



Scarcity & Decision Making in UAE : The Impact of Scarcity on Decision Making Among Immigrants from Kerala in UAE

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Abstract: *Newcomers to cultures have used various technologies to resist and assist in the cultural adaptation and acculturation process for as long as immigration has taken place (Stephen M. Croucher, 2011). People migrate to different places from all around the, and especially from developing countries like India. They want better job opportunities and the UAE being a hub of multiple job prospects for a low-salary individual living in a developing country like India is exciting. The UAE being a socially open country with many industries requiring mass labor and interns for organizational firms, like oil industry, tourism, etc. is quite tempting. This research is based on how immigrant's - mainly focused on Kerala immigrants in UAE - decision-making is affected by scarcity of resources. This study explores how the scarcity of mainly time and money, including other things affects their financial management patterns and time allocation. Data was collected through surveys, interviews and questionnaires, with a focus on how these immigrants manage their priorities and work-life balance. The study explores the role of UAE government social programs and how they help these immigrants, as well as the cultural adjustments required to balance traditional values with the UAE's fast-paced society.*

Keywords: *Scarcity, immigrants, Work-life balance, UAE.*

1. Introduction

People move to different cities or countries in search for a better lifestyle, better wages, better job opportunities etc. Indian migration to the UAE drastically increased in the 1970s and 1980s, with the expansion of the oil industry and the growth of free trade in Dubai. This meant heavy investment in the UAE, for both skilled and unskilled labor from across the world. Kerala, being very close to it and full with these kinds of laborers, made use of this opportunity leading to the heavy migration of laborers towards the UAE. Tempting as it may seem from the outside, but UAE is not all glory and glamor. New immigrants face many day to day challenges here that forces them to prioritize their work (to earn money) over everything else, these challenges are mainly faced by young immigrants aging 27-35, particularly in the blue-

collar category, which make up for most of the country's labor force. As a cause because of which mass numbers of immigrants in this category were forced to move back to their original countries because they could not afford a lifestyle here. The scarcity mindset - defined as a pattern of thinking that focuses on what you don't have and the underlying belief that you're not ever going to have the things that you want, even when you have access to basic needs, like food, water, housing, income, etc., which has been debated about by many economists, researchers, professors etc, is something that has captured the mind of not only immigrants in a foreign country but also many middle class individuals and families, which sometimes affects the mentality of immigrants in the process affecting decisions too. They think that they can't afford certain things which are important, because they have to prioritize things like food and housing even though they have enough funds to do so. Scarcity is something that not only immigrants but everybody faces in day to day life. This



study shows how immigrants from Kerala which is located in India, residing in UAE, which is known mainly for its work/job opportunities and tourism, face. Presenting challenges such as high cost of living, costly food and having to live in shared spaces, which are sometimes very unhygienic, to the immigrants. Scarcity of resources like time and money can affect their decisions, including things like - how they spend, save, choose jobs (to get higher wages) and maintain their work/life balance. This research is based on the Scarcity definition given by (Prof. Lionel Robbins, 1932) in an Essay on the Nature and Significance of Economic Science, written in 1932.

For example, scarce financial resources leads to the immigrants cutting down on important things like - Health insurance, better housing, education etc, especially for those who have immigrated with their families.

There are also many pros of living in the UAE, that help the immigrants adapt better into the new environment. All thanks to the leaders of UAE who have made it possible - (Zaki Nusseibeh 2024), Chancellor of the United Arab Emirates University "Our wise government, led by President His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, recognises that the rich cultural heritage of the UAE plays a crucial role in supporting sustainable development and enhancing the UAE's leadership in global competition. The leadership has embraced this heritage and harnessed its transformational power to drive positive change and innovation, highlighting it as an attractive force for investments and a source of inspiration for sustainable tourism development initiatives." Experts note that fluctuations in currency exchange rates can lead to unknown financial situations for immigrants. For example, if the UAE Dirham strengthens against the Indian Rupee, the immigrants will have to send more money to support their families back home, which will affect the way they spend and save. Also, changes in the job market, like changes in demand for types of labor or changes in wages, can worsen these challenges. Immigrants may land in a risky situation if their wages struggle to keep up with the cost of living and other expenses, not only in UAE, but also in their home country (India).

