

## A STUDY OF EMOTIONAL CHALLENGES AND WELLBEING OF ELDERLY PARENTS AFFECTED BY CHILDREN'S MIGRATION IN MADHUBANI DISTRICT

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### **Abstract**

*The emotional and physical health of the elderly parents left behind is greatly impacted by the current surge in young migration, which is a common occurrence. The effects of children's migration on the mental and physical health of their elderly parents in the Madhubani district are investigated in this study. Using a well-structured questionnaire, the researchers gathered primary data from 160 parents who were 65 and older for this descriptive study. The respondents are chosen using a simple random sampling method. Statistical methods including the chi-square test, the simple percentage analysis, and the Friedman ranking test are used to examine the gathered data. The research shows that the most emotional problems that parents experience as they become older are isolation, less social contact, and a weakening of family ties. Anxiety, uncertainty, and a host of physical and mental health problems are additional outcomes of children's absence from their lives. Improving the well-being of aging parents can be achieved through increased community involvement, regular connection with migrant children, and emotional support systems, according to the study. When it comes to addressing the emotional repercussions of children's relocation on the elderly, the findings offer useful information for healthcare providers, social welfare groups, and lawmakers looking to build effective interventions and support mechanisms.*

### **Keywords**

*Elderly Parents, Migration, Emotional Challenges, Wellbeing, Mental health, Family Support.*

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## **Introduction**

People engage in migration when they uproot their lives and settle in a new location, either temporarily or permanently. Reasons for migration might be political, educational, or economic. A move can be in their future if they find better living conditions or more prospects elsewhere. Due to the severe life circumstances in their country and the challenging adaptation to their destination, mental health disorders are a common danger for these individuals, according to research.

Primarily migrating adults can be younger individuals or older adults themselves. Because they rely on their younger relatives, they might move. Difficulties will vary from group to group. Since they may be in worse physical health, have less social connections, and have a harder time learning a new language and culture, older migrants are at a higher risk of experiencing these mental health problems. Worldwide, migrants aged 65 and up made up about 34.3 million people in 2020, or 12% of the total. Mental illness appears to be common among the vast majority of the world's elderly travelers. Nevertheless, research, policies, and development initiatives sometimes fail to take older migrants into account because they are believed to be a younger demographic. There are a lot of elderly migrants who end up in poor housing conditions with inadequate pensions and health insurance in their new home. There would be a greater deterioration in mental health and insufficient access to effective treatments as a result of this.

People move from one country to another for a variety of reasons, including better living conditions, the chance to be with family, to escape poverty, or to improve their quality of life. Research on migration has mostly focused on working-age adults and young people, with comparatively little focus on migrants in their latter years, particularly those who retire to Western countries. As a consequence of family reunion policies or to provide or receive care inside the family circle, these individuals relocate to be with their children or other relatives. In terms of the difficulties they would inevitably face, older migrants are distinct from elderly migrants. The reason behind this is that older migrants often find it difficult to adapt to the new country's social, economic, and cultural norms because they have spent so much of their lives immersed in their own culture. Observation reveals that these individuals not only relocate physically, but also mentally and emotionally. Many senior migrants experience a sense of displacement during this shift because they leave behind the houses, friends, and culturally mandated ways of life that have shaped their lives for so long.

This is due to the fact that elder migrants have a disproportionate share of difficulties throughout migration compared to their children, who may have embraced Western society earlier. When people of different generations interact, it often leads to misunderstandings and arguments because of differences in language, culture, and outlook. There are instances when older migrants may feel emotionally and socially

isolated because they can't relate to the younger generation in their families. Furthermore, most Western industrialized cultures have individualistic social and cultural standards, in contrast to the collectivist communities from which the elderly migrants originate, where they rely on the assistance of both their immediate family and society at large. It is critical to evaluate the psychological and social requirements of the aging migrant population as the number of people in this demographic continues to climb.

### **Reviews of Related Studies**

**Sharma, Sanjana et al., (2025).** The mental health of the parents of Namdhari Sikh migrants from the Ellenabad block in Sirsa district, Haryana, who were left behind, is the focus of this study. Whether it's for job, school, or family reasons, the parents who stay behind also feel the impacts of their children's migration. The results of ten in-depth interviews and a sample of one hundred homes selected by non-random sampling methods are presented in this article. Findings from the study shed light on the social, psychological, and emotional effects on parents who are left behind, including increased risk of sadness, anxiety, and isolation as well as changes in family dynamics. The article also delves into the parents' coping techniques, which may include religious activities, farming, and social support. Discussion centers on suggested interventions for mental health.

**Mandal, Sourav & Paul, Manoj. (2024).** The purpose of this research is to look at how remittances help make up for a parent's absence and how adult child migration affects their mental and physical wellbeing.

**Sharma, Anju et al., (2024).** A big current worry is the mental health of the world's aging population, which has been exacerbated by the global trend of an aging population and the rapid migration of adult children. The purpose of this research was to examine how the perceived mental health of elderly parents in the rural Parbat area relates to the migration of their adult offspring.

