward Caste. They are economically and socially marginalized, hence, hinder their access to education. But now, after emigration to GCC nations, there has been seen positive impact on their socio-economic condition.

**5.7 Marital status.** Most of the migrants from Gorakhpur district are married. The above table shows 89.3 percent migrants are married and 10.7 percent migrants are unmarried. There is age variation amongst the married migrants in compared to unmarried ones. Amongst these migrants, most of them got married after migration and economic stability. And those migrants have been recently migrated to the GCC countries are unmarried. In these villages, international migration to GCC countries is an attractive source of income after marriages. There is a traditional division of labour among families where men's role is to do outside work, whereas women engaged as a household head in the absence of men. According to the respondent, marriage is also a reason of their emigration to GCC countries because when children are born after marriage, their low income is not adequate to fulfill their needs, so they decide to move to GCC countries for earning extra income.

**5.8 Family structure of emigrants.** Family is universal although there is a shift in meaning and composition with the change of time and space (Perlesz, et al 2006). In the era of industrialization, people are migrating from one place to another in search of

employment and better lives, and in this process, globalization has been influencing the family structure. Consequently, family structure has been changing from joint to nuclear as the structure of family varies across different cultures and societies (Bures 2009). Nuclear family is characterized by monogamous married couple living with their children, apart from additional relatives, with the husband working outside the home and the wife being a full-time housewife (Popenoe 1999). Table no.2 shows 61.3 percent of respondents belong to the nuclear family and 38.7 percent respondents belonged to the joint family. Before migration, most of the respondents were members of the joint family but after emigration, they made a separate family (nuclear family) with their wife and children although they understand traditional norms and values. The family structure of people migrating from Gorakhpur district is either nuclear or joint. The trend of the nuclear family is a modern phenomenon, that is to say, modernity which has encouraged individualism and also impacted migrant family structure. Migrants from these villages are motivated by personal development and personal thinking. Therefore, most of the migrants prefer nuclear family than joint family.

## **Section-B**

### **Socio-economic perspective: Problems and prospect**

International labour migration is an important source for economic development in origin countries, as well as destination in India (Zachariah, Mathew, and Rajan 2001). It influences the national economy, as well as the local economy, which carries both positive and negative implications. Migrants send remittances to the origin countries which create considerable multiple effects in the local economy at the place of origin (Raghuram 2009). India as a classic example of labour immigration to GCC received a large number of remittances in the world and these remittances contribute to national and regional economic development and GDP.

### **6. Remittances and emigrant's job profile in the GCC countries**

Remittances are the money sent by the emigrant workers to their home or origin place. It is a significant part of international capital flow, especially related to labour exporting countries (Al-Assaf & Al-Malki 2014). It is a momentous source of earnings for household, particularly in developing countries like India, Indonesia, Myanmar, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Pakistan, etc. According to MOIA report, 2014 India received the largest amount

of remittances in the world, approximately \$70 billion (MOIA 2014). Skilled, unskilled and semi-skilled workers have been contributing to the intensification of these huge remittances (Bhagat, Keshri and Ali 2013). In the table no. 3 have mentioned the flow of remittances from Indian emigrant's workers back to their families in the home country which is a very essential source of income in micro-level economic development.

**Table No. 3**

| <b>Profession</b>     | <b>Percentage of labourer</b> | <b>Salary (in thousand) p/m</b> |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Carpenter             | 61.3                          | INR 25000-35000                 |
| Rajmistry             | 4.0                           | INR 25000-30000                 |
| Forman                | 6.7                           | INR 40000-60000                 |
| Construction Labourer | 5.3                           | INR 18000-25000                 |
| Plumber               | 4.0                           | INR 25000-35000                 |
| Driver                | 14.7                          | INR 30000-35000                 |
| Artisans              | 1.3                           | INR 20000-30000                 |
| Official Work         | 1.3                           | INR 35000-40000                 |
| Electrician           | 1.3                           | INR 30000-35000                 |

Sources: Data has been collected by field survey and labourer percentage have been analyzed by the SPSS

