

**Patterns of Social Change among the Migrant  
Farmers of Kannur District – a Case Study**

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**Funded by**

**Kerala Research Programme on Local Level Development  
Centre for Development Studies  
Thiruvananthapuram  
2003**

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# Chapter I

## Introduction and Methodology of the study

### Introduction

#### Background of the study

Change is the most visible and inevitable aspect of social life. The various structural components of society witness constant change corresponding to any variation in the social system. Some changes are the consequence of rational, planned and deliberate activity. While some changes are accidental, unplanned and spontaneous in nature. Certain changes lead to development and progress, while certain changes are downward directed and have adverse impact upon the society.

The factors and variables that determine change differ from society to society and from time to time. Migration is one such crucial sociological and economic variable that exerts a pervasive influence on the socio-economic, political and demographic structure of both the sending and receiving areas.

Migration is basically a spatial mobility from one place to the next. This can happen with or without effecting occupational mobility. Migration is a socio-economic variable because it is capable of effecting occupational change among individuals and groups. If migration is planned towards a destination of permanent nature having the deliberate involvement of a group of people, its influence would be quite far-reaching. One of the universal consequences of migration is mobility of labourforce from farm to non-farm occupations.

#### Migration streams in Kerala.

Kerala state has witnessed several streams of migration. The two important streams of migration that 20<sup>th</sup> century Kerala witnessed are : 1) Migration of farmers from Travancore to the highlands of Malabar 2) Migration of semi-skilled and unskilled labourers to Gulf and Arabian countries. Existing literature indicate that both these migration streams have induced profound soico-economic changes in Kerala society.

Migration and mobility of labour are the topics that are extensively studied by Sociologists, Economists, Demographers and Geographers. However their focus, approach and methodology have been different.

#### Migration of farmers from Travancore to Malabar

The migration of farmers from central Kerala was started in 1920s. It was first initiated by a group of Syrian Christians. Majority of the migrants were small peasant farmers who went to make Malabar their permanent abode. In the beginning it was only an isolated attempt of landless and enterprising few. But gradually households having more land also started settling in Malabar.

By the end of 1920s almost the entire cultivable area in Travancore was brought under cultivation. So the peasants of Travancore had to seek opportunities outside the region/state. For migration to take place the potential migrants should know about the places where lands are available. Though the people of the two regions- Travancore and Malabar speak the same language, there was practically no administrative, political or economic links between them. Some of the peasant farmers of the interior parts of Travancore got to know from the Mappila labourers information of the availability of cultivable lands. Some potential migrant farmers took the trouble of visiting Malabar and finding out the actual conditions in Malabar.

The presence of earliest settlers, no doubt, helped the new settlers in understanding the topography of the area and the extend of available lands for cultivation. During the period 1941-1951 the percentage of increase in the total population of Malabar was 21.09%, while the increase of Christian population in the period was 97.69%. This indicates that the period 1941-1951 witnessed the peak period of migration. However the trend continued up to 1971. The total number of Syrian Christian in the region was estimated to be 1,23,219 in 1960. But this increased to 2,92,815 in 1970.

The process of early migration seem to have followed a common pattern. First an investigatory trip was undertaken by one or two persons. They used to visit the areas where Christian mission stations or churches has already been established by the catholic Diocese of Calicut. When the capital had been raised, they took a second trip,

in which land was purchased and then migrated to Malabar along with one or two neighbouring families.

The individual farmers from different villages of Travancore started moving to several parts of Malabar from early 1920s onwards. The three midland taluks of Travancore viz. Meenachil, Muvattupuzha and Thodupuzha were the major places which contributed to Malabar migration.

Several of the migrant households had to pay a high cost in the initial period of migration. They felt as if they were alien followed with heavy destruction of crops and lives by wild animals, financial loss and death of young and aged members of the family due to diseases and absence of proper treatment. 'As a result a sufficiently substantial number of families have returned back broken in health and fortunes, to their native homes'.

#### Statement of the Problem

Empirical studies with the migrant households indicate that the migration of farmers from central Kerala to Malabar region is unique and is distinct from many other regional, national and international migrations. It is a community or group migration wherein a group- a homogenous people along with their close kin migrated together to another region with a sole purpose of ascendance in the status ladder by earning a livelihood through farming. Hence most of them sold away their entire property in the motherland(with no hope to return) and settled in clusters in several parts of Malabar. Thus it was a planned, permanent and 'settler migration'. As a result they developed a sound mind to withstand the initial hurdles and constraints that they had to face in the new land.

Several other migration streams are due to the aspirations for modern sector jobs- as a result there have been mobility of labour force from farm to non-farm occupations, but the peasant migration to Malabar made a significant addition to the agricultural labourforce. This also created an enlightened new generation farmers and converted the vacant rocky land of Malabar into a paradise of farming activities.

The migration of a group of labourforce from Travancore to Malabar, to pursue the occupation which they viewed in high esteem was meant for upward social mobility. But after 68 decades since the beginning of Malabar migration, what have taken place in the socio-economic living conditions? What are the emerging trends and dilemmas in the agrarian households of Malabar? This has to be understood at a micro-level.

### Understanding the factors of Change

The different patterns of change in the farming households was studied through an in-depth study(life-history) of selected cases.

A detailed profile of the following factors are prepared.

- ❖ Socio-economic living conditions of the migrant farmers while at Travancore
- ❖ The reasons for migrating to Malabar
- ❖ The initial hurdles and losses that they encountered and how they overcame them
- ❖ The agencies and factors that have contributed to initial success and stability
- ❖ The nature and intensity of change in the last two decades

The study looked into the changes that have taken place in the following socio-economic variables.

