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**RESEARCH PAPER**

**Beyond Borders: Social Well-Being of Women Left Behind in District  
Gujrat**

**<sup>1</sup>Iram Shaheen, <sup>2</sup>Dr. Huma Butt and <sup>3</sup>Dr. Tauqeer Hussain Shah\***

1. MS Scholar, Department of Sociology, International Islamic University Islamabad, Pakistan
2. Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology International Islamic University, Islamabad, Pakistan
3. Assistant Professor, Department of Development Studies, NUST University, Islamabad, Pakistan

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**\*Corresponding Author:** [Tauqeerhussain@s3h.nust.edu.pk](mailto:Tauqeerhussain@s3h.nust.edu.pk)

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**ABSTRACT**

The overseas migration of husbands significantly influences the lives of the wives left behind, particularly in terms of their gender roles and social, emotional, and financial well-being. This study aims to explore the everyday lives and social well-being of left-behind wives in District Gujrat. The impact of such migration on women's social well-being remains unclear, as it can either lead to increased autonomy and improved living standards or result in additional burdens and emotional distress. Guided by the theoretical framework of women's empowerment, the research investigates how migration reshapes traditional gender roles and responsibilities within families, especially in joint family systems. A qualitative research approach was adopted. The study was conducted in urban areas of District Gujrat, with participants selected through snowball sampling. A total of 20 women were interviewed until data saturation was achieved. Data were collected using a semi-structured interview guide and analyzed through thematic analysis. The findings reveal that male migration significantly alters the gender roles of women. Although migrant remittances improve the economic conditions of the family, but, many women may experience increased emotional stress & burden due to managing the household chores, finances, and childcare, especially in the prolonged absence of their husband's support. To improve the social well-being of left-behind women in District Gujrat, it is necessary to provide mental health care services, build & strengthen social connections, and introduce opportunities that linked with practical skill-based financial opportunities.

**KEYWORDS** Migration, Left-Behind Wives, Gender Roles, Social Well-Being, Emotional Well-Being

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**Introduction**

Migration is a widespread and growing phenomenon, with significant social and economic consequences for both origin and destination countries (Rai et al., 2023). Many studies show multifaceted effects on both migrants and their families who remain in their home country, as well as for the communities involved. In 2016, according to the United Nations Office for Economic and Social Affairs Population Division, around 244 million individuals, constituting 3.3% of the world population, resided outside their nation of birth in 2015 (Paudyal & Tunprasert, 2018).

Between 2000 and 2004, according to the sources, a significant number of Pakistanis were living abroad, with the highest density found in several key regions. The Middle East managed the highest number of overseas Pakistanis (45%), followed by Europe at 29% and the Americas at 23%. Additionally, a distinct category labeled "sea-based" migrants was identified, with the Middle East accounting for 44%-50% of

this group, the Asian region for 38%–45%, Europe for approximately 6%, and the Americas for less than 25%. In 2004, Pakistan recorded the emigration of 174,864 individuals—a significant increase compared to 122,620 in 1995. In districts with high emigration rates, such as Rawalpindi, many households depend on small-scale subsistence farming and non-agricultural employment as primary sources of livelihood. This discussion highlights the means of subsistence and asset ownership among emigrant households.

The effects of migration on the social well-being of left behind are dynamic and can vary over time, making them difficult to predict with certainty. According to Rigg (2007), rural communities in China have experienced both economic and social challenges due to the departure of migrating individuals. This study explores the relationship between points of departure and destination, and how these movements influence the well-being of those who remain in the place of origin. Labor migrants often maintain contact with their families back home, which can influence traditional values and norms within the household, thereby affecting the overall well-being of the left-behind members. As Hadi (1999) emphasizes, it is essential to first understand the family structure and local interpretations of concepts such as 'marriage' and 'household' in order to fully grasp their impact on the social well-being of affected individuals—particularly in the context of Nepal, which this study later addresses.

