

An Exploratory Study on the Role of Migrant Workers over time: Comparative Case Study of Singapore and the UAE

Raghav Kalra

United World College of South East Asia Dover Campus Singapore

DOI: 10.46609/IJSSER.2026.v11i04.026 URL: <https://doi.org/10.46609/IJSSER.2026.v11i04.026>

Received: 20 March 2026 / Accepted: 15 April 2026 / Published: 30 April 2026

ABSTRACT

Singapore and the UAE have different systems of governance and ownership of means of production, that has resulted in different systems of employment. The common factor in both these economies is that for growth and infrastructure development, they relied not on their own workforce but on migrant workers from developing countries. Singapore put into place economic policies that ensured adequate wages, which took care of the workers' standard of living. The United Arab Emirates (UAE), on the other hand, worked under the Kafala System. This system, according to the United Nations (UN) violated human rights conditions. Subsequently, the UAE has been encouraged to follow sensitive practices with respect to human rights, while employing their workers. Unlike Singapore, they have not tried to replace them through capital-intensive methods. The paper has researched the system of employment of migrant workers over time and has also used authentic data to indicate the current situation. Data for Singapore was widely available; however was scarce for the UAE. The paper extensively analysed the importance of migrant labourers in the development of these countries.

Keywords: Migrant Workers; Work-Permit System; Foreign workers levy; Dependency Ceiling (DRC); Construction, Marine, and Processing (CMP) sector; Kafala System; Infrastructure; Human Rights; Capital Intensive Production

1. Introduction

1.1 Singapore

Singapore attained its independence in 1965 from Malaysia. Before that, it was a British Colony. At the time of independence, Singapore was a poor economy with no natural resources. It separated from Malaysia without any credible resources or production base. The only possibility

for the Economy was trade, as it was strategically located between the Strait of Malacca and the South China Sea, linking two major oceans: the Indian and the Pacific Ocean.

Image 1: Location of Singapore vis a vis major oceans



Source: <https://cimsec.org/the-strait-of-malacca-from-sultanates-to-singapore/>

The population at the time of independence was estimated to be 1.9 million people (CNA), and the GDP was approximately US\$787 million, with a per capita income of around US\$500 (Institute of Developing Economies). At this point, the unemployment rate was 10% (Lee Kuan

Yew School of Public Policy). Additionally, at that time, political leaders faced an economy with no natural resources and a population that was neither skilled nor educated. The only positive aspect was its strategic position with respect to trade.

The government had set out its agenda, that the economy would become self-sustaining, develop its own military capability, reduce dependency, and move towards an export-oriented industrialisation strategy. This achievement required educating its citizens and working towards industrialisation. [1]

The world at that time had just opened up, encouraging trade without any barriers. This led to an efficient use of scarce resources. Singapore took advantage of the world's situation and used its labour to add value to products, which it could further export and be a part of the efficient global value chain.

The aim of the government after independence was to achieve the following:

- A developed economy in the shortest period of time
- Develop its own military capability

The first meant that the dependence on other nations had to be progressively reduced and the government policies had to be geared towards ensuring all-around development. The movement was from '*self-interest to national interest*'. At a very early stage, the lack of adequate natural resources meant that the only option would be man-power development, which was achieved in terms of the field of education. This sphere would have added to the value of its citizens and, at the same time, led to a fusion of social, economic, and political attitudes.

In 1965, given the political will of the state towards the provision of quality education for its citizens, the economy led to increase in manpower development in a way that encouraged technocrats and managers, etc, leaving the menial jobs for migrants from other less developed countries. Thus, a large number of migrants entered Singapore from Southern India, primarily from Kerala.

1.2 UAE

It was in 1966 that oil was discovered in the UAE, and from the 1970s, the growth of industrialised nations in Europe and Japan led to the increasing demand for oil. The UAE, realising that oil is a scarce product, moved from ADNOC to OPEC (Cartel). At the same time, the government initiated various policies that impacted infrastructure and trade within the country. The cartel meant that all the UAE countries got together and decided to restrict oil supply to get higher prices, creating an artificial shortage in the market.

Table 1: Timeline of Infrastructure Growth Path of the UAE

Year	Key Figures	Project
1966	Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan (the ruler of Abu Dhabi)	Schools, Hospitals, Housing, and Roads
1970s	Sheikh Rashid and Sheikh Zayed	Laid the foundations of Modern Day UAE
1973-1982	Sheikh Rashid and Sheikh Zayed	Oil boom and surplus available for infrastructure projects
1982-2003	Sheikh Zayed Bin al Nahyan	Moved from the public sector to the private sector investment; encouraged FDI Large number of investment from UK, Japan, and India
2003-2022	Khalifa Bin Zayed al Nahyan	Investment in transport, logistics, tourism, and industry
2022-present day	Mohamed Bin Zayed al Nahyan	Investment in transport, renewable energy, digital transformation, and urban development

The above timeline indicates the emphasis on varied areas by different rulers, depending on world demand, and systematically working towards ensuring the relevance of the UAE in the changing geopolitical scenario.

The rulers followed the theory stated by the **Kraljic Portfolio Model**. This looks at the supply base for products and allocates resources in four strategic heads. Purchasing is done based on these four heads. These are:

- Non-Critical items - These are low-profit and low supply. The money spent on them is low, and so is the time period
- Leverage items - These are high-profit and have a low supply. A large amount of money is spent on these items, resulting in companies negotiating hard in using them so that they could save costs and increase earnings
- Bottleneck items - These are low profit, but have a high supply risk. They are critical for operation but their availability is scarce and risky. The economy needs to have a continuous supply of these products. At times, firms tend to maintain a high inventory even though it is costly for an uninterrupted supply. Some firms enter into a collaborative agreement to ensure a continuous supply of the product.
- Strategic items - These are high-profit and high supply risk, but they are vital for the company's functioning. Most companies involve long-term agreements and joint investment to ensure a continuous supply of such products

Kraljic Portfolio Model: The UAE used this model to increase the significance and importance of the only natural resource that it had, namely oil.