1. Occupation:- The change in the nature and content of the farming activities of the farmer and the occupational patterns of his sons.
2. Income pattern:- The pattern of income of the farmer over the years was studied. What is the major income source of his sons? What are the supplementary income earning activities of his sons?
3. Landholding and assets:- What is the size of the land owned-cultivated and cultivable? What are the farm assets, household utensils of the respondent and his sons?
4. Land use pattern:- Whether there has taken place any significant change in the land use pattern of the respondent? What is the nature and motives of change?
5. Crop economy:- What is the present crop-pattern? What is the viable crop pattern for Malabar region?
6. Social system and support:- The social and political relationship of the farmer's households and the support institutions that enhances the entrepreneurial qualities in the past and at present.

# **Methodology of the Study**

## **Objectives**

### **General Objective**

To study the changes in the migrant farmers of Kannur District through life- history (case study) approach.

### **Specific Objectives**

1. To prepare a case study of 15 migrant farmers of Kannur district.
2. To prepare a present-day socio-economic profile of the migrant farmers of Kannur district.
3. To qualitatively analyse the nature and patterns of change in the agrarian households over the years (inter-generational).
4. To understand the factors that have motivated for such changes.
5. To understand the socio-economic problems that the agrarian households face.
6. To get their suggestions for the younger generation farmers

## **Method**

Life history method was used to trace the entire process of migration and the changes that are noted today. The study is non-qualitative, historic and descriptive in nature. The first-hand and in-depth data was collected from the older members of the farming households through informal and intensive personal interviews, discussions and interaction.

Life history approach was used to understand the changes in the migrant farming households of Malabar over two successive generations. This paper attempts to trace the changes through time and change process itself in the lives and livelihoods of the migrant agrarian households of Malabar. Narration of life histories have been very much helpful in unfolding the mobility from agriculture as the primary occupation followed by the father to non-agricultural occupations like teaching, petty business, technocrat by the sons. The life histories allow us to understand socio-economic changes in a qualitative and in-depth manner through an appreciation of the relationships whereby men and women gain their livelihoods and live their lives.

This method was used in this study to get first person account of the following stages of the transition:

1. Socio- economic conditions of their past while at Travancore.
2. The conditions after reaching to Malabar region till recent past.
3. The changes that have taken place in the occupational aspects of the younger generation.

Universe of the study:- All the migrant farmers of (Syrian Christians) Kannur district who have migrated to Kannur in 1940s or those above the age of 60 comprised the universe of the study.

Area of Study: The area chosen for the study is Kannur district. 15 farmers from the IX and X wards of Alakkod Panchayath was selected for the case study. Alakkod is an area, where the peasant farmers from Travancore started settling, in significant number, since 1920s. Significant number of migrant farming households are found in Alakkod. Several migrant colonies surround this locality.

Sampling: 15 farmers (above 60 years of age and who have lived 15 years at Travancore) were selected for the case study through simple random sampling. Details regarding the occupational aspects of the sons of the respondent as well as his siblings were collected from him. All the respondents were Syrian Christians.

The study is basically two- generational which attempts to trace the occupational details of the father(First generation) and the sons (second generation). The social mobility theory propounded by Bernard Barber is applied.

### **Notes on Major concepts**

#### Social Change

Social Change is basically the change that takes place in the society. Social change is the significant alteration of social structures including consequences and manifestations of such structures embodied in norms, values and cultural products. Social change means the change in the occupational patterns of the members, which differ from that of their fathers and immediate forefathers.



Social change in the present study could be understood as the structural changes in agrarian society in terms of the landholding patterns, land use patterns, income patterns and educational patterns that contribute for the occupational mobility over the generations.

#### Migrant farmers of Kannur

Several households have migrated to Malabar in pursuit of farming especially from central Kerala. But majority of them are Syrian Christians. In the present study migrant farmers means those Syrian(catholic) Christian households who have migrated to Kannur district from central Kerala for ensuing farm-based occupations.

#### Non-agricultural occupations

Non-agricultural occupations means those various branches of commodity production other than agriculture such as agro-based industries, employment in foreign countries, trade, commerce, service sector, industrial enterprises, salaried jobs in government and non-government organisations etc.

#### Generation

Present study is two-generational. Those migrant farmers who are above 60 years of age and who have lived 15 years at Travancore comprise the first generation. All the sons of the first generation respondents are considered as second generation.

#### Arrangement of the report

The report is presented in 5 chapters. The first chapter is the introductory part which deals with the back ground of the study and the historical aspects relating to Malabar migration. The significance of the study as well as the methodology of the study is described in chapter one. Chapter two gives a random review of literature on the migrant farming households of Malabar and the agrarian social structure. Chapter three discusses the structural as well as functional changes that have taken place in the agrarian society of Kerala. Chapter four deals with the analysis of primary data gathered through life history approach and the summary and major conclusions of the study are given in chapter five.

## Chapter II

### **Agrarian Social Change : A random review of literature**

The migration of farmers from Travancore to Malabar has been the subject of study for Demographers, Economists, Historians and Sociologists. Several Malayalam writers have also given quasi-historical account of the subject. However their focus and approach is different.

Tharakan, Michael P.K(1984) in his 'Migration of farmers from Travancore to Malabar from 1930-1960' analyses the economic compulsions that motivated the peasant farmers of Travancore to migrate to Malabar.

Joseph.K.V(1988) in his sample study 'Migration and Economic Development of Kerala' analyses the socio-economic dimensions of peasant migration in Kerala. He has identified the causes of migration, the socio-economic characteristics of the migrant's households and the impact of this migration on the economic development of Malabar region and Kerala.

