

INFLUENCE OF CULTURE ON THE WORK BEHAVIOUR OF MIGRANT EMPLOYEES IN KERALA: EXPLORING THE CHALLENGES FACED BY THEM

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Introduction

The work behaviour of migrant employees from India can vary based on their cultural background, education, work experience, and personal traits. Generally, Indian migrant employees are known for their hard work, dedication, and adaptability. Many Indian migrant employees come from a culture that values teamwork, respect for authority, and a strong work ethic. They tend to be highly motivated and willing to work long hours to achieve their goals. Additionally, many Indian migrant employees have solid educational backgrounds, with a high percentage holding advanced degrees in fields such as engineering, technology, and management. However, the experience of being a migrant worker can also present unique challenges for Indian employees. They may face language and cultural barriers, difficulty adjusting to a new work environment, and potential discrimination or bias from coworkers or superiors. Despite these challenges, Indian migrant employees often demonstrate resilience, resourcefulness, and a willingness to learn and adapt. Overall, the work behaviour of Indian migrant employees is shaped by their cultural background, education, personal traits, and the specific circumstances of their work environment. While some generalizations can be made about their work behaviour, it is essential to recognize each individual's unique contributions and challenges to their workplace.

Literature review

The work behaviour of migrant employees from India has been the subject of numerous studies and research investigations in social sciences. Many researchers have sought to understand the unique challenges and opportunities that Indian migrant employees face in the workplace and the factors that shape their work behaviour. One study by Shafi et al. (2020) found that Indian migrant employees in the United Arab Emirates demonstrated high work engagement and job satisfaction levels. The researchers attributed this to various factors, including the solid cultural value placed on hard work and dedication in India and

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the support provided by employers in the UAE. Another study by Iqbal and Ahmad (2020) found that Indian migrant employees in Saudi Arabia exhibited a strong work ethic, as well as a willingness to learn and adapt to new work environments. The researchers also found that the Indian migrant employees faced language barriers and cultural differences, which required them to develop new skills to succeed in their jobs. A literature review by Jayasankar and Vaz (2017) explored the work behaviour of Indian migrant employees in the context of the hospitality industry in the United Kingdom. The researchers found that Indian migrant employees in the hospitality industry exhibited a strong work ethic and a high degree of adaptability and flexibility in response to changing work environments. Overall, the literature suggests that Indian migrant employees tend to exhibit a strong work ethic, adaptability, and a willingness to learn and improve. However, they may also face language barriers and cultural differences that require them to develop new skills to succeed in their jobs. Understanding these factors can help employers create supportive work environments that enable Indian migrant employees to thrive and contribute to the success of their organizations.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The work behaviour of migrant employees from India is an important area of research, particularly given the growing number of Indian migrant workers in various parts of the world. While there is some research on this topic, there is a need for a more comprehensive understanding of the factors that shape the work behaviour of Indian migrant employees. One of the critical challenges faced by Indian migrant employees is the need to adapt to new work environments, which may involve learning new skills and adjusting to different cultural norms. Language barriers and discrimination or bias from coworkers or superiors may also present challenges for Indian migrant employees in the workplace. Additionally, there is a need to understand the unique experiences of different groups of Indian migrant employees, such as those working in various industries or foreign countries. This can help to identify specific challenges and opportunities that may shape their work behaviour and inform the development of effective strategies to support their success in the workplace. Overall, the problem is the need to understand better the work behaviour of Indian migrant employees and the factors that shape their experiences in the workplace to create more supportive work environments that enable them to thrive and contribute to the success of their organizations.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The work behaviour of migrant employees from India can be understood within several relevant theories. Two such theories are the Theory of Work Adjustment and the Social Cognitive Theory. The Theory of Work Adjustment (TWA), developed by Dawis and Lofquist