The Abu Dhabi National Oil Corporation (ADNOC) is a state-owned company that manages oil in and around the UAE. It is the main oil exploratory company and supports the industry through various services, rendered by multinational companies like ExxonMobil and Shell, to name a few.

The Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) is a permanent governmental organisation that helps to stabilise the supply of oil with respect to increasing demand that was witnessed due to increased industrialisation over the years. It was formed in 1960 and comprised of oil exporting nations such as the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Qatar.

As a large amount of funds and investment entered the UAE, it resulted in a large amount of construction activity targeted towards infrastructure development. It is for this purpose that unskilled migrant labour was required. This set of labourers primarily came from developing economies like India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka. The majority of labourers from India entered the UAE from the southern states (Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana), Uttar Pradesh, and Bihar.

2. Research Gap

The paper would attempt to analyse the importance of migrant labourers in the development strategy of both Singapore and the UAE. As these economies have increased their GDP levels

over the years. Has the status of migrant labourers changed over time and over space? A comparison would be attempted between the two economies in understanding the role and status of migrant labourers.

3. Methodology

The methodology adopted in understanding the impact of migrant labourers would be of the mixed method type that would look at both quantitative and qualitative data from authentic sources. Quantitative data would be used for migrant labourers from official government website reports and institutional data bases to understand the impact it had on GDP of both economies. Data would also be indicated both in tabular and graphical form. Qualitative data, also from authentic sources, would be used to explain the trends that both the countries have adopted in terms of impact of migrant labour and their status currently.

4. Analysis of the occupations where these migrant workers are largely present over time

4.1 Singapore

Singapore requires all foreign nationals to hold a work permit pass before they can work and live in the country. Migrant workers in the low wage bracket are concentrated in the construction sector, marine shipyards, oil processing sector (in certain islands off Singapore), and migrant domestic workers. The construction sector comprises general construction workers, and more specifically building scaffolders, rebar workers and electricians, and low-skilled plumbers, to name a few. The Ministry of Manpower (MOM) classifies construction as one of the three sectors with the highest dependence on work permit holders. (Minsitry of Manpower Site). The Marine Shipyard sector comprises mainly of ship repair workers as well as welders, painters, fitters, and blasters. Lastly, the process sector, which is mainly involved in oil, gas, and petrochemicals, mainly employs plant maintenance workers, and technicians. These sites are located on Jurong Island and other industrial hubs around the country. Together, the construction sector, marine shipyard sector, and the processing sector make up the Construction, Marine, and Processing (CMP) sector.

The initial inflow of migrant workers began in the late 1960s-70s after Singapore had gained independence in 1965. During this period, Singapore faced extreme labour shortages, especially in sectors such as construction, manufacturing, and processing industries. Foreign workers were present in the country, but mostly on an ad-hoc basis. These workers mainly came from neighbouring countries like Malaysia and Indonesia.

In the 1980s, the formal work permit system was introduced. Singapore formally put into place a work permit system for low-skilled migrant workers, especially for those in the construction

sector. Then, in 1982, Singapore introduced the foreign worker levy in which employers had to pay a levy to hire low-wage foreign workers. Its purpose was to discourage over-reliance on foreign labour as many locals avoided these jobs. However, the CMP sector was deliberately allowed a higher reliance as many locals avoided these low skilled jobs.

In the 1990s, dependency ratio ceilings (DRCs) were introduced, putting a cap on the number of foreign workers that firms could hire. However, the CMP sectors were given a much higher quota than other sectors. The Employment of Foreign Workers Act, that came into place in 1990 further enforced regulation, pertaining to the employment of migrant workers.

Since the 2000s, the CMP sector still relies on work permit holders from countries in Asia. Despite technology and innovation, work in the CMP sector still demands physical strength and has long working hours making it unattractive to locals. Increasing dependence on capital-intensive technology, as an alternative to labour, has been implemented in the CMP sector due to a cap on the number of workers entering in the economy. The deterrent to employment of migrant workers is the high levies that the employers have to pay. This has led to an increase in employment of locals, or else spending or making an investment in capital-intensive technology.

As the economy has grown, so did its social obligations to its citizens, including those who enter as migrants. This increasing burden on the state exchequer and the aim to reduce unemployment has led to the above stringent conditions on migrant labourers