Mar Vellapally Sebastian (1999) in his 'Deivum Nammodu Koode'(mal)explains the initial hardships of the migrant households and the manner in which they became enterprising farmers of Malabar. The emergence of Catholic Church as the guardian of the migrant farming community is significantly underlined. He also gives brief note on 17 migrant colonies of Malabar including Peravoor, Alakkode and Cherupuzha of Kannur District.

Joseph Kuravilangad(1991) in his 'Konnipadigal'(Mal) has given a detailed account of the historic aspects of Malabar migration. This book also analyses how the earlier migrant households withstood the initial problems and hurdles for climbing up to the **ladder** of progress. He also gives a description of 18 pioneering migrant colonies of Malabar including Alakkode, Peravoor and Chemperi of Kannur District.

Mgr.Pazheparambil Thomas (1975) in his 'Swapnabhoomiyil', Sivaswammy.K.G (1945) in his 'The Exodus from the Kottayam division of Travancore State to Malabar- 1943 & 1944', Chacko.A.C (1993) in his 'History of Alakkode' give the historic aspects of Malabar migration and the initial hurdles that they faced.

The above discussion indicates that majority of the studies on the Malabar migration deal with historic aspects – the socio-economic causes, the initial problems of the migrant households and the consequences of the Malabar migration. Several of these studies are quasi-historical and lack methodological clarity. None of these studies take note of the emerging changes in the socio-economic aspects of the migrant households in the last two decades. Hence the present study has focused on the emerging changes that takes place in the agrarian households in the recent past.

It is generally understood that agrarian households undergo transition on account of several changes taking place in the global society. Thus the migrant farming households have witnessed change in the socio-cultural dimensions including the occupational aspects. Several authors have elaborately explained the motives behind this occupational change.

Accepting the prevalence of occupational mobility as the universal phenomenon, many authors have described the rationale of this process. Eapen(1995) notes that only since the early 1970s the process of diversification of occupation in rural areas began to be observed in Indian Society. According to her the year 1970 marks a turning - point in Kerala economy too. She cites two reasons for the same. 1. Intensification of the process of commercialisation of agriculture with an accelerated shift towards the major cash crops and 2. an unprecedented outflow of workers from rural areas primarily to West Asia resulting in a large inflow of remittances. According to her, Kerala has higher level of diversification in the rural economy compared to rest of the Indian States. She also notes that the percentage of people engaged in subsidiary economic activities is very high in Kerala.

Kannan(1990) brings out the implicit contradiction in Kerala economy- that is the capability of low-income agrarian society to achieve higher levels of quality of life. He

also argues that diversification of occupations to more skill-oriented and value - added ones is a pre-requisite for the reduction of poverty and unemployment, which will automatically help in achieving the economic well being of the state.

Ramachandran(1998)suggests that for the effective and sustainable solutions for Kerala's unemployment 'Kerala of the future will have to consist of multiple - economic activity families. He views that in Kerala's context even industrialisation cannot give lasting solutions to Kerala's economic problems and accepts occupational diversity as a step towards this goal.

Agreeing with the residual sector hypothesis Ramachandran(1998) holds that as a single occupation agriculture does not seem to generate adequate income for a family and therefore members of each family have to depend upon other occupations. For many agrarian households agriculture is not the sole or even principal source of income. According to him the major reason for the high level of educated unemployment in Kerala is due to the inability of the farm sector to absorb rural labour force.

Varghese T.C(1970) in his comprehensive and historical sketch regarding agrarian relations in Kerala underlines the drastic changes in caste-relations, break-up of the joint family system and the introduction of land reform programmes which brought changes in the pattern of landholdings as possible reasons for the agrarian population entering to non-agricultural occupations.

Sivanandan(1979) holds that the structure of the labour market and the distribution of assets in Kerala retain a very significant level of caste-class association. Along with upward occupational mobility, a certain level of downward occupational filtration has taken place in the later years. He concludes that occupational diversity is the consequence of the denial of equality of economic opportunity caused by the interplay of caste and class forces in Kerala. Ownership of land was the sole privilege of the upper castes. So the less privileged are to depend upon non-agricultural occupations.

Eapen (1994) highlights the role of education in shifting the work-force from agriculture to non-agriculture. The other contributory factors being the low per capita

land availability, increase in the proportion of low-sized landholding, close rural-urban linkage, increasing gulf remittance and high level of commercialisation in agriculture.

Switching on to more profitable occupations by the agrarian households is viewed by Saith and Tanka (1972) as an economic option. According to them many agrarian households combine multiple occupations due to the ownership of small land holdings.

Saleth(1997) finds a correlation between income factor and occupational mobility. According to him while the rich have the greater economic capacity to diversify their occupation and income sources, the poor have the economic compulsion to follow a diversified occupational pattern so as to achieve the dual goal of income stability and upward social mobility.

According to Bowler (1996)several farm households have become pluri-activity households. He gives the following reasons for the same 1) the downward pressure on farm income especially for the small farm landholders which force them to look for supplementary sources of income 2) the gap between the expectations of the young people with regard to the standard of living and life styles and the income earning capacity of agriculture.

Several of the above mentioned explanations are also found to be true with the case of the occupational change in the agrarian households of Malabar. The nature of occupational diversity depends upon many factors. It varies from time to time and from one region to the other .However there are few factors which are society-specific and some are common to all societies

The above discussion on occupational diversity primarily deals with it as an economic option. In Kerala the phenomenon is meant not merely for the economic upliftment but also for the upward social mobility. It is because occupation is seen as a significant social role that determines ones status in the society.