Although, Indian emigrants are mainly engaged in three kinds of jobs: (1) white-collar jobs such as doctors, engineers, accountant, and managers (2) the second one is semi-skilled blue-collar jobs like a craftsman, drivers, artisans, and other technical workers (3) and the third one is unskilled labourer like construction sites, farmlands livestock, ranches, shop, stores, household maid and domestic workers (Kumar 2015). But in the context of my research area, the labourer are highly engaged in blue-collar employments (Carpenters, Mason, Plumbers, and Artisans, etc.) followed by unskilled labourer in the GCC countries very few are engaging in a skilled profession. Maximum emigrants from this area are uneducated, unskilled and semi-skilled, therefore the maximum proportions of emigrant labourer are engaging in carpentry jobs. Among these labourer, the foreman is the highest wages receiving labourer group than the mason, construction labourer, and artisans, because they have skills to run the machinery in the limited companies, but those who have been engaging in construction sites are paid low wages (see table no 3). Electricians, plumbers, and official workers received a moderate salary. So, many complaints have been receiving regarding low wages than the promised quantum of wages when the Indian labourer facilitated by the unscrupulous agents in India, as well as GCC countries (MOIA2014). But

the emigrants inform that there is an inconsistency of labour wages. Sometimes the wages increase and sometimes reduces every month depending on the availability of employment, but they are happy because they are fulfilling the basic requirement of their family. Thus, remittances have played an instrumental role in supporting the family in Gorakhpur districts. Remittances, which engendered economic empowerment, have also consolidated their social position in the society, particularly those are from the bottom of the society.

## **7. Contract and destination**

**7.1 Contract.** After the oil boom in the 1970s, GCC countries chose a holistic development path to control the oil-based revenue system or economy for the socio-economic development (Thiollet 2016). Hence, they have adopted flexible immigration policies to attract foreign labourer to build their infrastructure and work in their oil industries. But in the course of time, the increasing growth of immigrant labourer and unemployment among the native population pushed to GCC countries to adopt restrictive immigration policies for the naturalization process to the locals (Fargues 2011). Labour migration to GCC countries is known as contractual labour migration for a certain period of time. These countries did not give permanent visa to the foreign workers either skilled or unskilled. Since the initial stage of the oil boom, the GCC countries have attracted international migrants from South Asian countries like a powerful magnet. Few of them emigrants from Gorakhpur district have opened petty business-like bicycle garage in the GCC countries. The Indian emigration to GCC countries is a temporary emigration; it is different from the permanent emigration to industrialized and highly developed countries, for instance, United State, United Kingdom, and Canada, etc.

The government of origin countries and destination countries are now committed to handling their contractual labour arrangements in such a way as to arrange for mutual profits, and to prevent the risk of exploitative practices at alteration with international standards of human and emigrant labourer rights (Plant 2008). The present Indian government has been trying to build a good relationship with the GCC nations through international relations. As per my research survey, the entire emigrants are contractual labourer. Although the respondents informed me that most of the Muslims have been engaging in their own petty business (bicycle repairing shop) and few people are doing the job in fortune shop but they all are contract signed labourer. Among these emigrants, some of them are monthly paid labourer such as electrician, foreman and drivers, whereas rest of them are fixed wage

labourer, however, they do not receive wages on time. Those who are working the longtime said that earlier the contract period was minimum five years and maximum seven years but the duration of contract depends upon the nature and complexity of work. The contractual period may be two to three year maximum.

**7.2 Destination countries.** Earlier the highest number of populations migrated from south Indian states (Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, etc.). Most of them are skilled or unskilled labourer as GCC countries are providing a lot of job opportunities to these labourer. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO) since 2011 to 2015, Uttar Pradesh ranked the top position followed by Bihar, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu and started declining since 2016, but continues to be highest international labour producing state to the GCC countries in India (ILO2018).

Although since the initial stage of migration to gulf countries, the kingdom of Saudi Arabia is the most preferred country for the Indian labourer but in the context of my research area, the United Arab Emirate (UAE) especially, Dubai is the first destination choice country for the labourer followed by Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar Kuwait, and Bahrain (Kohli 2014). Industrialization and the constructions for development provide more scopes for the carpenters and unskilled labourer to migrate to Dubai as it is less exploitative than Saudi Arabia (Naithini and Jha 2009). The emigration from Gorakhpur district to the GCC countries depend upon the availability of jobs as per the skill of migrants, salary, the emigrant-friendly environment which includes law and order, working condition, facilities, etc.

