

**KERALA'S BRAIN DRAIN PROBLEM; UNDERSTANDING THE
REASONS, BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF STUDYING ABROAD**

Project Report

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Under the guidance of

Ms. MAYA P

In partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of

BACHELOR OF COMMERCE



ST. TERESA'S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), ERNAKULAM

COLLEGE WITH POTENTIAL FOR EXCELLENCE

Nationally Re-Accredited with A++ Grade

Affiliated to

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ST. TERESA'S COLLEGE, ERNAKULAM (AUTONOMOUS)

COLLEGE WITH POTENTIAL FOR EXCELLENCE

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the project titled "**KERALA'S BRAIN DRAIN PROBLEM; UNDERSTANDING THE REASONS, BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF STUDYING ABROAD**" submitted to Mahatma Gandhi University in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Degree of Bachelor in Commerce is a record of the original work done by **Ms. Akhila K, Ms. Aditi Krishna P S, Ms. Nandana M A, Ms. Stiniya D Silva**, under my supervision and guidance during the academic year 2024-25.

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DECLARATION


We, Ms. Akhila K, Ms. Aditi Krishna P S, Ms. Nandana M A, Ms. Stiniya D Silva, final year B.Com students(Taxation), Department of Commerce (SF), St. Teresa's College (Autonomous) do hereby declare that the project report entitled "KERALA'S BRAIN DRAIN PROBLEM; UNDERSTANDING THE REASONS, BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF STUDYING ABROAD" submitted to Mahatma Gandhi University is a bonafide record of the work done under the supervision and guidance of Ms. Maya P, Assistant Professor of Department of Commerce (SF), St. Teresa's College (Autonomous) and this work has not previously formed the basis for the award of any academic qualification, fellowship, or other similar title of any other university or board.

PLACE: ERNAKULAM

DATE: 25-03-2025



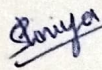
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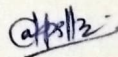
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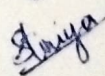
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

KERALA'S BRAIN DRAIN PROBLEM; Understanding the reasons, benefits and challenges of studying abroad.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The literacy rate is a key indicator of a population's educational attainment and overall development. It measures the percentage of people who can read and write at a specified age, often 15 and above. As of the most recent data, Kerala's literacy rate stands at approximately 96%. This impressive figure reflects the state's robust education system, high levels of public investment in education, and successful literacy campaigns. Kerala's commitment to universal education and gender equality in educational access has significantly contributed to this achievement, making it a model for educational progress in India.

In accordance with the NIRF 2024 evaluation, 16 Kerala institutions are considered among the top 100 universities in India. It is a well-known phenomenon that Kerala is one of the formidable educational hubs in India, which drastically attracts migrant students from other Indian states and other countries as well. Despite its impressive literacy statistics and quality of education, many students from the state choose to migrate for higher education or professional opportunities. Furthermore, globalization of education and the rise of international institutions have further fuelled this trend, as students seek to enhance their qualifications and broaden their horizons. Push factors, such as poor job prospects, low wages, and political instability, often drive individuals away, while pull factors, including higher wages, better career prospects, and superior living conditions, attract them to the destination country.

Brain drain is one of the consequences of the migration of students abroad. It refers to the significant emigration of highly skilled or educated individuals from their home country to another nation, driven by the pursuit of better job opportunities, higher salaries, and improved living conditions. This phenomenon results in a considerable loss of valuable human capital, which is essential for the development and innovation across various sectors.

Until a few years ago, Gulf countries were preferred the most. Now the trend has changed, and non-Gulf countries like Europe, Canada, Australia, etc. are preferred

for higher studies or advanced education. While only a small percentage of migrated students return to India, others decide to obtain permanent residence or nationality. With the availability of permanent residence, they also plan to take their family with them.

While this phenomenon has created benefits like increased annual remittances and exposure to new ideas, perspectives and experiences; fostering global understanding and cooperation. It has its own downsides like cultural shock, mental health problems, financial difficulties, academic differences, and visa and migration issues. Studies have shown that the youth population is rapidly decreasing.

This project aims to explore the complexities surrounding the immigration of students, examining motivations, experiences, and outcomes. By investigating the intersection of global mobility, education, and cultural exchange, this study will contribute to a deeper understanding of the opportunities and challenges presented by this growing trend.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Kerala is renowned as one of India's most literate states, abundant with efficient and hardworking young generations. In recent times, Kerala has been witnessing a recent surge of students flocking to other nations for higher studies is the latest trend in Kerala's migration landscape. Thanks to easy access to educational loans and a plethora of institutions welcoming international students, the idea of studying in a foreign nation has evolved into a coveted goal for students who have completed their schooling or undergraduate studies. Our topic, KERALA'S BRAIN DRAIN PROBLEM is inspired by witnessing this trend, as the percentage of students migrating abroad among our generation has increased. We aim to research their motives, benefits and challenges of studying abroad.

According to the recent Kerala Migration Survey (KMS) 2023, 'a significant rise in student emigration has substantially contributed to maintaining the emigration levels in 2023. From 129,763 student emigrants in 2018, the number has doubled to about 250,000 in 2023. The KMS 2023 has revealed that students constitute 11.3 percent of total emigrants from Kerala, indicating that a growing number of younger

individuals are choosing to emigrate, particularly for educational opportunities abroad. A higher proportion of female emigrants were students (26.6 percent) compared to male emigrants (7.7 percent)’.

1.3 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

As the project aims to get first-hand information from the students who are studying abroad, we created a questionnaire. This questionnaire was circulated to the students who belonged to the age group of 18-35, consisting of both males and females. The target audience consisted of students who are currently pursuing undergraduate, postgraduate, and higher studies abroad from Kerala. This helped in analysing the problems faced by them, the benefits of going abroad and which are the factors that motivated them to pursue studies abroad.

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To understand the factors motivating the students’ choice of going abroad with the help of a questionnaire.
- To assess the benefits of studying abroad
- To study challenges faced by the migrated students.
- To analyse the reasons for the selection of countries

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.5.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

A descriptive survey approach was taken up to understand the in-depth reason for the Kerala students’ migration. The survey aims to quantitatively assess the motivations, experiences, outcomes, and future aspirations of students from Kerala who migrate for education. A mixed-methods approach of combining qualitative and quantitative research was used to study the characteristics of the problem along with the numerical aspects.

1.5.2 SAMPLE DESIGN AND SIZE

Convenience sampling and snowball sampling were used for easier access to the audience. The questionnaire was sent to primary representatives, who were asked to circulate it among other migrated students.

Sample size-Responses were collected from a sample of 154 students belonging to the age category of 18-30 who were currently pursuing studies abroad.

1.5.3 COLLECTION OF DATA

Primary data

The data which is collected for the first time by an investigator or agency. We distributed a structured questionnaire to students who have migrated for studies, covering demographics, reasons for studying abroad, and destination countries.

Secondary data

Secondary data is the data which has already been collected by someone else. Information from secondary sources like newspaper reports, government reports and websites have contributed to this study.

1.5.4 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS FOR DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Instruments used for the data collection was questionnaire. Tabular and graphical representations like bar diagram, histogram, pie chart etc were used for the data analysis.

1.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

As there were strict deadlines to be followed, due to time constraint we were not able to collect maximum responses. In addition to this, timely responses were not received and the responses were biased and inaccurate. As we chose non-probability sampling methods like convenience sampling and snowball sampling, there were sampling errors.

1.7 CHAPTER OUTLINE

This research study has been presented in five chapters. Each part of the study has a significant role in the completion of the study.

Here are the chapter segregation followed for the study

1.7.1 Introduction

This chapter gives a brief introduction of the topic. It includes the statement of the problem, scope, objectives, research methodology and limitations of the study.

1.7.2 Literature Review

This chapter includes the existing literature relating to the topic. This includes past research papers relating to the topic categorised into international, national and state level.

1.7.3 Theoretical Framework

This chapter covers all the topics related to the study. It includes definitions, education system in Kerala, comparison between Indian education and international education, how it affects the state, risks of studying abroad etc.

1.7.4 Data Analysis and Interpretation

This chapter includes analysis and interpretation of the data relating to the topic. It deals with the primary data collected from the students who have migrated to other countries for studies. For better analysis tables and graphs are used.

1.7.5 Findings, Recommendations and Conclusion

This final chapter includes a summary of findings and suggestions to solve the problem. This is done with the help of data analysis and interpretation.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

2.1.1 Cairns (2021)

In the book ‘Palgrave Handbook of Youth Mobility and Educational migration’ underscores the universal aspiration for a better quality of life through mobility, a sentiment shared by youth across different social strata, thus aligning with the ambitions of these migrating students. Noting the existence of societal conditions, whether the structure of local labour markets and the distribution of educational opportunities or various forms of discrimination and marginalization, provides one means of understanding migration decision-making,

2.1.2 Roberson (2013)

The research on the topic 'Transnational students-Migrants and state' illuminates the intricate balance necessitated by migrant students between maintaining transnational relationships and fulfilling educational, professional, and immigration aspirations in the migrated nation. Arriving first on student visas, and often remaining on temporary work visas for varying periods after graduation, they had to fulfill a number of criteria to be successful in their ultimate applications for permanent residency. This extended migration journey was often fraught with specific challenges and obstacles, as government criteria for immigration could change during the course of their study. It involved balancing ongoing transnational connections and obligations to friends and family in their home countries with fulfilling their intertwined education, work and migration goals in Australia.

2.1.3 Shein (2008)

In his research ‘Chinese Student Migration in Europe: A Migration That Nobody Objects To?’ he draws out the importance of policy reforms in both Chinese and European immigration sectors by pointing out the surge of Chinese students’ influx to the EU after the former’s entry into WTO. Chinese studies have been influential to many experts in various fields; since both India and China shares the largest number of students sending to abroad, it is very crucial for India and China to look upon its soaring migration of students. These so-called traditional migration countries have seen a great number of foreign students, particularly from Asia, who once in the receiving country have changed status into economic migrants. The

outcome of this movement is not predictable and often unexpected. Therefore, this pattern is often regarded in traditional migration and development studies as constituting a potential ‘brain drain’ for developing countries, which consequently suffer from the loss of talented individuals.

2.1.4 Heike C alberts, Helen D hazen (2005)

Through their study, they have highlighted that the movement of international students has increased dramatically in the post-war period, with the United States acting as a major destination owing partly to a good education system and generous funding of graduate studies. Officially, these migrations are expected to be temporary and visa restrictions are applied accordingly; in reality many international students never return to their home countries.

2.2 NATIONAL LEVEL

2.2.1 S Irudaya Rajan, Varsha Joshi and Rohit Irudayarajan (2023)

In their report ‘India Migration Report- Student migration’, they have observed that India’s rapidly growing economy and enlarging middle class have led to a rise in India’s international student mobility (ISM). They studied about the increasing role played by recruitment and consultant agencies in student migration and the lack of regulation and false marketing strategies of such agencies, leading to misinformation and deceit among students wanting to pursue their education abroad

2.2.2 Nirma Jovial (2023)

In her journal, she highlighted that the major factor that has contributed to the increase in migration of students is the increased availability of loans to study abroad. It is helping students from middle-class families to pursue the dream of foreign education. In the last 10 years, 4.61 lakh students have availed loans from public sector banks to study abroad. In 2012-2013, the number was 20,366. And in 2021-2022, it was 69,898.

2.2.3 Sanjay Krishnapratap Pawar (2023)

In his article, he has highlighted that the international student flows have predominantly been one-directional—from Asia to the Western world. For many

decades, the USA and the UK have been the leading receivers of international students. Interestingly, in the new millennium's first decade, new "regional" and "South-South" international student flow directions emerged. These "horizontal" student flows, particularly to several developing Asian countries, have intensified.

2.2.4 R B Bhagat (2022)

In his research, 'Youth and Migration Aspiration in Kerala' he discusses the migration of Kerala youth to Middle East Gulf countries. In 1970 there was a massive increase in migration from Kerala to Gulf countries and it's the beginning of a migration trend. The youth want to migrate abroad for a job or related activities. The majority of the young people think that the only way they may succeed in life is to migrate and they can develop their future by migrating overseas. The youth choose courses that will give them the opportunity to work productively and have higher chances to migrate.

2.2.5 Ambarish Datta (2018)

In his article he shared that employers look for people who have global experience, cross-cultural competence and language skills. Among the reasons students go abroad, other than access to quality education, is the need for a better lifestyle and the belief that studying abroad is a passport to a good life. For Indians, one of the reasons is the abysmal quality of home universities—poor infrastructure, shortage of good teachers, jaded curriculum, industry disconnect.

2.3 STATE LEVEL

2.3.1 Cyril Sebastian (2024)

In his article the author highlighted that the majority (78%) of female students from Kerala chose to migrate seeking a society that promotes inclusivity, offers a better lifestyle, and is free from social stigmas and stereotypes. The majority (78%) of female students from Kerala chose to migrate, seeking a society that promotes inclusivity, offers a better lifestyle, and is free from social stigmas and stereotypes. Such findings suggest that young women view migration not just as a journey for

personal growth but as a route towards a more liberal setting promising equality and opportunity.

2.3.2 Anila Skariah, Sivarenjini B (2024)

In their journal, they shared that the principal motivation for migration is the pursuit of higher quality education and improved career prospects. The study reveals a preference for English-speaking countries, with the UK, New Zealand, and Germany being the favored destinations, reflecting language familiarity and perceived educational excellence. Most respondents migrated after completing their undergraduate studies, aiming for postgraduate education abroad. The reliance on educational loans as the primary source of funding highlights the significant financial commitment of students and their families. The research identifies substantial challenges faced by students, including financial constraints, social and psychological adaptation issues, and the hurdles of cultural integration.

2.3.3 Justine George (2023)

In his research he discusses the increased migration due to the educational drawbacks in Kerala. In the study the researcher used a study by the Centre for Development Studies to mention the number of students moving to foreign countries. As per the study about 1.5 million students from Kerala were attending higher education abroad. 12% of the graduates from Kerala continue their education overseas. Two out of every three young people in Kerala want to move overseas for work and associated reasons.

2.3.4 Anantha Narayanan (2022)

In his article he wrote that young people from Kerala are travelling overseas in increasing numbers for higher study, and Malayali students can be found all over the world. In reality, students from Kerala are present in Curacao, a tiny nation in the Dutch Caribbean with a population of just 1.55 lakh and an area of 444 square kilometers.

2.3.5 Muralee Thummarukudy (2022)

In his article he highlighted that the major reason for student migration is lack of job opportunity in Kerala. Most of the participants believed Kerala lacked adequate jobs.

The excellent standards of education abroad, meanwhile, were cited as the second most frequent cause of student migration. Other factors included low pay scale, a poor social and economic climate in the state, a better standard of living and stay-back options abroad. The decision of students to move abroad is strongly influenced by foreign education fairs, IELTS training centers, consulting agencies and advertisements in the media.