### **Theoretical application**

Sociologists have done great deal of research to find explanations for the attempts on social mobility among various sections of the population. The important ones that have relevance to the present study are the social mobility theories of Pitrim Sorokin David

Glass and his associates and Bernard Barber. Pitrim Sorokin(1959) has undertaken a pioneering study on social mobility. According to him' social mobility is any transition of an individual from one social position to another. The direction of this social transition can be both vertical and horizontal. The change or transition of a given social status is vertical mobility which is either ascending or descending.

David Glass and his associates(1954) conducted the first major study of intergenerational mobility in England and Wales in 1949. They have identified that nearly 67% of men had different status category from that of their fathers.

Bernard Barber(1954) explains the mobility as a movement upward or downward between higher and lower social classes or movement from one relatively full-time functionally significant social role and another that is evaluated as either higher or lower. This movement is a process that is occurring over time with individuals and whole family unit *moving* from one role and social class position to another.

Shift to a better occupation is only a manifest function, while the latent function is upward social mobility. As Barber points out, the shift is not towards a single social role. It is rather a combination of roles which acts as a safety valve against the risks of agrarian occupations. Now-a-days agrarian occupation remains a functionally significant one for those who own high-sized landholdings and among them for those who are less educated i.e. the low –sized land holders and the more educated ones find relative significance in non-agricultural occupations.

## CHAPTER III

### Social Change in the agrarian Society of Kerala: An overview

Agrarian society undergo structural changes in terms of the ownership of land, land use, levels of income and sources of income and level of education. All these variables have contributed for the occupational mobility over the generations. The present section attempts to have a random overview of these changes.

#### Land use pattern

The cropping pattern was conditioned by the geographic and natural features viz the coastal low-land, mid-land and high land, each specializing in cultivating different crops. Of these the high land zone generally consists of land that have been brought under cultivation in comparatively recent years. Cultivation of plantation crops expanded only towards the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century. The geographical features have also very much favoured the diversified land use pattern as well as diversified occupational pattern. The expansion of plantation sector in the forest region of Malabar attracted many enterprising cultivators (majority being Syrian Christians) of Travancore during 1920s. Unlike other states, the agriculture sector in Kerala has been dominated by commercial crops like coconut, rubber, tea, coffee and spices, historically.

Table 3.1

Share of area under major crops in total cropped area ( in percentages)

Sl.No	Major crops	1980-81	1990-91	2000-01
1	Rice	27.8	18.5	11.6
2	Coconut	22.6	28.8	31.2
3	Rubber	8.2	12.7	15.8
4	Pepper	3.7	5.6	6.6
5	Cardamom	2.0	2.2	1.4
6	Cashew nut	4.9	3.8	2.9
7	Tapioca	8.5	4.9	3.7
8	Coffee	2.0	2.5	2.8
9	Tea	1.3	1.1	1.2

Source: based on data provided in Economic Review, Various issues, State Planning Board, Trivandrum

There has been drastic shift in the cropping pattern over the decades. As a result of this commercial crops like rubber and coconut have substantially increased in the area coverage.

### Land holding Pattern

In the traditional rice-based agricultural system land was in the hands of a few households (especially with the upper castes). Traditionally landholding was a major trait of status symbol and possession of land was solely confined to upper caste communities. However the pattern of land relation was not unique. It differed in three regions of Kerala.

Due to the earlier phase of the land reform legislations in 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and the disintegration of matrilineal joint families, Christians and the advanced among the enterprising backward classes gained ownership rights especially in Travancore and Cochin. The implementation of the land reform programmes of the Kerala Government subsequently brought out further changes. The traditional privilege of proprietorship, administrative and supervisory powers enjoyed exclusively by supervisor and influential castes in the past came to be shared by a large number of other castes particularly by the Hindu, Christian and Muslim communities. Another striking feature is the predominance of small holdings. The average size of agricultural holdings in Kerala is about 0.33 hectare as against 1.57 hectare for all India.

### Occupational Pattern

The percentage of population engaged in non-agricultural pursuits in Kerala has been very high since decade's back. According to 1901 Census only half the population was engaged in agricultural activities in three regions. This trend is more or less continuing with greater intensity. While 74% of the male workers was engaged in agriculture in 1911 in all India level, only 65.7% were involved in Kerala. As per the Census of India, the percentage of people depending on non-agricultural occupations has increased from 34.7% in 1971 to 43.9% in 1991. This indicates that agriculture was not a prime occupation for most people. One of the major reasons for this is that the lower caste communities were denied of land ownership rights..



There is a perceptible shift in the rural occupational structure towards non-agricultural activities since early 1970s. This has been sharper in 1980s 1) The process of commercialization was intensified since the mid 1970s with an accelerated shift towards the major cash crops such as coconut and rubber due to sharp changes in relative prices 2) There was also an unprecedented outflow of workers from rural areas primarily to West Asia resulting in a large inflow of remittances.

Table 3.2 gives a picture of the percentage of people involved in non-agricultural occupations. Kerala has been far ahead in this regard when compared to other states, since 1961. The percentage of people engaged in non-agricultural pursuits has been more or less consistent through the decades.