The emigrants migrating to UAE work as technicians, plumbers, construction workers, carpenter, etc, in the fixed contract duration. The study informed that there are very few chances of the exploitation of labourer than other GCC nations, therefore most of the migrant prefer to UAE as their destination. Saudi Arabia is the second destination country as per the survey, where 27 percent respondents are living in Saudi Arabia. Oman and Qatar (14.7 & 12.0) are the moderate destination countries for the Indians (see the table no. 4). Oman is one of the emigrants-friendly places as they get freedom at working site, and not been abuse by native people or employers. However, the wages are low; hence, most of them prefer to emigrate to UAE and Saudi Arabia. Before going to gulf, most of the emigrants feel that they can accumulate more money in Qatar but the situation different as they reached the place. The place is not favorable to them, as there was rampant exploitation in wages by

native and owners. Therefore, they used to return to India and then again went to the UAE and Saudi Arabia. Only few emigrants are working in Kuwait & Bahrain (see the table no4) and they are engaged in construction sites with fewer wage. Therefore, United Arab Emirate and Saudi Arabia are the most favorable countries to generate high wages.

**Table No. 4**

| <b>Destination countries</b>                             | <b>Percentage</b>             |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| United Arab Emirate                                      | 42.7                          |
| Saudi Arabia                                             | 21.3                          |
| Oman                                                     | 14.7                          |
| Qatar                                                    | 12.0                          |
| Kuwait                                                   | 5.3                           |
| Bahrain                                                  | 4.0                           |
| <b>Emigrants who has visited more than two countries</b> |                               |
| <b>Number of countries</b>                               | <b>Percentage of visitors</b> |
| One Countries                                            | 52.0                          |
| Two Countries                                            | 18.7                          |
| Three Countries                                          | 16.0                          |
| More than Three Countries                                | 6.7                           |
| All the GCC Countries                                    | 6.7                           |

Data Sources: Data has been collected from the field survey

**7.3 Emigrants who have visited more than two countries.** These semi-skilled and unskilled labourer have high rate of turnover in the GCC countries as the contract is valid for a short period, usually not more than two or three years. Therefore, emigrants from this area return to their home after completion of their contract or visa. The Indian labour migration to the GCC countries are dominated by circular migration (Barbar and Gardner 2016) that is visible in this region. Hence, after returning home, they try to go to other countries where they can get high salary. In this emigration process, few of them have visited the entire GCC nations for seeking job opportunities and expectations of high wages. Most of the emigrants have visited single country (see the table no.4) as they are satisfied with their job and monthly wages. But those who have visited more than one country are not satisfied with their

job and salary, as well as the working atmosphere and bad relationship with their roommates and employers. After moving two or three countries they get experience and good social networks that help to move to GCC countries. Few of them could move easily in single contract duration. There are so many case studies I have noticed one of them I have discussed below:

*Jhangur is a 46-year-old emigrant worker. He did primary education in Jagdeeshpur village. He visited all the GCC countries in his life. Presently, he is working in Saudi Arabia as a carpenter. His first arrival was at Saudi Arabia in 1995 for a two-year contract. He was living in company lodge where everything was available. Every basic facility was provided by the company. The company lodge was situated at 35-40 kilometers away from the main city. People working with him and every emigrant had life insurance. But 5 to 8 emigrant workers were sharing a single room. In the breakfast, loaves of breads, one egg, and tea were served. He spent eighteen months in Saudi Arabia and after completion of their contract, he returned to India. In their first trip, he was never exploited by any native people or their employer. The year 1998 was his second trip in Kuwait, with free visa but he was getting very low wages. So, he abandoned that work and again moved to Bahrain in the same company. He returned to India in the year 2000. In the same year, he again migrated to Dubai, where he worked for three years. In Dubai, he was getting 2,500 dirhams, and he was living in company lodge with seven people in a room. There was a lack of basic amenities like AC, refrigerator, bed, etc. But he was happy because he was getting high wage and his employer was a good man. After three years, he returned to India and again went to Oman in 2006. But again, the wage was very low; hence, he migrated to Qatar where he lived for three years. He says that he has spent fourteen years in the GCC countries. In these fourteen years, he made a good home, purchased three acres of agricultural land and basic amenities (TV, Tractor, Car, Refrigerator, Washing machine etc.).*