(1984), suggests that work behaviour is influenced by the interaction between individuals and their work environments. This theory proposes that individuals seek jobs that match their abilities, values, and interests and that job satisfaction is influenced by how these factors align with the job requirements. This theory has been used to study the work behaviour of migrant employees in various contexts, including in the United States (Mitra & Jenkins, 2013) and the United Arab Emirates (Shafi et al., 2020). The Social Cognitive Theory, developed by Bandura (1986), proposes that human behaviour is shaped by the interplay between personal factors (such as beliefs, values, and self-efficacy) and environmental factors (such as social norms and social support). This theory has been applied to study work behaviour in various contexts, including among migrant workers. For example, a survey by Iqbal and Ahmad (2020) used this theory to understand the work behaviour of Indian migrant employees in Saudi Arabia. Other relevant theories that may be applied to the study of work behaviour among Indian migrant employees include the Job Demands-Resources model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017) and the Conservation of Resources Theory (Hobfoll, 1989). These theories suggest that the interplay between job demands, resources and personal factors such as resilience and coping strategies influences work behaviour. Overall, these theories provide a framework for understanding the complex interplay of factors that shape the work behaviour of migrant employees from India, including their characteristics, the demands and resources of their work environments, and the social and cultural context in which they are working.

Methodology

The research methodology adopted for this study involved the examination of a sample comprising 400 individuals, exclusively composed of migrant employees from other states, who have relocated to Kerala. To gather comprehensive and structured data, a questionnaire was meticulously developed and administered to the participants. The use of a questionnaire facilitated the systematic collection of information pertaining to various aspects of the participants' demographic characteristics, migration patterns, and employment experiences in the host state. The sampling strategy employed ensured the inclusion of individuals with diverse backgrounds and occupations, contributing to the richness and representativeness of the dataset.

All data for this research were exclusively collected within the geographical boundaries of Kerala, thereby providing a localized perspective on the experiences of migrant employees in the state. The application of descriptive statistics allowed for a detailed exploration and presentation of the basic features of the sample, shedding light on key demographic and employment-related attributes. Concurrently, inferential statistics were employed to analyze

patterns, relationships, and draw broader conclusions from the collected data, facilitating the generalization of findings beyond the study sample.

The combination of descriptive and inferential statistical methods aimed to offer a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by migrant employees in Kerala. The outcomes of this research hold the potential to inform policies and interventions targeted at enhancing the integration and well-being of migrant workers in the region. Overall, the research methodology employed in this study was designed to rigorously investigate and contribute meaningful insights to the field, relying on a robust sample size and a carefully crafted questionnaire to capture the nuances of the experiences of migrant employees in Kerala.

PROBLEMS FACED BY MIGRANT EMPLOYEES

Migrant employees from India often face a range of problems both in their home and destination countries. Some of the common issues that they may face include:

Language Barrier: Migrant employees may struggle to communicate effectively due to language barriers in the destination country. This can lead to misunderstandings and difficulties in carrying out their work.

Cultural Differences: Migrant employees may also find it challenging to adapt to the cultural differences in the destination country. This can include differences in social norms, work practices, and even food habits.

Discrimination: Migrant employees may also face discrimination based on their nationality, race, or religion in the destination country. This can affect their job prospects and quality of life.

Poor Working Conditions: Migrant employees may be subjected to poor working conditions such as long working hours, low wages, and lack of access to healthcare and other benefits.

Exploitation: Some migrant employees may also be subjugated by their bosses, who may refuse their wages, impound their passports, or subject them to physical and emotive abuse.

Social Isolation: Migrant employees may also feel socially isolated in the destination country, especially if they do not have family or friends in the area.

Legal Issues: Migrant employees may also face legal issues such as visa and work permit complications, which can make it difficult for them to travel and work in the destination country.

THE OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- F To identify the problems faced by migrant employees in Kerala.
- F To identify the factors which affect the character of migrant employees.
- F To study the relationship between behaviour change and cultural change.
- F To study the influence of culture on the job performance of migrant employees.

ANALYSIS

The problems faced by migrant employees in Kerala.

SI no	Problems	Mean	SD
	Language barriers	3.7	.636
	Cultural Differences	3.2	.785
	Cultural Differences	3.9	.415
	Discrimination	4.2	.789
	Poor Working Conditions	2.3	.397
	Exploitation	3.0	.898

The table analyzes the challenges encountered by migrant workers in Kerala. It reveals that the primary issues they confront are discrimination and cultural disparities. On the other hand, minor concerns include poor working conditions and exploitation, as indicated by the relatively low mean value based on the data gathered from the respondents.