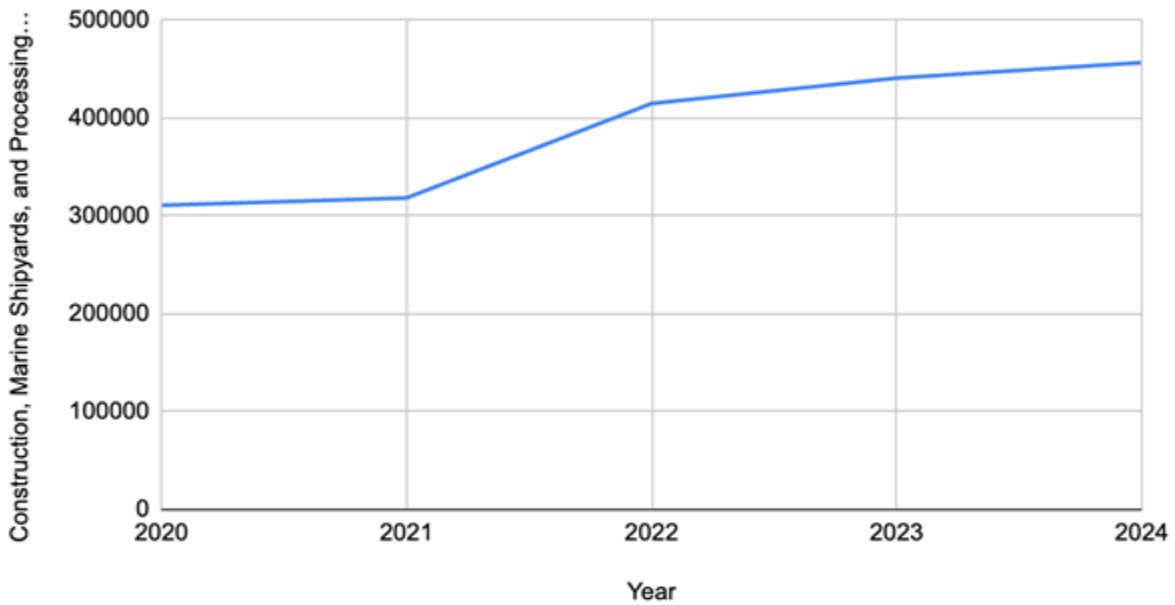
Table 1: Migrants entering Singapore for CMP

Year	Construction, Marine Shipyards, and Processing (CMP)
2024	456800
2023	441000
2022	415000
2021	318500
2020	311000

Source: Ministry of Manpower (MOM)

Graph 1: Based on information in Table 1

Construction, Marine Shipyards, and Processing (CMP) vs Year



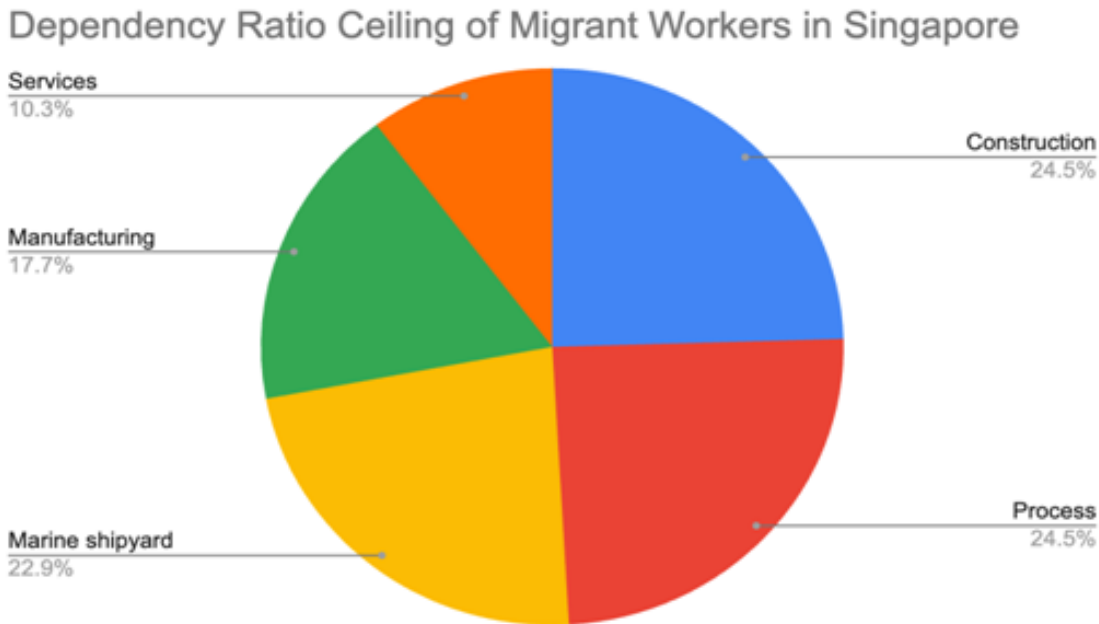
The Singapore Government is extremely strict on the number of migrant labourers that enter into their country. The Government employs a dependency ratio ceiling (DRC) criterion to control this.

Table 2: Dependency Ratio Ceilings by Sector (2025)

Sector	DRC
Construction	83.3%
Process	83.3%
Marine shipyard	77.8%
Manufacturing	60%
Services	35%

Source: Ministry of Manpower

Graph 2: Pie chart showing the Dependency Ratio Ceiling of Migrant Workers in Singapore (2025)



The above two graphs and tables indicate a higher percentage of migrant labourers in comparatively lower-productivity areas. The government of Singapore, under its guidelines indicated by the Ministry of Manpower, is attempting to reduce these percentages over time to lower its dependency on foreign workers.

The government is constantly striving to efficiently and optimally allocate scarce resources for sustainable growth. To achieve their global competitiveness, they have put into place policies that would be implemented from January 2026 to employ higher-skilled and higher-productive migrant workers even in the so-called “lower-skilled sectors” like CMP. To accomplish this goal, the government has increased the levies imposed on companies that come under the CMP bracket so that it forces them to rethink their strategy by employing less percentage of migrants, and ensuring that these companies look for higher productivity and increased skills with respect to them so that with a fewer number of migrant labourers employed at a higher cost would eventually lead to enhanced productivity and higher profit.