## **8. Living condition in the GCC countries**

The living condition of the migrants depends on the income and pressure to send remittance to their home. As per the return migrants there are highly skilled workers and few white collars emigrant workers, are living along with their families with high basic rules and regulation. There is widespread variation in the living conditions and basic amenities provided by the GCC countries or employers (Azhar 2016). The skilled and unskilled

workers are normally located in labour camps, which is situated at outside of the residential areas and excluded from mainstream society (Baldwin 2011). According to the returnees, labour camps are the place of living with poor facilities, where labourer are forced to stay along with the groups in signal room, signal bathroom and for the single men. In the UAE, approximately, 70 percent of the labourer are accommodated in labour camps, constructed for mainly single male workers (Zachariah, Prakash & Rajan 2004). These labour camps are recognized by the semi-skilled and un-skilled international labourer. In most of the cases, Indian expatriates as other emigrant workers tend to live in clustered communities (Kohli 2014). They did not live with the only Indian labourer; it depends upon the employers to distribute the rooms among the labourer. These Indian labourer have to stay with other international labourer from the Sri Lanka, Nepal, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Egypt, and other South Asian countries. Some of the labour camps do not provide basic amenities but few of them have given all type of basic facilities including air conditioning, canteen, drinking water sources, and electricity. But according to them, maximum camps provided basic facilities for the labourer. There are few un-skilled labourer in the GCC said that, who live in the apartment but these apartments are not referred as labour camps (Gardner 2010). They are white color employee and living along with their family. But in the context of Gorakhpur district, I have not found a single household emigration to GCC countries although this area is characterized by signal men emigration to GCC nations.

Though in the entire gulf region, the accommodation is free but according to the emigrants, the employer and company give their salary after the deduction of accommodation charges. Emigrants reported that most of the registered company and formal sector provide free accommodation to their employee in the city. However, primary data, which have been gathered by field survey, tells a different story. The respondent informed that though migrants face problems in the GCC countries, despite all odds, it provides lucrative labour market for emigrants. Most of the migrants hold the view that GCC country's laws regarding emigrant labourer are not as harsh as it is widely considered. Labour laws in the GCC countries are effectively implemented. Barring few exceptions, payment is made on time and families receive remittances on time.

**8.1 Place of interaction with relatives.** GCC nations fail to give enough space or freedom for mingling with host society (Winckler 1997). It may be religious barriers and theocratic laws prevent workers from becoming part of them. All the GCC countries are

mainly Islamic countries where the domination of Islamic principles persists. Therefore, emigrants from other ethnic groups have socio-religious problems of adjustment (especially Hindus) and in my research area, the majority of emigrants are Hindus. But in certain circumstances, emigrants belonging to Muslim communities could adjust with the native society and have a good interaction. The emigrants from Gorakhpur district live in segmented labour camps; hence, they face difficulties in meeting with their relatives. Even labourer from the same village and families live far away from each other. Despite that, some of them try to meet their relatives and friends as long as come outside to the market and shopping. But few of them never meet their friends & relatives.

**8.2 Company distance from residence.** Indian migrants engaged in the work in GCC nations execute their respective work at the worksites, which in most cases are far away from the downtown city. The labour camps themselves are frequently found in the semi-urban and industrial hinterland of the cities, which prevent the emigrants from obtaining groceries from the main cities (Gardner 2011). As per the emigrant's answer, the distance between labour camps and work sites ranges minimum 10 km to 60 km from the cities. However, labourer do not have to pay traveling charges, as the transportation arranged by the company.

## **9. Impact of remittances on household**

Myron Weiner has mentioned that remittances are the important source of emigrant's families, enabling them to pay off debts, purchasing agricultural land, build a new home, send their children to a good school, and pay for the wedding (Weiner 1982). The entire Eastern Uttar Pradesh is highly affected by the gulf emigration and remittances, as these places have become the major source of micro economic development. Migration is a universal phenomenon and it has a broad impact on the place of origin and place of destination which is closely linked with the socio-economic condition of households (Ibid). It affects social life in different ways and the effect varies across different types of migration along with different stages of migration (Katseli, Lucas & Xenogiani 2006). The socio-economic effects of emigration in Gorakhpur district to the GCC countries consist of changes in household structure, child outcomes in terms of education and health. In these villages, I have noticed both positive and negative remittances which are explained below.

## 9.1 Positive impact

**9.1.1 Purchase household assets.** Prior to emigration to GCC, the emigrants were characterized by poverty, and this prompted them to become part of internal and international migration. I have observed that after emigration emigrant's household condition has changed. Emigrants sent remittances to their families to contribute to their socio-economic development for instance purchased household amenities like television, refrigerator, motorcycles, car, cooking gas, washing machine, etc (Kannan 2005). Remittances increase household income and it is an anti-poverty force in developing societies (Ratha 2013). Therefore, we can say that remittances have changed household's lifestyle and reduced their poverty.