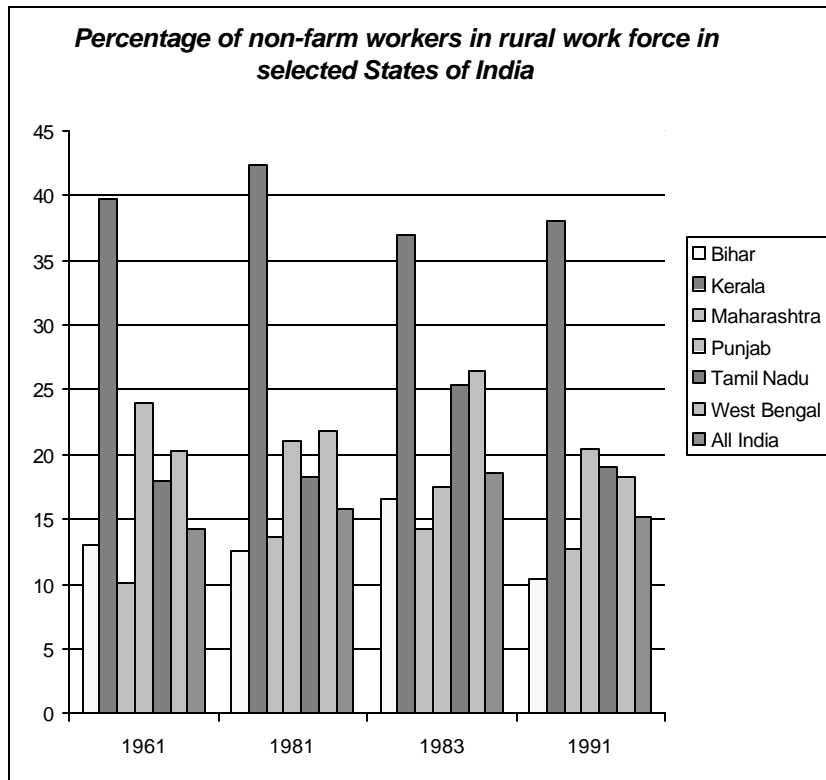
Table 3.2

Percentage of Non-farm Workers in Rural Workforce in Major States of India

State	Year			
	1961	1981	1983	1991
Andhra Pradesh	17.8	17.0	22.8	17.3
Bihar	13.1	12.6	16.5	10.4
Gujarat	11.8	17.4	15.4	14.1
Haryana	16.3	21.2	22.3	21.5
Himachal Pradesh	10.0	17.7	12.9	17.8
Karnataka	11.7	15.4	15.8	15.5
Kerala	39.7	42.3	36.9	38.0
Madhya Pradesh	9.0	10.4	10.0	9.4
Maharashtra	10.1	13.6	14.3	12.7
Orissa	12.9	14.9	20.9	14.9
Punjab	23.9	21.1	17.5	20.5
Rajasthan	9.0	12.9	13.3	12.6
Tamil Nadu	17.9	18.3	25.4	19.1
Uttar Pradesh	12.8	12.9	18.0	12.3
West Bengal	20.3	21.8	26.4	18.2
<b>All India</b>	14.3	15.8	18.6	15.2

Source : Samal, Kishore(1997)pp.86

Diagram 3.1



The long-term tendency of a shift towards non-agricultural employment in rural areas does imply a qualitative improvement in the rural employment situation i.e. the overwhelming growth in the tertiary sector and the marginal contribution of manufacturing sector.

Job-opportunities outside agriculture is best manifested by the overcrowding in tertiary sector. People look for income security which agriculture is not able to provide. The percentage of population absorbed to the agrarian sector in accordance with the growing population is very low in Kerala. The percentage absorption of rural workers to agriculture during 1981-91 was 26% for Kerala, while it was 94% for Bihar, 92% for Madhya Pradesh and 72.1% for Tamil Nadu. This implies that not only the occupational structure of rural Kerala is changing in terms of high involvement in non-agricultural occupations but also the shift away from agriculture is very intense. This is clearly indicated by the low percentage of people absorbed in agricultural sector (table:3.4). All the above mentioned trends that take place in the agrarian society of Kerala have a direct bearing on the migrant farming households of Malabar.

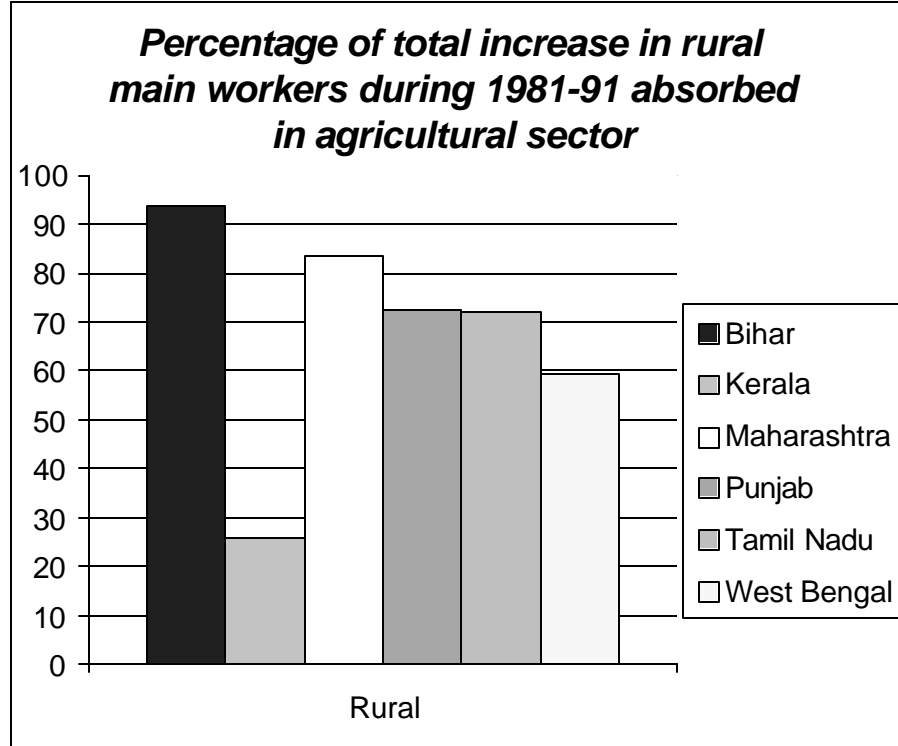
Table:3.4

Percentage of Total Increase in Rural Main Workers During 1981-91 Absorbed in Agricultural Sector :Males and Females