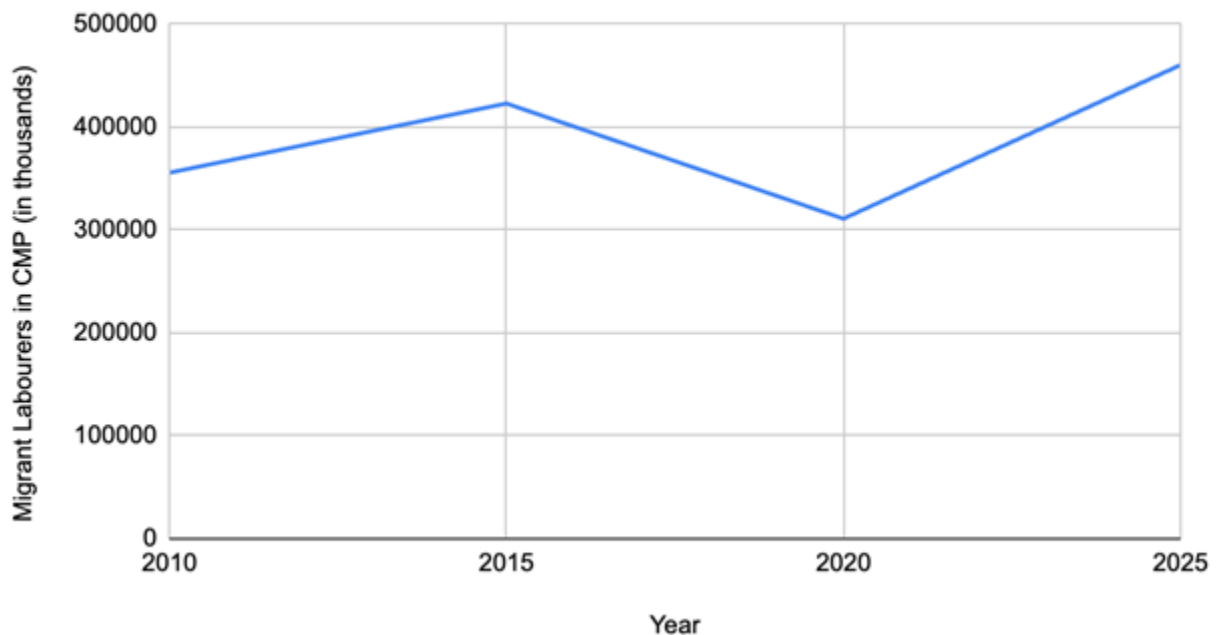
This clearly indicates that the above policy measures are an attempt to force productivity enhancement in so-called “unskilled sectors”. This is a complete contrast to the type of migration policies that the government followed during the time of its development.

Table 3: Impact of Migrant Labourers Superscript

Year	Migrant Labourers in CMP (in thousands)	GDP of Singapore (\$USD in billions)	GDP Growth Percentage Increase
2025	460300	574	4.4%
2020	311000	349	-3.8%*
2015	423000	308	3%
2010	355700	240	14.5%**

Source: Ministry of Manpower and Wikipedia

Migrant Labourers in CMP from 2010-2025



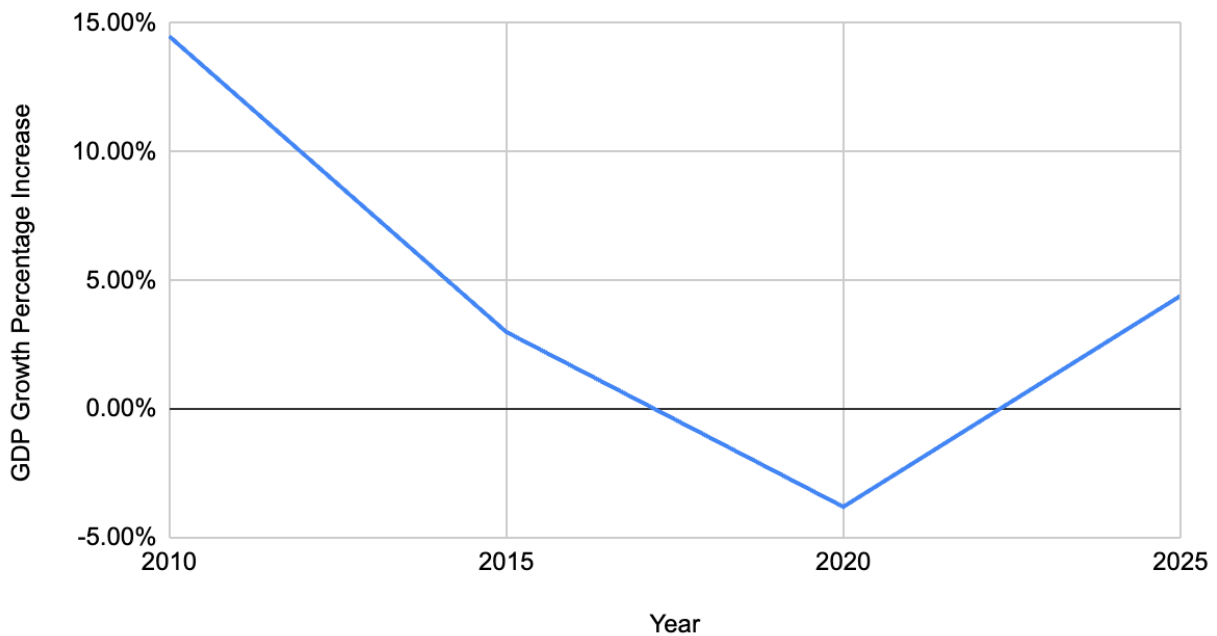
The overall trend visible in the graph is that the number of migrant workers increases from 2010 to 2015, then falls significantly by 2020, and recovers strongly by 2025.