2. Literature Review

The immigrations in the world, in this case UAE, have caused a few eruptions in the city, like more and more immigrants are coming each year, so living spaces have been created almost everywhere, causing congestion in the small city, also immigrants coming from small or poor countries are having to live in unhygienic partitions or bed

spaces. And having to do any kind of labor job they get. This is infact applicable to many big or wealthy countries in the world.

In an interview with (Vernon M. Briggs, Jr., 2006), he said "Inadequate housing, crowded schools, poor public hygiene, and urban slums were often the social by-products of mass immigration." Immigrant families primarily work in a labor force stratum that does not provide living wages, benefits, or job security (Solheim, Ballard, Fatiha, Dini, Buchanan & Song as cited in Clark et al., 2020; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018a; 2020) Experts note that fluctuations in currency exchange rates can lead to unknown financial situations for immigrants. For example, if the UAE Dirham strengthens against the Indian Rupee, the immigrants will have to send more money to support their families back home, which will affect the way they spend and save. The International Trade Council (2023) posted an article about currency fluctuations saying - "Currency fluctuations impact the prices of imported goods and services. A depreciating currency can increase the cost of imports as it takes more domestic currency to purchase foreign goods. This can result in higher prices for imported products, affecting consumers and businesses reliant on foreign inputs."

To balance into a new culture, whether it may be about moving to another place/country for various reasons or converting into another religion again for various reasons is something that can be very difficult for almost everyone, yet immigrants are the best at this job, they slowly but successfully adapt to another country's culture while balancing their own culture and traditions. When somebody immigrates to another country that person has to think global but at the same time act local. Different cultures can experience the same things but at the same time value it completely differently (Hanna Jansson, 2003). People that immigrate have to get used to a completely new culture and we all deal with adjustment in different ways. Some people might even feel very lost after they immigrated and lose a sense of belonging (Jansson, 2003, as cited in Smith, 2000). Research on cultural adaptation indicates that the process of adapting to a new culture is difficult. Generally, individuals experience stress, depression, loneliness, and other negative emotions (Stephen M. Croucher, 2011). Immigrants often face many financial challenges, including limited access to resources, employment instability, and cultural adaptation that affect their economic decisions. Research demonstrates that immigrants use media to aid in the adaptation process (Croucher, 2011) and to maintain ties with the homeland (Croucher, 2011 as cited by Durham, 2004; Lee, 2004). But the UAE being such an amazing and open country,



they allow and embrace every new culture and the traditions that immigrants bring with them.

Financial scarcity, or the condition of limited financial resources, is a crucial factor affecting decision-making, specifically among low-income categories. Research argues that scarcity shapes decision-making processes by focusing individual's attention on immediate needs instead of long-term goals. The scarcity mindset often leads to situations where individuals prioritize short-term financial necessities over probable long-term investments.

Remittances—the money immigrants send to family members in their country of origin—have a long tradition (Houle & Schellenberg, 2008). Remittances play a big role in the financial management patterns of an individual immigrant. Cultural factors significantly affect financial behaviors, especially among the immigrant population. Hofstede's (1980) theory of cultural dimensions points out "collectivism" as a characteristic of Indian society, specifying a prioritization of family over individual well-being, in financial or any case. This is observable among keralite immigrants, who often prioritize saving for family or sending remittances rather than personal savings and spendings.

Study on financial stress suggests that low-income individuals are more likely to engage in non-essential spending as a coping mechanism for work and financial stress. For Keralite immigrants, who face constant financial obstacles, such spending can result in reduced savings and an inability to manage funds for long-term investments. Consumers experiencing stress may show increased spending behavior, directed specifically toward products that the consumer perceives to be necessities and that allow for control in an otherwise uncontrollable environment (Durante & Laran, 2016).

Debt plays a significant role in the financial behavior of low-income immigrants. In the case of immigrant workers, debt burden is often caused due to migration expenses, with many suffering loans to secure employment in the UAE. These debt repayments impact their capacity to save or invest, making them prioritize short-term decision-making over long-term financial planning.