**Khanal, Prakriti et al., (2018).** After their children migrate out, very little is known about the quality of life of elderly parents. The primary goal of this research is to determine how children's migration out of their parents' homes affects those parents who are residing in nursing homes.

**Ghimire, Saruna et al., (2018).** The purpose of this research is to find out how the well-being of elderly parents in Nepal is affected when their adult children leave the country. In Krishnapur municipality, Nepal, 260 senior citizens living in the community were the subjects of a cross-sectional house-to-house study. The purpose of this binary logistic regression analysis was to determine if there was a correlation between adult children migrating and factors such as self-reported chronic diseases, depressive symptoms, loneliness, and social support among elderly parents. At least one adult migrant kid lived in 51.2% of the households surveyed. Participants with a migrant child were more likely to report chronic diseases, experience

depressive symptoms, and report feeling lonely compared to those without a migrant child. However, the odds ratios for the other well-being indicators were not statistically significant, with the exception of loneliness. In contrast to previous research suggesting a negative correlation between adult children's migration and their parents' general health, we found no such correlation among the study's participants. From a policy standpoint, though, it's important to keep in mind that these findings might be short-lived due to the dynamic nature of Nepalese families.

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To identify the emotional challenges faced by elderly parents due to children's migration in Madhubani district.
2. To assess the impact of children's migration on the overall well-being of elderly parents.

### **Research Methodology**

#### **Research Design:**

The study used a descriptive research approach to learn about the mental and physical difficulties experienced by migratory parents.

#### **Sample Size:**

One hundred sixty parents whose children are away at college or work are part of the study's sample.

#### **Sampling Technique:**

Participants are chosen from different communities using simple random sampling.

#### **Data Collection:**

Both primary and secondary sources are used to gather data.

#### **Primary Data:**

In order to have a better understanding of the emotional experiences of aging parents, primary data is gathered through surveys and structured interviews. Questions concerning social isolation, emotional suffering, mental health, and loneliness are incorporated into a questionnaire. To get a more in-depth look at the participants' experiences, we also conduct in-depth interviews.

#### **Secondary Data:**

This study relies on secondary data culled from reports, literature, and prior research on the psychological effects of migration on families, with a focus on the elderly.

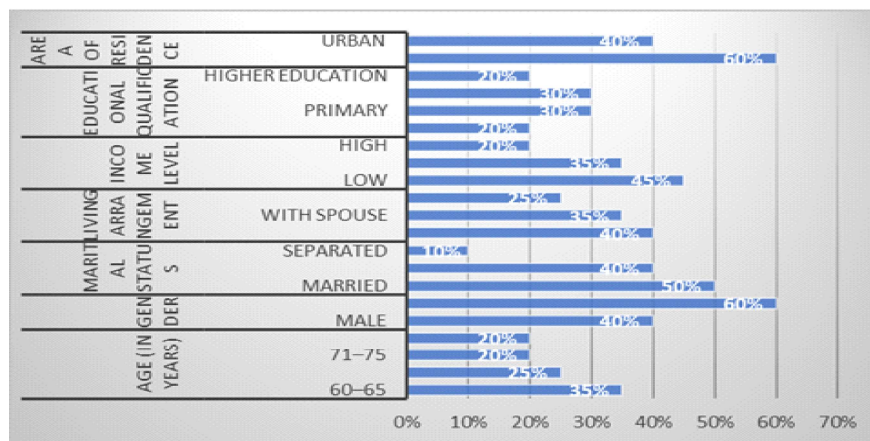
#### **Data Analysis Techniques:**

Statistical software like SPSS or Excel is used to examine survey data by calculating simple percentages, applying chi-square tests and the Friedman ranking test, and so on.

### **Results of the Study**

**Table 1.1**  
**Demographic Profile of the Respondents (N = 160)**

Demographic Variable	Categories	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Age (In Years)	60–65	56	35%
	66–70	40	25%
	71–75	32	20%
	Above 75	32	20%
Gender	Male	64	40%
	Female	96	60%
Marital Status	Married	80	50%
	Widowed	64	40%
	Separated	16	10%
Living Arrangement	Alone	64	40%
	With Spouse	56	35%
	With Family	40	25%
Income Level	Low	72	45%
	Medium	56	35%
	High	32	20%
Educational Qualification	Illiterate	32	20%
	Primary	48	30%
	Secondary	48	30%
	Higher Education	32	20%
Area of Residence	Rural	96	60%
	Urban	64	40%



**Figure 1.1: Demographic Profile of the Respondents (N = 160)**

Table 1.1 shows the demographic profile of the 160 older adults who filled out the survey. The age group of 60–65 years old accounts for 35% of the total

responders, with those aged 66–70 making up a close second with 25%. Twenty percent of the sample falls into either the 71–75 or over 75 age brackets, suggesting a well-balanced representation of the senior citizen population. Among the responders, more women than men made up the total (60%) compared to 40%.

In terms of marital status, half of the participants are married, 40% have lost a spouse, and 10% are in a different relationship. According to the statistics on living arrangements, 40% of the older respondents are single, 35% are married, and 25% are living with relatives. This data reveals that the researched older population has a wide range of living situations.