States	Rural Total	Rural Male	Rural Female
Andhra Pradesh	82.6	75.1	87.9
Bihar	94.0	93.5	95.3
Gujarat	64.2	52.8	79.4
Haryana	71.6	65.3	87.7
Karnataka	77.7	64.3	88.9
Kerala	26.0	41.5	-119.4
Madhya Pradesh	92.0	87.2	98.8
Maharashtra	83.7	68.6	94.0
Orissa	75.4	67.6	90.0
Punjab	72.4	73.2	69.1
Rajasthan	88.5	80.0	99.3
Tamil Nadu	72.1	63.8	77.9
Uttar Pradesh	77.3	71.8	88.6
West Bengal	59.4	57.8	64.6

Source: Kulkarni, Sumati (1994).

Diagram 3.1



## Chapter IV

### Analysis of Primary Data

The occupational mobility trends among the migrant farming households are analysed through the empirical data gathered through life histories. The change in occupation, land size, land use, income and educational level of the farming households are analysed to understand the social mobility trends.

#### Pattern of occupation

Here occupation means the principal occupation followed by the father and that of his sons.

Table 4.1

#### Two –generational occupation shift

Generation	Agriculture	Non-agriculture	TOTAL
<b>I Generation</b>	15	-	15
<b>II Generation</b>	20(44.44%)	25(55.56%)	45

Data regarding the pattern of occupation (table 1.1) indicates that there is a clear shift of occupation from agriculture to non-agriculture over two successive generations. While all the first generation respondents were depending on agriculture, 55.56% of their sons (2<sup>nd</sup> generation) have moved to non-agricultural occupations.(business, technician, teachers, employment in gulf countries etc). All the first generation respondents were peasant farmers while they were at Travancore and all of them continued with the same at a greater depth and intensity after settling in Malabar. None of the 1st generation respondents had pursued non-agricultural occupations as primary or supplementary ones. Further analysis indicates that majority of the non-agriculturists follow agriculture as their supplementary occupations. But very few of the agriculturists ensue non- agriculture even as supplementary occupations.

#### Analysis of Inter-generational occupational shift

Table(4.2) indicates the intensity of the occupational shift over two successive generations. The occupational diversity is highly pronounced among the sons of first generation respondents.

Table 4.2

**Occupational categories of first and second generations**

Sl.No	Occupational Category	Occupation of the father	Occupations of the sons
1	Cultivator	15	20
2	Business		6
3	College/School Teacher		5
4	Gulf Employed		3
5	Mechanic/Electrician		3
6	Managerial Grades		3
7	Engineer		3
8	Driver		1
9	Lawyer		1
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>45</b>

**Landholding pattern based on generation**

Data regarding the land size of the sons( second generation) have been obtained from their fathers(respondents). Data regarding the land holding pattern indicates that there is notable reduction in the land size over two successive generations. Majority(80%) of the first generation had high land –size. Where as only 20% of their sons do possess high-sized land. The average land size of the 1<sup>st</sup> generation was 25.55 acres while that of the 2<sup>nd</sup> generations(sons) is 7.08 acres. This reduction in land size has been chiefly due to the family partitioning. If the same trend persists over the next generation, majority of the farming households will be forced to pursue non-agricultural occupations to maintain their livelihood. The reduction in the size of the land will have serious implications in the livelihood choices of the agrarian households. One of the immediate consequences would be the tendency to aspire for supplementary occupations or leaving farming altogether.

Table 4.3

Landholding pattern of the households

Land size	Generations	
	1 <sup>st</sup> generation	2 <sup>nd</sup> Generation
Low	2	17
Medium	1	19
High	12(80%)	9(20%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>45</b>

### **Land use pattern**

The cropping pattern has undergone changes over two successive generations. This has been on a uniform line towards more profitable cash and commercial crops like rubber, coconut, arecanut etc. Tapioca is the major crop that has witnessed a severe set back in the region. Rubber and coconut are the predominant crops of the region now. Fortunately these are the crops that fetch high income at present. (As a result of this when the researcher met the farmers in person to collect data through life history during September- October 2003' he could witness that majority of them were happy of bring farmers). Being a region that is favorable to cash/commercial crops, the land use changes that has happened over a period of two generations is not significant. However 80% of the younger generation farmers have initiated vanilla cultivation. Their attempt is to prove that they are agricultural entrepreneurs capable of adapting to innovative farming practices.

### **4. Income pattern of the sons**

Table ; 4.4

Level of Income of the households

<b>Income level</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Below Rs. 40,000</b>	6	13.30
<b>40,000-1 lakh</b>	10	22.30
<b>1-2 lakh</b>	15	33.30
<b>2-4 Lakh</b>	14	31.10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Majority (86.70%) of the second generation households in the present study are non-poor. What does it mean? Does it denote that agriculture provides enough to the subsistence of the farming households? According to Sociologists and Economists 'one of the striking features of agrarian households is poverty. The affluence witnessed in the farming households of Malabar can mean that either farming households derive better income from their land or they involve in diversified occupational pursuits. The major change that has happened with regard to the income pattern is the phenomenon of occupational diversity. While all the first generation households derived their sole source of income from agriculture, the major source of income of 55.56% of their sons

is from non-agricultural jobs. Similarly 45.5% of the younger generation agriculturists derive supplementary income from non- agricultural sources and 45.5% of the younger generation non-agriculturists get supplementary income from farm -based occupations.