Policy initiatives play a big role in affecting the financial behaviors of immigrants. According to the World Bank (2017), financial inclusion policies can help low-income individuals by providing access to banking, savings accounts, and low-cost loans. The UAE government has recently introduced policies to improve labor conditions for immigrants but significant gaps remain, particularly in terms of financial support for low-income workers. Policies aimed at promoting savings, reducing debt burdens, and providing financial education could support the financial stability of Keralite workers, enabling them to

make more strategic economic decisions. Public policies play a crucial role in shaping how immigrants adapt to life. Federal, state, and local laws and administrative practices impact immigrants' access to education, health insurance and medical care, cash assistance, food assistance, and other vital services. Additionally, immigration enforcement activities have substantial effects on immigrants' health and participation in public programs, as well as effects on immigrants' families (Perreira & Pedroza, 2019).

The literature highlights multiple factors that influence the economic decision-making patterns of Keralite immigrants in the UAE. Financial scarcity, cultural values, debt, remittances, and financial stress all contribute to their financial behavior, which is often characterized by short-term priorities and limited long-term planning. Behavioral economics suggests that things like financial literacy programs, debt reduction initiatives, and policy changes to support financial inclusion could help ease up some of these pressures, enabling individuals to achieve greater financial stability and independence.

Impact of global conflicts on the UAE

Global conflicts, such as the recent Russia-Ukraine war, Israel-Palestine war and other global conflicts in the GCC and Europe, have also influenced resource availability and job opportunities. With growing numbers of immigrants from all over the world, resources are becoming more limited, increasing the effects of scarcity on decisions.

3. Conceptual framework of study

The conceptual framework serves as the foundation of this study, giving us a structured approach to study the connection between resource scarcity and decision-making of kerala immigrants in UAE. By studying how funds, time and housing scarcity affects immigrants, we can understand in-depth how they make certain economic choices, manage work-life balance while dealing with scarce resources.

4. Theoretical background

1. Scarcity Theory

Scarcity - meaning the limited availability of resources, affects the decision-making process of humans. The scarcity theory shows us that when the immigrants are faced with the problem of limited resources, like - time, money, food or housing - they are forced to prioritize certain things before others. Kerala immigrants, who are



often in blue-collar jobs, have to face these constraints almost all the time.

2. Decision-Making Theories

Decision-Making theories like the Rational Choice Theory or the Bounded Rationality give us a deeper understanding of how immigrants deal with scarcity issues. RCT suggests that individuals make choices by calculating the possible advantages and disadvantages. But, Bounded Rationality assumes that decision-making is often influenced by the information available and the basic reasoning of individuals. For Kerala immigrants in the UAE, who sometimes also face language barriers, cultural adaptations, and financial pressures, decisions are frequently influenced by limitations and the necessity to adapt for survival.

3. Previous Studies have shown a strong connection between scarcity and economic behavior, especially among immigrants. Research has shown that financial limitations often lead to cautious spendings, reduced savings and focusing on urgent needs over future commitments. However, Kerala immigrants who are working in the blue-collar industry may be more vulnerable to this pressure due to the nature of their work.

5. Independent and Dependent Variables

1. Independent Variables:

- Financial scarcity - based on monthly salary.
- Work Hours

Many Kerala immigrants in the UAE, are in blue-collar jobs, with a minimum salary of 2000 AED, which is very little to cover daily and other expenses. Scarcity of funds compels immigrants to make difficult choices about daily spendings and savings.

Long working hours and sometimes even overtime work, with little personal or family time, can impact work-life balance and the chance to pursue individual goals or have some personal downtime. Lack of efficient education also affects the immigrants' capacity to get well-paying jobs, also affecting their job stability and their ability to mingle up in a foreign country.

2. Dependent Variables:

- Economic decision-making –
- Work/life balance

Scarcity of funds often forces immigrants to prioritize important things like housing and food, rather than non-essential things like insurance and education/better job.