In terms of income level, 45% of respondents are from the low-income bracket, 35% are in the medium-income bracket, and less than 20% are in the high-income bracket. Based on their level of education, 30% of the participants have completed elementary school, 30% have completed secondary school, 20% are illiterate, and 20% have completed college. To round things off, when asked where they call home, 60% of respondents said rural areas and 40% said metropolitan areas. The table provides a thorough context for comprehending the emotional issues experienced by elderly adults, as it demonstrates a broad demographic composition of the respondents.

**Table 1.2**  
**Chi-Square Test Results on Demographic Factors Influencing Emotional Challenges**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Calculated Chi-Square Value</b>	<b>Critical Value (at 0.05 significance level)</b>	<b>Result</b>
Gender	2.5	3.841	No significant association
Age	7.2	7.815	No significant association
Marital Status	5.5	3.841	Significant association
Living Arrangement	3.9	5.991	No significant association
Income Level	4.1	5.991	No significant association
Educational Qualification	2.8	5.991	No significant association
Area of Residence	6.5	5.991	Significant association

At the 0.05 level of significance, Table 2 displays the findings of the chi-square test that investigated the impact of demographic characteristics on the emotional issues experienced by respondents. The results demonstrate that there is a statistically significant correlation between emotional problems and married status ( $\chi^2 = 5.5$ ), since the computed chi-square value is higher than the crucial value

(3.841). Likewise, there is a significant correlation with the region of residence ( $\chi^2 = 6.5$ ), since the computed value is more than the critical value (5.991). This suggests that respondents' emotional issues vary greatly depending on their marital status and whether they live in various places.

At the 0.05 significance level, the computed chi-square values for gender ( $\chi^2 = 2.5$ ), age ( $\chi^2 = 7.2$ ), living arrangement ( $\chi^2 = 3.9$ ), income level ( $\chi^2 = 4.1$ ), and educational qualification ( $\chi^2 = 2.8$ ) do not indicate any statistically significant associations with emotional challenges. In general, the findings indicate that out of all the demographic variables examined, marital status and place of residence are the most important in determining emotional difficulties, whereas the remaining characteristics are not statistically significant.

**Table 1.3**  
**Association Between Demographic Characteristics and Emotional Challenges of Elderly Parents**

Variable	Calculated Chi-Square Value	Critical Value (At 0.05 significance level)
Gender	3.2	3.841
Age	8.1	7.815
Marital Status	4.6	3.841
Living Arrangement	5.0	5.991
Income Level	2.9	5.991
Educational Qualification	6.3	5.991
Area of Residence	7.0	5.991

Table 1.3 displays the results of the chi-square test, performed at the 0.05 level of significance, showing the association between certain demographic variables and the emotional difficulties experienced by elderly parents. The computed value surpasses the critical value (7.815), indicating a statistically significant link between age ( $\chi^2 = 8.1$ ) and emotional problems. The same holds true for married status ( $\chi^2 = 4.6$ ), educational qualification ( $\chi^2 = 6.3$ ), and region of residence ( $\chi^2 = 7.0$ ). All three show significant relationships because their estimated chi-square values are more than the critical values (3.841 and 5.991, respectively). This suggests that these demographic characteristics considerably affect the emotional difficulties faced by elderly parents.

Contrarily, emotional problems are not statistically associated with gender ( $\chi^2 = 3.2$ ), living arrangement ( $\chi^2 = 5.0$ ), or income level ( $\chi^2 = 2.9$ ) since their computed chi-square values are less than the threshold values at the 0.05 level of

significance. This indicates that these factors do not have a substantial impact on the emotional difficulties faced by elderly parents. In sum, the results show that factors including marital status, level of education, and geographical location significantly affect the mental health of older parents.

### **Conclusion**

In this study, we look at how the migration of children in the Madhubani district impacts the mental health and well-being of older parents. The results show that when children move out, it affects the emotional lives of their elderly parents in a big way, making them feel lonely, cutting them off from social activities, and eroding the links within the family. Elderly parents, who have always relied on family-based support systems for care, company, and emotional stability, may find it particularly challenging to cope with the emotional voids left by a lack of children in their daily lives.

The report goes on to say that when parents are old, they have emotional difficulties, and those difficulties might affect their mental and physical health. Commonly reported emotions include anxiety, insecurity, and stress; in rare instances, these mental burdens may exacerbate physical health problems. Especially for elderly parents who live alone or have few social connections, the absence of consistent emotional and physical care from migrating children increases their vulnerability. There is a statistically significant association between the emotional challenges experienced by elderly parents and marital status and area of residence, according to the chi-square analysis. However, no such association is observed for variables such as gender, age, income level, educational qualification, or living arrangement. Because of less social interaction, less institutional support, and less access to healthcare and community services, this indicates that living in a remote region after a widow's death may heighten emotional vulnerability.

In sum, the research shows how critical it is to help the elderly parents who are left behind by their children who migrate by bolstering their emotional support systems. A child's health and happiness can be greatly enhanced with regular parent-child communication, community-based support networks, social engagement initiatives, and easily available healthcare. Researchers hope that legislators, social workers, and healthcare providers would use the study's findings to improve the living conditions and mental health of the elderly in areas hit hard by migration.

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