The reason behind the increase in migrant labourers from 2010 to 2015 is largely due to Singapore’s strong recovery from the Global Financial Crisis. At this time, many infrastructure

and housing projects were being developed, which led to dependence on migrant workers. Since the Ministry of Manpower allows higher dependence on workers in the CMP industry, the number rose sharply.

On the other hand, the sharp drop around 2020 was largely due to the COVID-19 virus, which plagued the world. It saw the closure of borders, leading to a lower inflow of migrant workers. Additionally, virus outbreaks in dormitories halted construction activities, leading to many projects being halted or disrupted. Post the pandemic, borders reopened, and Singapore once again opened its doors to foreign migrant workers, as can be seen by the sharp increase. The MOM also increased the quota for migrant workers in the CMP sector due to a shortage of local labour. By 2025, the number of migrant workers reached 460,300, exceeding pre-COVID levels.

GDP Growth Percentage Increase (2010-2025)



The graph above indicates that the GDP growth percentage is very high in 2010, moderate in 2015, then negative in 2020, and finally recovers in 2025.

In 2010, the GDP growth was exceptionally high due to Singapore's strong recovery from the Global Financial Crisis and a lower base from which the GDP is measured. Its high percentage growth can be attributed to the fact that the economy was rebounding from a contraction. Singapore also had large exports and helped revive trade globally. The high growth reflects a post-crisis rebound. By 2025, GDP growth slowed down as the economy expanded slowly. By

2020, the GDP growth entered the negative quadrant due to the COVID-19 pandemic which led to travel bans and construction shutdowns, leading to a global economic collapse. After 2020, GDP growth rebounded due to the reopening of borders and the return of migrant labour to Singapore, leading to global trade rebounding.

4.2 United Arab Emirates (UAE)

The UAE's government emphasis on infrastructure has paved the way for a large section of migrant low and semi-skilled workers from developing economies like India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan. The country realised that complete dependence on oil would not exist forever, and given the stable political environment that it provided, infrastructure became an important linkage for the growth of other industries, namely tourism, finance, shipping, and processing.

The initial inflow of migrant workers in the late 1960s and 70s, after the discovery of oil in the UAE in 1971. Rapid economic development and the growth of infrastructure projects created labour shortages as the national population was small and lacked manpower. During this period, migrant labourers were recruited largely on an ad hoc basis from countries in South Asia and the Middle East to meet labour demands in sectors such as construction, manufacturing, and oil processing industries.

In the 1980s, the UAE introduced the *Kafala system* in which a migrant worker's residency and employment status were directly tied to their employer. Under this system, the employer controlled the main aspects of the worker's life in the UAE, such as their contract. This made it easier for the UAE to regulate large inflows of migrant labourers. The *Kafala system* formalised the role of migrant workers in the UAE economy, particularly in key sectors such as construction and industry, and local Emirati workers deliberately avoided these physically demanding and low-wage jobs. Therefore, migrant labour became a necessity, rather than a temporary situation.

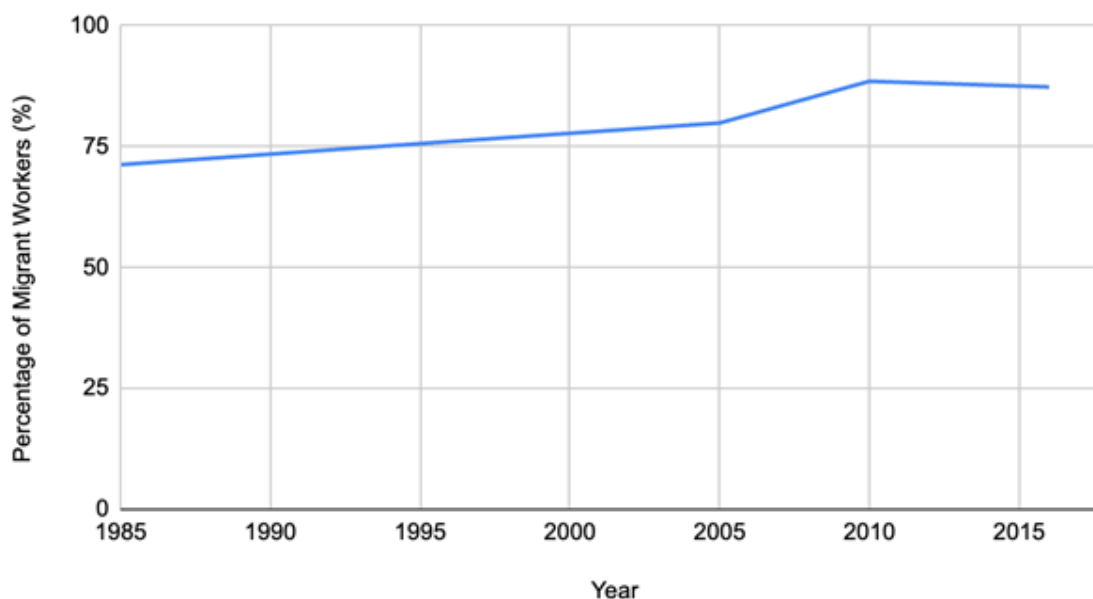
During the 1990s, rapid urbanisation and large-scale development projects in major cities such as Dubai and Abu Dhabi led to an increase in demand for migrant labour. In contrast to Singapore's policies, the UAE did not implement dependency ratio ceilings or limits on the number of migrant workers, and instead, its regulations focused more on employment sponsorship and residency. *As a result of this deregulation, their construction and manufacturing sectors became overdependent on migrant labourers.*

Since the 2000s, the UAE has had one of the highest levels of migrant labourers in the world, with migrant workers contributing more than 85-90% of the country's workforce. Although there have been multiple technological advancements and innovations pertaining to factors of production such as capital, the UAE continues to rely on low-skilled migrant workers due to its low labour costs and abundant supply.

