

## Elderly People and Impact of Migration in India: An Appraisal

**Dr. Mahima Devi\***

Migration is a natural process and its impact is visible on cultural evolution of man across the globe. Due to migration of human being from Africa, he is present everywhere around the world. According to basic necessity of man as defined by Malinowski, he wanders from here and there for better food and protection. Today whole earth is divided into nation-state concept and it is not possible for an individual to walk anywhere.

Culture, which made man as special creature on the earth, played a vital role in migration. Culture made its impact on metabolic function of man due to eating cooked food. So it was not easy for an individual to eat everything as other creatures could.

Culture and impact of nation state also made an effect on natural resources which was not free for an individual in arbitrary manner and it generated an idea of slavery which converted into service or employment in course of time. Life of man divided into haves and have not which also accelerated migration of have not for their betterment.

Increasing Population and migration for better life of an individual made an environment of division of family from joint to nuclear and this effect put elderly people as vulnerable people in India.

India is the second largest populated country in the world after China.

Indians are mainly concentrated in rural areas. More than 85 % population is living in rural areas.

Agriculture based life in India is based on weather which decides their fate for a year. So villagers are poor and are not in condition to look after their elderly people properly. They work as daily wagers but their earning is not up to the mark to look after elderly people while they also bear responsibility of their own family. These migrants' laborers are victim of circumstances.

---

\*Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology, Dr. R. P. M. Degree College, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India

Other part of population which is sketched as urban population is not so pink. Unemployment, high inflation and desire to cope with modern world press youth to migrate from their native place to another where they could earn better but this approach makes elderly people more vulnerable.

Elderly people is not more than a child who can't walk, eat, earn on his own feet and for their requirements they look towards others but in context of India they desire with their children and that is why they come into a psychological and cultural shock when their children ignore them because of their hard earning and difficult life style where they live for earning. On this juncture elderly people find themselves as biological creature instead of cultural being. Present paper is an effort to examine the effect of migration of youth in search of better life and its effect of elderly people's life.

Present research work is done in the Lucknow state capital of Uttar Pradesh, India. Lucknow is a culture specific city where all caste and religious groups are living together. Majority of population is Hindu and Muslim. In 1990 its population was 28 Lakh which is now more than 57 Lakh which the rapid growth of population due to migration from the other parts or districts of the state.

Present research work is exploratory cum descriptive of work which is done in the month of February 2014. Present research work is based on interview technique of 600 elderly people randomly who come under the age of 60 and above. Both sexes have been taken into account

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION-

Table 1

### Age wise distribution of elderly people

Sex	60 to 70 years	71 to 75 years	76 to 80 years	80+
Male 314	167	102	32	13
Female 286	135	96	24	31
Total 600	302	198	56	44

In this table age wise classification of elderly people has shown. Maximum number of elderly people belongs to 60 to 70 years which constitute 302 respondents. While 198 respondents come under 71 to 75 years of age. Only 56 respondents are of 76 to 80 years of age while only 44 are in 80 plus age.

Here I want to clear that I have chosen 600 respondents of different age groups. Widow, widower and couples are taken for interview to make a clear version regarding elderly people. 229 couples, 105 widow and 37 widowers are taken randomly.

**Table-2**

**Do you live with other family members?**

sex	living	Not living
Male 314	124	190
Female 286	145	141
Total600	269	331

Table two shows an interesting fact of elderly people living with other members of the family. 190 are not living with family members while 124 are living whereas 145 females are living and 141 are not. Overall 269 respondents are living with family members while 331 respondents are not living with family members. This table shows an inclination of increasing percentage of loneliness among elderly people. It is very interesting that all elderly people not living with family are either separated from their children due to low income or due to migration of children for betterment of life.