2.3.6 Vivek Rajagopal (2022)

In his study, he says that these days, for Keralites, the Middle East, Europe, and North America are like their own countries. It is expected that in 2025, about 75 Lakh of Indian students will migrate to foreign nations. Regardless of the quality of universities and courses, a number of variables influence the migration of young people from Kerala. Personal liberty, a higher standard of living, social security, and respect for labour are on the list.

2.3.7 Paul Thomas (2020)

In his study on international migration of Kerala Students for medicine course, he discussed the challenges and opportunities as a student in a foreign country. One of the reasons for the increase in education outside of India is the lack of seats in Government medical colleges in India and unaffordable fee structure.

2.4 SUMMARY

The migration of students abroad for studies is a significant topic, reflecting a mix of aspirations and challenges. Research identifies key motivators such as economic growth, educational quality, and cultural aspirations. Globally, young people seek improved quality of life, influenced by labour market structures and societal discrimination. Migrant students face the challenge of balancing their educational and professional goals while maintaining ties to their home countries. Evolving immigration policies complicate paths to permanent residency, leading to concerns about brain drain, particularly from countries like China. In rapidly developing nations, economic growth and a rising middle class drive student migration, though unregulated recruitment agencies can misinform students. Increased access to educational loans has made studying abroad more attainable for middle-class

families. In regions like Kerala, young women often seek inclusive societies and better lifestyles, with English-speaking countries as preferred destinations. Financial burdens and adaptation challenges persist for these students. Overall, the literature underscores the need for thoughtful policies to address the complex dynamics of student migration.

CHAPTER 3

THORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Student migration from Kerala to abroad has emerged as a significant phenomenon in recent decades, reflecting broader trends in global education and mobility. This movement is driven by a variety of factors, including the pursuit of higher education, better career prospects, and the desire for enhanced life experiences. Kerala, known for its high literacy rates and emphasis on education, has produced a large number of students who seek opportunities beyond its borders. This trend is particularly notable given the state's unique socio-economic context, where the value placed on education has led many families to prioritize academic success as a means of improving their socio-economic standing.

The motivations behind this migration are multifaceted. Many students are drawn to foreign universities that are renowned for their academic excellence, research opportunities, and diverse cultural experiences. Countries like the United States, Canada, Australia, and the United Kingdom attract a significant number of Kerala students due to their prestigious institutions and comprehensive programs in various fields. Additionally, the promise of international exposure, coupled with the chance to build global networks, further entices students to venture abroad.

However, this trend is not without its complexities. While student migration can lead to substantial personal and professional growth, it also raises concerns about the implications for Kerala itself. The phenomenon can contribute to a "brain drain," where the most talented individuals leave the state, potentially hindering local development and innovation. Furthermore, the outflow of young talent can result in demographic shifts, particularly in rural areas, where the loss of a younger population can impact community sustainability and economic vitality.

In recent years, the dynamics of student migration have evolved, influenced by changing global economic conditions, immigration policies, and the rising costs of education. As the landscape of higher education becomes increasingly competitive, the pressures on students to excel and secure placements abroad have intensified. This has prompted a reevaluation of local educational institutions in Kerala, highlighting the need for reforms to enhance their appeal and retention capacity.

Ultimately, the issue of student migration from Kerala is emblematic of larger global trends in education and labour mobility. It reflects the aspirations of a generation seeking opportunities in an interconnected world while also posing challenges that require careful consideration and strategic responses. As Kerala navigates this landscape, understanding the implications of student migration—both positive and negative—will be essential for shaping policies that foster local development while supporting the ambitions of its youth.

3.2 DEFINITION AND MEANING

MIGRATION

Migration is the act of moving to a new location with the intention of settling or for achieving their goals. Migration opens up opportunities for creativity, exploration, risk taking and anxiety. Social, economic, political and cultural variables all influence human movement. More than any other aspect, economic development is the primary cause of mobility. These elements also influence the different types of migration. The different types of migration are as follows.

- **Internal migration:**

Internal migration refers to population movement within a country, which may take place within a state, a city, or a district. It indicates that individuals adopt local customs, traditions, and ways of life.

- **International migration:**

The movement of people overseas is known as international migration. The movement of international migrants takes place as legal immigrants, illegal immigrants and refugees.

- **Out-migration:**

Out migration refers to people who travel to another area or region within their own country for permanent stay.

- **In-migration:**

In-migration is the process of people moving into a specific area or country from another location.

- **Seasonal Migration:**

The movement of individuals from one location to another on a seasonal basis is known as seasonal migration. Seasonal changes in the demand for labour are the main cause of it.

- **Forced migration:**

In forced migration people are moving to various locations against their will as slaves or the movement is primarily due to natural disasters like flood, starvation and earthquake, as well as external reasons like civil war. For this reason, they are compelled to leave their home country.

- **Return migration:**

It is the process of moving back to the country where the migrant came from is the return migration. The people who migrate to other places are known as migrants. The migrants are classified under three heads: an emigrant, an immigrant, a refugee.

STUDENT MIGRATION

Student migration refers to the movement of individuals from their home countries to foreign nations for the purpose of pursuing education. This phenomenon has gained significant traction in recent years, driven by factors such as globalisation, the search for high-quality education, and the desire for diverse cultural experiences. Many students migrate to countries renowned for their academic excellence, such as the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia. These nations often provide not only a robust educational framework but also a vibrant multicultural environment that appeals to students from various backgrounds. In addition to seeking prestigious degrees, students often pursue specialised programs that may not be available in their home countries, thereby enhancing their career prospects in an increasingly competitive job market.

The impact of student migration is multifaceted, influencing both the host and home countries. For host countries, international students contribute significantly to the

economy through tuition fees, living expenses, and other expenditures. This influx of diverse talent enriches the social fabric, promoting cultural exchange and innovation. However, countries with high rates of out-migration may experience a brain drain, losing skilled individuals who could contribute to their own economic and social development. Furthermore, while international students often bring valuable perspectives and skills, they may also face challenges such as language barriers, cultural adjustment, and social integration, which can impact their academic and social experiences.

Despite the benefits, student migration presents various challenges that can affect the overall experience of international students. Cultural adjustment is a significant hurdle; students may encounter culture shock as they adapt to new social norms and lifestyles. Differences in academic systems can also create obstacles, with variations in teaching styles, assessment methods, and educational expectations. Financial strain is another common issue, as the cost of living and studying abroad can be substantial, especially if students are unable to work part-time due to visa restrictions. Moreover, navigating the complexities of immigration policies and maintaining legal status can be stressful, adding to the overall burden on these students. Social integration is crucial, yet building a supportive network can be challenging, leading to feelings of isolation among many international students.

Looking ahead, the landscape of student migration is poised for change. The rise of hybrid learning models—combining online and in-person education—could reshape migration patterns by offering more flexible options that reduce the necessity for physical relocation. As competition among countries to attract international students intensifies, universities may enhance their programs and support services to stand out in this increasingly crowded marketplace. Mental health awareness is growing within academic institutions, prompting many to improve their support systems to address the unique challenges faced by international students. Furthermore, immigration policies will continue to play a pivotal role in shaping migration trends, with countries that offer favourable work and residency options likely to attract more students. Collaborative international partnerships between universities are also on the rise, creating opportunities for students to benefit from diverse educational experiences without necessarily relocating entirely.

In conclusion, student migration is a complex and dynamic process that has significant implications for individuals and societies. While it offers opportunities for academic advancement, cultural enrichment, and personal growth, it also presents challenges that require attention and support. As the global education landscape evolves, understanding the intricacies of student migration will be crucial for students, educators, and policymakers alike, ensuring that the benefits of this phenomenon are maximised while addressing the challenges faced by those who embark on this journey.

PERMANENT RESIDENCE

Permanent residence is an immigration status granted to individuals, allowing them to live and work in a country indefinitely. It provides many of the rights and privileges of citizenship, such as access to education and healthcare, while typically excluding the right to vote. Permanent residents often have a pathway to citizenship after meeting specific residency and legal requirements. This status can be particularly relevant for international students who wish to remain in the host country after completing their studies.

Permanent residence plays a significant role in the context of student migration, influencing the choices and futures of international students. Many students choose to study abroad not just for the educational experience but also for the potential opportunity to gain permanent residency in their host country. After completing their studies, graduates often seek to transition from student visas to permanent residency, allowing them to stay and work in the country long-term. This pathway is particularly appealing in nations with high demand for skilled workers, where universities are often seen as a stepping stone to employment and settlement.

The ability to apply for permanent residence can significantly impact a student's decision to study in a particular country. For example, countries like Canada, Australia, and New Zealand have specific immigration policies designed to attract international students by offering clear pathways to permanent residency after graduation. These policies can include points-based systems that favour graduates of local institutions, making the prospect of permanent residency a strong incentive for students to choose these destinations.

Obtaining permanent residency can provide numerous benefits to former students. Permanent residents generally enjoy many rights similar to those of citizens, including the ability to work without restrictions and access to social services. This status can enhance their professional prospects, allowing them to establish careers and integrate into the local community. However, it's important to note that maintaining permanent residency typically involves meeting certain conditions, such as residing in the country for a specified period, which can be a consideration for students who may wish to travel or work abroad after their studies.

Hence, the prospect of obtaining permanent residence is a critical factor in student migration. It not only shapes the decisions of international students but also influences the policies of host countries seeking to attract and retain talent. As students navigate their educational journeys, the pathway to permanent residency remains a key component of their migration experience and long-term aspirations.

3.2.1 EDUCATION SYSTEM IN KERALA

The education system in Kerala is widely recognized for its strong emphasis on literacy and inclusivity, making it one of the most progressive in India. Historically, Kerala has placed a high value on education, which is deeply rooted in its cultural and social fabric. The state achieved remarkable milestones in literacy rates, with a focus on universal education that emerged as a priority post-independence. Earlier, Vedic knowledge was taught in the Sabha mathams. Then there were the Kalaris, who ran schools and taught martial arts. With the entrance of Christian missionaries, widespread adoption of Western schooling started. Numerous schools and other educational institutions have been established by them. This commitment to education has been further bolstered by social reform movements, particularly those led by figures like Sree Narayana Guru and Ayyankali, who advocated for the rights of marginalised communities and promoted the idea that education is a fundamental right. Their efforts laid the groundwork for a more equitable educational landscape in the state, which continues to thrive today.

The structure of Kerala's education system is characterised by a blend of public and private institutions, with a robust framework that caters to various educational needs. The state follows a 10+2 system, comprising ten years of schooling followed by two years of higher secondary education. Primary and secondary education is primarily

delivered through government schools, which are funded and regulated by the state, ensuring that education remains free and accessible to all students. In addition to traditional subjects, the curriculum often incorporates local culture and language, fostering a sense of identity among students.

Higher education in Kerala has also seen significant advancements, with a growing number of universities and colleges offering diverse courses in various fields. The state boasts a strong emphasis on research and development, with institutions actively engaging in innovative projects and collaborations. The government encourages public-private partnerships in the education sector, leading to the establishment of numerous private universities and institutions that complement the public education system. Additionally, Kerala has become a hub for professional courses, especially in fields like engineering, medicine, and management. This diversification in higher education not only attracts students from within the state but also from other parts of India and even abroad, contributing to a vibrant academic community. The focus on quality education and research has positioned Kerala as a key player in the Indian higher education landscape, with many institutions gaining recognition at national and international levels.

The bulk of higher education institutions today, including universities and colleges, are run by businesses, governmental organisations, and private persons. The Central Commission for Secondary Learning (CBSE), the Kerala State Education Board, and the Indian Certificate of Secondary Education (ICSE) are a few of the boards with which these educational institutions are affiliated. In the vast majority of institutions, especially private ones. Every student spends ten years in middle school before moving on to higher intermediate. Science, business, and the arts are the three main areas of study in high school. One can enrol in professional or general degree programmes after graduating from high school. The Education Development Index (EDI) places Kerala first out of the remaining 21 Indian states. The EDI is calculated utilising factors like access, resources, instructors, and outcomes. The capital of our state, Thiruvananthapuram, is one of the major hubs for higher education. The University of Kerala and several professional colleges, including 15 engineering schools, 3 medical schools, 3 Ayurvedic schools, 2 homoeopathic schools, 6 other medical schools, and numerous legal schools are located in this area. Thiruvananthapuram Medical College, Kerala's top medical institution, has been

given the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) status. The most well-known engineering college in this region is the College of Engineering. The two main management education institutions in Technopark are the Asian School of Business and IIITM-K. The Indian Institute of Space Science and Technology is based in Thiruvananthapuram. The main university in this region is the Cochin University of Science and Technology, often known as Cochin University. The majority of Kochi's universities are connected to the Mahatma Gandhi University. There are many national schools and universities in Kochi. These organisations include the Central Institute of Fisheries Technology, the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute, the Nautical and Engineering Training, and the National Academy of Oceanography.

Despite its successes, the education system in Kerala faces challenges that require ongoing attention and reform. Issues such as overcrowded classrooms, teacher shortages, and disparities in educational quality between urban and rural areas persist. While the state has made significant investments in infrastructure and resources, ensuring that all schools meet high standards remains a challenge. Furthermore, the rapid pace of technological advancement necessitates continuous updates to the curriculum and teaching methods to equip students with the skills needed in a globalised world. The need for a greater emphasis on mental health and emotional well-being among students has also gained recognition, as pressures related to academic performance can lead to stress and anxiety. Addressing these challenges is essential for maintaining the high standards of education in Kerala and ensuring that it continues to evolve to meet the needs of its diverse population.

The education system in Kerala is a testament to the state's commitment to literacy, inclusivity, and holistic development. Its historical context, combined with a focus on accessibility and quality, has created an environment where education flourishes. As Kerala navigates the challenges of the modern educational landscape, ongoing reforms and adaptations will be crucial to sustain its legacy of excellence. The state's proactive approach to education, encompassing both academic and vocational training, positions it well for future growth and development, ensuring that the next generation is well-equipped to face the complexities of an ever-changing world.

3.2.2 INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

A dynamic idea, international education refers to a voyage or movement of people, thoughts, or ideas across political and cultural boundaries. It is made easier by the phenomena of globalisation, which gradually eliminates the geographic limitations on economic, social, and cultural arrangements. The fundamental benefit of an international education is that you can readily adapt to global changes because the knowledge you are learning is regularly examined by worldwide standards. A greater range of courses, some with research opportunities and skill-based training for students, are available when studying abroad. This broadens your perspective and creates a world of fresh educational chances. The world of international education is a melting pot of individuals and learning with a global perspective ensures students are exposed to different cultures, ethnic groups, religions and languages, enriching society in the process and broadening the academic experience for everyone. It also, of course, establishes a multicultural learning environment which makes it the ideal setting for increasing students' cultural awareness and fostering their understanding and appreciation of those who come from a different background to their own. It plays a vital role in broadening students' horizons and enriching their academic experiences. It not only involves traditional study abroad programs but also includes joint degree programs, exchange initiatives, and online courses offered by institutions across borders. These opportunities allow students to immerse themselves in different cultures, languages, and educational systems, fostering a global mindset that is increasingly valuable in a multicultural workforce.