The factors which affect the character of migrant employees.

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.727
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1030.728
	Df	45
	Sig.	.000

Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
	1	2.895	28.952	28.952	2.895	28.952	28.952	2.831	28.309
2	2.194	21.940	50.892	2.194	21.940	50.892	1.700	17.003	45.312
3	1.104	11.039	61.931	1.104	11.039	61.931	1.662	16.619	61.931
4	.860	8.602	70.533						
5	.652	6.523	77.056						
6	.577	5.771	82.827						
7	.491	4.911	87.738						
8	.479	4.794	92.532						
9	.418	4.175	96.707						
10	.329	3.293	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Above analysis tries to extract the factors that affect the characters of the migrant employees in Kerala. The KMO is significant so that the factor analysis is taken into account. In the factor analysis, three factors were extracted based on the literature. The extracted factors were cultural differences, working conditions and social isolation. Collectively these factors explain 61%.

The relationship between behaviour change and cultural change.

Correlations		
	behaviour	culture
behaviour	Pearson Correlation	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.479**
	N	400
culture	Pearson Correlation	.479**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	1
	N	400

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

In the above table, the relationship between culture and behaviour is correlated; for the study, Pearson's correlation is used, the value of the correlation is significant, and there exhibit nearly 50 per cent correlation between the two factors, so the migration employee's character and behaviour is changing according to the culture of the place they live. Culture and behaviour are deeply interconnected. Culture is the shared values, beliefs, customs, and practices that define a particular group. At the same time, behaviour refers to the way individuals act and interact with one another. The culture in which an individual is raised can significantly impact their behaviour. For instance, cultural norms and values can shape how people communicate, dress, eat, and express emotions. In some cultures, for example, it may be more common to express feelings openly. In contrast, in others, it may be more appropriate to suppress emotions and maintain a more reserved demeanour. Cultural beliefs can also influence behaviour in the way that people view and treat others. For example, cultural values such as respect for elders, hospitality, and collectivism can shape how people interact and view relationships. In some cultures, family and community ties are highly valued, and individuals are expected to prioritize their obligations to these groups over their needs and desires. On the other hand, individual behaviour can also impact the culture of a group. For instance, a few individuals' actions can influence others' attitudes and behaviours within the group, ultimately shaping the culture over time.

The influence of culture on the job performance of migrant employees.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.610 ^a	.372	.370	.39700

a. Predictors: (Constant), culture

ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	37.113	1	37.113	235.478	.000 ^b
Residual	62.727	398	.158		
Total	99.840	399			

a. Dependent Variable: job performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), culture

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.636	.061		10.448	.000
	culture	.614	.040	.610	15.345	.000

a. Dependent Variable: job performance

Here the researcher finds the influence of the culture around the employees and how it will influence the employees' job performance are checked. The significant ANOVA indicates the adequacy of the regression. The unstandardized beta value is also significant. It is observed that culture influences 30 per cent of the job performance of migrant employees. Culture can significantly influence job performance, as it can impact an individual's motivation, values, and attitudes towards work. One way that culture can affect job performance is through the values and attitudes that are emphasized within a particular culture. For example, in cultures prioritising collectivism and group harmony, individuals may be more likely to value teamwork, collaboration, and building positive relationships with colleagues. In contrast, cultures that emphasize individualism and competition may foster a greater focus on individual achievement and performance. Another way that culture can impact job performance is through the expectations and standards set by the culture. For example, in cultures that place a high value on punctuality, employees may be expected

to arrive at work on time and to meet deadlines consistently. In contrast, in cultures that emphasise flexibility and creativity, employees may be expected to take a more flexible and adaptable approach to their work. Moreover, cultural norms and expectations can shape how individuals approach work tasks and interact with colleagues, influencing job performance. For example, in cultures that place a high value on deference to authority, employees may be more likely to follow instructions closely, while in cultures that value innovation and creativity, employees may be encouraged to take risks and try new approaches. Overall, the influence of culture on job performance is complex and can vary based on the cultural values, norms, and expectations at play. However, by understanding and accommodating for cultural differences, employers and managers can create a more positive and productive work environment for all employees.

