Globalisation and Labour Migration in the GCC: Comparative Analysis from South and Central Asian Countries

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the pattern of labour migration in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states from 1990 to 2020, with a particular focus on flows originating from South and Central Asian countries. There is a contradiction in labour migration in the GCC states, where South Asian countries have a large number of labour migrants. But labour migration from Central Asian countries to the GCC remains very low due to the structural constraints. As migrant labourers are an integral component of the economic growth story of GCC countries, the push and pull factors for labour migration in the region differ between South and Central Asian countries in several ways. Historically, the oil-driven economic boom of the 1970s paved the way for the economic prosperity of Gulf countries, leading to large-scale infrastructure development and an overall rise in citizens' living standards. To sustain uninterrupted development at home, Gulf countries began seeking cost-effective workers, both skilled and unskilled, across all economic sectors, including energy, construction, manufacturing, and services**.** This has led to large-scale migration to the region from all parts of the world, including South Asian countries, particularly in unskilled and semi-skilled jobs. However, Labour migration from Central Asian countries remains limited to the Gulf countries. Currently, various Gulf countries are implementing economic diversification projects beyond hydrocarbons to develop other sectors of the economy. Such initiatives to diversify the economy and develop robust secondary and tertiary sectors have significantly increased demand for skilled workers in technology-oriented sectors. The ongoing diversification process also aims to improve the conditions of expatriate workers by reforming the existing Kafala system and labour laws. Furthermore, given the existing heterogeneity of the migrant workforce in the region, the GCC countries have the potential to attract migrant labour from Central Asia amid the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict, which is reducing labour migration from Central Asia to Russia.

KEYWORDS: Globalisation, Labour Migration, Gulf Cooperation Council, Kafala System, Labour law

INTRODUCTION

Labour migration is intrinsically linked with the economic development of all the GCC countries, viz. Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). These Gulf countries share common characteristics of oil-based economic development that began in the second half of the 20th century. The discovery of hydrocarbon reserves and, subsequently, their large-scale export have not only triggered the first wave of labour migration in the region but also made these Gulf countries more interconnected with the world's major economies. At the end of the 20th century, the growing demand for these hydrocarbon fuels, even at higher prices, particularly due to the emergence of major Asian economies such as China and India, has led to substantial revenue inflows into these countries. This large volume of accumulated wealth was invested by the rulers of these countries either in the various infrastructure development projects or in providing world-class services to their citizens, such as improved health, education, and transportation facilities. Whether it is the massive infrastructure projects such as NEOM or the development of robust service sectors in fintech, aviation, tourism, and hospitality, all require millions of skilled and semi-skilled workers.

The surge in employment opportunities in Gulf states following the oil boom during the 1970s, attracted millions of labour migrants from outside the Gulf region. These GCC economies are the immense recipients of short-term labour migrants on the planet, with non-citizens comprising about 54.6 per cent of the population (De Bel-Air, 2025). Table 1 shows the percentage of migrants and the native population in the GCC states.

Table 1: The percentage of non-nationals in GCC states (national statistics, mid-2022).

S. No.	GCC State	Share of Migrants in the Population (%)	Share of nationals population (%)
1	Saudi Arabia	41.6	58.4
2	UAE	87.1	12.9
3	Kuwait	67.3	32.7
4	Oman	40.1	59.9
5	Qatar	87.9	12.1
6	Bahrain	53.2	46.8

Source: National Institute of Statistics and Gulf Labour Markets, Migration, and Population (GLMM) estimates based on data published by the National Statistical Institute (Gulf Labour Markets, Migration and Population Programme, 2025).