## **5. Educational Pattern**

There is significant change in the educational level of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> generation respondents. While all the first generation respondents are less educated, 51.7% of their sons are highly educated. Better education has provided the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation with the access to white- collar employment and the mobility to off-farm occupations.

The spirit towards change for upward mobility is highly visible among the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation. This is expressed through their attempts for change in land size, income patterns, occupational pursuits and educational level. While the 1<sup>st</sup> generation has climbed up to the status ladder by reaffirming their presence in farming, their sons attempt to maintain the status by educational advancement, searching for occupation and income avenues through involvement in non-agricultural occupations and bringing timely innovative changes in the land use pattern.

### Hiring of casual labour

Capitalistic farming through hiring of casual labour is quite high in agrarian households. The tendency of hiring of labour is significant among all category of agriculturists. While majority of the first generation respondents were doing farming through family labour, 60% of the second generation farmers do farming only through hired labour. Only the low- sized land holders primarily resort to family labour.

The hiring of casual labour influences the agrarian households on several ways- by employing hired labour the farming households can conveniently diversify their economic activities by engaging in non- agricultural activities. This gives agriculture with the status of supplementary occupations.

One of the crucial positive impacts of employing of hired labour is that it helps to generate employment in both agricultural and non-agricultural sector. As a result of

this the teachers, the bankers, clerks and the office goers can continue in farming activities along with non-agricultural activities.

Major variables determining occupational change

As has been explained by several authors the key variables that initiated and induced occupational change are education, income and landholding. How far these variables have been responsible for effecting social change in the agrarian households of Malabar is to be analysed.

**Association between occupation and landholding**

Table 4.5

Occupation and landholding of the sons

Land size	Occupation		Total
	Agriculture	Non-agriculture	
<b>Low (0-3 acres)</b>	5	12	17
<b>Medium (4-9 acres)</b>	11	8	19
<b>High (10-15 acres)</b>	4	5	9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>45</b>

Data indicates that landholding is a variable that has great role in initiating and inducting occupational mobility. One of the major reasons for the mobility of people from farm to non-farm occupations as well as diversified occupations is ownership of small holdings which cannot provide them with a means of subsistence. Mobility to off-farm occupations is significantly pronounced among low-sized landholders. 70.60% of the low –sized landholders are involved in non- agricultural pursuits. What is found significant is that even the high-sized land holding do not deter the households from diversifying their economic activities. This can be explained as the agriculture-induced growth, wherein the gains from agriculture has enabled their sons to get better access to education that has enabled them to engage in high status non-farm occupations. Whereas the low-sized landholders diversify their economic activities away from agriculture out of compulsion.



### Association between education and occupations of the sons

Table 4.6

#### Education and Occupation of the sons

Education	Occupation		Total
	Agriculture	Non-agriculture	
Less educated (S.S.L.C. & Pre-Degree)	13	6	19
High educated (Degree & above)	7	19	26
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>45</b>

There is significant level of association between education and occupation. 68.42% of the less educated ones are in agriculture, while 73% of the high educated ones are in non-agriculture. It means that higher the level of education, lesser are they in agriculture and higher are they in non-agricultural pursuits. While education deter people from opting agriculture, non-agricultural occupations are capable of accommodating people from all educational levels.

### Association between income and occupation

Table 4.7

#### Income and Occupation

Income	Occupation		Total
	Agriculture	Non-agriculture	
Below Rs.40,000	5	1	6
Rs.40,000- 1 lakh	1	9	10
1-2 lakhs	8	7	15
2-4 lakhs	6	8	14
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>45</b>

Empirical data(table 4.7) indicates that there is no significant level of association between income and occupation. As has been explained, rural poverty is less among the second generation agrarian households( 25%.) Further analysis indicates that those households getting low income solely depend on low-sized land . This indicates that as

a safety net against low income arising out of low- sized landholding, such households will have to diversify to a combination of agricultural and non-agricultural occupations.

As has been indicated the capacity to earn high income is possible both in agricultural and non-agricultural occupations. However it has to be admitted that the diversification of farming households to non-agricultural occupations has also helped to reduce poverty through income multiplication which in turn has contributed for rural affluence.

In the foregoing analysis, the major social variables leading to occupational change have been discussed. The influence of education, income and landholding in determining occupational change leading to social mobility has also been examined. As per the above analysis it becomes clear that the variables education and landholding are the two significant variables that have initiated change in the agrarian households. The findings of the study is in conformity with Bernard Barber's theory of social mobility.

## **Chapter V**

### **Summary and Conclusions**

It is identified that occupational diversity has positive impact on the agrarian households. It has contributed a lot for the rural affluence. Occupational mobility away from agriculture enhances the level of income and provides employment opportunities. This is a characteristic feature of an open society which is highly mobile. In course of the evolutionary process, society moves from a simple occupational structure to a complex and multiple occupational structure. It is seen as an alternative development paradigm by which economic uplift and social mobility are enhanced.

It has to be understood that the solution to poverty does not lie in agriculture alone. Rural economic base must be diversified first within agriculture and then between agricultural and non-agricultural activities. Since agricultural sector in rural areas is over-saturated, the growth of rural non –farm sector is a promising one for generation of sustainable employment and removal of rural poverty. The future challenge is not only to create more jobs to keep face with the growth in the labourforce, but also to increase the average productivity of all jobs.