In the 2010s, many labour reforms, such as the Wage Protection System, were implemented to help control the poor employment and living conditions of migrant workers. However, most of the unskilled migrant labourers are employed under deplorable conditions and contracts. The UAE still needs their assistance as they are rapidly increasing infrastructure due to reclamation and the inadequate availability of the local population

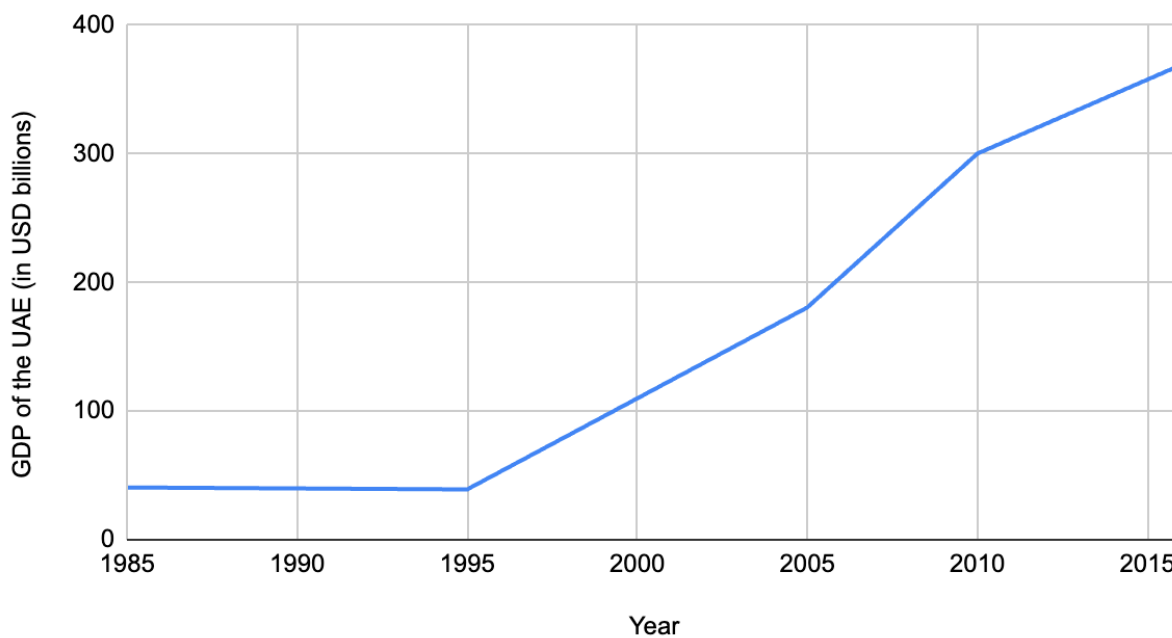
Year	Percentage of Migrant Workers (%)	GDP of the UAE (in USD billions)
2016	87.35	369.26
2010	88.53	300.2
2005	79.9	180.6
1995	75.64	39.1
1985	71.28	40.6

Percentage of Migrant Workers (%) vs Year



From this graph, we can see an overall increase in the proportion of migrant workers in the UAE from 1985 to 2016, rising from 70% to almost 80% of the workforce. This increase can be explained by the UAE's rapid economic expansion, a small number of working UAE nationals, and an increased number of migrant workers in labour intensive sectors such as construction, manufacturing and oil processing. There is also a slight decline after 2010, however it is minimal, indicating that reliance on migrant labour is structural rather than temporary.

The GDP of the UAE from 1985 to 2016



This graph shows that the GDP of the UAE grew at a slow rate until the mid 1990s, before rising sharply from the late 90s to 2010s. This growth was largely driven by high oil revenues, large scale infrastructure projects, and economic diversification, all of which required a high concentration of migrant labourers. Overall, the trend suggests that there is a strong link between the level of economic growth and GDP and the number of migrant workers.

Limitations

The major limitations of the study were the lack of availability of official data, particularly in the case of the United Arab Emirates. Unlike Singapore, where the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) publishes official data and regularly updated statistics on the number of migrant workers in each sector, as well as the specific work permit category, the UAE does not provide comprehensive and up-to-date statistics on the official number of migrant workers employed in low-wage versus

high-wage occupations. A majority of the figures for the UAE are estimates from international institutions, and not official national sources.

Further, there was a lack of segregation between low-skilled and high-skilled migrant labourers in official UAE statistics. Although it is known that migrant labour in the UAE is largely dominated by low-wage labourers, official statistics often report migrant workers as a single population under the term “Non-nationals” without distinguishing their wage levels, occupation types, or skills. This makes it difficult to accurately quantify the number of migrant labourers engaged specifically in low-wage jobs, like in Singapore.

Possible compatibility issues between Singapore and the UAE also constrained the study. Singapore has a highly regulated labour market that utilises policies such as quotas, dependency ratios, and levies, whereas the UAE’s sponsorship-based system lacks numerical controls. Addressing the above limitations would enable the study to be more specific and complete.

Conclusion

The study set out to analyse the role of low-skilled migrant workers in the development strategies of Singapore and the United Arab Emirates, with a concentration in how their employment changed over time as these economies developed. The analysis demonstrates that migrant labour has been a vital factor in driving economic growth in both economies, especially during periods of rapid infrastructure development and industrial expansion.