With limited income/funds, the immigrant's think of doing short-term savings, such as sending money back home, rather than long term financial planning. Scarcity also affects career stability and job choices, because many immigrants are not able to change their jobs due to certain factors like - financial and time restrictions and also sometimes they are not so well educated to get jobs in higher posts.

6. Hypothesis

Hypothesis is one of the most important aspects in a research. The purpose of a hypothesis and its testing is to show the validity of the hypothesis as data is collected through various sampling methods and not a complete detailed method.

This research study's the economic decision-making ways of Keralite immigrants in the UAE, facing financial scarcity. Based on the economic views of Rational choice and previously observed/researched studies.

Research Question -

'How does financial scarcity affect the economic decision-making and work/life balance of Keralite immigrants in the UAE?'

Independent Variable

Financial Scarcity

(Measured by: Income, Debt, and Savings)

Dependent Variable

Economic Decision-Making

(Measured by: Non-Essential Spending, Long-Term Investments, and Lifestyle Choices)

Hypothesis -

1. Null Hypothesis (H0) - There is no significant difference between long term-investments and non-essential spending patterns.

- Alternative Hypothesis (H1) -There is a significant difference between long term-investments and non-essential spending patterns.

2. Null Hypothesis (H0) - There is no significant difference between savings and non-essential spending patterns

- Alternative Hypothesis (H1) -There is a significant difference between savings and non-essential spending patterns

3. Null Hypothesis (H0) - There is no significant difference between non-essential spending and debt percentage.

- Alternative Hypothesis (H1) - There is a significant difference between non-essential spending and debt percentage.



7. Research Methodologies

1. Research Design

This research follows an Exploratory Research Design. This style has been chosen to go in-depth and explore the topic of scarcity and decision-making among immigrants from Kerala in the UAE, a topic on which not much research has been done before. As Exploratory research aims to gain insights and an in-depth understanding about topics that haven't been studied in-depth, it is well-suited to explore the new insights in this vaguely defined study.

2. Data collection methods

To gather data, equal amounts of qualitative and quantitative data were used.

- Interviews: Different interviews by economists, professors or other immigrants were used in this study. (Citations are listed in the references section)
- Articles and literature review: Existing articles, and reports on the topics of scarcity and decision-making given mainly by immigrants were also referred to in this study.
- Questionnaire: A questionnaire was made by the researcher in order to gain more knowledge about the struggles of the immigrants, and distributed to a certain number of people, out of which 25 responded in order to gain more knowledge about the struggles of the immigrants.

3. Justification for Methodology

An exploratory research style was chosen in this study, over other research designs like descriptive or casual research for several reasons -

- Descriptive Research: Aims to accurately and systematically describe a population, situation or phenomenon is not well-suited because this study intends to uncover new insights rather than simply just describing existing ones.
- Causal Research: Which aims to identify cause and effect relationships, needs a better understanding of the topic, which isn't available for this topic at the moment.

4. Sampling technique

A purposive sampling technique was used in this study, targeting individuals who are directly affected by things like scarcity of resources due to different economic conditions, also ensuring that many types or perspectives are used.

5. Sample Size

As it is an Exploratory research, the sample size of 350 - 400 is thought to be adequate. The sample size was calculated to show 2% of the keralite population in the UAE, (But as 2% was too much we took a calculated amount of 400 immigrants) with demographic of 27-35 years old, working in blue-collar jobs within structured and organized firms, focusing more on those earning at least 2000 AED and receiving accommodation.

What is your monthly salary?

(a) AED 1,500-2,000

(b) AED 2,000-2,500

(c) AED 2,500-3,000

How many dependents do you financially support?

(a) None

(b) 1-2 dependents

(c) 3 or more dependents

Do you have any savings?

(a) No savings

(b) Less than one month's salary saved

(c) More than one month's salary saved

What amount of your monthly income goes to debt repayment?

(a) No debt

(b) Less than 10%

(c) More than 10%

How do your monthly expenses compare to your income?

(a) Expenses exceed income

(b) Expenses equal income

(c) Expenses are less than income



Do you have access to any financial aid?