Moreover, international education encourages the sharing of ideas and best practices among educational institutions worldwide, leading to enhanced curriculum development and research collaboration. Students gain unique insights into global issues, such as climate change, health, and technology, through diverse academic perspectives. This exposure can inspire innovative solutions and foster a sense of responsibility toward addressing global challenges. Furthermore, the experience of studying abroad often promotes personal growth, resilience, and independence, as students navigate new environments and adapt to unfamiliar settings. Such experiences are not only transformative on an individual level but also contribute to the development of future leaders who are equipped to operate effectively in an interconnected world. As international education continues to evolve, its significance

in shaping informed, culturally aware citizens will remain crucial for fostering peaceful and productive global relationships.

3.2.3 A COMPARISON STUDY ON INDIAN EDUCATION AND INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

1. Indian education gives emphasis on theoretical knowledge rather than practical knowledge while in other nations the emphasis is placed on practical knowledge. In addition to this there is a lack of innovation in the system. The result in failure of building the capability of students in facing the real business world.
2. Foreign education curriculum includes both academics and extracurricular activities like sports and arts. While the Indian education system only focuses on studies.
3. Foreign countries like Dubai, education in public schools is free for UAE nationals and in private institutions, there are many scholarships, concessions to facilitate education. But in India, education is slowly turning into a business and is only about profits.
4. It is common in India where students are forced to study in fields like engineering or medicine in contrast to their interests. Sports and arts are not considered as career fields by Indian parents. On the other hand, students are admitted in foreign nations based on their areas of interest and talent.
5. Students in India are routinely required to memorise hundreds of different items, including chemical reactions, the birth and death dates of historical figures, thousands of mathematical equations, and facts and statistics. Basically, we just focus on theory. Practical application effectively influences students' knowledge when considering foreign countries.
6. The teaching of outdated technology is a major component of the Indian educational system. It appears that not much has changed in the educational system since independence. because new trends and technology are not well incorporated into the curriculum of the Indian educational system. When studying abroad, the curriculum is constantly updated to reflect advances in technology and business needs.

7. As a result, students in India get admitted into programs that provide more employment chances or greater salaries than those in other nations. In contrast, students in other countries are accepted according to their interests and skills.

8. Indian Education is predominantly exam-driven, focusing on rote learning and standardized curricula set by boards like CBSE and ICSE. The curriculum emphasises core subjects such as Mathematics, Science, and Language. While international education mainly follows a more flexible and holistic approach. Programs like the International Baccalaureate (IB) and Cambridge International Examinations (CIE) focus on critical thinking, interdisciplinary learning, and global awareness.

9. In the Indian education system assessments are primarily through periodic examinations, with a significant focus on performance in board exams at the end of schooling. While International Education uses a variety of assessment types, including formative assessments, peer evaluations, and portfolios. This system emphasises continuous assessment and skill development rather than high-stakes testing.

10. Indian Education is highly influenced by cultural values emphasising respect for authority, discipline, and familial expectations. Education is often viewed as a pathway to secure employment. International Education generally promotes individualism, critical inquiry, and self-expression. There is often greater emphasis on understanding diverse perspectives and global citizenship.

3.2.4 MIGRATION OF STUDENTS FROM KERALA

Kerala has seen an upsurge in students who leave the state for further education in Europe, Canada, Australia, and other nations before relocating there permanently. In his 2023 budget statement on February 3, Kerala's Finance Minister KN Balagopal stated that the state is focusing on keeping the youth in the state by providing more job opportunities and improved facilities. The Kerala High Court has cited the lack of infrastructure and aesthetic appeal in Kerala's cities as the cause of the trend of young people moving away.

In 2012, there were 40 lakh Indian students studying abroad; by 2025, that number is anticipated to reach 75 lakhs. The number of students travelling overseas for higher

education has increased by 68%, according to data that the Ministry of Education presented to the Parliament in February of this year. From 4,44,553 in 2021 to 7,50,365 in 2022, the number rose. Over the years, this increase has remained consistent, rising from 4,54,009 in 2017 to 5,17,998 in 2018 and 5,86,337 in 2019. The rise in student migration helped Kerala register a marginal rise in total emigration from the State compared to the previous survey in 2018. From just 1,29,763 student emigrants in 2018, the number has doubled to about 2.5 lakhs in 2023, around a 100% increase in the post-pandemic period. The number of Malayalis who migrated to other countries in 2023 was approximately 22 lakhs, which is an increase from 21 lakh in 2018. The latest Kerala Migration Survey (KMS) estimates that the number of emigrants from Kerala has risen to 2.2 million in 2023. According to information provided by the Union government, 6,46,206 students left the nation up until November of the previous academic year. Only 4% of this came from Kerala, with 12% coming from Andhra Pradesh, 12% from Punjab, and 11% coming from Maharashtra. Additionally, there has been an increase in the number of students enrolling in higher education in Kerala.

International student migration from India is a growing trend and Kerala is poised to become one of the top states in terms of students pursuing education abroad. This reflects the desire for high-quality education and better career opportunities among the students of Kerala. The KMS 2023 estimates 2.5 lakh student emigrants from Kerala with Ernakulam having the highest number of emigrant students at 43,990, followed by Thrissur and Kottayam with 35,873 and 35,382 students respectively. Wayanad had the lowest number of student emigrants from Kerala at 3750.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT MIGRATION BY DISTRICT

District	Emigrant Students	Percent
Thiruvananthapuram	4887	2.0
Kollam	21607	8.9
Pathanamthitta	10466	4.3
Alappuzha	14217	5.8
Kottayam	35382	14.5
Idukki	6946	2.9
Ernakulam	43990	18.1
Thrissur	35873	14.7
Palakkad	13692	5.6
Malappuram	15310	6.3
Kozhikode	15980	6.6
Wayanad	3750	1.5
Kannur	23512	9.7
Kasaragod	4391	1.8
Total	250002	100.0

SOURCE: KMS SURVEY 2023

54.4 percent of student emigrants from Kerala are males and 45.6 percent are females. The gender disparity is hence narrower in the case of student emigrants when compared to the total immigrant population from Kerala, where over 80 per cent are males. The age pyramid of emigrants in the working age category shows a trend where more females are in the age categories between 25 and 44, while males are more evenly distributed between the various age groups from 25 to 60 years. Among the graduate immigrants from Kerala, women constitute 71.5% and men constitute over 34.7%.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT MIGRATION BY SEX

Sex	Emigrant Students
Male	54.4
Female	45.6
Total	100.0

SOURCE: KMS SURVEY 2023

3.2.5 CHANGING LANDSCAPES: THE DECREASE IN STUDENT ENROLLMENT IN GULF COUNTRIES

There has been a notable decline in the number of students choosing Gulf countries for higher education in recent years. Various factors contribute to this trend, including increased global competition for international students. Many students are now looking toward established educational hubs in Europe, North America, and Asia, which are often perceived to offer more prestigious programs and better career opportunities post-graduation. According to a report by the Institute of International Education (IIE), countries like the United States and the United Kingdom continue to attract a significant share of international students, which has affected the enrollment numbers in Gulf countries.

Economic factors also play a crucial role in this decline. The fluctuating oil prices in the Gulf region have led to economic uncertainty, which can affect funding for education and scholarship opportunities for international students. Reports indicate that countries like Saudi Arabia and the UAE have had to adjust their budgets, impacting educational initiatives and potentially reducing the attractiveness of their institutions. Moreover, the political and social climate in some Gulf countries can deter international students. Concerns about political stability, social freedoms, and cultural differences have become more prominent in students' decision-making process. While Gulf countries have invested significantly in improving their higher education systems, perceptions about the quality of education and research opportunities still lag behind more established universities worldwide. Many international students prioritise institutions with strong research output and global rankings.

Studies are showing that there has been an increased preference for European union and western nations which has grown from 10.8% in 2018 to 19.5% in 2023. The UK, US, Australia and Canada still remain the preferred choice, but students are also considering countries like Uzbekistan, Philippines, Russia, Ireland, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan. In the USA, there was a surge of nearly 20% in the number of Indian students studying in the US for the academic year 2021-2022. The total number of students enrolled was 1,99,182. After the announcement of the Graduate Route visa by the British government in 2019, the UK has seen a sharp spike in the number of

Indian students joining their universities. According to statistics available on the UK government website, Britain granted 1.4 lakh sponsored study visas to Indians in 2022, a major increase from 34,261 visas in 2019. Recent changes to UK visa policies are already reshaping the landscape for Indian students. The UK government has placed restrictions on dependent visas, which could lead to a significant decline in postgraduate applications. Nearly 40% of Indian postgraduate students bring dependents, and this change may lead to a projected 15-20% drop in applications. Many of these students will likely turn to alternative countries where they can relocate with their families. For undergraduate students, the projected decline is smaller, at around 5-10%, as this group tends to be less reliant on dependent visas. One of the main attractions for Indian students studying in the UK has been the Graduate Route visa, allowing up to two years of post-study work. However, with this visa currently under review, there is growing uncertainty among prospective students.

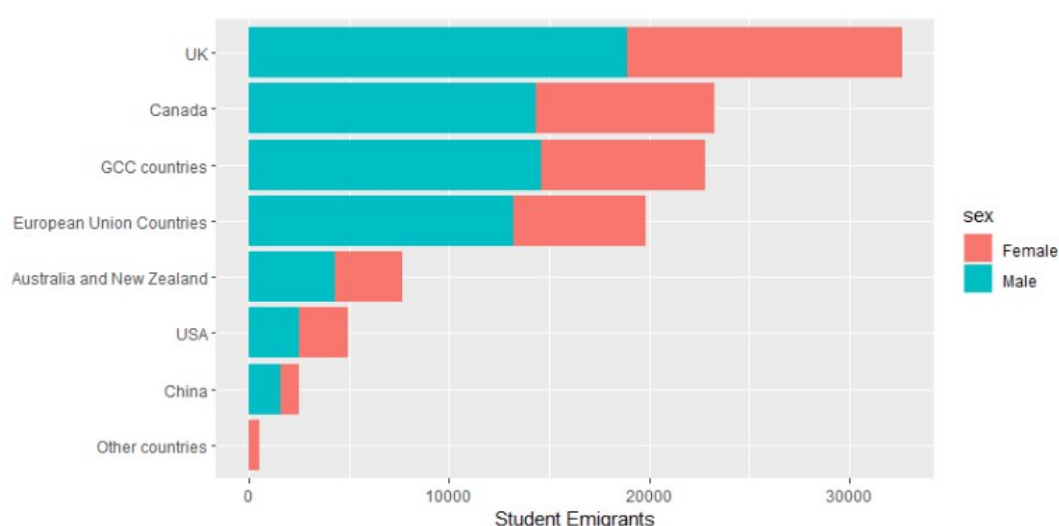
Canada has seen a consistent rise in the influx of Indian students. As per the data, there were over 2.2 lakh Indian study permit holders studying in Canadian colleges in 2019. Indian students constitute 34 percent of Canada's foreign student population. There are more than 3 lakh Indian students studying in Canada currently. Canada, once seen as a welcoming destination for Indian students, is also tightening its policies. A recent decision to reduce student visa approvals by 35% in 2024 is expected to severely impact Indian applicants. In 2023, over 230,000 Indian students were enrolled in Canadian institutions, but this new restriction could lead to around 80,500 Indian students being denied study permits next year alone. By 2025, a further 10% reduction is expected, potentially affecting another 23,000 students.

Ukraine and China are the two countries which have always remained popular amongst the students who want to pursue medicine. The ongoing Ukraine crisis has put a question mark on the future of some 18,000 Indian medical students. On the other hand, around 23,000 medical students who were studying in China could not go back since the pandemic. Last year, China opened up student visas in August and around 6,200 of them have obtained it.

Those looking to study abroad are expected to head for alternative higher education destinations such as Germany, France, Spain, Italy, Ireland, New Zealand and Malta

in greater numbers, according to higher education and study abroad consultants. However, the increased intake in these countries is likely to fall short of compensating the anticipated decline in Canada, Australia and the UK. Australia recently put a cap on the number of new international students coming in at 270,000 a year from 2025, as well as introduced stricter visa requirements and eligibility criteria. Spain saw a more than 28% increase in international student intake while Germany saw a nearly 13% increase and, outside of Europe, both New Zealand and Dubai saw about 10% increase. While students prefer cheaper countries as the overall cost to study abroad depends on various factors such as tuition fees, living expenses and the exchange rate between the Indian rupee and the local currency. However, some countries are generally more affordable compared to others such as Poland, Germany, Denmark, Belgium, Italy, Spain, and Switzerland.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT MIGRATION BY DESTINATION AND SEX



SOURCE: KMS SURVEY 2023

3.2.6 IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON STUDENT MIGRATION PATTERNS

The COVID-19 pandemic profoundly reshaped student migration patterns worldwide, with several interrelated factors influencing the decisions of students regarding international education. One of the most immediate impacts was the imposition of travel restrictions. Countries around the globe enacted strict bans on

travel, which effectively halted the flow of international students. As a result, many prospective students were unable to enter their host countries, leading to a significant decline in enrollment numbers at universities, especially in popular destinations such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia.

The pandemic also accelerated the shift toward online learning. With universities transitioning to remote education, many students found they could pursue their degrees from their home countries. This shift raised questions about the necessity of studying abroad, particularly for those who had previously considered international education essential for their career prospects. As students experienced remote learning, some discovered that they could access quality educational resources without incurring the costs and challenges associated with living abroad, prompting a revaluation of their educational goals.

Financial constraints further complicated the landscape for international students. The economic impact of the pandemic affected families worldwide, leading to increased uncertainty about funding education abroad. Many students faced job losses or reduced incomes, making it difficult to finance tuition and living expenses in foreign countries. Consequently, financial aid and scholarships became even more critical for students considering international study. Institutions responded by increasing support for international students, but the overall economic climate led to a significant decrease in applications from abroad.

Safety concerns also played a crucial role in shaping student migration patterns. With the pandemic highlighting vulnerabilities in global health systems, many students became hesitant about travelling to countries with high infection rates or inadequate healthcare responses. This led to a shift in preferences, with students favouring countries that were perceived as managing the pandemic more effectively. Nations that implemented robust health measures, such as New Zealand and Canada, experienced increased interest from international students seeking safer environments.

Moreover, the disruption caused by the pandemic affected short-term programs, such as exchange programs and summer courses. Many of these initiatives were cancelled or postponed, impacting students' plans and aspirations to gain international experience. This disruption not only affected immediate educational goals but also

had long-term implications for students' cultural exposure and global networking opportunities.

As countries began to stabilise and reopen, there was potential for a rebound in international student mobility. However, this recovery is likely to bring about shifts in patterns of migration. Students may gravitate toward regional options or hybrid models of education that combine online and in-person learning experiences. The pandemic has led many to question traditional notions of studying abroad, creating a landscape where flexibility and adaptability become key factors in decision-making.