One of the major reasons for the affluence in the agrarian households of Malabar is due to the success made through the generation of productive employment in agriculture and non-agriculture, through diversification of agriculture and accelerated growth of non-agricultural activities. It can be rightly said that job diversification is essential even for the sustainability of agriculture in agrarian Malabar.

According to several authors, for the sustainability of agriculture, rural households will have to be pluri-activity households. For this many have emphasized educating and skilling of the members of the farming households along with the continuous process of skilling, re-skilling, multi-skilling and skill modulation.

## Appendix (A)

### Interview Guide for Life History

### Patterns of Social Change among the migrant farmers of Kannur District—A Case Study

#### **Interview Guide for tracing the life history**

#### **I Personal/Family**

1. Name and address of the respondent :
2. Religion : 3. Age:
4. Present Occupation
5. How long have you been resident of this place
6. Ownership of the house 1.built 2.Rented 3.Inherited
7. **Family Data**(Including the sons-in-law)

Sl.No	Relation with HH	Principal Occupation	Education	Age	Income (Monthly)	Place of Stay

#### **II. History of life while at Travancore**

1. Place of birth and address
2. What were you doing at Travancore
3. When did you migrate from Travancore
4. Why did you migrate from Travancore
5. Who all did migrate with you from Travancore

#### **6. Details of Siblings**

Sl.No	Relation with HH	Education	Occupation	Place of Stay	Remarks

7. How was the process of migration initiated (explain)

(Agents/ Factors- push pull /supporters/etc)

8. When did you settle in present place

9. Why did you select this place to migrate

10. Any change of place after coming to Malabar (Yes/No reasons)

11. Total acres of land that you had in Travancore

12. What did you do with that

13. Do you own land in Travancore at present Yes / No

If yes how much land why do you own there ? Land use

Who takes care of it

### III. Occupation

1. Principal occupation of the father/sons/grandsons

Sl. No	Father	Son.1	S.2	S.3	S.4	Grant Son.1	G.S.2	G.S.3	G.S.4	G.S.5

2. Change of Place/occupation of family members

Sl.No	Persons	Change of place	Change of occupation	Period	Reasons

3. Did you have any shift of occupation in your own life -time

Explain

#### IV. Income

1. Annual Income of Households from all sources

Sl.No	Source of Income	Father	Son .1	Son.2	Son.3
1.	Primary Occupation				
2.	Supplementary occupations				

2. % of income from agriculture to total income

#### V. Land holding

1. How did you get land in Malabar

2. Is there any change in land size ever since you got the land Yes/ No

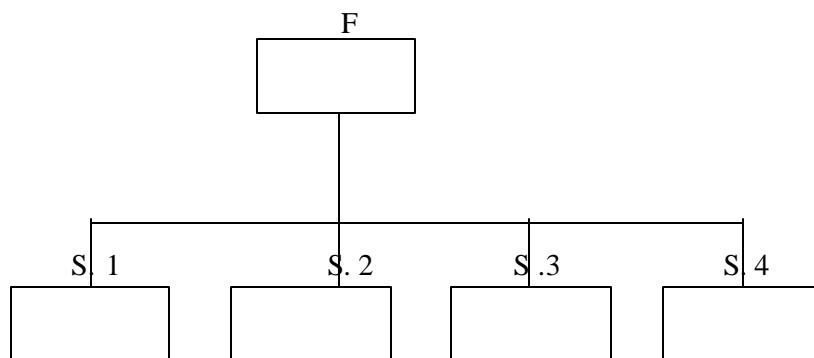
a. if increase -reasons

b. If decrease -reasons

3. Have you ever sold land Y/ No Reasons

4. Have you ever purchased land Y/ No Reasons

5. Land size



6. Do you possess land outside region Y/ No

Give details of size /land use etc

## VI. Land use pattern

1. Major changes taken place in the land use pattern in your life time in Malabar

Sl.No	Period	From Which	To which	Reasons

2. Major land use changes over the Generation

Sl. No	I Gen	Land size	II Gen	Land size	III Gen	Land size

3. Pattern of labour employed      a. Family      b. Hired      c. both

## VII. Remigration attempts

1.

Sl.No	Education of sons/Daughters(place)	Occupation of sons/daughters	Marital ties of sons(place)	Marital ties of daughters(place)

2. Do any of your close kins live at Travancore

3. What is the frequency of contact - To and Fro

4. Nature of Transport facilities etc

5. Can you share some nostalgic memories while you were at Travancore

6. How do you feel here- as an alien or native

7. Does any of your close kins willing to migrate to Malabar

8. Do you know anyone from Malabar attempting to re-migrate

1. To Travancore      2. To any other region

9. Do you intend to go back to Travancore

10. Do you feel guilty of migrating over to Malabar

11. What are the major achievements in your life after settling in Malabar

12 Major loss(cost paid) in your life after coming here

**(To the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation respondents)**

13.What job do you aspire for your son

14.What do you prefer to be the spouse of your daughter

15.From which region your son should get marry

16.Where do you intend to marry your daughter

17.Do you want that your sons should settle in Travancore

18.Do you intend to sell your land and go back

### **VIII. Consumption pattern**

1.Major consumer items do you own

2.Present investment pattern 1. Agriculture 2. Non-Agriculture

3.Any loans taken- purpose- source

### **IX. General**

1..Role of women members in agriculture

2.Major hurdles you faced in the initial period of migration

3.How do overcome

4.What are the agencies that have helped to withstands the initial hurdles

5. Your general suggestions/observations for the migrants farmers in Malabar

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