(a) No access

(b) Limited access

(c) Full access

How many hours do you work per day on average?

(a) Less than 5 hours

(b) 5-10 hours

(c) More than 10 hours

How often do you engage in physical activities (exercise, sports, etc.)?

(a) Rarely/never

(b) Occasionally (1-2 times a week)

(c) Frequently (3 or more times a week)

How often do you engage in non-essential spending (leisure, entertainment, etc.)?

(a) Rarely/never

(b) Occasionally

(c) Frequently

Have you invested in any long-term needs (e.g., housing improvement, education, savings)?

(a) No

(b) Yes, but minimally

(c) Yes, significantly

Data Analysis and Interpretation

This chapter shows the Data Analysis and finding of this study. The questionnaire used in this study was carefully analyzed to ensure that the data gathered was presented clearly with the help of graphs etc, where possible.

The aim of this study was to calculate how immigrants manage their day to day life-decisions, dealing with obstacles like scarcity - of money/time, and issues like work/life balance, balancing routines for personal/family time.

Research Statement - Is there a relationship between non-essential spending and long-term investments?

Analysis Report -

The below analysis examines the relationship between financial scarcity, non-essential spending patterns, and economic decision-making, focusing on long-term investments, savings, and debt percentages.

8. Results

Hypothesis 1 -

Table 2: Frequency Table

Non-Essential Spending	Count of Long-Term Investment	Percent	Cumulative %
Frequently	1	6.67%	6.67%
Occasionally	9	60.00%	66.67%
Rarely/Never	5	33.33%	100.00%
Grand Total	15	100%	-

Table 3 : Chi-square Results

RESULTS OF CHI-SQUARE	
STATISTICS	VALUE
CHI SQUARE VALUE(χ^2)	9.52
DEGREES OF FREEDOM	2
P-VALUE	0.0498

Interpretation -

The chi-square test got a value of 9.52 with p-value of 0.0498, showing a significant yet weak relationship



between non-essential spending and long term investments. Since the p-value is less than the significance level (set at 0.05), we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that individuals who spend more on non-essential items are less likely to invest in long-term investments.

Hypothesis 2 –

Table 4
Frequency Table (Savings)

Non-Essential Spending	Count of Savings	Percent	Cumulative %
Frequently	2	13.33%	13.33%
Occasionally	10	66.67%	80.00%
Rarely/Never	3	20.00%	100.00%
Grand Total	15	100%	-

Table 5 : Results of Chi-Square(2)

RESULTS OF CHI-SQUARE	
STATISTICS	VALUE
CHI SQUARE VALUE(χ^2)	7.91
DEGREES OF FREEDOM	2
P-VALUE	0.019

Interpretation -

The chi-square test result shows a significant p-value of 0.019, indicating that the relationship between non-essential spending and savings is significant.

Since the p-value is less than the significance level (set at 0.05), we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that individuals who engage in frequent non-essential spending have reduced savings rates.

Hypothesis 3 –

Table 6
Frequency Table (Debt Percentage)

Non-Essential Spending	Count of Debt Percentage	Percent	Cumulative %
Frequently	3	20.00%	20.00%
Occasionally	8	53.33%	73.33%
Rarely/Never	4	26.67%	100.00%
Grand Total	15	100%	-

Table 6 : Results of Chi-Square(3)

RESULTS OF CHI-SQUARE	
STATISTICS	VALUE
CHI SQUARE VALUE(χ^2)	10.53
DEGREES OF FREEDOM	2
P-VALUE	0.005

Interpretation -

The chi-square test result with a p-value of 0.005 indicates a significant relationship between non-essential spending and debt percentage.

Since the p-value is less than the significance level (set at 0.05), we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that individuals who frequently engage in non-essential spending are more likely to have a higher debt percentage.

Data Analysis -

This provides a complete analysis of the survey responses gathered from Keralite immigrants in the UAE. The focus is on demographic features, financial targets, debts and savings. The analysis looks into the impact of financial

scarcity on work-related decisions and the allocation of personal time for oneself.