In summary, the impact of COVID-19 on student migration patterns was multifaceted, driven by travel restrictions, shifts to online education, financial constraints, and safety concerns. While immediate effects were largely negative, the long-term consequences may foster new trends and adaptations in international education, influencing how future generations of students approach their academic pursuits.

3.2.7 HOW DOES IT AFFECT THE STATE?

Just like how a coin has two sides, the increase in student migration from Kerala has both positive and negative effects. The positive effects are that Many students who secure jobs in foreign countries after completing their education often send remittances back to India. These remittances, while smaller than the outflow, do contribute foreign currency to India's reserves, providing some economic balance. In 2023, India received over \$100 billion in remittances from its diaspora, a testament to how these funds play a vital role in the country's economy. Furthermore, students who gain international exposure often acquire skills and experiences that might not be available within India. They bring back knowledge, technical expertise, and global networks that can enrich India's workforce and potentially foster innovation and entrepreneurship upon their return. This exchange of knowledge is a key component of a globally interconnected world, and many believe that a well-rounded education involves cross-cultural experiences.

The migration of students also exerts pressure on local educational institutions to improve their standards. As more students seek higher-quality education abroad, there is a growing demand for better infrastructure, faculty, and academic programs

in Kerala. This drive for improvement can lead to significant reforms and investments in the education sector. Furthermore, returning students often bring diverse perspectives and global experiences, enriching the educational environment and fostering a culture of innovation. Moreover, the trend of student migration raises aspirations among the younger population. Witnessing peers pursue higher education and international opportunities can motivate others to set ambitious educational goals. This collective aspiration can enhance the overall educational attainment in Kerala, fostering a more educated and skilled population.

In addition to economic and cultural benefits, returning students often play a vital role in community development. They tend to engage with their local communities, sharing knowledge and skills gained abroad. This involvement can lead to initiatives that uplift local areas, driving social development and improving quality of life.

The increase in student migration from Kerala presents several negative effects that can significantly impact the state in various ways. One of the most pressing concerns is the phenomenon of brain drain, where some of the most talented and educated individuals leave Kerala for better opportunities abroad. This outflow can lead to a shortage of skilled professionals in critical sectors such as healthcare, engineering, and education. The result is a potential hindrance to local development and economic growth, as the loss of expertise can stifle innovation and progress in these essential fields.

Demographic imbalances are another critical issue stemming from increased student migration. When a large number of young individuals leave for education, particularly in rural areas, it can create a disproportionate age distribution within communities. This trend may lead to an aging population that struggles to sustain local economies and social structures. As the younger workforce diminishes, productivity may decline, making it challenging for these areas to thrive and adapt to changing economic conditions.

Moreover, the migration of students can pose a risk to the cultural identity of Kerala. As these young individuals adapt to new cultures and lifestyles abroad, they may return with different values and practices. This shift can create a disconnect with traditional ways of life, leading to tensions between returning students and those who have remained in the community. The blending of cultures, while enriching, can

also dilute local traditions and customs, raising concerns about the preservation of Kerala's unique cultural heritage.

Economic dependency is another significant concern associated with increased student migration. While remittances from students abroad can provide a financial boost to local economies, an over-reliance on these funds can hinder long-term growth. Communities may become less inclined to invest in local industries or entrepreneurial initiatives, as they depend on money sent home by family members overseas. This dependency can stifle innovation and reduce local economic resilience, making communities vulnerable to fluctuations in global economic conditions.

Social disparities also become more pronounced with the trend of student migration. The benefits of studying abroad are often not evenly distributed, leading to increased inequalities. Families with the financial means to send their children abroad may gain significantly, while those without such resources may feel marginalized. This disparity can exacerbate existing inequalities in education and economic opportunities, further entrenching socio economic divides within the state.

Lastly, the emotional and social strain on families left behind can be profound. Parents and siblings may experience feelings of loss and disconnection as their loved ones pursue education abroad. This emotional toll can affect family dynamics and mental health, creating challenges in maintaining relationships. Additionally, returning students may struggle with reintegration into their communities, leading to feelings of isolation or alienation as they navigate their changed identities.

In summary, while the migration of students from Kerala offers various advantages, it also brings significant challenges that must be addressed. Balancing the positive impacts with the negative effects is crucial for ensuring the sustainable development of the state, allowing it to harness the benefits of migration while mitigating its adverse consequences.

3.2.8 RISKS OF STUDYING ABROAD

Studying abroad can be an exciting and transformative experience, offering students the chance to immerse themselves in new cultures, gain unique academic insights, and foster personal growth. However, alongside these opportunities come a variety

of risks that students should be mindful of to ensure a successful and enriching experience. Understanding these challenges can empower students to navigate their journeys more effectively and make the most of their time overseas. Here are some key risks faced by students studying abroad

- **Fraudulent Activities by Agencies**

Students often rely on educational agencies to help them navigate the study abroad process, including application assistance and visa procurement. However, some agencies may engage in fraudulent practices, such as misrepresenting institutions, fees, or visa requirements. This can lead to wasted time and money, and in some cases, students may find themselves enrolled in unrecognised or substandard institutions, jeopardizing their education and future opportunities. These agencies may provide incorrect or misleading advice regarding visa applications, falsely guaranteeing approvals. Such actions can lead to significant legal issues for students, including visa denials or complications that jeopardize their ability to study abroad. They may provide inaccurate or exaggerated information about programs, institutions, or countries. This could include false claims about academic rankings, job placement rates, or the quality of living conditions. Such misinformation can lead students to make poorly informed choices that affect their educational and career prospects. Students might be surprised by hidden fees for application processing, visa assistance, or even travel arrangements that can significantly increase the overall cost of studying abroad. This lack of transparency can strain students' budgets and financial plans. After the initial application process, the agencies will no longer help the leaving students to navigate challenges alone once they arrive in the host country. This lack of ongoing assistance can lead to difficulties in adjusting to a new environment.

- **Fraudulent Practices in education institutions abroad**

Fraudulent activities by educational institutions can significantly impact students studying abroad. One major concern is the misrepresentation of programs, where institutions exaggerate the quality or content of their courses. This can lead students to enroll in programs that don't align with their expectations or career goals.

Another issue is unrecognised accreditation. Some institutions falsely claim to be accredited, leaving students unaware that their degrees may not be valid or

recognized in their home countries. Additionally, a lack of transparency regarding costs can result in unexpected financial burdens, as institutions may hide fees or inflate tuition.

Deceptive advertising practices, such as using false testimonials or misleading statistics about success rates, can create unrealistic expectations. Students may also encounter aggressive recruitment tactics that pressure them into quick decisions without proper research.

Poor academic standards can further complicate the situation, with some institutions prioritizing profit over quality, leading to inadequate programs and support. Lastly, exploitative contracts can limit students' rights, making it difficult to transfer or withdraw from programs.

- **Health Issues**

Health concerns are a significant risk for students abroad. Access to healthcare services may differ dramatically from what students are accustomed to, and they might face language barriers when seeking medical help. Additionally, students may not have health insurance coverage in the host country or may be unaware of local health services, leading to challenges in addressing health issues. Moreover, being in a new environment can expose students to different diseases or health risks, potentially impacting their well-being. Pre-existing medical conditions can complicate health care access further. Some students may not have access to the medications or treatments they need, or they may find it challenging to manage their conditions in a new environment. This can lead to exacerbated health issues that impact their ability to study and adjust to life abroad. Mental health is another critical area of concern. The stress of adapting to a new culture, combined with feelings of isolation or homesickness, can significantly affect students' mental well-being. Many students may not seek help due to stigma around mental health issues or a lack of awareness about available resources. Inadequate mental health support can lead to severe consequences, including anxiety and depression.

- **Strict Laws and Penalties**

Different countries have varying legal systems and laws that may be stricter than what students are used to. International students may inadvertently break local laws

due to cultural misunderstandings or ignorance, resulting in severe penalties, including fines, arrest, or deportation. It's essential for students to familiarise themselves with local laws and regulations to avoid legal troubles and ensure their safety. Political activism and freedom of speech can also be fraught with risks in certain regions. In some countries, expressing dissent or participating in protests can lead to legal repercussions, including detention. Students should be aware of the political climate and legal restrictions in their host country to avoid unintentional violations. In addition to this, laws related to academic integrity, such as cheating or plagiarism, can be more strictly enforced abroad than students may expect. Universities often have zero-tolerance policies, and violations can lead to serious academic penalties, including expulsion. Students might find themselves navigating a disciplinary process that differs significantly from what they are accustomed to in their home institutions.

- **Loss of Lives**

In extreme cases, students may face life-threatening situations while studying abroad, whether due to accidents, natural disasters, or safety issues related to crime or political instability. Such tragedies can arise from a lack of awareness about the local environment, risky behaviours, or failure to heed safety warnings. One of the most pressing concerns is the threat of violence. Armed conflict can escalate suddenly, and students may find themselves in dangerous situations, whether from military operations, crossfire, or terrorist activities. Even those who believe they are in a relatively safe area may be at risk if violence spreads or if they inadvertently enter a conflict zone. Another critical risk is the potential for evacuation or displacement. In the event of escalating violence or war, students may be forced to evacuate suddenly, often with little notice. This can lead to chaos, confusion, and difficulty accessing transportation or safe routes, putting lives at risk. The stress of living in a war zone, witnessing violence, or fearing for one's safety can lead to anxiety, depression, or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Unfortunately, the stigma around mental health in some cultures may prevent students from seeking the help they need.

CHAPTER 4

**DATA ANALYSIS AND
INTERPRETATION**

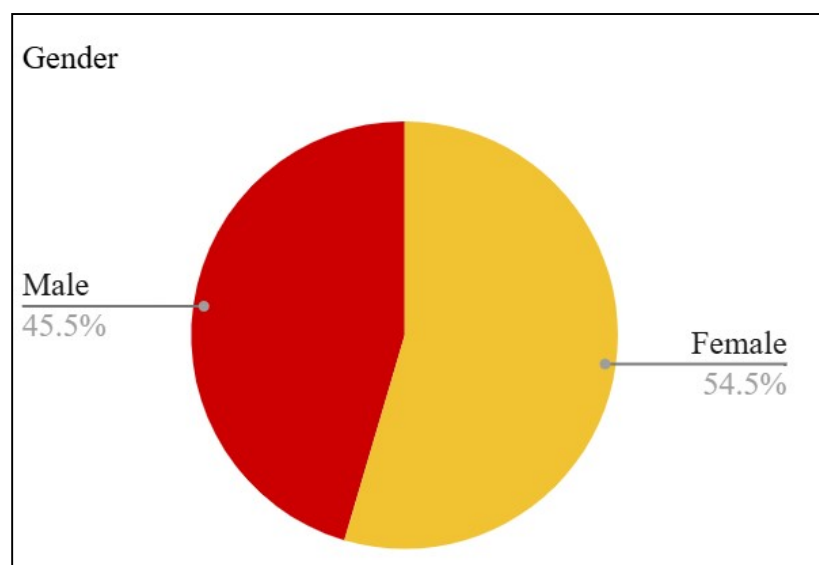
4.1 GENDER OF RESPONDENTS

Table 4.1 Table showing the gender of respondents

Gender	Number of respondents	Percentage
Female	84	54.50
Male	70	45.50
TOTAL	154	100

(Source -Primary data)

Figure 4.1 Figure showing the gender of respondents



(Source -Primary data)

INTERPRETATION: The data reveals a near-equal gender distribution among respondents, with females comprising 54.5% and males 45.5%. While there is a slight majority of females, the difference is minimal, indicating a relatively balanced representation of both genders in the sample.

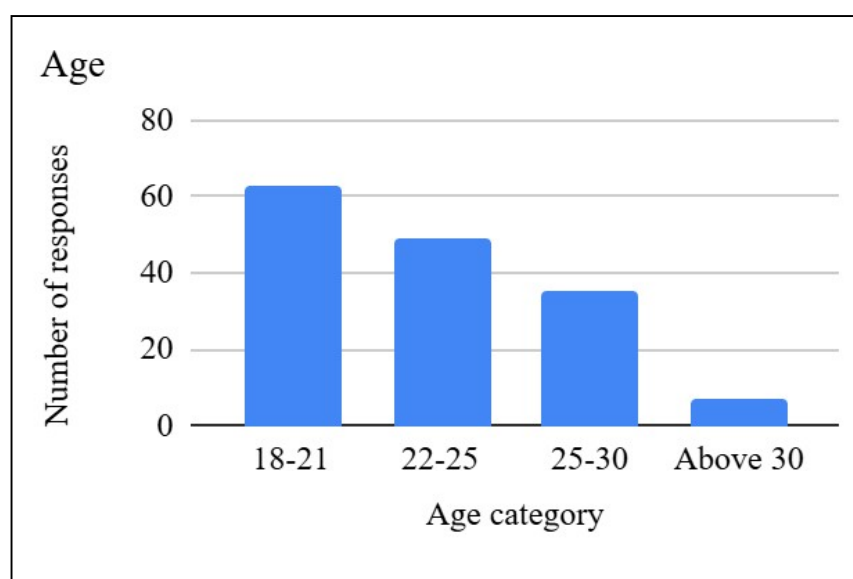
4.2 AGE OF RESPONDENTS

Table 4.2 Table showing the age category of respondents

Age category	Number of responses	Percentage
18-21	63	40.9
22-25	49	31.8
25-30	35	22.7
Above 30	7	4.5
TOTAL	154	100

(Source -Primary data)

Figure 4.2 Figure showing the age category of respondents



(Source -Primary data)

INTERPRETATION: As the data shows the age distribution of the respondents indicates that a significant portion of the sample is young, with nearly 41% of respondents between the ages of 18 and 21. The proportion gradually decreases as the age increases, with only a small percentage (4.5%) being above 30. There is a significant underrepresentation of older individuals in the survey.

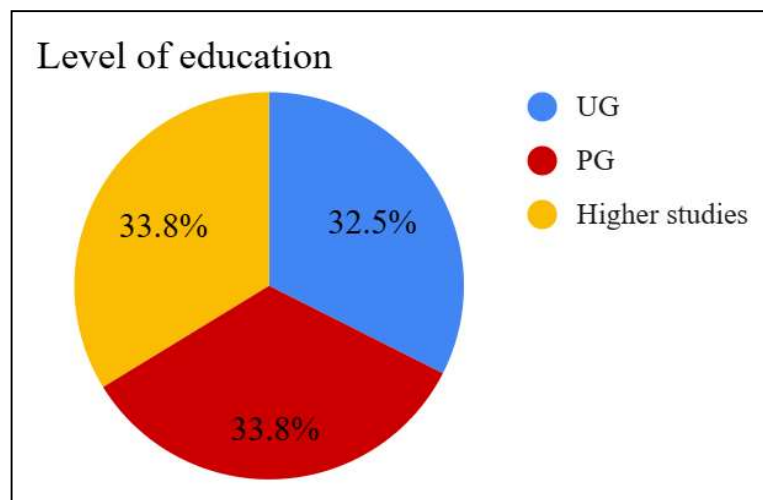
4.3 EDUCATIONAL LEVELS AND PROGRAMS OF THE RESPONDENTS

Table 4.3 Table showing the level of education currently pursued by the students

Level of education	Number of responses	Percentage
Under graduation	50	32.50
Post graduation	52	33.80
Higher studies	52	33.80
Total	154	100

(Source -Primary data)

Figure 4.3 Figure showing the level of education currently pursued by the students



(Source -Primary data)

INTERPRETATION: The data suggests a relatively equal distribution of individuals across different levels of education. Specifically, 32.50% of respondents are pursuing undergraduate studies, 33.80% are pursuing post graduate education, and 33.80% are pursuing higher studies beyond that, indicating a balanced representation of education levels among the group. This shows that a significant portion of the respondents are equally divided between postgraduate and higher studies, with undergraduates comprising a slightly smaller segment.

