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Status of Unskilled Re-Immigrants from Middle East to India

In terms of the magnitude of flow this scale of a migration of workers to Middle East is unknown in the history of international migration. It is estimated that there were 10 million immigrants in the Middle East in 1985. The flow has enabled these countries to execute the needed infrastructure and other development programs making way for the improvements in the quality of life of their nationals. However little is known about quality of life of the migrants, the final outcome of migration their problems and prospects. A look at these issues is all the more important in Gulf migration since in the absence of official co-operation in organizing the flow there is the presence of labour contractors. Also there is discrimination between the nationals and the migrants and further legal protection to the migrants in some of the countries are far from satisfactory. Another issue, which is looked upon with concern is the problem of return migration which has posed serious problems to the migrants, his family and to the economy. This study attempted to shed some light on these issues with reference to a sample of 335 male (300 unskilled and 35 skilled) and 21 female return migrants to the Indian state of Kerala. India is one of the largest exporter of labour to the Middle East countries as indications are that one fifth of the immigrant workers present in the region came from India. Within India most of the migrants originates from the state of Kerala. The high pressure on land, economic backwardness and acute unemployment problems acted as push factors for out migration from the state.