Demographic Statistics -

1. Age group distribution:

Age Group

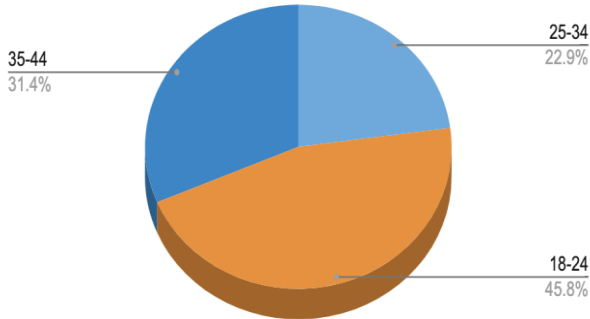


Figure 1
Age Groups

The respondents were classified into three age groups: 18-24, 25-34, and 35-44. These age categories consider the working population in the UAE, particularly among Keralite immigrants. The majority of participants were found in the 25-34 age group, showing that most participants were likely in their peak working years, also maintaining their work/life balance.

Gender Distribution:

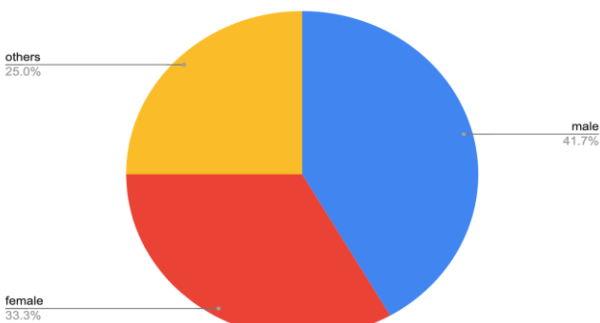
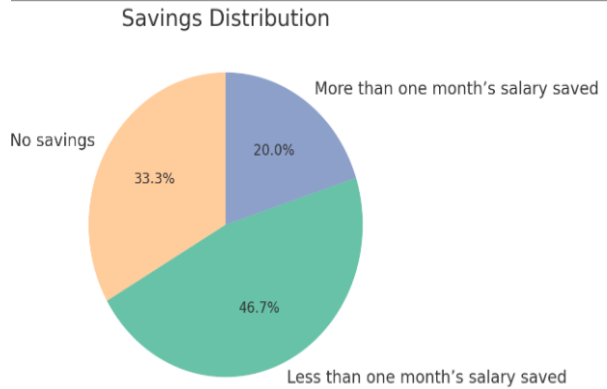


Figure 2
Gender Distribution

According to the response rate, the majority of respondents was identified to be males, there was also a significant representation of females. The inclusion of a bi-gender option also allowed diverse understanding of immigrants in the UAE. This categorized distribution may also show the influence of gender on migration outcomes, with men possibly being more involved in job-driven work from Kerala to the UAE.

3. Savings:

Figure 3
Savings Distribution

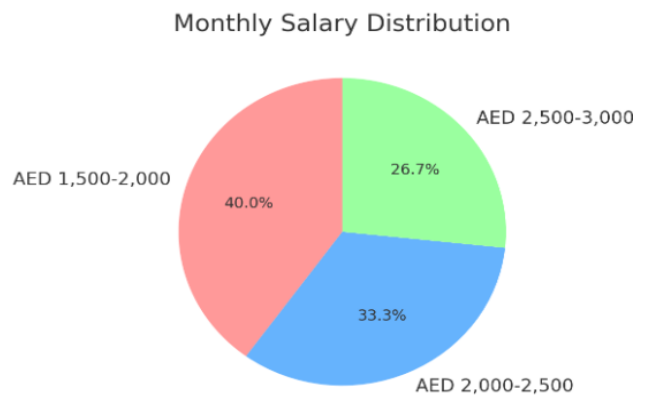


The majority (46.7%) have savings amounting to less than one month's salary, 33.3% have no savings, while 20% have more than one month's salary saved. This highlights a general trend of limited savings among the respondents.