According to Niehof (2012), a family's life can be regarded as the domain where its members carry out their daily activities, irrespective of their current spatial location, to create and utilize resources to meet their basic needs and ensure their well-being. An increasing amount of scholarly literature has investigated the impact of migration on the social well-being of families residing in emerging and developing economies. The phenomenon of migration has been scrutinized to determine its potential for fostering prosperity in societies that send migrants. It may be achieved through various means, including but not limited to elevating living standards, facilitating access to housing, stimulating corporate investments, and augmenting the accessibility of healthcare and educational resources for those family members who remain in their home country.

Migration can significantly affect social well-being by alleviating economic difficulties, providing additional social support, and addressing the deficiencies of government policy measures. Remittances significantly help alleviate financial pressures on families by enhancing their liquidity. Nonetheless, if the relocation of a family member adversely impacts the overall welfare or social standing of the household—and leads to a decline in both market and non-market productivity because of their absence—it could deteriorate the family's condition instead of enhancing it (Paudyal & Tunprasert, 2018)

## **Literature Review**

Migration is a worldwide phenomenon that affects millions of individuals globally. The choice to migrate usually has profound impacts on people, families, and communities. The effects of migration are especially notable for wives who are left behind, as they must handle household responsibilities and look after their children while their spouses are absent (Gartaula et al., 2011). In migration studies, the social well-being of left behind wives is an important area of research, as the ramifications of migration on women's social well-being can be significant. In 2019, the report showed that women represent nearly half of all international migrants, with female migrants accounting for 48.5% of the total. Migration is a worldwide phenomenon, that impacts millions of individuals across the globe. In 2020, according to the World Migration

Report, the world count of international migrants in 2019 hit 272 million, marking a rise of 51 million since 2010 (Rai et al., 2023).

Though migration may adversely affect left-behind families it can also improve the financial stability and social well-being of both migrants and their families. At the individual level, it can also lead the economic conditions higher income, and enhanced job opportunities, which can aid in quality of life and social improvement. In the United States, the study revealed that immigrants who came to the country as children achieved higher education levels and were more likely to earn higher incomes and access better job opportunities than non-immigrants. The research indicated that immigrants played a role in the nation's economic growth through entrepreneurship and workforce involvement (Marlow et al., 2022).

In Bangladesh & Mexico, a study has shown that left-behind wives faced considerable difficulties in managing household workloads, childcare, and economic hardships challenges. They also expressed feelings of social isolation and a lack of support, resulting in depression and anxiety without their spouses (Koirala, 2023).

Migration significantly influences the family structure, especially regarding the women's roles and duties. The focus of the present study is to clarify the nature and strength of the family structure, such as a rise in female-led households, smaller household sizes, and shifts in the division of labor at the household level. Left-behind women assumed extra responsibilities, such as running the household and looking after children, resulting in a change in family gender roles. In India, research has shown that migration resulted in alterations to the gender distribution of familial roles & duties, as women assumed extra duties when their partners were not around. Moreover, this research revealed that left-behind wives faced extreme stress from their greater workload and the demands to fulfill their family's needs. (Tong et al., 2019).

In India, a study found that left-behind wives had reduced social support, less social participation, and a diminished sense of community compared to women whose husbands did not migrate. Similarly, in Bangladesh, research findings revealed that left-behind wives expressed feelings of social isolation and a deficiency in social networks, resulting in a feeling of being disconnected from their communities. These results indicate that the effects of migration on the social well-being of wives who are left behind can be substantial and need focus from both policymakers and researchers. Likewise, in the Philippines research revealed that left-behind wives underwent notable shifts in their social connections, such as decreased interaction with extended family and friends. (Lei & Desai, 2021).

Moreover, managing the relationship between mothers and their children without the father is a considerable challenge for left-behind wives. In Mexico, the study found that left-behind wives are facing difficulties in managing their children's education, health, and emotional well-being without their partners. Moreover, wives assume the responsibility of the main caregiver, which can be difficult, especially if they possess limited financial assistance. Left-behind wives frequently encounter the challenge of upholding discipline and overseeing their children's behavior without the father's presence. One of the reports from the United Nations Children's Fund showed that children in families where parents are absent face increased emotional and behavioral issues because of their father's absence. The report emphasized that mothers left behind encounter considerable financial challenges, with 27% of female-headed households in developing nations living in poverty. A study by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute in Pakistan indicates that the migration of male partners

resulted in heavier workloads for mothers who remained, causing many to work extended hours to support their families (Paudyal & Tunprasert, 2018).