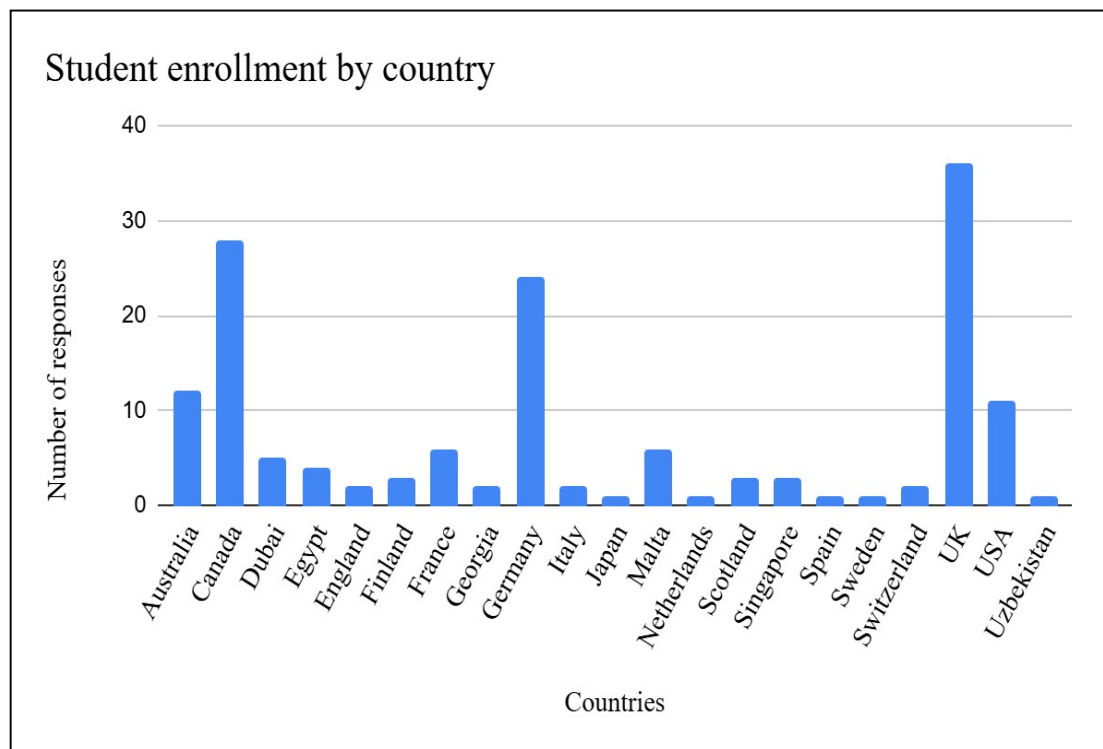
4.4 STUDENT ENROLLMENT BY COUNTRY

Table 4.4 Table showing student enrollment by country

Countries	Number of responses	Percentage
Australia	12	7.8
Canada	28	18.2
Dubai	5	3.2
Egypt	4	2.6
England	2	1.3
Finland	3	1.9
France	6	3.9
Georgia	2	1.3
Germany	24	15.6
Italy	2	1.3
Japan	1	0.6
Malta	6	3.9
Netherlands	1	0.6
Scotland	3	1.9
Singapore	3	1.9
Spain	1	0.6
Sweden	1	0.6
Switzerland	2	1.3
United Kingdom	36	23.4
United states of America	11	7.1
Uzbekistan	1	0.6
TOTAL	154	100

(Source -Primary data)

Figure 4.4 Figure showing the student enrollment by country



(Source -Primary data)

INTERPRETATION: According to the data, students prefer Western nations as the data shows countries like Germany (15.6%), Canada (18.2%) and the United Kingdom (23.4%). Overall, 64.6% of the responses come from just the top three countries, suggesting they play a dominant role in this dataset. Australia (7.8%), the US (7.1%), and France and Malta (3.9% each) make smaller amounts. While countries from Asia, the Middle East, and other regions have minimal representation. This implies heavy emphasis on Europe and English-speaking nations.

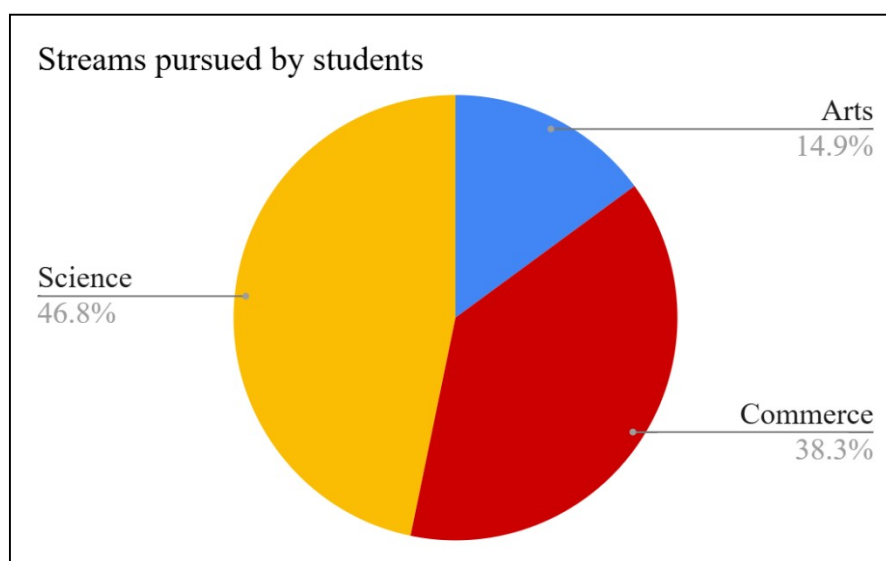
4.5 STREAMS CURRENTLY PURSUED BY THE STUDENTS

Table 4.5 Table showing the streams currently pursued by the students

Stream pursuing	Number of responses	Percentage
Arts	23	14.9
Commerce	59	38.3
Science	72	46.8
TOTAL	154	100.0

(Source -Primary data)

Figure 4.5 Figure showing the streams currently pursued by the students



(Source -Primary data)

INTERPRETATION: As per the data the majority of responses are from those in Science (46.8%) and Commerce (38.3%), indicating that these fields are more popular or have higher participation. Arts accounts for only 14.9% of responses, suggesting less interest or representation in this area. The students were pursuing a wide variety of courses like Medicine, Engineering, Design, Aviation management, Business administration, Supply chain, Logistics, MSW etc. These responses were generalised and grouped. Overall, the data reflects a stronger focus on Science and Commerce streams.

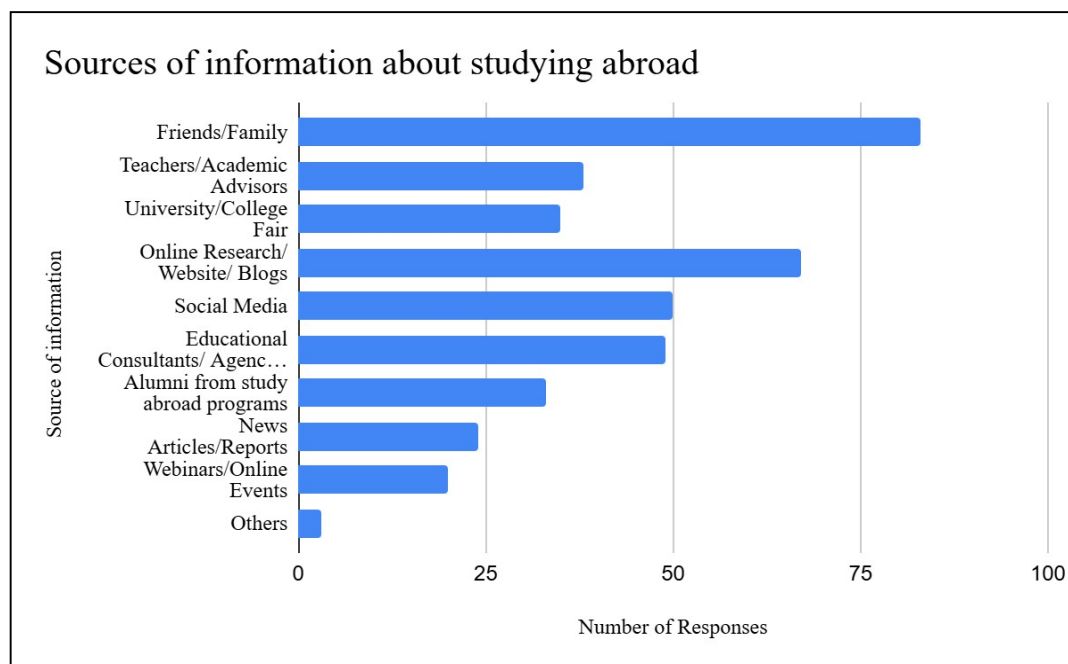
4.6 SOURCES OF INFORMATION ABOUT STUDYING ABROAD

Table 4.6 Table showing the sources of information about studying abroad

Source of information	Number of Responses	Percentage
Friends/Family	83	53.9
Teachers/Academic Advisors	38	24.7
University/College Fair	35	22.7
Online Research/ Website/ Blogs	67	43.5
Social media (Facebook, Instagram, etc.)	50	32.5
Educational Consultants/ Agencies	49	31.8
Alumni from study abroad programs	33	21.4
News Articles/Reports	24	15.6
Webinars/Online Events	20	13.0
Others	3	1.9

(Source -Primary data)

Figure 4.6 Figure showing the sources of information about studying abroad



(Source -Primary data)

INTERPRETATION: The data indicates that prospective students primarily rely on personal networks, particularly friends/family (53.9%), for information about study abroad programs, highlighting the importance of trusted relationships in decision-making. Additionally, a significant portion of respondents (43.5%) utilize online research/website/blogs, reflecting a shift towards self-directed research and the influence of digital platforms. This combination suggests that while personal recommendations are crucial, online resources are increasingly vital in shaping students' choices and perceptions about studying abroad.

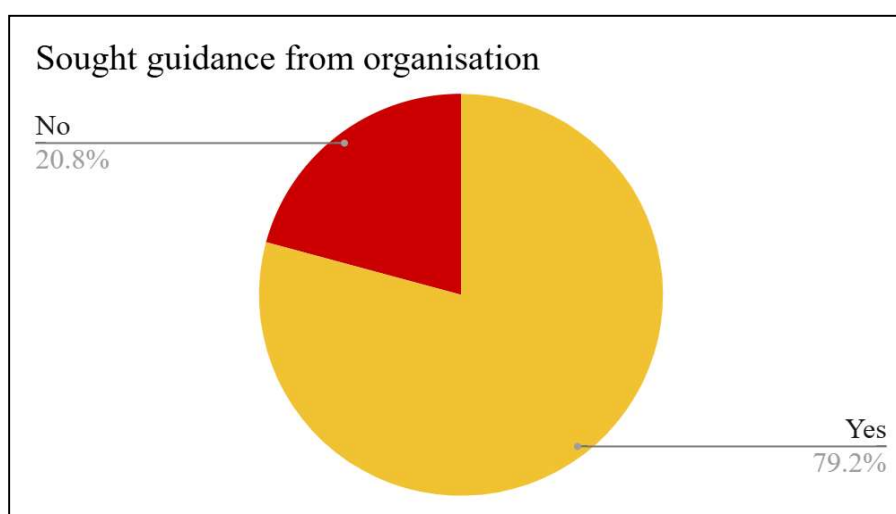
4.7 SEEKING GUIDANCE FROM STUDY ABROAD CONSULTANTS

**Table 4.7 Table showing the number of students who sought guidance from
study abroad consultants**

Response	Number of responses	Percentage
Yes	122	79.2
No	32	20.8
TOTAL	154	100.0

(Source -Primary data)

**Figure 4.7 Figure showing the number of students who sought guidance from
study abroad consultants**



(Source -Primary data)

INTERPRETATION: The data shows that most respondents (79.2%) took assistance from study abroad consultants when planning to study abroad, which means students find the support from educational consultants and institutions helpful. Since there is an upward trend in the number of students migrating, there is a similar increase in the number of these consultants. However, 20.8% opted for no assistance from these institutions indicating personal research for handling application and visa process.

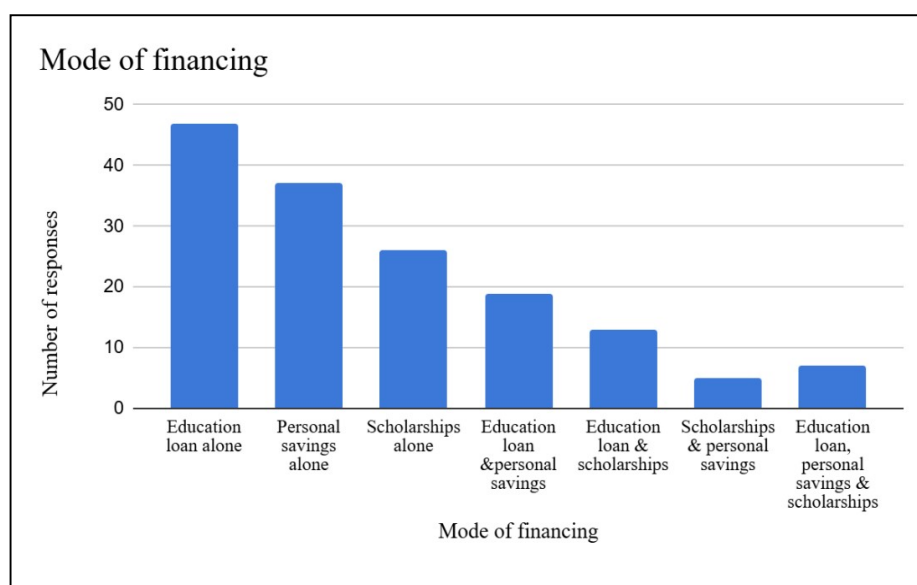
4.8 MODE OF FINANCING STUDIES ABROAD

Table 4.8 Table showing the mode of financing studies abroad

Mode of financing	Number of responses	Percentage
Education loan alone	47	30.5
Personal savings alone	37	24.0
Scholarships alone	26	16.9
Education loan & personal savings	19	12.3
Education loan & scholarships	13	8.4
Scholarships & personal savings	5	3.2
Education loan, personal savings & scholarships	7	4.5
TOTAL	154	100.0

(Source -Primary data)

Figure 4.8 Figure showing the mode of financing studies abroad



(Source -Primary data)

INTERPRETATION: As the data shows the majority of students finance their studies abroad through education loans (30.5%). Personal savings alone accounts for 24% of students relying on it. Scholarships are a key source of funding for 16.9% of students. Smaller groups combine different sources of funding, such as education loans and personal savings (12.3%) or loans and scholarships (8.4%). A few students use a combination of all three methods (4.5%).