Financial Priorities and Time Allocation -

4. Monthly Income –

Figure 4
Monthly Income



A significant portion (40%) of the respondents earn between AED 1,500-2,000, followed by 33.3% earning AED 2,000-2,500, and 26.7% earning AED 2,500-3,000 showing average earnings of immigrants in the UAE. This variable is crucial to understand the financial restrictions

and goals of the respondents, especially those in lower-income categories who might face more financial pressure.

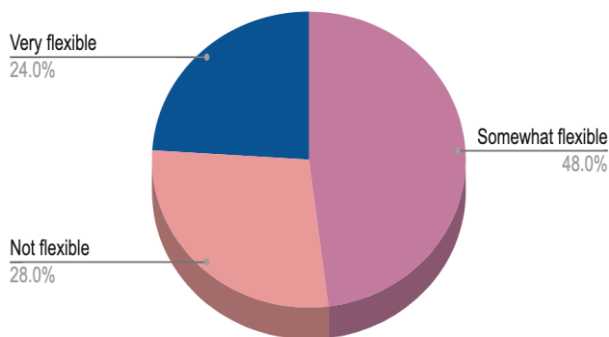
Main Financial Goal -

Participants were asked to identify their main financial goal from the following options: Saving for future, meeting daily expenses or paying off debts. A significant number of participants told that meeting daily expenses was their main financial goal, though a proportionate amount also told that paying off debts was their main priority for a long time, because they had a lot of debts due to their major life-decisions. This section shows the financial challenges faced by many migrant workers, Particularly those earning low incomes.

Work/Life Balance and Personal Sacrifices –

Figure 5
Work Flexibility

Work Flexibility



Respondents were asked about their weekly work hours, which were divided into three categories: 40-50 hours, 51-60 hours and more than 60 hours. A substantial number of respondents worked 51-60 per week, which shows the work-intensive nature of many jobs held by immigrants and overtime due to financial scarcity.

A majority of the respondents rated the flexibility of their work schedules as somewhat flexible. Showing limited control over working hours, lack of work flexibility can create obstacles for these individuals, especially those with family pressures.

Respondents were inquired how much time they spend on personal or family-related activities. Most respondents said approximately 15-20 hours per week was the most they could give, showing the struggle faced in maintaining a work/life balance. A notable amount of respondents reported that they regularly sacrifice personal time for work. This situates the earlier results of extended work

hours, telling us more about the challenges faced by immigrants while balancing work and life.

Finally, when asked to rate how satisfied they are with their work/life balance, the majority of respondents indicated that they are neutral or somewhat dissatisfied, a smaller yet noteworthy amount conveyed dissatisfaction, which is contemplative of the long working hours and financial pressure that hamper the ability to attain a much more balanced lifestyle.

Conclusion -

To understand the relations between variables, statistical analysis methods were implemented; which included questionnaires and chi-square tests. These methods help find significant relations between financial strains, work flexibility and personal/family time.

9. Discussion

This chapter shows the information from the data collected on the decision-making patterns of Keralite workers/immigrants in the UAE. The analysis surveys how scarcity of resources, particularly financial and time-related, affects these decisions. Also, the discussion explains the information, compares it to existing literature and shows their significance.

Results

Demographic of respondents -

A sum of about 400 respondents aged between 27-35, working in blue-collar jobs, with a minimum salary of 2000 AED have participated in this study. These individuals are just a bare minimum of 2% population of the total estimated population of keralites in the UAE - which reaches to about 1 million keralite immigrants.

- Gender Classification: 41.7% male, 33.3% female and 25% others.
- Family status: 35% are married here, the other 65% have dependent families back home.
- Occupation: Most are employed in the blue collar industry, construction, manufacturing etc.

Financial Decision-Making

Savings -

Nearly half (46.7%) have savings less than one month's salary, while 33.3% report having no savings at all. Only 20% of the respondents have managed to save more than one month's salary. This suggests that financial scarcity plays a significant role in preventing workers from building substantial savings, which could be linked to their relatively low income levels. This aligns with the literature indicating that lower-income groups often face challenges in saving for the long term due to immediate financial pressures.



Long-term investments -

Respondents who rarely engage in non-essential spending are more likely to have made significant long-term investments, while those who spend frequently on non-essentials tend to invest less.