### **Material and Methods**

This research utilizes a qualitative approach to examine the social well-being of women who remain behind as a result of their husbands' overseas migration in District Gujrat. In the present study, researchers use qualitative method, as it provides a deep comprehension of the lived experiences, views, and feelings of the participants within their social and cultural settings. From an interpretivist epistemological viewpoint, the research aims to comprehend how women perceive and interpret their social well-being without their husbands, acknowledging that knowledge is collaboratively formed through interactions between the researcher and participants. The research involved 20 participants, and data gathering persisted until thematic saturation was reached through the snow ball technique. Data were collected through in-depth, semi-structured interviews, which allowed participants the freedom to express their thoughts and experiences openly. An interview guide was developed to explore themes related to emotional well-being, social support, decision-making roles, financial autonomy, and changes in household dynamics. All interviews were conducted in the local language, transcribed verbatim, and analyzed thematically. Ethical considerations such as informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation were strictly observed. The study aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of how transnational migration affects the social fabric and well-being of women left behind, offering insights into the gendered dimensions of migration in the Pakistani context. Furthermore, the conceptual model presented by the researchers offers a comprehensive framework that elucidates the entire scope of the study.

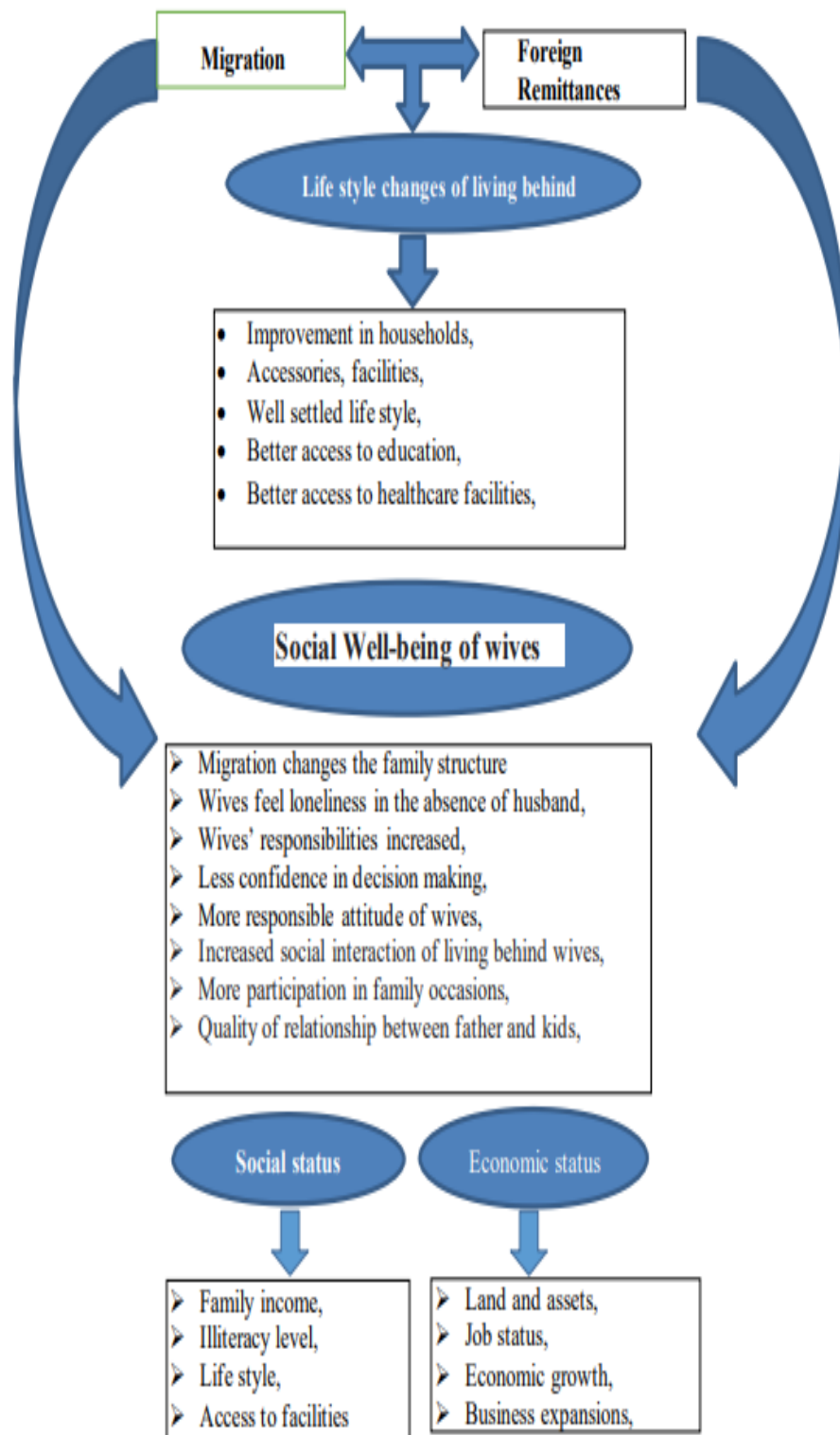


Figure1: Conceptual model of the Study

### Data Analysis

The data analysis in this study is empirical in nature and directly addresses the research questions, which include: (i) How does migration alter the responsibilities of wives left behind? (ii) In what ways does migration impact the social well-being of left-behind wives? (iii) What challenges arise in managing the relationship between

migrated husbands and their wives? The final themes for analysis were developed using a systematic coding method. The following text presents the main themes and sub-themes that emerged during the analysis, with respondents' answers interpreted in relation to these themes.

### **Improvement in Daily life of Left behind Wives**

Under the current theme of improvement in daily life of left behind wives, the research has explored the financial stability in daily life of wives left behind, their access to health care facilities, access of children to better education, improvement in economic condition of family, change in family structure, increased social interaction and participation in family occasions. The current research study fills this research gap by explaining the financial stability in daily life of left behind wives. The respondents were asked about how their daily life and access to facilities was improved since the husband migrated, different respondents provided different answers. One of the respondent said that she is satisfied with her financial conditions since her husband migrated abroad her expressions while giving the answer were of satisfaction.