Table No. 5

| S. No. | Name of Items   | Response | No. of respondent |
|--------|-----------------|----------|-------------------|
| 1      | Television      | Yes      | 75                |
|        |                 | No       | 00                |
| 2      | Refrigerator    | Yes      | 23                |
|        |                 | No       | 52                |
| 3      | Cooking Gas     | Yes      | 69                |
|        |                 | No       | 6                 |
| 4      | Washing Machine | Yes      | 21                |
|        |                 | No       | 54                |
| 5      | Tractor         | Yes      | 22                |
|        |                 | No       | 53                |
| 6      | Motorcycles     | Yes      | 68                |
|        |                 | No       | 7                 |
| 7      | Car             | Yes      | 8                 |
|        |                 | No       | 67                |

Data sources: Data collected through the field survey

As per the survey, every household have branded (LG, BPL and Samsung) color television and 23 households have refrigerators (see the table no. 5) and rest have come from the bottom of the society, especially lower castes & few from the Other Backward Class's (OBC) new emigrants, they said instead of wasting money to purchased refrigerator it would be better to save money for future betterment. In the rural Indian societies have been noticed that generally, poor people use wooden fire for the cooking but remittances have given opportunities to purchased cooking gas and after emigration 69 household have bought cooking gas and rest are households still using wood for cooking food. Most of them have

purchased a motorcycle after emigration. Few of them have bought washing machine, tractors, and the car also (see the table no.5) and those have not bought anything saving money for the purchase of agricultural land and for their children's wedding. I have observed that those households have more agricultural land has purchased their own tractors for farming and mostly belong to other backward castes. As per my survey, 22 households have bought their tractors with the help of remittances.

Those possessed a car (8) come from the economically established family but for the sake of extra income, they send their sons to GCC countries. They are also traditionally rich coupled with agricultural lands, and most of them belong to OBC communities. So, remittances have directly increased the income of the households in Gorakhpur district and it has been providing financial resources for poor households in these villages. In these villages, remittances have reduced poverty and resulted in development in many low-income households.

**9.1.2 Health and education.** It is notice that before emigration, among the deprived communities, the female and child labour were found in the agricultural sector and in the construction of houses in the villages, as they were socio-economically backward. According to the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) 2015-2016, 62.3 percent children (age of 6-59 month) and 49.5 percent, women are anemic in the rural area at Gorakhpur district (NFHS, 2015-16). Because of poverty, they are unable to provide proper nutritious food, but after migration, it is found that the head of emigrant's household prefers to good hospitals and doctors during sickness or any kind of disease (Diwakar 2009). In the rural household in Gorakhpur district, remittances have increased educational expenditure their children are enrolled in school. Those children receiving education their family is educationally conscious, they understand the importance of education. Few of the families are not much sincere about the importance of education and this insincerity may be because of illiteracy. Because of illiteracy, they are not much more conscious to send their children to school.

**9.1.3 Purchased agricultural land.** Remittances has influenced macro-level development through the multiple effects arising as a result of household consumption, investment activities and purchasing of land or basic amenities (Singh & Hari 2011). There is an interesting trend among the emigrant's families that they have a strong tendency to invest remittances in the agricultural land and housing. Purchasing agricultural land is a common use

of remittances in Gorakhpur. After emigration, every emigrant has purchased agricultural land or plots for making a new home from the outside of their villages.

**Table No. 6**

| Categories     | 1-3 Bigha | 5-6 Bigha | More than 6 Bigha | 3-4 Bigha | Not Purchased | Total     |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|-------------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|
| <b>General</b> | 1         | 0         | 0                 | 0         | 0             | <b>1</b>  |
| <b>OBC</b>     | 28        | 4         | 3                 | 10        | 1             | <b>46</b> |
| <b>SC</b>      | 14        | 2         | 2                 | 7         | 3             | <b>28</b> |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>43</b> | <b>6</b>  | <b>5</b>          | <b>17</b> | <b>4</b>      | <b>75</b> |

Sources: Data has been collected from the fieldwork

The data shows the number of households who have purchased the agricultural land after migration.

The evident of material possession and purchased agricultural land after emigration are the visible indicators, that means, gulf emigrants have brought prosperity in their family (Khan, and Valatheeswaran 2016). Before migration, the lower caste's emigrants were sharecroppers, as well as agricultural labourer in landlord's agricultural field. The lower caste women chop the crops farmlands and receive either grain or per day as a kind, which was not sufficient for their family survival but after emigration, remittances have given an immeasurable hope for upward economic mobility. Consequently, backward castes are the dominant communities in terms of purchase land after migration followed by scheduled castes (see the table no. 6).