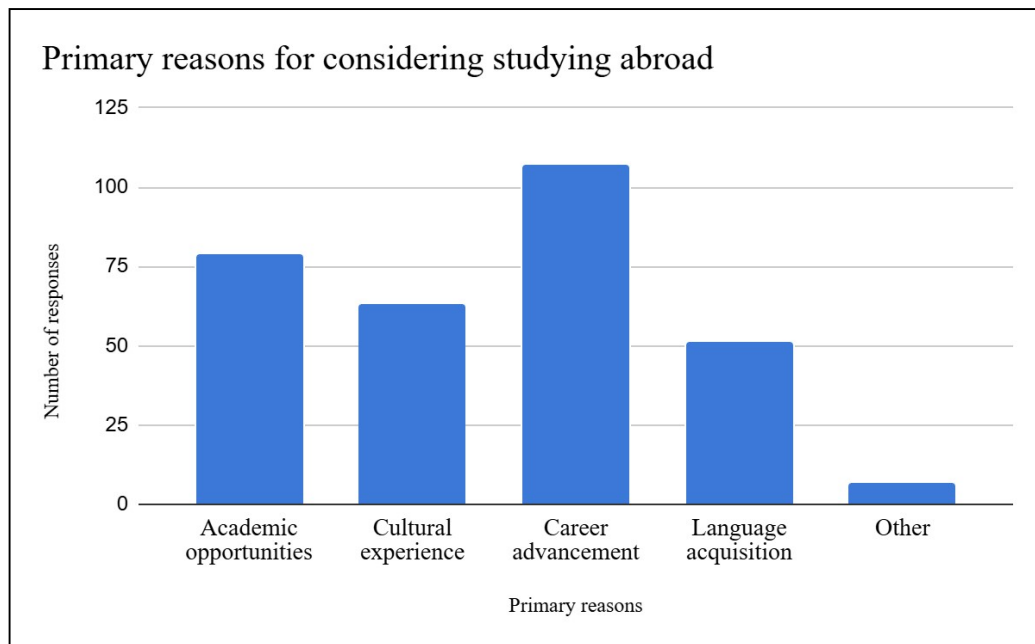
4.9 PRIMARY REASONS FOR CONSIDERING STUDYING ABROAD

Table 4.9 Table showing the primary reasons for considering studying abroad

Primary reason students study abroad	Number of responses	Percentage
Academic opportunities	79	51.3
Cultural experience	63	40.9
Career advancement	107	69.5
Language acquisition	51	33.1
Other	7	4.5

(Source -Primary data)

Figure 4.9 Figure showing the primary reasons for considering studying abroad



(Source -Primary data)

INTERPRETATION: As the data shows that the primary motivation for students studying abroad is career advancement (69.5%), indicating a strong emphasis on enhancing their employability and professional skills. This is followed by academic opportunities (51.3%), suggesting that students also seek to enrich their educational experiences. In addition to these, they also value cultural experience (40.9 %) and language acquisition (33.1%).

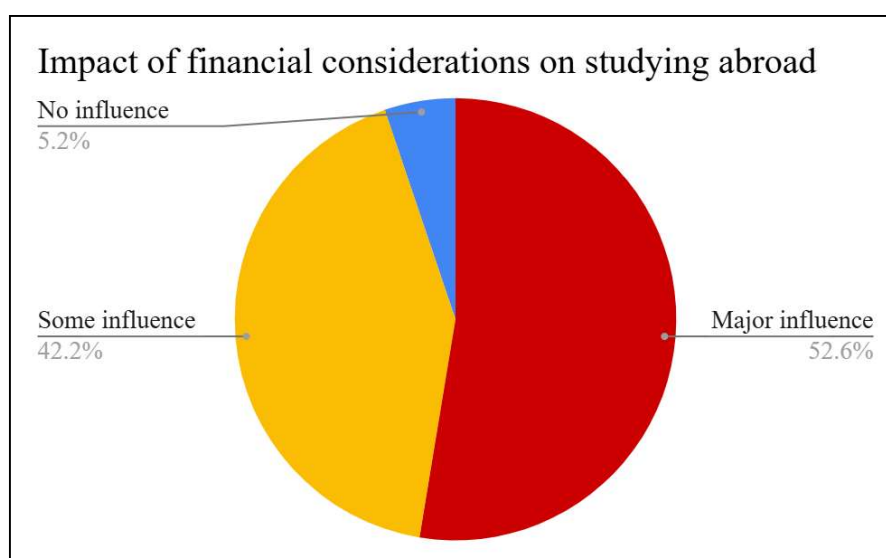
4.10 THE INFLUENCE OF FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS ON DECISION TO STUDY ABROAD

Table 4.10 Table showing the impact of financial consideration on the choice to study abroad

Degree of influence	Number of responses	Percentage
Major influence	81	52.6
Some influence	65	42.2
No influence	8	5.2
TOTAL	154	100

(Source -Primary data)

Figure 4.10 Figure showing the showing the impact financial consideration have on the choice to study abroad



(Source -Primary data)

INTERPRETATION: The data reveals that over half of the respondents (52.6%) believe the financial factor has a major influence on their decisions or experiences, indicating its significant role in shaping their perspectives. Additionally, 42.2% of respondents acknowledge some influence, suggesting that while the factor is important, its impact may vary among individuals. The small percentage of respondents (5.2%) who report no influence indicates that the factor is generally relevant and impactful for the majority, underscoring its importance in the context being evaluated.

4.11 RATING GIVEN BY THE STUDENTS FOR QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN THEIR DESTINATION COUNTRY

Table 4.11 Table showing the rating given by the students for education overseas

Rating	Number of responses	Percentage
1 (worst)	24	15.6
2	8	5.2
3	23	14.9
4	56	36.4
5 (best)	43	27.9
TOTAL	154	100.0

(Source -Primary data)

Figure 4.11 Figure showing the rating given by the students for education overseas



(Source -Primary data)

INTERPRETATION: As the data shows, the ratings reflect generally positive feedback on the quality of education, with 36.4% of students giving a 4 and 27.9% a 5, indicating strong satisfaction. However, the presence of lower ratings (1 and 2) highlights that some students had negative experiences. On an average, overseas studies received a rating of 3.56 stars.

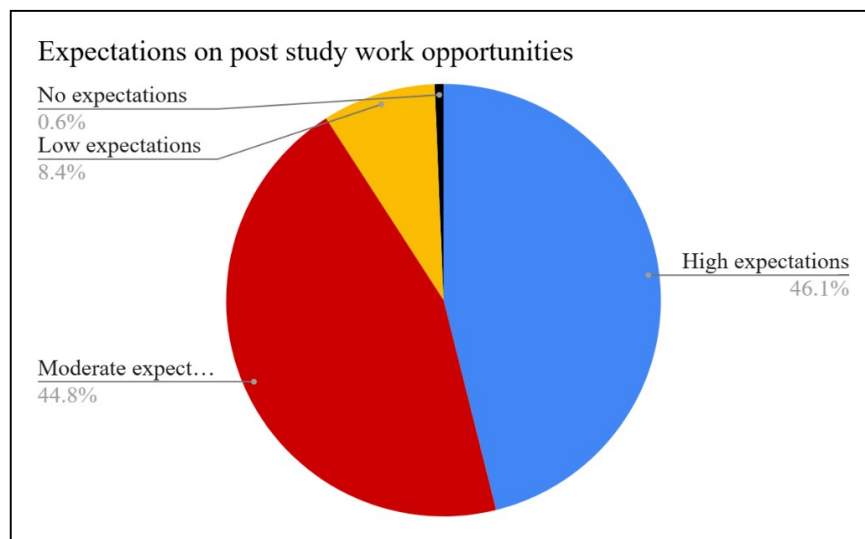
4.12 EXPECTATIONS REGARDING POST-STUDY WORK OPPORTUNITIES IN THE HOST COUNTRY

Table 4.12 Table showing the expectations regarding post-study work opportunities in the host country

Degree of expectations	Number of responses	Percentage
High expectations	71	46.1
Moderate expectations	69	44.8
Low expectations	13	8.4
No expectations	1	0.6
TOTAL	154	100.0

(Source -Primary data)

Figure 4.12 Figure showing the expectations regarding post-study work opportunities in the host country



(Source -Primary data)

INTERPRETATION: As the data shows the majority of students have high or moderate expectations regarding post-study work opportunities in the host country, with 46.1% and 44.8% of responses, respectively. This indicates that most students are hopeful about securing employment after their studies. Only a small percentage, 8.4%, have low expectations, while just 0.6% have no expectations at all. Overall, these students are generally optimistic about their chances of finding work abroad after completing their studies.

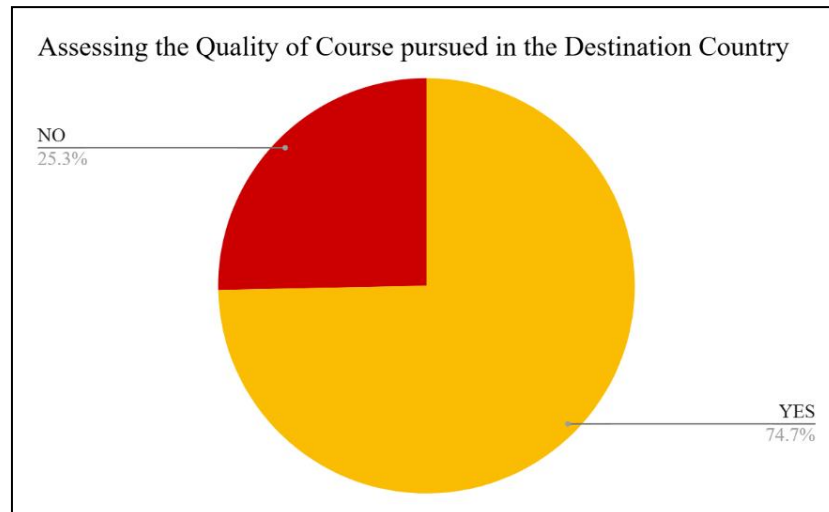
4.13 ASSESSING THE QUALITY OF COURSE PURSUED IN THE DESTINATION COUNTRY

TABLE 4.13 Table showing the opinions of students studying abroad as to whether they are pursuing the best course

Response	Number of responses	Percentage
Yes	115	74.7
No	39	25.3
TOTAL	154	100.0

(Source -Primary data)

Figure 4.13 Figure showing the opinions of students studying abroad as to whether they are pursuing the best course



(Source -Primary data)

INTERPRETATION: The table reveals that a majority of students (74.7%) believe they are pursuing the best course available in their host country. This indicates that their choice of country has been influenced by the quality of education in that country. However, a significant portion (25.3%) feels that the course they are studying is not the most prestigious or suitable in the destination country. This suggests that while many students are confident in their educational decisions, there may be a gap between their expectations and the opportunities available abroad.

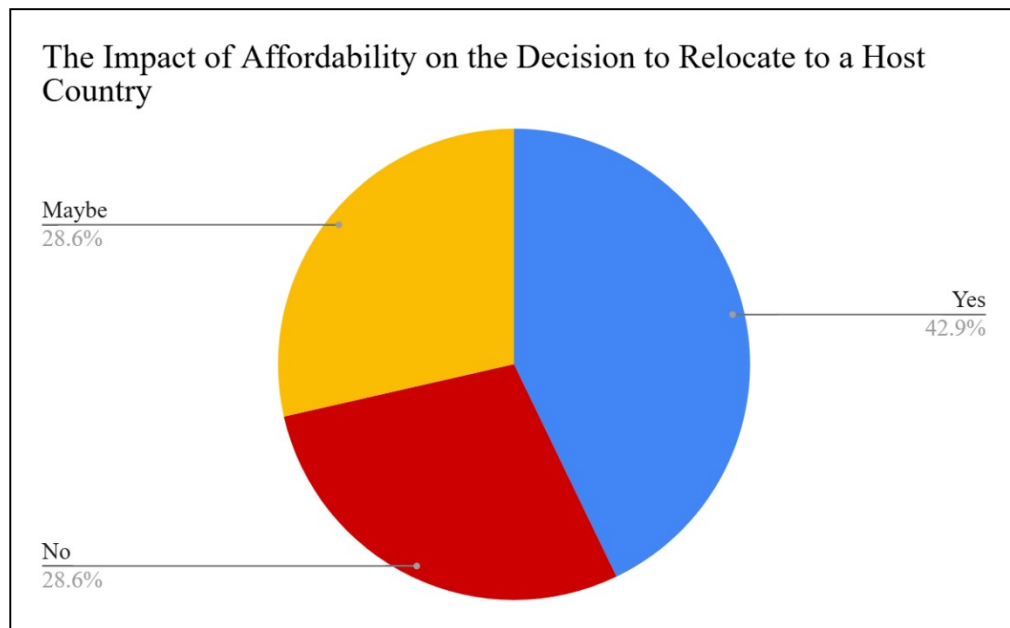
4.14 THE IMPACT OF AFFORDABILITY ON THE DECISION TO RELOCATE TO A HOST COUNTRY

Table 4.14 Table showing the impact of affordability on the decision to relocate to a host country

Response	Number of responses	Percentage
Yes	66	42.9
No	44	28.6
Maybe	44	28.6
TOTAL	154	100.0

(Source -Primary data)

Figure 4.14 Figure showing the impact of affordability on the decision to relocate to a host country



(Source -Primary data)

INTERPRETATION: The table shows that affordability plays a significant role in the decision to relocate to a host country, with 42.9% of respondents indicating that it directly influenced their decision. However, a notable portion (28.6%) of students feel that affordability is not a deciding factor, while another 28.6% are uncertain, suggesting mixed opinions on this matter. This indicates that while many students prioritize financial considerations, others may weigh factors such as academic quality, cultural experience, or career opportunities more heavily.