The respondent quoted that:

*"I feel much improvement in my life and day to day life because of better financial state, my family now have the resources to meet our basic needs and handle unexpected expenses. It has reduced our constant worry about fulfilling our daily needs, which can impact our mental and emotional well-being."*

The respondent emphasized that overseas migrants make significant contributions to both their home and host societies through the remittances they send. These financial transfers not only support their families but also help build social and political ties, fostering solidarity between migrants and both their countries of origin and destination. Host communities can benefit from these connections through opportunities for cross-border investment, cultural exchange, and the promotion of mutual understanding. This connection allows migrants to maintain a sense of identity and belonging while respecting their cultural traditions. Collectively, these factors support the development of peaceful, diverse societies and contribute to the economic stability and financial well-being of the wives left behind (Tachibana et al., 2019).

Another Respondent stated that:

*"I feel great improvement in my daily life due to increase in our income, my daily life has improved a lot because my husband is now making more money since he started his job in Dubai, and this increase in income has brought positive changes financially which are noticeable in my daily activities and overall well-being."*

She explained that migration is a phenomenon centered on human beings, who have engaged in the act of relocating for countless times. Sociologists have mostly directed their attention on the examination of social, cultural, and economic integration as well as the mobility of migrants, including both those who migrate via legal channels and those who do so irregularly (West et al., 2021). The motivation for this interest is driven by the impact that these migrations have on the social and financial systems of families. Given the dynamic nature of both migration and society, it can be migration of husband make the life of wives left behind financially stronger as explained by another respondent.

The possibility to get access to better healthcare facilities for left behind wives and children increases when the husbands migrate to earn livelihood in another country (Archambault, 2010). While collecting the responses from interviewees, the researchers also asked about their access to healthcare facilities. All of the respondents provided a positive answer that they now get access to good doctors and better healthcare facilities.