In the UAE, Qatar, Kuwait and Bahrain, the non-national population is larger than the citizen population. Saudi Arabia has an estimated 13.4 million expatriate labourers, and the UAE has an estimated 8.9 million migrant worker population. These two nations in the GCC hosts largest number of transnational migrants in the region. Likewise, in the GCC countries, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE, 'the number of male international migrant workers are significantly higher than that of females, which is related to the structure of their economies' (e.g., the prevalence of construction and other low-skilled sectors) (McAuliffe & Oucho, World Migration Report, 2024). Approximately 83 per cent of all migrant labourers in the Gulf Countries are men. Migrant female workers constitute only 17 per cent of the region's worker population (McAuliffe & Oucho, World Migration Report 2024, 2024, p. 24). For Eastern African countries like Ethiopia, Uganda, and Kenya, the Gulf countries remain a significantly attractive labour migration destination option due to unemployment and underemployment in their own countries. The majority of workers from these countries are employed in the construction, hospitality, security, and retail sectors (Adrian Kitimbo, McAuliffe, Abel, & Dolling, 2024). The demand for unskilled and semi-skilled manual work among migrant workers in the GCC countries is expected to continue, and it is crucial that local businesses have sufficient access to migrant labour in their respective countries to achieve growth in various sectors. There is a significant difference in the nature of labour for migrant workers and national citizens. In the GCC states, the native population in various sectors continues to hold higher hierarchical jobs with reserved benefits, mainly in some smaller and wealthier GCC countries, such as Kuwait and Qatar.

Several suggestions were made to enhance the skills of low and semi-skilled migrant workers in the GCC Countries. Towards this, the World Bank Group report advocated that 'GCC countries need to invest in the upskilling of workers and fostering a competitive labour market to create productive jobs in the economy. At the same time, attracting and retaining high-skilled talent, as well as reducing bias towards low-skilled migrant labour. Further reform in the sponsorship system that can strengthen migrant labour rights, internal mobility, incentives for training, and provide a path for permanent residence is a way forward' (World Bank, 2018).

UNDERSTANDING THE CHRONOLOGY OF MIGRATION PATTERNS IN GCC COUNTRIES

Before the discovery of oil in the GCC countries, the economic structure of these countries was limited; the majority of the population was engaged in agriculture and livestock herding. The economy has made tremendous strides since commercial oil production started in the GCC states. Oil revenue has fueled economic development programs in these countries and has propelled their transition from a traditional tribal economy into a modern industrialised society (Almtairi, 1985, p. 20). The massive and sustainable influx of millions of temporary foreign national workers is significantly linked to the surge in petroleum wealth and the development of successive infrastructure projects in GCC countries. The following three stages of periodic categorisation is explained as the influx of migrant labour in the region over time.

THE EARLY PERIOD OF PETROLEUM DISCOVERY

The hydrocarbon exploration in the GCC countries between the 1930s and 1960s resulted in a relatively smaller scale labour migration, mostly from neighbouring Arab countries like Egypt, Palestine and Yemen to fill the administrative and technical roles. Additionally, due to a shortage of the skilled labour force, the Gulf countries have resorted to recruiting workers from Western nations, South Asia and Iran (Fargues & De Bel-Air, 2015). The Yemenis and Egyptians were the largest group seeking better employment opportunities in the Gulf states, mainly in the Saudi Arabian Peninsula. Later, Palestinians and some Iraqis arrived in Gulf countries following the 1968 coup in Iraq.

THE POST OIL CRISIS FROM 1973 TO THE 1990S

In 1973, an economic boom resulted from the shock in oil prices due to the Arab-Israeli War. With the enormous accumulation of wealth as oil prices skyrocket, the GCC Countries launched large-scale developmental projects. To meet these demands, large-scale manual and semi-skilled migrant workers were required. Huge flows of labour migrants from Yemen, Sudan, Egypt, Jordon, India and Pakistan were hired through the sponsorship system.

The major work route in the Gulf countries is through a kafeel (sponsor), who is a national citizen of the Gulf countries, an agency, a company or a private citizen who can issue the employment to foreign labour through a contract. A kafeel bears all social, legal and economic responsibilities throughout the complete occupational duration of the worker and sets the employment conditions. This system creates a reliance between the kafeel and migrant workers. In 1990, the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, approximately 3 million immigrations were compelled to vacate their host countries in the GCC region. This period also witnessed labour market dualism in the GCC countries; the national citizens were employed in the public sector with high remuneration, on the other hand, foreign labourers were only employed in the private sector at low cost.