**Table -3**

**How do you feel life?**

Sex	Good	Not good	Better	Worst
Male 314	34	123	12	145
Female 286	75	39	132	40
Total 600	109	162	144	285

Sympathy, empathy, emotion, touch, care and better look after are so many factors make an elderly person happy because they never demand for money and so many desires. Their lives want only attention but young generation copes with new situation and circumstances and they find everything around money specially when they live with elderly people, so they ignore their demand which ultimately creates a worst condition of elderly people. Elderly people after getting responses of their children decide their happy life which is shown in table 3. 30 males and 75 females are saying life as

good while 123 males and 39 females say about life as not good. 12 males and 132 females find their life better. While 145 males and 40 females say worst. at the level of analysis, it is clear from the table that females are more satisfied than males. it depends upon Indian culture which makes an environment for women to restrict their life on husbands because Indian is a culture specific country and main earning member is male. Female depends upon her husband earning, so after seeing pity or low income situation Indian women never show their desire or problem and it gives a picture of satisfaction. On the other hand females think that to say her problem before an outsider is only insult of her family and she will not get any result or solution of her problem. Indian mother never wants to say wrong about her children in front of an outsider and that is why almost maximum female respondents chose the option good or better in maximum while the picture is not so pink.

**Table 4**

**What is your earning?**

Sex	Pension	Self employment	Money sent by children	Nothing
Males 314	76	148	13	77
Females 286	09	69	05	203
Total 600	85	217	18	278

Table 4 shows very pity picture of elderly people. Only 85 respondents are getting pension which varies from 600 to 2000 Indian rupee per month while 217 are self employed. Only 18 respondents are getting money from their children which vary from 1000 to 1700 Indian rupee. It is very eye opening fact that 278 respondents are getting nothing. How do they survive? It is also important fact that all respondents have children. But only 18 are getting support from their children. As I have described in table no 2 that 331 are not living with family members for their survival. But in table 4 shows that 331 respondents including 278, 12 self employed, 18 based on children and 23 pensioners are those who are not living with family members. It is also clear from the table that after living with family members elderly people are not getting any financial support from their children.



Table 5

**Do you feel healthy?**

Sex	Yes	No
Males 314	10	304
Females 286	107	179
Total 600	117	483

Table 5 shows a contrast picture of “health is wealth” 483 respondents are not happy with their health while only 117 respondents are satisfied with health. Here it is important to note that women never want to tell their health problems to adjust with their low income that is why they always say as good with health. Maximum respondents reported fever, cough, cold, weakness etc general old age problems but they are helpless to visit doctor because of money and distance from their home to doctor clinic.

Table 6

**Do you feel loneliness?**

Sex	high	medium	low
Males 314	167	145	02
Females 286	128	123	35
Total 600	295	268	37

Man is a social animal and he wants to share his life with group. No doubt husband wife also makes a small group but as they enter in the ambit of elderly people. This group wants more attention from their kith and kin especially from their children but in the era of globalization, survival is not so easy. To cope with modern situation new generation prefers to migrate from his native place to another for better earning but they find helpless to live with their old parents in a small room and emerging trend of privacy which is general in present day. All these problems make elderly people to live alone instead of with their children. Apart from other creatures on this earth man made culture for better survival from childhood to old age but culture has its own limit and carrying capacity which changed the life style of an individual and that is why man is as alone as animals are in old age or when they feel weak in old age. Table 6 shows that all respondents feel loneliness. But only 37 are feeling low level of loneliness. 295 are feeling very high loneliness and 268 feel medium level of loneliness. Here category of high and

medium are based on their response. When respondents used dirty words, wept, it is taken as high level of loneliness whereas when respondents says “what is the use of children” “why god has made our future to worst” is taken as medium.