One of the respondents stated that:

*"Yes I have an access to private health opportunities like hospitals and good doctors, I can contact on phone for medical issues to consultant and specialist doctors and get appointments. Because I have access to private health care opportunities, it provides me with a sense of security and convenience when it comes to my healthcare needs."*

The respondent has stated in the statement that since her husband has migrated for the job, she has gotten the access to better healthcare facilities. She can now receive high quality treatment from the doctors on time without waiting for her turn in line. Majority of the respondents claimed that they were happy as they were able to get better health care facilities since the migration of husband.

Another respondent also said that:

*"I have access to good health facilities. I have access to private doctors and get proper guidance and treatment regarding my health. I can get appointments from specialists from a renowned private hospital. I can take my child to specialist in emergency if need be. The hospital provide expensive and good medicines which i am able to afford because of husband's money"*

The reply from a left behind wife showed that healthcare access for her and her children had significantly better even when considering elements tied to their status in a migrant family. She highlighted that migration positively affected healthcare accessibility, primarily because remittances lowered financial obstacles. These results indicate that the departure of husbands for work can improve health conditions for the wives and children left at home. Furthermore, another individual indicated an impressive degree of contentment with her existing way of life, particularly emphasizing her capacity to provide private healthcare for her children as a significant advantage. Her emotional tone and visible tears expressed this sentiment.

*"Alhamdulillah, I possess numerous resources, enabling me to consider private options too. However, I often prefer government hospitals, while I try to take my children to private hospitals & my mother in law as well for specialist care".*

The wife who was left behind shared that her access to healthcare services had greatly improved because of her husband's remittances. She explained that her children now receive regular checkups at private clinics and hospitals and are able to consult with specialists who charge higher fees. She also mentioned taking her mother-in-law to a private hospital, citing the availability of qualified doctors and respectful treatment of elderly patients. She expressed gratitude for the financial support sent by her husband, which has enabled her to care for her family without facing financial constraints.

### **Increased Social Interaction and Participation in Family Occasions**

When husband migrates, the social responsibilities of left behind wives also increase. It is due to the fact that left behind wives have to attend the family events or family gatherings in the absence of husbands (Choithani, 2020). Majority of respondents claimed that they were living in the joint or extended families. A respondent told that:

*"Migration change my family structure in sense of absence of husband and i have to bear a lot of responsibilities, I live in joint family. when your husband in home most of the outdoor gathering occasions are managed by him but now when I am alone then I have to do all that things myself"*

The respondent explained that her husband's migration had led to a significant shift in her family dynamics, particularly due to his absence and the resulting increase in her responsibilities. She noted that living in a joint family system has further intensified her duties. She elaborated that when her husband was present, he typically handled outdoor social engagements and related responsibilities. However, in his absence, she is now solely responsible for managing these affairs on her own. Additionally, another respondent shared a similar experience, stating that:

*"I live in a nuclear family and yes my husband's migration has affected me a lot in many ways. I try to take his place on some occasions but some of them are missed due to kids. I participate in all the family events in the absence of my husband such as family weddings or eid gathering. I feel like I represent my husband in all these occasions."*

In the above statement, the respondent explained that before her husband's migration, she lived in a nuclear family. However, following his departure, she was compelled to move into a joint family household. As a result, she noted that his absence had significantly affected her in various ways. While she made efforts to take on her husband's responsibilities in certain situations, there were times—such as during funerals—when she was unable to do so due to childcare obligations. Nonetheless, she actively participated in important family events, including weddings and Eid gatherings, in his absence. In these instances, she perceived herself as representing her husband. In a similar context, another respondent also shared her perspective:

*"We were living separately in his presence, but now I'm living in a joint family I have to participate in family gathering more in his absence because he's the eldest son in the family and after him I've to look after those things. The reason is that if I do not participate or attend events then the family members will call me arrogant due to change in my economic status or the increased social status of my husband. I do not want people to jinx our financial or social status so i attend these events to not become the talk of the town"*

In the excerpt above, the respondent highlighted a unique perspective: she attended family events not only out of obligation but also to prevent others from casting negative judgments her financial and social status. Her family structure had changed following her husband's migration, shifting from a nuclear to a joint family arrangement. Previously, she lived independently with her children, but now she resides with her in-laws, which has increased her involvement in family affairs. As her husband holds the position of the eldest son in the family, she has taken on the responsibility of representing him at social functions in his absence. She explained that her participation in such gatherings is driven by a desire to avoid being perceived as arrogant or aloof—an impression that could be fueled by her improved financial situation or her husband's elevated social standing. According to the respondent,



attending these events helps prevent gossip or superstitious beliefs among close relatives that could harm her social or economic reputation (Shwe et al., 2019).