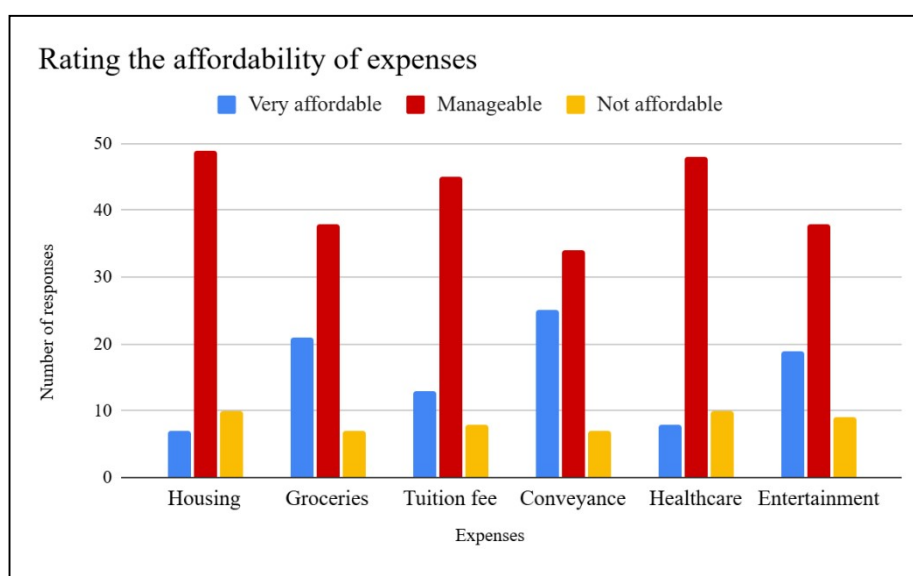
4.14.1 RATING THE AFFORDABILITY OF EXPENSES

Table 4.14.1 Table showing the rating given by students regarding the affordability of expenses

Expenses	Rating and number of responses			TOTAL
	Very affordable	Manageable	Not affordable	
Housing	7	49	10	66
Groceries	21	38	7	66
Tuition fee	13	45	8	66
Conveyance	25	34	7	66
Healthcare	8	48	10	66
Entertainment	19	38	9	66

(Source -Primary data)

Figure 4.14.1 Figure showing the rating given by students regarding the affordability of expenses



(Source -Primary data)

INTERPRETATION: As the table shows that most students find their expenses manageable. For housing, 49 out of 66 rated it manageable, while 25% found it either very affordable or not affordable. Groceries and tuition fees followed a similar trend, with most students rating them manageable (38 for groceries, 45 for tuition). Conveyance was rated "very affordable" by 25 students, while healthcare and entertainment expenses were mostly manageable, with 48 rating healthcare manageable.

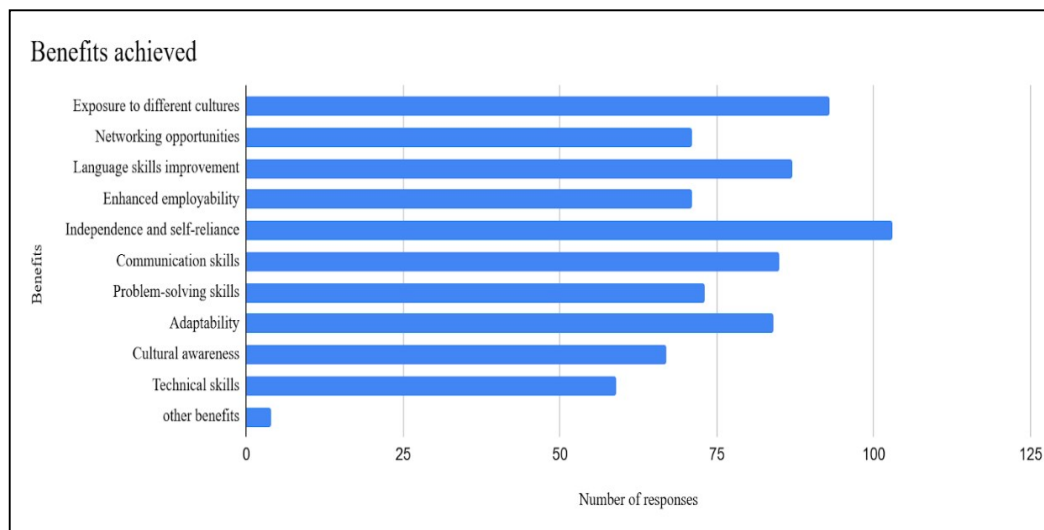
4.15 BENEFITS ACHIEVED BY THE STUDENTS STUDYING ABROAD

Table 4.15 Table showing the benefits achieved by the students studying abroad

Benefits	Number of responses	Percentage
Exposure to different cultures	93	60.4
Networking opportunities	71	46.1
Language skills improvement	87	56.5
Enhanced employability	71	46.1
Independence and self-reliance	103	66.9
Communication skills	85	55.2
Problem-solving skills	73	47.4
Adaptability	84	54.5
Cultural awareness	67	43.5
Technical skills	59	38.3
other benefits	4	2.6

(Source -Primary data)

Figure 4.15 Figure showing the benefits from studying abroad



(Source -Primary data)

INTERPRETATION: As the table shows, the top benefits of studying abroad are increased independence (66.9%), exposure to different cultures (60.4%), and improved language skills (56.5%). Networking, employability, and communication skills are also important, each reported by about 46% to 55% of students. In addition to these benefits, students also value technical skills, personal growth and cultural exposure.

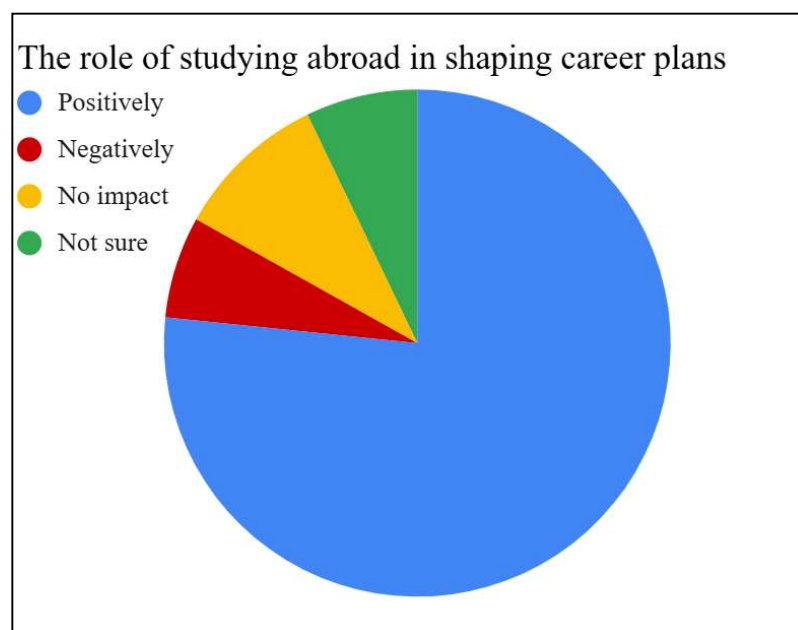
4.16 THE ROLE OF STUDYING ABROAD IN SHAPING CAREER PLANS

Table 4.16 Table showing the impact of studying abroad on career plans

Degree of influence	Number of responses	Percentage
Positively	118	76.6
Negatively	10	6.5
No impact	15	9.7
Not sure	11	7.1
TOTAL	154	100.0

(Source -Primary data)

Figure 4.16 Table showing the impact of studying abroad on career plans



(Source -Primary data)

INTERPRETATION: The table shows that studying abroad has a largely positive impact on students' career plans, with 76.6% reporting a positive influence. Only a small percentage (6.5%) feel it negatively affects their career, while 9.7% believe it has no impact. Additionally, 7.1% are unsure about the impact. Overall, the majority of students view studying abroad as beneficial for their career prospects.

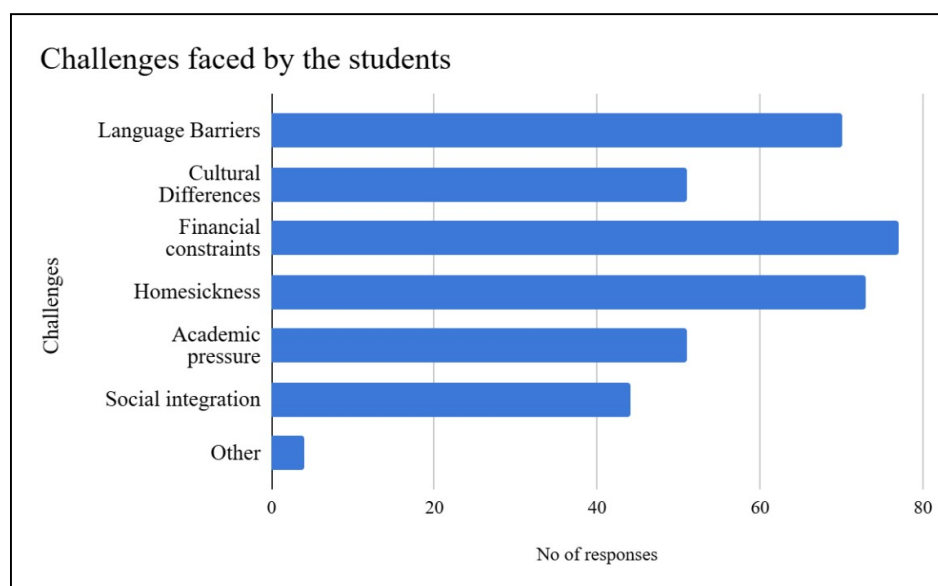
4.17 CHALLENGES FACED BY THE STUDENTS STUDYING ABROAD

Table 4.17 Table showing the challenges faced by the students studying abroad

Challenges	Number of responses	Percentage
Language Barriers	70	45.5
Cultural Differences	51	33.1
Financial constraints	77	50
Homesickness	73	47.4
Academic pressure	51	33.1
Social integration	44	28.6
Other	4	2.5

(Source -Primary data)

Figure 4.17 Figure showing the challenges faced by the students studying abroad



(Source -Primary data)

INTERPRETATION: The data highlights that financial constraints (50%) and homesickness (47.4%) are the most pressing challenges faced, with language barriers (45.5%) and cultural differences (33.1%) also significantly affecting respondents. Social integration (28.6%) and academic pressure (33.1%) follow closely, while a small percentage (2.5%) mention other challenges. It's likely that concerns such as cooking and part-time jobs may be included in the "other" category, though they seem less prevalent compared to the primary issues identified.

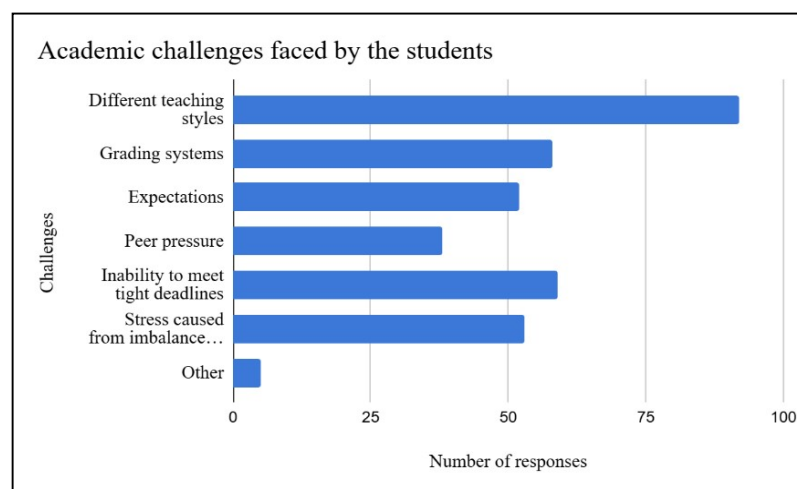
4.18 ACADEMIC CHALLENGES FACED BY THE STUDENTS STUDYING ABROAD

Table 4.18 Table showing the academic challenges faced by the students

Academic challenges	Number of responses	Percentage
Different teaching styles	92	59.7
Grading systems	58	37.7
Expectations	52	33.8
Peer pressure	38	24.7
Inability to meet tight deadlines	59	38.3
Stress caused from imbalance between internships and studies	53	34.4
Other	5	3.2

(Source -Primary data)

Figure 4.18 Figure showing the academic challenges faced by the students studying abroad



(Source -Primary data)

INTERPRETATION: The data reveals that the most common challenge students face is adapting to different teaching styles, with 59.7% of respondents highlighting this issue. Other significant challenges include grading systems (37.7%), meeting tight deadlines (38.3%), and managing the balance between internships and studies (34.4%), while a small proportion (3.2%) cited other challenges. Additionally, some students struggle with managing multiple responsibilities and the difficulty in communication due to varied dialects among international peers.

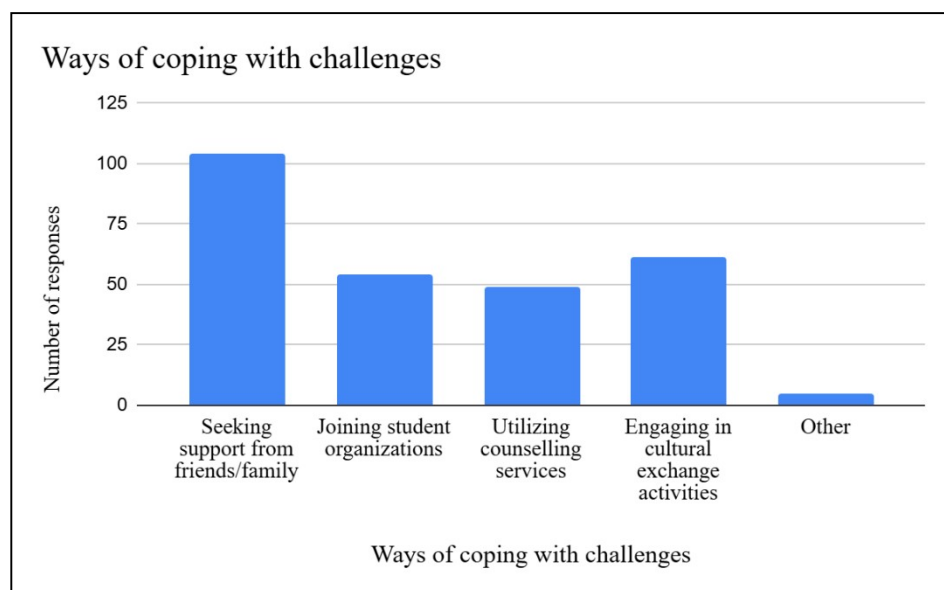
4.19 METHODS TO ADDRESS AND COPE WITH THESE CHALLENGES

Table 4.19 Table showing the methods adopted by the students to cope up with challenges

Ways of coping with challenges	Number of responses	Percentage
Seeking support from friends/family	104	67.5
Joining student organizations	54	35.1
Utilizing counselling services	49	31.8
Engaging in cultural exchange	61	39.6
Other	5	3.2

(Source -Primary data)

Figure 4.19 Figure showing the methods adopted by the students to cope up with challenges



(Source -Primary data)

INTERPRETATION: The data shows that seeking support from friends or family is the most common way of coping with challenges, with 67.5% of responses indicating this method. Other strategies like joining student organizations (35.1%), utilizing counseling services (31.8%), and engaging in cultural exchange activities (39.6%) are also used, but to a lesser extent, while only a small percentage (3.2%) chose ‘other’ methods like training to trust on oneself.