The possession of land and good house is also regarded as basic symbols of social status. Therefore, we can say that remittances constitute the economic paddle for moving the wheel of development in these emigrant regions.

**9.1.4 Housing and business.** After the flow of remittances, they spent a large amount of money in constructing a new house, as well as in renovating the existing house. They have started to construct new and modern houses. In fact, the head of household enjoy prestigious socio-economic status in the villages. I have observed that a slight part of savings are also invested in sustainable consumer goods like cycles, radios, pumping machines for agricultural land and Tulu pump for water supply in the home, etc. Few of them have set up business in the village such as grocery shops, commercial transportation, big tea shops, sweet shops and hardware shops, etc. After setting these businesses, few of them build a strong network with the political parties for disseminating their business at a large scale in the town area.

**9.2 Negative impact**

After the arrival of emigrants in the GCC countries, they often seek a good job to improve the well-being of their family, and provide better opportunities to their children for the long run (Yanovich 2015). Emigration may support socio-economic stability but apart from that, the absence of guardian or head of the family make their children to divert their attention socially and psychologically. The north Indian society is characterized by patriarchy, where men are the head of the family. Whereas, women are control by male members, they are not considered as equal to male counterparts in this hypocritical Indian society. Therefore, children whose father is working in the GCC countries, especially youngsters become alcoholic. The important negative impact of labour migration is visible on the family conjugal separation (Parsuraman 1986). Some new emigrants have separated from the joint family after migration when there was a chance for improving their socio-economic conditions. Hence, the nuclear family is emerging in this region because of economic stability. The children generally (12-18 years old) never consult to rest of the family members about any decision in their life or work. They choose to live in materialistic world, while their father is busy making money in GCC for children's better education. Youth are making connections with political parties. But the brighter side of the picture is that in these village, children are getting higher and technical education (B.Tech, ITI, Polytechnic, Graduation, and Post-Graduation, etc.). When the teen ager's requirement doesn't fulfill, then their behavior becomes aggressive towards the family.

**10. Transformation of social remittances**

Social remittances are conceptualized as intangible flow of knowledge such as ideas, prospects of migration, religious ideologies, and practices, etc. which enable the rapid flow of emigration from India to other countries (Rutten 2012). It is imperative to transform the very idea of relationship between migration and international migration. Once the emigrants have settled, they would start sharing their understanding with friends or relatives about employment opportunities in the GCC countries. Apart from the appropriate employment in the GCC countries, they send information about immigration rules, language compatibility and the way of transferability of their skills and competencies to the new working environment at the GCC countries (Oommen 2016). The nature of Indian labour migration to GCC nations is ephemeral and circulatory which increases the transformation of transnational ideas, religious practices and activities of emigrants, which in turn influences their home

members and relatives (Levitt and Lamba-Nieves 2011). These labourer are not sending only the ideas of migration but also the level of living cost & importance of career advancement is shared at home. Therefore, the flow of knowledge among friends at home countries stimulates the emigration process in the Gorakhpur district, as well as in creating a chain in the Eastern parts of Uttar Pradesh.

### **11. Causes of emigration**

Socio-economic conditions provide the main inspiration behind emigration to GCC countries (Straubhaar 1986). Although the phenomena of migration always occurs either due to the harsh socio-economic conditions or unavailability of employment. Generally, migration is characterized by voluntary and involuntary in the context of Indian emigration to European and North American countries (USA, UK, Canada, etc.) (Azeez & Begum 2009). But the Indian labour migration to gulf countries varies from the skilled Indian migration. India has the highest second population after China which is the main cause of unemployment but in terms of poverty, there is an unequal distribution of resources and corruption are responsible for unskilled, semiskilled, uneducated and literate labour emigration to GCC countries. There is a popular assumption that most of the resources have been owned by a few populations, especially by the upper castes and elite classes, while only minimal resources have been held by the majority population. Therefore, people from the bottom (mostly lower caste) are unable to take higher education, consequently, they are suffering from poverty and unemployment, although it is my personal views, and not contextual. So, push and pull factors are responsible in this region for semi-skilled and unskilled Indian labourer forcefully and reluctantly emigration to GCC countries for the economic upliftment of their families. In India, labour emigration is mostly influenced by social structure and pattern of development (Kaur, Singh, Garg, Singh & Singh 2011). The slow process of development failed to create new job opportunities for the poorer and needy peoples (especially lower caste and class). Poverty and desire for high wages are the main reasons for emigration from Gorakhpur district to GCC countries, as well as landholding system, the unequal of agricultural land has created socio-economic inequality in this region. Large family size, caste system, exploitation in the native place in terms of wages & labour contributes to the breakdown of the traditional socio-economic relationship between landlords and labourer in the villages. Therefore, family decides to send a member to Saudi Arabia or Dubai for the socio-economic development.