RAPID DEMAND-DRIVEN MIGRATION FROM THE 2000 TO 2020S

The economic diversification and liberalisation policies by Saudi Arabia Vision 2030, UAE Vision 2031/71 and preparation for global events like Qatar 2022 World Cup, Expo 2020 in Dubai have paved the way for new construction waves, leading to increased labour influx. There is a continuous need for low-skilled Asian labour. But there is aggressive recruitment of high-skilled Western and global professionals like fintech, healthcare professionals, engineers, etc., to drive the knowledge economies.

As of mid-2020, the major chunk of migrant workforces in the Gulf countries was from Asian countries. Since the 1990s, a significant shift in the nationality configuration of migrant workers to the Gulf countries has followed, where the Asian labourers have gradually substituted Arab labourers for numerous political and social reasons. The migrant worker population grew massively, driven by the new construction boom in the GCC countries. Despite all these structural changes in the labour force composition (in terms of nationality) in the GCC countries, the region has the highest ratio of foreign migrant labour worldwide. It represents a large majority of the labour force population in these countries. Although these foreign workers faced exploitation and abuse under the Kafala system.

Another significant development is, the national population of the GCC increased during this period, and now unemployment has become a serious issue in these countries. The nationalisation policies stated by the GCC countries in the quota system were imposed on the private firms to restrict the inflow of foreign workers and provide employment opportunities to their national citizens.

LABOUR MIGRATION IN GULF COUNTRIES

The development of the energy sector and the high demand for infrastructure projects increased the reliance on foreign labour in the Gulf countries. There are two major reasons for the high dependence on these foreign workers: first, to occupy low-skill jobs that the citizens' workforce of GCC countries is unwilling to accept; second, to fill high-skill jobs that the national workforce is not capable of (Wagle, 2024).

Labour migration may be voluntary and coerced migration, depending upon the availability of job opportunities in a country. Migrants are primarily motivated by the shortage of occupational prospects, lack of employment incentives and poverty in the source countries.

The labour mobility in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries has been characterised by a large increase in foreign labour over the last few decades. According to UNDESA, in 2020, the global estimate of international migrant workers in the GCC countries was 31 million in various sectors.

THE DETERMINANTS OF WORKERS MOBILITY IN THE GCC STATES

For economically motivated migrants, the desire for a good life is often realised through better employment opportunities and high wages. The primary pull factor is the high wage gain in the Gulf states as compared to the source country of migrant labourers. The most suggestive labour market determinant of migration flows is the wage differences between source and destination country (World Bank, 2018). The wage difference across countries creates dominant pull and push factors, leading to large-scale demand for migrant labour in GCC countries. The most important costs faced by migrant labourers are adapting and settling into a new location with diverse economic and cultural characteristics. The geographical distances from the source of the migrant workforce are deterrents to labour mobility in the destination country. Other factors may include linguistic differences and cultural divergences in the destination country. However, these factors are not a significant deterrent to labour migration in the Gulf countries. Additionally, these countries have favourable mechanisms for earning and sending remittances home to support the families of migrant labourers. The migration from South Asia is driven by many factors, including fewer opportunities in the home country, unemployment, low per capita income, financial pressure, underdevelopment and underemployment (Rajan, 2024). In the case of Central Asian countries, labour migration in Russia is shaped by historical development and closed socio-economic relations between these countries. Since the disintegration of the USSR, Russia has been the primary destination for labour migration from Central Asian countries. These countries have common Russian language advantage, educational curriculum which makes Russia a major destination for migration rather than Gulf countries. Post-Soviet era economic development in Russia attracted more labour migration from Central Asia. As a result, the economies of Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan have relied on the billions of dollars in remittances from Russia (Kholmatova & Abdulloeva, 2026).

ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION AND SKILL SHIFT

The primary objective of economic diversification in the GCC countries is to transition from a rentier economy to a knowledge-based, competitive economy. This is a structural shift in response to long-term goals outlined in national blueprints like Qatar National Vision 2030, Saudi Vision 2030, and UAE Vision 2031/2071. These new economic visions are focusing on new priority segments such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), advanced production, healthcare, and FinTech. The mega projects like NEOM, DIFC in Dubai and King Abdullah Financial District Riyadh required international expertise in areas like banking, digital infrastructure, manufacturing, renewable energy and urban planning. These new sectors and mega projects required a new set of skills. This shift in economic demand has created a distinct two-tiered labour market in the GCC countries. First, demand for high skilled workers in the field like data science, engineering, specialised medicine and financial services. Second, regulation of low skilled labour in construction, retail and domestic work. The policies like labour nationalisation (Nitaqat/Emiratisation) aims to make the employment for of low-skilled workers more costly for the private sector to encourage the hiring opportunities of citizens in the GCC states.

THE IMPACT OF GLOBALISATION ON MIGRATION IN GCC

The World Migration Report 2024 emphasised that, ‘despite being an “age-old phenomenon”, migration was accelerating as part of broader globalisation transformations of economic and trade processes that were enabling greater movement of labour, as well as goods and capital’. The increasing economic interdependency of countries has been a an extensively recognised component of globalisation. In this era, international labour mobility has increased enormously. The requirement for migrant workers remains consistent, due to a lack of a native, skilled and affordable workforce in many Gulf countries. It also indicates that globalisation has had both positive and negative impacts on employment conditions in destination countries. The demand for migrant labour remains evident in each primary, secondary and tertiary sector in the GCC states (Taran & Geronimi, 2013).

Globalisation is heavily connected with the ‘dynamics of migration and produces radical changes in migration patterns. From a societal perspective, international migration can be seen primarily by developmental inequality between countries and increasing demand for social mobility’ (Mehdi, 2004). Globalisation has also increased labour mobility within the highly skilled segments of the labour market.

Globalisation has made migration more feasible through the faster transportation network, which has enhanced the range of options for international travel and decreased the cost of transportation. According to the data collected from 1990 to 2020, the number of labour migrants is showing an upward trajectory in the GCC countries.

Table 2: International migrants (destination) in the GCC Countries, both sexes combined (population in million)

S.NO.	Country (GCC)	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020
1	Saudi Arabia	4.9984	5.1227	5.2633	6.5018	8.4299	10.7771	13.4548
2	UAE	1.3065	1.8241	2.4470	3.2811	7.3166	7.9951	8.7167
3	Kuwait	1.0743	0.9219	1.1276	1.3335	1.8748	2.8661	3.1101
4	Oman	0.3040	0.5396	0.6236	0.6661	0.8162	1.8562	2.3728
5	Qatar	0.3097	0.3616	0.3596	0.6460	1.4564	1.6876	2.2261
6	Bahrain	0.1730	0.2059	0.2393	0.4040	0.6664	0.7224	0.9360

Source: International Migrant Stock 2024 **(**United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, 2024).

The data in Table 2 and Chart 1 represent the influx of migrants in the GCC countries. On the X axis, it represents the population of migrant (in million) workers in the GCC Countries. The Y-axis represents the years 1990 to 2020. It can be seen from the charts that there has been an increasing trend of labour migration in the GCC states over the last three decades. Saudi Arabia, followed by the UAE, remains a vital destination for a huge number of migrant workers in the Gulf states. Almost all six countries are showing an upward trend in labour migration in these countries.