A respondent further explained that:

*"Yes, it is obvious that the husband provides a lot of support. I have the responsibility of taking care of family members and children and to look after the whole house and everything. When the husband goes out, the responsibility increases. It also increases social interaction. We can say that there is no one, you get the time to participate most of the time, on top of that, I will say that my husband is not here, but like in our family, there is an event where I enjoy myself, it is very important to go there, so I have to go instead."*

In the excerpt above, the respondent noted that while her husband provided emotional and moral support during their time living in a nuclear family, his migration compelled her to move in with her in-laws. As a result, she is now responsible for caring for the children and other family members, as well as managing the household and its affairs. The departure of the spouse significantly increases the responsibilities of the left-behind wife, including her level of social engagement. Within her family setting, she particularly enjoys attending Eid gatherings, as they offer her the opportunity to reconnect with her own parents, siblings, friends, and extended in-laws. The analysis of responses reveals that most participants originally lived in nuclear families but moved into joint family systems after their husbands migrated—often to avoid isolation and maintain social support. This shift not only changed their household composition but also transformed their gender roles, as the wives typically took on responsibilities managed by their husbands (Singh, 2018). Many left-behind wives are now expected to attend all family gatherings in their husband's absence, which at times allows them meaningful chances to reconnect with loved ones. Overall, the analysis offers unique insights into the changing family patterns and increased social participation of left-behind wives following their husbands' migration.

### **Social Well-being of Left Behind Wives**

In social science research methodology, especially in the domain of the emotional well-being of women who are left-behind is the exploration of factors that lead to the development of stability of emotions. The concepts of emotional wellness, mental well-being, and causation are influenced by societal, psychological, and social variables (Lund et al., 2018). Within the theoretical framework of migration, particularly labor migration, many additional circumstances may contribute to the emergence of emotional well-being issues among women.

Women who are left behind by their spouses' face challenges in maintaining their overall welfare due to the added strain of home responsibilities. The empowerment of women has been facilitated by decision-making, however simultaneously, their empowerment is hindered by a dearth of economic autonomy and an incapacity to make judgments on significant subjects (Koirala, 2023). In addition to the aforementioned concerns, insecurity and loneliness emerge as significant challenges, afterwards compounded by limited access to entitlements. However, it is worth noting that a certain number of respondents expressed contrasting viewpoints. Such as one of the respondent asserted that:

*"Life has changed completely because I am taking care of my two kids and I don't get enough time to sleep, exercise and eat. I am trying to improve my daily wellbeing. I most of the time suffer insomnia because i cannot sleep as become so much tiresome after working like machine the whole day. My kids are very naughty so i have to keep an eye on them 24/7 a day."*

*My mother in law is diabetic and heart patient so i have to take care of her. All these duties make me too much anxious due to which most of time I cannot sleep peacefully at night."*

The respondent conveyed a feeling of being dazed and distracted following her spouse's departure for professional reasons. She neglected the economic benefits linked with their spouse's relocation, instead she focused on her sleeplessness while dealing with the difficulties of managing married life independently and burdened with domestic responsibilities. She explained that she was suffering from sleep deprivation, she could not eat well or work out because of which suffers from insomnia. Because her children are naughty and nobody from in laws look out for her children so she has to take extra care of her children. She explained that her mother in law suffers from diabetes and cardiac disease due to which she has to take extra care of her mother in law. She stressed that she was unable to sleep at night because of those tiresome duties and absence of husband's moral support.