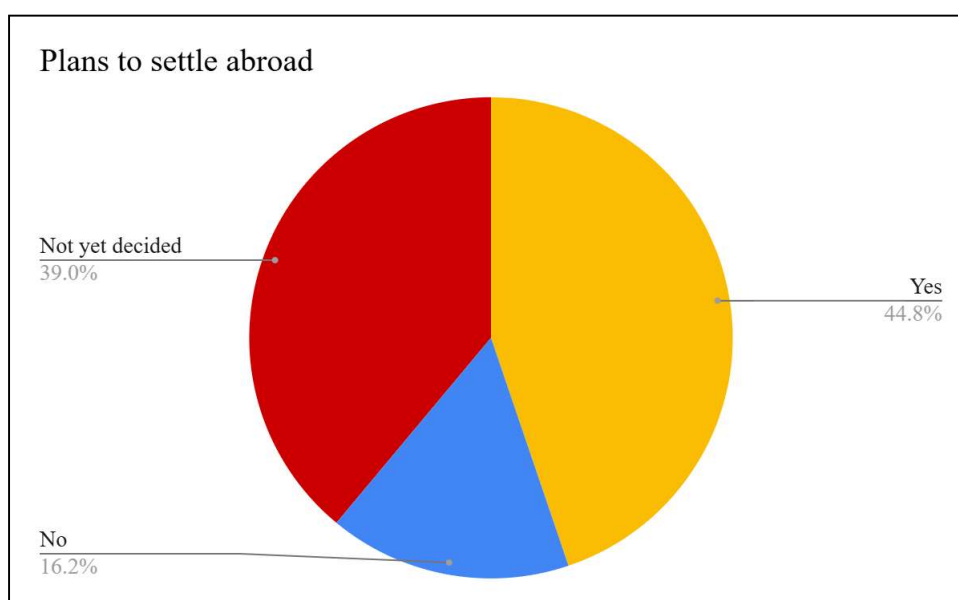
4.20 THE DECISION TO SETTLE ABROAD

Table 4.20 Table showing the responses on plans to settle abroad

Response	Number of responses	Percentage
Yes	69	44.8
No	25	16.2
Not yet decided	60	39.0
TOTAL	154	100.0

(Source -Primary data)

Figure 4.20 Figure showing the responses on plans to settle abroad



(Source -Primary data)

INTERPRETATION: The table indicates that 44.8% of students plan to settle abroad after their studies, indicating easing in permanent residence. In contrast, 16.2% have decided against settling abroad. A significant portion, 39%, are still uncertain about their future plans.

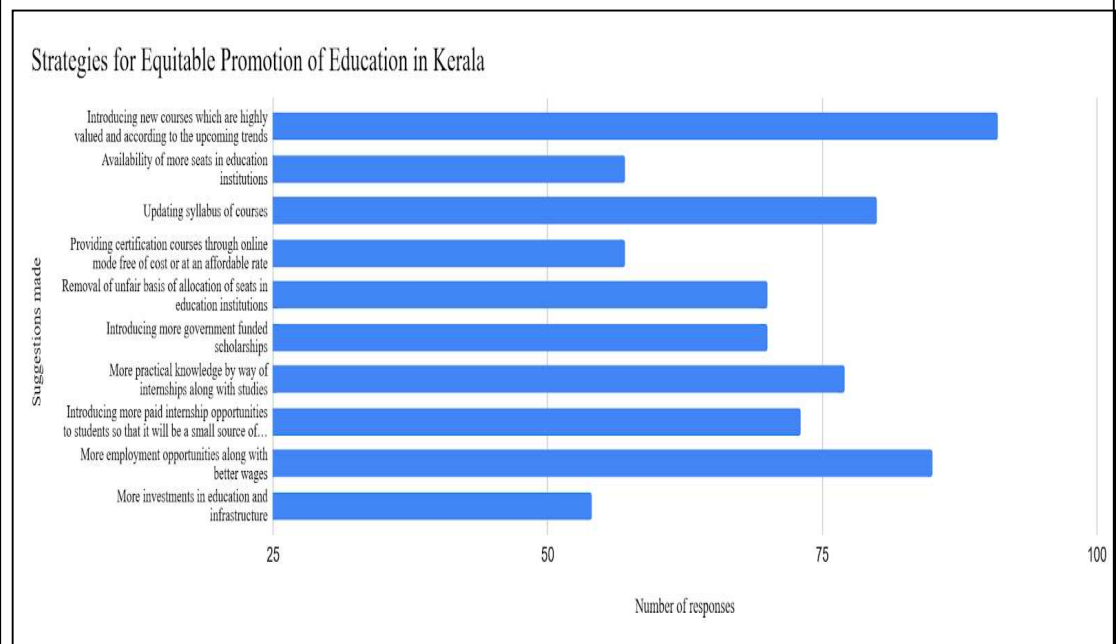
4.21 SUGGESTIONS MADE BY MIGRATED STUDENTS TO ENSURE THAT STUDYING IN KERALA IS EQUALLY PROMOTED.

Table 4.21 Table showing the suggestions made by the migrated students

Suggestions	Number of responses	Percentage
Introducing new courses which are highly valued and according to the upcoming trends	91	59.1
Availability of more seats in education institutions	57	37.0
Updating syllabus of courses	80	51.9
Providing certification courses through online mode free of cost or at an affordable rate	57	37.0
Removal of unfair basis of allocation of seats in education institutions	70	45.5
Introducing more government funded scholarships	70	45.5
More practical knowledge by way of internships along with studies	77	50.0
Introducing more paid internship opportunities to students so that it will be a small source of income	73	47.4
More employment opportunities along with better wages	85	55.2
More investments in education and infrastructure	54	35.1

(Source -Primary data)

Figure 4.21 Figure showing the suggestions made by the migrated students



(Source -Primary data)

INTERPRETATION: As the graph suggests the most favoured suggestion from students is the introduction of new courses aligned with upcoming trends, with 59.1% supporting this idea. Other significant recommendations include updating course syllabus (51.9%), providing affordable or free online certification courses (37.0%), and offering more paid internships (47.4%).

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS

AND CONCLUSION

5.1 FINDINGS

1. There was a near gender representation but with females having more candidates than men. A large proportion (40.9%) of respondents were young adults (18-21 years) and a lesser number for older students (above 30). The educational levels were evenly distributed, with respondents pursuing undergraduate studies, postgraduate, and higher studies. The most preferred courses were Science and Commerce.
2. Students preferred countries like the UK, Germany, Canada, Australia and USA.
3. Friends and family were the primary source of information (53.9%), followed by online research and social media. A majority (79.2%) of respondents sought guidance from study abroad consultants while others prefer to navigate the process independently.
4. The majority of students finance their studies abroad through education loans and personal savings, while scholarships help a smaller group of students. Other students used different combinations of funding methods.
5. The primary motive for students studying abroad is career advancement and academic opportunities along with cultural experiences, and language acquisition.
6. Over half of the respondents report that financial considerations have a major influence on their decision to study abroad. Even though the quality of overseas studies received mixed opinions most students have high expectations regarding post-study work opportunities.
7. Countries like Canada, Germany, Australia and Dubai were voted as affordable countries. USA and Malta were voted as unaffordable countries. Some considered the UK as affordable while others did not. Most students found the expenses to be manageable, though some faced issues with affordability, particularly concerning housing, healthcare, and groceries.
8. Students choose their countries on the basis of quality of education. Students choose Australia and Germany for higher studies, Canada and the UK for postgraduate programs and USA for both post graduation and higher studies.

9. While studying the relation between courses and countries, we found that students choose Australia, USA, Germany, Dubai for science courses due to its excellent engineering, tech programs, and affordable education, Canada, Malta, France for commerce courses or its world-renowned business programs and access to global markets.
10. The key benefits cited by students include increased independence, exposure to different cultures and improved language skills along with networking opportunities and enhanced employability.
11. The challenges faced by students were financial constraints, homesickness, adapting to different teaching styles, and managing academic pressure. Seeking support from friends or family was the most common coping strategy.
12. Nearly 45% of students plan to settle abroad after their studies.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the responses on how education in Kerala can be made equally desirable, and our analysis of the survey, the following are the ways by which the problem of Kerala's brain drain problem can be solved from students' point of view,

1. Introducing skill-based education and vocational training programs in high-demand fields and according to upcoming trends.
2. Creating more opportunities for internships, research projects, and industry collaborations during academic studies. This will enhance practical experience and help students see local career potential during their education.
3. Encourage students to explore entrepreneurship as a career path, offering guidance, resources, and startup incubators within educational institutions. This not only retains human resources but also benefits our state.
4. Updating the syllabus of courses as the content does not hand in hand with current global scenarios. Along with this building academic exchange programs and collaborations with international universities, allow students to gain global exposure without leaving Kerala, thus offering a global learning experience within the state.
5. Ensuring a more transparent, merit-based system can help provide equal opportunities for all students, regardless of their background. This could lead to an equitable environment, allowing talented individuals to access quality education based on their abilities rather than other irrelevant factors.
6. Increase the number of scholarships and financial aid programs for students to study locally, especially for higher education, making it more affordable and attractive to stay in Kerala. In addition to this. Increase funding for academic research in Kerala to create more opportunities for students pursuing advanced studies.

5.3 CONCLUSION

Kerala, known for its high literacy rate and educated workforce, is facing a significant brain drain problem. This trend has been ongoing for decades, with a notable increase in recent years. The migration is driven by factors such as higher education prospects, better career opportunities, and the desire for a better quality of life. Through this research we were able to understand the prime factors which favoured the decision of studying abroad. These were career advancement and academic opportunities along with cultural experiences and language acquisition. Overseas studies benefitted these students by way of increased independence, exposure to different cultures and improved language skills along with networking opportunities and enhanced employability.

Migrated students had to face numerous challenges like financial constraints, homesickness, adapting to different teaching styles, and managing academic pressure. Seeking support from friends or family was the most common coping strategy. Students were drawn to countries like Australia, Canada, Germany, and the USA this was due to the affordability, quality of courses and their strong educational systems. As the trend of migrating abroad for studies grows rapidly, the state loses its valuable human resources, especially the youth. To tackle Kerala's brain drain, strategies include offering skill-based education, expanding internships and research opportunities, and promoting entrepreneurship. Updating syllabi, creating academic exchanges, and ensuring a merit-based system can also help. This study was an eye-opener as we were able to get first hand information about the life of migrated students.

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ANNEXURE

This questionnaire is prepared by students of 3rd year B com finance and taxation (SF) of St Teresa's College, Ernakulam namely Aditi, Akhila, Nandana and Stiniya. This questionnaire is a part of our final year project on the topic, KERALA'S BRAIN DRAIN PROBLEM. This questionnaire covers aspects like factors motivation the choice of moving abroad for studies, benefits and challenges of doing so and the reasons for selection of host country. We assure you this is completely for academic purposes and the information obtained will be kept confidential.

We appreciate your time and contribution.

Name: _____

Gender

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

1. Which age category do you belong?

- ☐ 18-21
- ☐ 22-25
- ☐ 25-30
- ☐ Above 30

2. What are you currently pursuing?

- ☐ Under graduation
- ☐ Post graduation
- ☐ Higher studies

3. Specify the name of your designation country?

4. Which stream are you currently pursuing?

- ☐ Arts
- ☐ Science

- ☐ Commerce
- ☐ Other: _____

5. From where did you hear about abroad studies?

- ☐ Friends/Family
- ☐ Teachers/ Academic Advisors
- ☐ University/College Fair
- ☐ Online Research (Websites/Blogs)
- ☐ Social Media (Facebook, Instagram, etc.)
- ☐ Educational Consultants/Agencies
- ☐ Alumni from Study Abroad Programs
- ☐ News Articles/Reports
- ☐ Webinars/Online Events
- ☐ Other: _____

6. Did you seek guidance from any organizations or individuals during the migration process?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

7. How are you funding your studies and living expenses abroad?

- ☐ Personal savings
- ☐ Scholarships
- ☐ education loan

8. What is your primary reason for considering studying abroad?

- ☐ Academic opportunities
- ☐ Cultural experience
- ☐ Career advancement

☐ Language acquisition

☐ Other: _____

9. To what extent do financial considerations influence your choice to study abroad?

☐ Major influence

☐ Some influence

☐ No influence

10. How do you perceive the quality of education in your chosen destination compared to your home country?

☐ 1

☐ 2

☐ 3

☐ 4

☐ 5

11. What are your expectations regarding post-study work opportunities in the host country?

☐ High expectations

☐ Moderate expectations

☐ Low expectations

☐ No expectations

12. Would you say that the course that you are currently pursuing is the best in your destination country?

☐ Yes

☐ No

13. Was affordability a contributing factor towards your decision to move to your host country?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

14. If yes, please rank the following

	Affordable	Manageable	Not Affordable
housing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
groceries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
tuition fee	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
conveyance (travelling)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
healthcare	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
entertainment (movies, restaurants, clothes etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

15. According to you, what are the benefits that you have achieved by pursuing studies abroad?

- ☐ Exposure to different cultures
- ☐ Networking opportunities
- ☐ Language skills improvement
- ☐ Enhanced employability
- ☐ Independence and self-reliance
- ☐ Communication skills
- ☐ Problem-solving skills
- ☐ Adaptability
- ☐ Cultural awareness
- ☐ Technical skills
- ☐ Other: _____

16. How did studying abroad influence your career plans?

- ☐ Positively
- ☐ Negatively
- ☐ No impact
- ☐ Not sure

17. According to you which of the following challenges have you faced the most?

- ☐ Language barriers
- ☐ Cultural differences
- ☐ Financial constraints
- ☐ Homesickness
- ☐ Academic pressure
- ☐ Social integration
- ☐ Other _____

18. What academic challenges have you faced in adapting to a different education system?

- ☐ different teaching styles
- ☐ grading systems
- ☐ expectations
- ☐ peer pressure
- ☐ inability to meet tight deadlines
- ☐ stress caused from imbalance between internships and studies
- ☐ Other: _____

19. How did you cope with these challenges?

- ☐ Seeking support from friends/family
- ☐ Joining student organizations
- ☐ Utilizing counselling services

☐ Engaging in cultural exchange activities

☐ Other: _____

20. Are you planning to settle there?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not yet decided

21. According to you, what changes should be implemented so that studying in Kerala is equally promoted?

☐ introducing new courses which are highly valued and according to the upcoming trends

☐ availability of more seats in education institutions

☐ updating syllabus of courses

☐ providing certification courses through online mode free of cost or at an affordable rate

☐ removal of unfair basis of allocation of seats in education institutions

☐ introducing more government funded scholarships

☐ more practical knowledge by way of internships along with studies

☐ introducing more paid internship opportunities to students so that it will be a small source of income

☐ more employment opportunities along with better wages

more investments in education and infrastructure