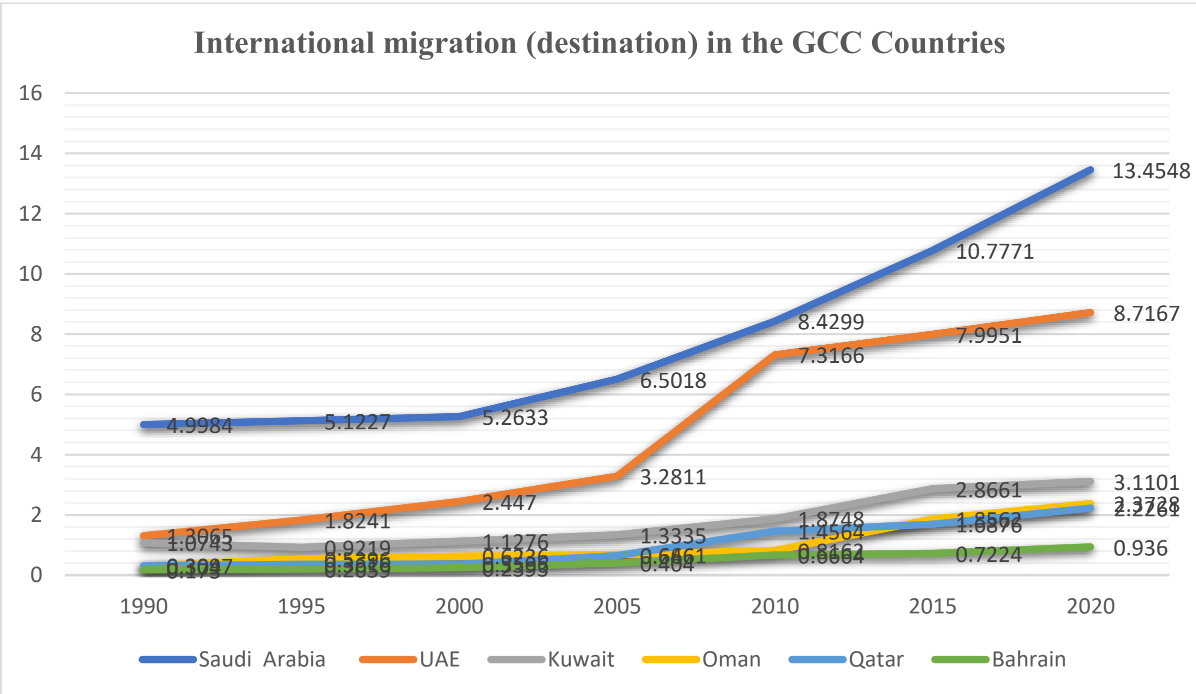

Chart 1: Graphical representation of the labour migration population in the GCC States from 1990 to 2020.

GCC COUNTRIES LABOUR MIGRATION POLICIES

Labour migration policies in the Gulf region are the decisions that determine the degree of influx and the procedures for migration, remittances, and employment conditions in these six host countries (Wagle, 2024). On the one hand, the government has created various policy frameworks to standardise the labour market in a way that ensures a consistent supply of foreign workers. On the other hand, the government wants to reduce reliance on them by boosting local employment opportunities for the native population. Since 2010, the national population of GCC countries have expanded at a regular pace of 2-3 per cent annually (Bel-Air, 2025). During the same period, the population of foreign residents decreased due to a deportation campaign and an increase in work and residency fees in several GCC countries.

The labour migration policy in the Gulf region is primarily regulated by the Kafala system, which addresses the growing demand for semi-skilled and low-skilled workers. Initially, this arrangement was intended to regulate the short-term migration of workers in the GCC countries. The Kafala system defines the legal status of the majority of migrant workers in the Gulf countries. However, the Kafala system also has some negative implications. It has been subject to serious criticism for facilitating labour exploitation. The sponsor has unrestrained control over the foreign labour. The Kafala system has also contributed to inefficient labour force allocations. The migrant workers are recruited on time-limited contracts to work for a specific employer, and workers cannot easily switch jobs.

According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), 'low labour mobility keeps wages low, leading to poor investments and productivity. Employers under the Kafala system frequently withhold food and compensation allowances, confiscate their passports, require them to work overtime without compensation and prevent workers from leaving their residence outside of work hours' (Aslam, 2025). In the last few years, Gulf countries have been "reforming Kafala" systems. This system has long been subject to serious criticism from international observers for its exploitative nature (Kalush & Saraswathi, 2024).