Wives who are left behind experience elevated worry, tension, and loneliness. The families of migrants have heightened feelings of loneliness, lack of affection, anger, and irritation compared to non-migrant households. Individuals experience heightened levels of rage and aggravation due to increased workloads and obligations. The mobility patterns of male household members impact women's self-confidence, decreasing their involvement in family gatherings (Ghimire et al., 2021). One participant who felt isolated at the time of special events and family functions reported that:

*"I definitely feel lonely in the absence of my husband especially on special occasions like Eid or on other family functions. In tough times, i want to have him by my side. Whenever we have a family gathering or a family wedding. I feel isolated in those gathering because all weded couples are together in those gatherings which makes me feel alone and isolated from the surrounding."*

In most joint families, women are typically responsible for homework but also engage in frequent and meaningful interactions with other family members. The respondent asserted that she experience a profound sense of isolated when her spouse is not around, particularly at significant events such as Eid or other family gatherings. During challenging circumstances, she wants his presence as a source of support and companionship. On occasions of familial gatherings or matrimonial ceremonies within the family, she often have a feeling of isolation at social events due to the presence of married couples, which contributes to her feelings of solitude and detachment from immediate environment. Another respondent, who experienced feelings of loneliness due to being in a love marriage and being left behind by her spouse, said that:

*"I do feel lonely and isolated in his absence, because I was very close to him, and no one can replace a husband's place. Becuase of our needs i have to compromise with his abscence, I am sacrificing and i yearn for him. I also think of him as he also feel alone and isolated as I am also not with him."*

In the above response, the respondent shared that, in the absence of her husband, she experiences a deep sense of loneliness and isolation, primarily due to the strong emotional bond they shared. She emphasized that the role of a spouse is irreplaceable and cannot be fulfilled by others. Despite these emotional challenges, she feels obligated to accept his absence because of the family's financial needs. As a result, she makes personal sacrifices and endures emotional strain, expressing a profound longing for his presence. Additionally, she reflected on the possibility that her husband

might also be experiencing similar feelings of loneliness and isolation in a foreign country.

### Emotional Wellbeing of Left Behind Wives

Many people nowadays move away from their homes in search of better economic opportunities. Although this movement has been good for the economy, it has been even better for the families left behind. The emotional health of these employees and their loved ones left behind is suffering, though, and this is becoming more apparent (Paudyal & Tunprasert, 2018). Wives who stay behind after their husbands leave are more likely to experience mental health issues including anxiety and despair because of the isolation they feel. Depression and other mental health issues are more common among out-migrants' spouses. Wives of migrants are particularly vulnerable to developing signs of stress, depression, and anxiety in the event of international relocation. This is because they experience temporary loss due to separation, being alone insecurity, emotions of anxiety due to a lack of interaction with their husbands, difficulties in parenting, and increased workload. Feelings of insecurity, anxiety, depression and loneliness are the indicators of emotional wellbeing (Saha et al., 2018). The following analysis has explained the emotional well being of left behind wives in the absence of husband.

Based on the analysis demonstrated above, it is clear that when men leave the household, their women take on more of the domestic duties at home. There is a lot of evidence in the literature to suggest that this circumstance causes stress, vulnerability, and loneliness (Haas, 2021). While questioned about how wives cope with loneliness while separated from their spouses, research participants expressed a range of responses. One of the respondents who felt lonely and sad because her husband left told that:

*"In the absence of my husband I feel lonely because there is no person like him to support in every field of life. His absence has created a vacuum in my heart, and i miss him when i feel stressed. If my child get sick I get so vulnerable and I cry because there is no one at times who can support me morally. I feel alone because of his absence."*

In the above statement, the left-behind wife explained that women living alone face significant challenges when their husbands are absent. Their responsibilities increase as they assume roles traditionally held by men in their culture. She expressed that loneliness is particularly intense when her spouse is not present to provide moral support during difficult times. The weight of domestic duties takes a toll on her emotional well-being, especially when her child falls ill. In such moments, she feels the absence of moral support acutely, as witnessing her child suffer leaves her feeling vulnerable and isolated. Another respondent reported that:

*"My husbands absence has increased my social and domestic responsibilities which makes me feel more alone. He was my friend and my support system on an emotional level. He had an amazing sense of knowing how I felt and making me feel better right when I wanted it most. His presence gave me a sense of mental comfort, and now that he has gone abroad, I crave that safe and comforting connection with my husband."*