However, the study highlights a clear difference in the ways that each country adopts policies with respect to migrant labour. Singapore adopted a highly controlled framework using work permits, levies, and dependency ratio ceilings to limit reliance on migrant labour and encourage technological advances and capital-intensive production simultaneously. In contrast, the UAE maintained a sponsorship-based system with minimal restrictions, which led to a significantly higher dependence on migrant labourers, even in the present, as they still are a majority of the workforce and population.

Overall, the findings suggest that while migrant labour has played a crucial role in the development of both economies over time, different long-term growth strategies have shaped the outcomes. Singapore’s heavily restricted and productivity-driven approach has aimed to reduce dependence on migrant labourers, while the UAE’s labour-abundant model actively supports large-scale infrastructure expansion. Therefore, the study concludes that migrant labour is a structural component of economic growth, especially in developing economies, while management plays a key role in the long run. Singapore is actively trying to reduce its dependence by replacing these jobs with technology and encouraging local citizens to work in these areas, while the UAE, on the other hand, is content with leaving these jobs with migrant

labourers. The UAE has come under intense criticism for the Kafala System of employment, which violates human rights conditions. They have been encouraged to change their system of employment to make it more “humane” and aligned with the UN conditions of respecting human rights.

Bibliography

Abu Dhabi Manpower Supply | Best manpower company in UAE. (2021, November 12). ADMS UAE. <https://www.admsuae.com/>

ADNOC - Maximum Energy Minimum Emissions. (2021). Adnoc.ae. <https://www.adnoc.ae/en/>

Al Youha, A., & T. Malit Jr, F. (2017, March 2). *Labor Migration in the United Arab Emirates: Challenges and Responses.* Migrationpolicy.org. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/labor-migration-united-arab-emirates-challenges-and-responses>

Alhammadi, A., Yusaf, T., Soar, J., Ali, B. M., Kadirgama, K., & Yousif, B. F. (2024). Revolutionizing procurement: Unveiling next-gen supplier strategies in UAE’s oil & gas sector. *The Extractive Industries and Society*, 17, 101428–101428. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.exis.2024.101428>

Arafat, W., Bing, Z. Y., & Al-Mutawakel, O. (2017). Infrastructure Developing and Economic Growth in United Arab Emirates. *Business and Economic Research*, 8(1), 95. <https://doi.org/10.5296/ber.v8i1.12355>

Buckley, M. (2012). From Kerala to Dubai and back again: Construction migrants and the global economic crisis. *Geoforum*, 43(2), 250–259. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2011.09.001>

Building Towers, Cheating Workers: Exploitation of Migrant Construction Workers in the United Arab Emirates: IV. Migrant Construction Workers in the United Arab Emirates. (n.d.). Wwww.hrw.org. <https://www.hrw.org/reports/2006/uae1106/4.htm>

De Bel-Air, F. (2018). *Demography, Migration, and the Labour Market in the UAE Gulf Labour Markets, Migration and Population ExPLaNatory NotE MIGRATION POLICY CENTRE Demography, Migration, and the Labour Market in the UaE.* https://gulfmigration.grc.net/media/pubs/exno/GLMM_EN_2018_01.pdf

EKT Interactive. (2023). *History of Oil - A Timeline of the Modern Oil Industry.* EKT Interactive. <https://ektinteractive.com/history-of-oil/>

Elsayed, M. (2024). Middle East Centre THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES' LABOUR MARKET. *LSE Middle East Centre Paper Series*, 89. <https://eprints.lse.ac.uk/124359/1/MEC-series-89.pdf>

FOREIGN WORKFORCE POLICY ANNOUNCEMENTS AT COS 2024. (n.d.). Retrieved December 23, 2025, from https://www.mom.gov.sg/-/media/mom/documents/budget2024/factsheet-on-foreign-workforce-policies.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com

Greco, A. (2022, February 17). *The Strait of Malacca: From Sultanates to Singapore | Center for International Maritime Security*. CIMSEC. <https://cimsec.org/the-strait-of-malacca-from-sultanates-to-singapore/>

History - The Official Portal of the UAE Government. (n.d.). U.ae. <https://u.ae/en/about-the-uae/history>

Ho, K. W. (2020). Challenges to Social Mobility in Singapore. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3643266>

Ideson, P. (2024, May 16). *The Kraljic Matrix Simply Explained*. Artofprocurement.com; Art of Procurement. <https://artofprocurement.com/blog/learn-the-kraljic-matrix>

Insight 245: Demographic Changes and Social Challenges in the UAE – NUS – Middle East Institute. (2020, September). Nus.edu.sg. <https://mei.nus.edu.sg/publication/insight-245-demographic-changes-and-social-challenges-in-the-uae/>

International Migration and Development: Indians in the Persian Gulf. (2024). Portal de Periódicos Da CAPES; Portal .periodicos. CAPES. <https://www.periodicos.capes.gov.br/index.php/acervo/buscaador.html?task=detalhes&id=W2087724401>

JIME News Report. (n.d.). Jime.ieej.or.jp. <https://jime.ieej.or.jp/en/publications/2011/0527.htm>

Khurana, A. (2025, March 5). *UAE's Impact on Trade and Supply Chain Development*. HLS Global UAE. <https://hls-global.ae/uaes-role-in-global-trade-and-supply-chain-transformation/>

Laws & Regulations | Ministry of Human Resources & Emiratisation. (n.d.). Www.mohre.gov.ae. <https://www.mohre.gov.ae/en/laws-and-regulations.aspx>

Looking instead for migrant domestic worker?The Work Permit allows semi-skilled migrant workers from approved source countries/regions to work in certain sectors. Find out