MIGRATION POLICY REFORM AND REGULATION

The migrants may affect the lives of the citizens of the destination country. Therefore, each nation has the sovereign legal right to regulate its labour market. The objectives of GCC governments' migration policies are to manage migration while adhering to certain moral and legal principles. The structural reforms to the Kafala system begin in some states, Qatar, the UAE, and Saudi Arabia to improve labour market flexibility and attract high-skilled migrants. Introduction of long-term residency visas (Golden Visa) for investors and professionals, signalling towards selective integration for the wealthy individuals. In 2009, Bahrain became the first country in the GCC to initiate labour reforms, enabling workers to switch employment more easily (Human Rights Watch, 2009).

In 2020, Qatar has abolished the requirement for No-Objection Certificate (NOCs) and Exit permit (Government Communication Office, 2020). The UAE introduced the Golden Visa (10/5 year residency) to support the transition to a knowledge-based economy. In 2020, Saudi Arabia introduced the Labour Reform Initiatives (LRI), which allows private sector expatriates to switch jobs and leave employment in the country without employer consent upon expiry of the binding contract (Ministry of Human Resource and Social Development, 2020). Saudi Arabia in June 2025, announced the abolition of the kafala system to improve labour flexibility and investment appeal under Vision 2030 (Interesse, 2025).

MAJOR CHALLENGES FOR LABOUR MIGRATION IN THE GCC COUNTRIES

The majority of the workforce in the Gulf States consists of unskilled individuals with low educational attainment. As the GCC countries are witnessing a youth bulge. To address citizen unemployment and reduce reliance on foreign labour, the GCC countries regulate the employment of expatriates through labour nationalisation polices. The GCC countries are increasingly adopting job nationalisation policies to create employment opportunities for the native population. The wages for migrant workers in GCC countries are significantly lower than those of the native workforce. The wage gap is primarily driven by policy distortions rather than market forces (Al-Mejren, 2024).

The imposition of quotas for migrant workers employed in firms, for example, 'The Nitaqat Policy' in Saudi Arabia. The Nitaqat system was introduced in 2011 as part of the Saudization policy, aiming to increase the employment conditions of Saudi nationals in various private sectors(Potnuru & Arora, 2022, p. 419). Also, the UAE, under the Emiratisation policy, imposes quotas or fees on companies to make employing its own citizens more attractive than employing foreign workers.

The impact of Global crises on migration, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, has exacerbated the vulnerabilities of migrant workers, particularly women, highlighting the intersection of gender, migration and global crises. The COVID-19 pandemic has intensified the challenges faced by these migrants, rooted in economic and social inequalities.

The wage disparities between migrant workers and the GCC citizens are one of the defining characteristics of the Gulf labour market. The wage gap is not simply explained by differences in the set of skills or qualifications of workers. It is structurally embedded in the GCC's unique political and socio-economic. The GCC nationals overwhelmingly prefer and are employed in the public sector. Now, to attract citizens to private companies, it must offer higher wages to the GCC nationals. Another issue of wage disparity, high-skilled expatriates from Western countries receive expensive housing allowances, health insurance, school fees for dependents and annual flight tickets. These amenities are far generous than low cash wages and basic accommodation provided to low-skilled workers.

RESEARCH QUESTION

The primary research question for this paper seeks to examine 'Why has there been an increasing labour influx in GCC countries since the 1990s, and how is there a contradiction in labour migration in Gulf countries from South and Central Asian countries? The paper also analyses why there is a changing pattern of labour migration in GCC, which is tied to the economic diversification of GCC states.