**12. Facilitators of emigration**

The recruitment process in the Gorakhpur district is an important part of labour emigration to GCC countries, as it is facilitated in various ways. It may be through the help of family members, friends, relatives, or local recruiting agents, as well as emigrant networks. Emigrant's network and local recruiting agencies played a mediator role in the process of gulf migration (Praksh1998). Nowadays the situation has changed. The government made laws to protect low-skilled citizens headed to GCC jobs, including utilization of licensed local recruitment agencies by the departing low-skilled emigrants and checking of the contract issued by the employers by the government agencies before departure (Sasikumar & Martin 2017). Those people are willing to migrate, have to approach those agents who can ensure their jobs on their arrival in GCC countries. There are so many emigrants who have been duped by the local agents mostly those are unaware at the first time of the recruitment process, now they knew about the visa fee and employment given by the foreign employers. So, there are fewer chances to allure to the emigrant labourer. The largest emigrants from Gorakhpur district approach to the local agents for going to the GCC countries. As per my survey, 64.0 percent emigrants have gone with the help of agents, while 30.7 percent emigrants through their relatives or family members and emigrants who approached their friends for migration constituted only 5.3 percent of the totals (see the table no.7).

**Table No. 7**

| <b>Facilitator</b>           | <b>Total percentage</b> |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Emigration Through Agent     | 64.0                    |
| Emigration Through Relatives | 30.7                    |
| Emigration Through Friends   | 5.3                     |

Data Sources: *Data has been collected through the field survey*

In the Jagdishpur villages, maximum households have more than two gulf emigrants and they help to others. Few emigrants those are circular knew about the employer and they have a good relationship with the employers in the GCC countries, if the employers need labourer they contact to their friends. Friends and relatives play an important role at the place of origin, as well as the place of destination for the examination to the reputation of the recruitment agencies, as they may have used them in the past (Plant 2008). In this context,

relatives and family member and friends play the significant role in giving information about the process of emigration. Migration through agents is the most common way of migration to GCC countries.

Facilitating migration process by the relatives & friends are cost-effective and safe then through the agent. But new emigrants consider that agents are the best medium of the assurance of employment in the GCC nations but those have relatives and friends, do not want to go to the agent. Despite odds associated with migration through agents, some emigrants still heavily rely on agents.

### **13. Exploitation and problems**

In GCC countries, labourers have several problems but the employers and the government of the GCC countries doesn't look toward labourer's problem (Naithani and Jha 2009). Few of them have registered complaints regarding their salary scant, living condition squalid and many of them have human right violated (Auwal 2010). Emigrants from my research area which are working in Oman receiving low wages and their working and living condition is not good as they expected. Though emigrants proclaim that they are not being exploited in the GCC countries but there few cases of suffering in the form of wage discrimination and exploitation and they have problems with the visa agents because they charge a huge cost for the employment in the GCC countries. They said that when emigrant labourer from either India or South Asia countries reached to GCC countries, they are being paid less salary. Their real monthly wages being lower than what was promised to them in their home country. The entire emigrant labour force faced challenges in the gulf region. According to Human Right Watch, domestic workers, especially in the UAE, there are labour exploitation, passport confiscation, violations of freedom of movement, denial of food, healthcare, adequate living conditions and are physically, sexually & psychologically exploitation has been found (Begum 2014). The lack of effective rules for visa brokers and local recruiting agents, exploit the Indian emigrant workers since the initial stage of emigration to till the end of the emigration process. Workers are not compensated for overtime and sometimes are subjected to beatings by their employers and there are cases of passport and residence permits confiscation which denied exit permits to return home (Amnesty International UK Press Releases 2014). Prior to emigration, agents make an image of gulf countries as wealthy but often they fail to provide complete information about the living, wages and working

circumstances in the GCC countries. There are few case studies has been given below which depict the situation about the gulf countries