Debt Repayment-

Respondents with more than 10% of their income allocated to debt repayment report higher levels of financial strain, affecting both their non-essential spending habits and savings capabilities. This suggests that a significant portion of income is spent in repayments, leaving little room for savings or investments in long-term goals.

Impact of Global Conflicts -

45% of respondents said that the current global conflicts in the GCC, Europe and Asia have increased the risk of financial instability, which has led to higher numbers of people saving for future emergencies, with 30% reducing their spending on non-essential things.

Scarcity of Time and Work/Life Balance -

The majority of respondents work between 8-10 hours per day, with only a small yet significant portion reporting more than 10 hours of work daily.

Those working longer hours tend to report less engagement in non-essential spending and physical activities, which may point to time limitations.

Discussion

The results shed light on the financial behaviors of Keralite immigrants in the UAE, showing patterns in spending, savings and debt repayment that put in line with the concept of financial scarcity.

The findings show the role that limited financial resources play in making economic decisions, especially among those with less income.

1. Relationship Between Non-Essential Spending and Long-Term Investments

The analysis shows a significant relationship between non-essential spending and long-term investments. Respondents who spend little on non-essential stuff are more likely to have saved or used the funds in a more crucial matter, such as housing, education, saving for the future or debt payment. This suggests that individuals facing financial scarcity are forced to compromise, prioritizing immediate needs over the long run.

2. Savings and Non-Essential Spending Behavior

Results show that respondents who frequently engage in non-essential spending are less likely to save more.

This shows a type of pattern of financial behavior where individuals facing scarcity are unable to save enough due to consumption patterns, This highlights how too much stress leads to unwanted spending.

3. Debt and Financial Strain

Debt management is a critical factor in understanding the financial stress experienced by these immigrants.

The findings indicate that a significant portion of respondents are using more than 10% of their income to repay debts, which further limits their financial flexibility. This debt burden creates a cycle of financial strain, where workers find it difficult to break free from short-term spending and save enough.

4. Impact of Work Hours on Economic Decision-Making

The data also reveals how work hours impact financial decision-making.

A majority of respondents reported working between 8-10 hours a day, with a small percentage exceeding 10 hours. Those working longer hours reported lower engagement in non-essential spending and physical activities, suggesting that the pressure to work long hours in order to meet financial needs also impacts their ability to spend time in personal leisure activities.

In conclusion, this study provides a detailed exploration of how financial scarcity influences the economic decision-making patterns of Keralite immigrants in the UAE. The restrictions faced by this population, help organizations and employers understand their situations too.

10. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher proposes the following recommendations to address the financial challenges faced by Keralite immigrants in the UAE and improve their economic decision-making patterns -

1. Financial Literacy Programs:

Implementing financial literacy programs will help to educate illiterate/ less-educated people to manage their funds, make accurate decisions, get better jobs, and reduce unwanted spending(occurring due to little knowledge about things).

2. Work-Life Balance Support:

Addressing the long working hours of immigrants by promoting better work-life balance can improve both financial decision-making and overall well-being. Employers should consider offering flexible work schedules or additional leisure opportunities which will also ensure work motivation.



3. Financial Aid Accessibility

As we conclude, we understand that this research highlights the impact of Financial Scarcity on the economic decisions of Keralite immigrants in the UAE. Factors such as low income, high living costs, debt and family responsibilities affect decision making. Cultural values, along with challenges of the labor market, also impact the spending and saving patterns, focusing more on immediate needs over future planning. Understanding these patterns is essential for developing support initiatives and financial support and literacy programs that can help immigrants to make better financial decisions during challenging economic circumstances.

11. Conclusions

As we conclude, we understand that this research highlights the impact of Financial Scarcity on the economic decisions of Keralite immigrants in the UAE. Factors such as low income, high living costs, debt and family responsibilities affect decision making. Cultural values, along with challenges of the labor market, also impact the spending and saving patterns, focusing more on immediate needs over future planning. Understanding these patterns is essential for developing support initiatives and financial support and literacy programs that can help immigrants to make better financial decisions during challenging economic circumstances.

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