METHODS

The paper used a descriptive research design to analyse the patterns of labour migration in the GCC countries. Labour migration data from the National Institute of Statistics, the Gulf Labour Markets, Migration, and Population (GLMM), United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, and international reports since 1990 are used to understand the increasing influx of migrant labourers from South Asian countries. On the other hand, labour migration data from Central Asia have been analysed for outflows from these countries. The paper also relied on quantitative data, policy documents, secondary literature and historical material to understand labour migration patterns in the GCC countries.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

'Migrant workers' refers to the phenomenon in which the labour requirements of one country are being filled by the supply of labour force from other countries. The presence of migrant workers has often been viewed as a phenomenon that enhances workforce availability and utilisation, thereby contributing to the economic development of host countries. Principally, the process of globalisation facilitates labour force movements across countries, thereby helping in constituting a robust social category known as 'migrant workers.' The process of globalisation has also affected migration governance in Gulf countries

The globalisation of labour migration in the GCC countries is characterised by a high degree of integration into the global labour supply chain. This process is primarily shaped by the GCC's transformation from rentier states into diversified, knowledge-based economies. It has paved the way for the intensification of demand for cheap, low-skilled labour and competition for high-skilled global talent.

The process of globalisation encompasses various aspects, including global integration, time-space compression, accelerating interdependence, and a shrinking world. According to Anthony Giddens, the process of Globalisation varies between communities, regions, and nations. The uneven nature of globalisation renders it a highly differentiated process (John Baylis, 2014, p. 22). It is manifest in all aspects of economics, social life, politics, culture, education etc. It implies the convergence of daily life with a knowledge system leading to collective and individual identity.

The globalisation phenomenon is deeply intertwined with labour migration, which is a significant characteristic of modern economics. 'Globalisation of labour migration' in the Gulf countries implied the belief that the labour force in the various nation-states of the world has increased its inter-connectedness at a remarkable pace over the last two to three decades with the Gulf region (Bhorat & Lundall, 2004).

According to the International Labour Office, the five crucial economic indicators of globalisation are: one, the increase in trade flows between national economies worldwide. Second, the propagation of science and technology, more especially the development of ICTs.Third, the rapid growth in trans-border capital flows. Fourth, the formation of various regional trade blocks and intensive trade liberalisation. Fifth, the important structural changes in domestic economics are away from primary production towards service industry output.

The globalisation phenomena are generally assumed to be an expansion in the magnitude of global migration of the worker population, involving more and more countries in the migration interaction, leading to the structural flow of migration in accordance with the needs of the labour market (Zubiashvili, 2017). Globalisation plays a vital role as a catalyst in altering the traditional role of the nation in international migration. As a general rule, larger corporations relocate their labour closer to the sources of production. Similarly, in the case of Gulf countries, crude oil needs a huge labour force in the refining process, and hence, the region remains a major source of labour inflow. Globalisation also shapes migration governance, the framework of laws and policies that govern states' approaches towards overall labour migration in a country (Milan et al., 2024). The revocation of the Kafala system is directly linked to the reforms undertaken by Gulf states following international criticism.

CONCLUSION

The current labour migration period in the GCC states is characterised by a fundamental tension between two major issues driven by globalisation. First, talent attraction through flexible visa and residency system globally for high-skilled labour. Second, giving priority to own citizens in the private sector and limiting future demand for expatriate workers.

The globalisation process initially favoured the large-scale, low-cost labour migration in the Gulf countries. However, in the later phase, the Gulf states, marked by economic diversification and international governance norms, is now pushing for a more regulated, selective and skilled migration regime. This provides future opportunities for migrants from South and Central Asian countries.

The major challenge for the GCC states is to achieve consistent labour migration to achieve their ambitious developmental demands. Although these countries have to develop their own national workforce in critical sectors for long time. However, as the Gulf region is striving for diversification, they will have to attract more migrant workers responsible for supporting these economic development. Labour mobility is a multidimensional phenomenon that significantly impacts labour market dynamics, economic transformation and human capital formation. Understanding its deep-rooted impact, it is essential to have policies and strategies to manage labour mobility and its associated challenges. To address the challenges of globalisation, the GCC labour law system needs to be improved in terms of skilling and reskilling migrant labour. The Vision documents of various GCC countries need to align with labour reforms in order to strengthen recruitment, improve wages and working conditions, and facilitate internal labour mobility.

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