- your sector's requirements, foreign worker levy and quota, and how to...* (2024, March 14). Ministry of Manpower Singapore. <https://www.mom.gov.sg/passes-and-permits/work-permit-for-foreign-worker?>
- MAS Monetary Policy Statement - April 2010.* (n.d.). Www.mas.gov.sg. <https://www.mas.gov.sg/news/monetary-policy-statements/2010/monetary-policy-statement-14-apr-10>
- Migrant Worker Experience and Employer Survey 2024 Report on Findings Manpower Research and Statistics Department Singapore.* (2025). https://stats.mom.gov.sg/iMAS_PdfLibrary/mrsd-Migrant-Worker-Experience-and-Employer-Survey-2024.pdf
- Migrant workers in the United Arab Emirates.* (2020, April 11). Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Migrant_workers_in_the_United_Arab_Emirates
- Ministry of Manpower. (2024, July 1). *Foreign worker quota and levy requirements.* Ministry of Manpower Singapore. <https://www.mom.gov.sg/passes-and-permits/work-permit-for-foreign-worker/foreign-worker-levy/what-is-the-foreign-worker-levy>
- Oil and Gas Industry in UAE - GET Global Group.* (2024, September 25). GET Global Group. <https://getglobalgroup.com/oil-and-gas-industry-in-uae/>
- Opec. (n.d.). *OPEC : Home.* Www.opec.org. <https://www.opec.org/>
- Pan, J., & Theseira, W. (2023). *Immigration in Singapore.* <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/080a4bc64cc8a9eb8a2a0e98d97a260a-0050062023/original/WDR-Immigration-in-Singapore-FORMATTED.pdf>
- Pass type Dec 2019 Dec 2020 Dec 2021 Dec 2022 Dec 2023 Jun 2024 Employment Pass (EP) 193,700 177,100 161,700 ...* (2024, September 12). Ministry of Manpower Singapore. https://www.mom.gov.sg/foreign-workforce-numbers?utm_source=chatgpt.com
- ROAD TO DUBAI 2003: A journey from difficult desert to beautiful oasis.* (2015). Khaleej Times. <https://www.khaleejtimes.com/business/road-to-dubai-2003-a-journey-from-difficult-desert-to-beautiful-oasis>
- Robinson, K. (2022, November 18). *What Is the Kafala System?* Council on Foreign Relations. <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/what-kafala-system>

SemiColonWeb. (2020). *The Role of Civil Labour in UAE's Infrastructure Growth*. Marmoommanpower.com. <https://www.marmoommanpower.com/en/blog/civil-labour-supply-uae-infrastructure>

SG101. (n.d.). *1959-1965: Early Economic Strategies*. SG101. <https://www.sg101.gov.sg/economy/surviving-our-independence/1959-1965/>

Source, S. (n.d.). *Title Educational development in Singapore: Connecting the national, regional and the global*. <https://repository.nie.edu.sg/server/api/core/bitstreams/6dfe1092-7bd9-4043-a0a4-1dbe3f89725a/content>

The. (2024, August 9). *Essential Education | Excel in Primary School and PSLE*. Essential Education | Excel in Primary School and PSLE. <https://www.essentialeducation.com.sg/blog/the-evolution-of-singapores-education-system-from-1965-to-the-present?srsId=AfmBOooBzPjbYGnDB7zdEjS6Ru9P6rRtg6dGcuxQS1ozE2ZklmFb2C HO>

The plight of Migrant Workers in UAE | Migrant Forum in Asia. (2025). Mfasia.org. <https://mfasia.org/the-plight-of-indian-migrant-workers-in-uae/>

The UAE's Unsustainable Nation Building | YaleGlobal Online. (n.d.). Archive-Yaleglobal.yale.edu. <https://archive-yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/uaes-unsustainable-nation-building>

Title Education in Singapore. (n.d.). <https://repository.nie.edu.sg/server/api/core/bitstreams/de3f7aa5-fe5e-4939-8a3c-08a0b2d40d11/content>

United Arab Emirates - Finance. (n.d.). Encyclopedia Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/place/United-Arab-Emirates/Finance>

Wagle, U. R. (2024). Labor migration, remittances, and the economy in the Gulf Cooperation Council region. *Comparative Migration Studies*, 12(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40878-024-00390-3>

Walk Free. (2024). *United Arab Emirates*. Walk Free. <https://www.walkfree.org/global-slavery-index/country-studies/united-arab-emirates/>

Wee, T. B. (2023). *An Overview of Singapore's Education System from 1819 to the 1970s*. Nlb.gov.sg. <https://biblioasia.nlb.gov.sg/vol-5/issue2/jul-2009/singapore-education-system-overview/>

Welcome To Zscaler Directory Authentication. (2025). Washingtoninstitute.org. <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/high-rises-and-low-wages-expatriate-labor-gulf-arab-states>

Wikipedia Contributors. (2019a, March 19). *Economy of Singapore*. Wikipedia; Wikimedia Foundation. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Economy_of_Singapore

Wikipedia Contributors. (2019b, April 29). *History of Singapore*. Wikipedia; Wikimedia Foundation. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Singapore

Wikipedia Contributors. (2019c, April 30). *Demographics of Singapore*. Wikipedia; Wikimedia Foundation. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographics_of_Singapore

Wikipedia Contributors. (2019d, October 27). *President of the United Arab Emirates*. Wikipedia; Wikimedia Foundation. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/President_of_the_United_Arab_Emirates

Wikipedia Contributors. (2024, February 15). *Labour force of the United Arab Emirates*. Wikipedia; Wikimedia Foundation. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Labour_force_of_the_United_Arab_Emirates

World Bank. (2025). *World Bank Group - International Development, Poverty and Sustainability*. Worldbank.org. <https://www.worldbank.org/ext/en/home>