**13.1 Case.** *Ali Hussain is an emigrant worker in Dubai. He is 26-year-old and educated person (12th). He was working for 9 hours per day as a carpenter labourer in Dubai for two years contract (UAE). His visa agent has cost him 80,000 rupees for work in Dubai. Visa agent promised that Ali will receive a good salary (600 dirhams) but after arriving at the destination place, he received only 175 dirhams and there was also underpayment and late payment. He was staying in the labour camp that situated 25 kilometers long away from the city and 15 km. away from the working site. There was a lack of basic amenities, hence, they were sharing all the things and the debt was double bunk. He said, his employer was not good, he was exploitative and abusing him. According to him every emigrant worker faced the same problems and deducts wages arbitrarily from their salary. After hard endeavor and with the help of other emigrants, he abandoned his work and returned to India. After much struggle, he decided that he will never go to GCC countries.*

**13.2 Case.** *Mahendra Nishad is 35-year-old carpenter labour and eight standard passed. He visited three GCC countries. His first arrival was Dubai with a three-year contract and he was living in very tangible conditions in a lodge provided by the company. There was lack of drinking water, water had to be purchased himself and for the buying the water he was going the long distance just for taking water. In that lodge, the room was very small. Therefore, in 2006, he returned to India and again in the year 2010, he went to Dubai for a two-year contract but this time, his visa was taken by the employer. So, he was forced to work in low wages in Dubai. After completion of their contract, he returned to India in 2012, and in the year 2012, once again he went to Dubai for three years' contract and again he was sucked up by the company. He said that the agent promised that he will give him 2,000 dirhams but after arriving in Dubai, the salary was less than being promised. He said "we do not have any right to fight or raise our voice against employers for exploitation and police also do not register their case." Once, he was ill and wanted leave for rest but supervisor denied his request. Hence, he quit his job and returns to his home before completion of the contract.*

The passport of emigrant workers are in the hands of agents and are compelled to work under the highly exploitative and discriminatory *Kafala system*<sup>2</sup> of sponsorship-based employment, which prevents them free from leaving employers. The emigrant labourer are captive workers for the employers, who originally recruited them, even the employers do not pay the salary as fixed period, and sometimes they confiscate the immigrant's travel documents (D'Souza A 2010). Consequently, the emigrant workers in the GCC countries were forced to work in unsafe working conditions, as well as stay in working site for long working hours without a regular salary. The emigrant from Gorakhpur informed that most of them use to work for eight to twelve hours per day. Around 8 to 12 emigrant workers live in a single room, which is 20 squaremeters on average and contains double bunk beds (Brusle 2009). Besides this, they are not given hygienic accommodation which considerably impacts the health of workers. According to Human Rights Watch, the deaths of hundreds of South Asian workers in Qatar have brought to light the appalling living and working conditions of low-wage migrant workers in the construction sector (Ali 2010).

In the GCC countries, immigrant's labourer have several socio-economic problems, especially the problem of living, life security, and exploitation. According to the respondents, the religious rights of immigrants are not protected by the state. These countries do not give the freedom to build churches, temples, *Gurudwara* on its soil and would not give permission to other religious practices in public spaces. The practice of any religion other than Islam is a punishable offence.

## 14. Conclusion

The process of Indian emigration to GCC nations is dominated by the un-skilled and semi-skilled labourer. It impacted positively on the emigrant's families through the remittances. The process of migration in this area is single circular dominated by other backward classes and scheduled castes. There are various reasons for the huge labour migration, including individual motivation, socio-economic circumstances of the family, and social network of friendship with those who are working in the GCC countries. However, the decisions are often taken by the family and individual himself. Gorakhpur districts reflect the rampant

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<sup>2</sup>*Kafala system* is a system used to monitor migrant labourer, especially those who work mostly in construction and domestic sector. The system requires all unskilled labourer to have the country sponsors, usually their employer, who is responsible for their visa and legal status of sponsorship-based employment, which prevents them from leaving employers.

migration process and wage differences between the origin place and destination place. Generally, newly emigrants pay approximately INR 70,000-80,000 for visa & passport to agent, and it takes a long time to reach the Gulf countries (approximately 6-12 months) but the expectation for high wages attracts them, and those who are going with the help of their relatives or friends are less exploited. Because it is their relatives who make necessary arrangements for getting documents for employment in the Gulf countries.

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