**Table 7****Frequency of visit of children during last five years**

Sex	Once in a year	Twice in a year	Whenever we want	never
Males 314	23	12	02	277
Females 286	25	05	03	253
Total 600	48	17	05	530

In connection with table no 4 this table shows same story of elderly people. 530 elderly people complaint about the ignorance of their children as they don't come their native place to look or meet their parents. They visit religious places for their betterment but they don't prefer to come at that place where their birth givers are living. it is just hypocrisy in act of youth who are ignoring their parents. Only 05 respondents are lucky to have such children who come at their parental home whenever their parents want. 17 respondents say frequency of children visit twice in a year whereas 48 respondents say that children come only once a year. “It is economy based time and whole life is governed by money. Youth are in service having no leave to visit their parents place frequently. Traveling is so costly and it is beyond the limit of an individual to visit his parents place whenever they want. It is easy to send money instead of to visit” these words were spoken by a son of a family who had visited his home during my work.

**Table-8****Did you visit your children place during last 5 years?**

Sex	Yes	No
Males 314	09	305
Females 286	12	274
Total 600	21	579

In the light of table no 5 elderly people questioned in this research work are not in capacity to afford their easy life, so it will be quite difficult for them to afford journey cost. Apart from this fact it is self

evident that most of the respondents have not visited their children place during last five years. Only 21 respondents visited their children place. One female respondent said “when our children don’t want to see us at their homes, how could we reach their and when we can’t afford our food and medicine, it is not easy for us to bear fare of journey. So we don’t go there. It is our fate and we are victims. We are like issue less parents” this narration shows the pity condition of elderly people.

As my paper stated the impact of migration on elderly people, it is clear from my study that loneliness the biggest problem of elderly people in India but it is not just because of ignorance of youth or children of a family but also depends upon new emerging problems of livelihood for youths. Coping management push them to migrate from their native place because Indian districts are not evenly divided with job opportunity. So youth are helpless to leave their places. With hard survival and costly living youth are not in position to accommodate their parents in a small house while right to privacy is becoming more important day by day.

Universal declaration of human rights talks about the good salary which could bear the burden of dependents including parents of an individual but it is just an utopian concept. people are working on small salary which is not sufficient for an individual and he has to manage his family in that, so ignorance with parents becomes common.

When we look at elderly people and their problem, a pity picture comes before us. Elderly people are those people who are more than sixty years of their age and they lead a conventional life instead of a modern life. Conventional life talks about customs rituals which connect youth with their parents. It is duty and value system of an individual to touch his parents feet when he gets up in the morning. It is his duty to visit pilgrim with their old age parents, so they could attain heavenly abode after their demise. but all these pinky hypothesis is nil in realty which creates a sharp generation gap and make elderly people condition pity and painful.

India is a culture specific country and family runs by its own members. State has not so sharp role in India as in foreign countries where social accountability is the prime focus of the state and every elderly person at least gets handsome amount for their expenditure. So we can’t compare Indian parents problem with any other country of the world.

So in this paper it is clear that Indian parents or elderly people are feeling more affected by migration of their children in the search of livelihood.

## REFERENCES

1. Barnard, A. (2000). History and theory in anthropology. Cambridge University Press.
2. Murray, S. (2007). Moveable feasts: from ancient Rome to the 21st century, the incredible journeys of the food we eat. Macmillan.
3. Zhou, M. (2009). Contemporary Chinese America: Immigration, ethnicity, and community transformation. Temple University Press.
4. Center, S. M. R. Prof.(Dr.) Asha Hans Ram Kishore Sharma, RO, VRC Reena Mohanty Pravas Mishra.
5. Mathew, L., & Pellissery, S. Poverty, Shame and Social Exclusion.
6. Mandelbaum, D. G. (1993). Women's seclusion and men's honor: Sex roles in North India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan. University of Arizona Press.
7. Sjaastad, L. A. (1970). The costs and returns of human migration. In Regional Economics (pp. 115-133). Palgrave Macmillan UK.
8. Jagawat, H. (2005). Transforming the dry lands: The Sadguru story of western India. India Research Press.
9. Patrick B. Mullen. (1992). Listening to old voices: Folklore, life stories, and the elderly. University of Illinois Press.
10. Kitchen, B. (1973). The Principles And Aims Of Family Allowances A Policy Discussion (Doctoral dissertation, University of British Columbia).
11. Waters, M. C. (2009). Black identities. Harvard University Press.