Similarly another respondent explained:

*"Yes of course I feel alone and it's not easy living without him. He was always there for me and I could always count on him. He was an integral part of my day-to-day life, helping me with everything from domestic chores and childcare to being an advisor for major decisions."*

*Without him, I have to handle all of these responsibilities on my own, which is very stressful and hectic. Having him as a friend meant more laughter and shared memories. There were jokes, and memories between us that we cheered together. There are now fewer possibilities for shared laughter and understanding now that my husband is gone abroad, and it's difficult not to long for the relationship we had."*

In the mentioned statement, the respondents expressed the anxiety and isolation she feels because of her husband's absence. She conveyed a deep feeling of isolation, stating that existence has turned considerably more challenging in his absence. Her husband was a steady source of encouragement, someone she could depend on at all times. She was crucial in her everyday life, helping with household tasks, raising children, and providing advice on significant choices. In his absence, she is now required to manage all these responsibilities alone, resulting in significant stress and a sense of loneliness. She also expressed that her husband's presence made her relationship joyous and resulted in delightful moments. Since his move to a foreign country, chances for collective joy and pleasure have substantially diminished.

Overall, the findings show that left-behind wives manage emotions of anxiety, distrust, displeasure, and anger. In general, the replies show that when we are physically distant from each other, anxiety and worry about our future relationship increase, and as a result, we become emotionally disturbed.

## **Results & Discussion**

The results of this research show that the migration of husbands profoundly impacts the lives of their wives who remain, especially regarding their emotional, social, and household experiences. The thematic analysis of interviews with wives left behind in District Gujrat provides important understanding of their lived experiences, coping mechanisms, and altered social roles. A significant discovery is the emotional strain experienced by the wives left behind as a result of extended physical separation from their spouses. Numerous participants expressed emotions of isolation, nervousness, and exposure, especially during urgent circumstances related to health issues or family crises. Although they obtained emotional support through phone or video calls, these women often mentioned a deficiency in physical and moral support, which heightened their stress and sense of isolation. Emotional health was further undermined by ongoing worries of cheating or remarriages, resulting in mental insecurity and distrust. Similarly, Jacka (2012), highlights that separation due to migration may lead to marital stress and emotional turmoil. The research also revealed that migration altered conventional gender roles in families. In numerous instances, women were forced to take on duties typically performed by men, including overseeing finances, participating in social events, or making choices regarding their children's education and healthcare. Participants expressed a challenging learning process in adjusting to these roles, particularly those who moved from a nuclear to a joint family system following their husband's relocation. While a few women felt a sense of empowerment and autonomy, most regarded these additional responsibilities as burdensome and emotionally draining. Despite the emotional strain, the financial remittances from husbands enhanced the household's socioeconomic status. Women indicated improved access to healthcare, education, and home facilities. This financial enhancement boosted their prominence and reputation among extended families and local neighborhoods. Nonetheless, this enhanced position also resulted in social pressure. Women felt compelled to participate in family gatherings when their husbands were unavailable to uphold appearances and counter possible gossip or beliefs regarding their social status. Wives left behind devised multiple tactics to

sustain their marriages. These involved regular interaction via digital means, participating in family duties to alleviate emotional turmoil, and maintaining ties with in-laws and their own relatives for encouragement. Despite utilizing these coping strategies, numerous respondents conveyed persistent uncertainty regarding their future, concerned about the potential erosion of emotional connections over time

### **Conclusion**

The study concludes that migration has multifaceted impacts including economically, emotionally, and psychologically as well. Left behind wives from District Gujrat experienced both positive and negative experiences after the husband abroad migration. The result showed that migration significantly improves the economic situation, but on the other hand, the women who are left behind often experience intense loneliness and a deep sense of insecurity, despite the economic benefits. This study concludes that there is a need for a support mechanism or policy initiatives by the government to assist the left-behind wives.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the study findings, it is recommended to improve the social well-being of the left-behind because they have many psycho-social obstacles; it is necessary to establish women's organizations, empowerment networks, and peer support groups that can provide a sense of attachment. These engagements can further empower these women and be relieved by the husband's absence.

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