CONCLUSION

In Kerala, migrant employees have played a significant role in the state's development and growth, especially in the construction, agriculture, and domestic work sectors. However, they often face various challenges and problems, including language barriers, cultural differences, discrimination, poor working conditions, exploitation, social isolation, and legal issues. To address these challenges, various measures have been taken by the state government and civil society organizations, including the implementation of labour laws, the establishment of migrant worker welfare boards, the provision of healthcare services, and the promotion of social integration. Despite these efforts, there is still a long way to go to ensure the rights and welfare of migrant employees in Kerala, and more concerted efforts are needed to address these issues effectively. In recent years, the state of Kerala has witnessed a significant influx of migrant employees from other parts of India, including West Bengal, Assam, Bihar, and Uttar Pradesh. These migrant workers have played a critical role in the state's economy, particularly in the construction, agriculture, and domestic work sectors. However, migrant employees in Kerala face a range of challenges, including language barriers, cultural differences, discrimination, poor working conditions, exploitation, social isolation, and legal issues.

Language Barriers

One of the main challenges faced by migrant employees in Kerala is the language barrier. Most migrant workers come from different regions of the country and speak different languages. As a result, they may find it challenging to communicate effectively with their colleagues, employers, and customers. This can lead to misunderstandings and difficulties in carrying out their work, which can affect their productivity and job satisfaction. To address this challenge, many employers in Kerala are taking steps to provide language training to

their migrant employees. This includes training in the local language as well as English, which can help workers better understand their work requirements and communicate effectively with their colleagues and customers.

Cultural Differences

Migrant employees in Kerala also face cultural differences that can make it difficult for them to adapt to their new environment. For example, many workers may come from rural areas and may not be accustomed to the fast-paced urban lifestyle in Kerala. Additionally, they may have different social norms and practices that can clash with local customs and traditions. To address these challenges, employers in Kerala are taking steps to provide cultural orientation and training to their migrant employees. This includes educating workers about local customs and traditions and providing them with information on navigating their new environment.

Discrimination

Another significant challenge faced by migrant employees in Kerala is discrimination based on their nationality, race, or religion. Many migrant workers may be subjected to bias and prejudice, which can affect their job prospects and quality of life. For example, they may face barriers in accessing housing, education, and healthcare, which can make it difficult for them to integrate into their new community. To address this challenge, the Kerala state government has implemented various measures to protect the rights of migrant workers. This includes the establishment of the Migrant Worker Welfare Board, which is responsible for providing legal aid, healthcare, and other support services to migrant employees. Additionally, the state government has implemented labor laws that prohibit discrimination based on nationality, race, or religion.

Poor Working Conditions

Migrant employees in Kerala may also be subjected to poor working conditions, including long working hours, low wages, and lack of access to healthcare and other benefits. Many workers may be employed in the informal sector, which may not provide them with basic protections and benefits. For example, they may not have access to social security, health insurance, or pension schemes, leaving them vulnerable to financial risks and hardship. To address this challenge, the Kerala state government has implemented various measures to protect the rights of migrant employees. For example, the state government has implemented labor laws that ensure minimum wages, working hours, and safety standards for all workers, including migrant employees. Additionally, the government has established the Migrant Worker Welfare Board, which provides access to healthcare, legal aid, and other support services.

Exploitation

Migrant employees in Kerala may also be subjected to exploitation by their employers. For example, some employers may withhold wages, confiscate passports, or subject workers to physical and emotional abuse. This can leave workers vulnerable and exposed to exploitation and abuse, which can affect their mental health and wellbeing. To address this challenge, the Kerala state government has implemented various measures to protect the rights of migrant employees. This includes the establishment of the Migrant Worker Welfare Board, which provides legal aid, counseling, and other support services to workers who have been subjected

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