



INDIAN COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH

Research Projects Division

Proposal Format –ICSSR Call for Research Projects on “Family and Family Systems in India” -(2025-26)

Note: Applicants must adhere to the word limit specified in each section, and any deviation from the prescribed ICSSR proposal format will result in the cancellation of the application.

Application number (To be noted down from the online application)	ICSSR-FFSI-2025-530
Theme	Family, Society, and Institutions
Sub-theme	Mental Health, Loneliness, and the Need for Strong Families
Title of the Research Proposal	Loneliness and Psychological Well-being of Senior Citizens in Punjab: Impact of Family Migration Abroad
Abstract (approx. 500 words) (Brief overview including objectives, significance, methodology, and expected outcomes)	In today's era of globalization, migration has become a common phenomenon, with many younger family members moving abroad in search of better employment, education, or lifestyle opportunities. While migration can bring economic benefits to families, it often leaves senior citizens behind, potentially affecting their emotional, social, and psychological well-being. Loneliness—a subjective feeling of social isolation—has been identified as a significant public health concern among older adults. This research seeks to explore the intricate relationship between family migration and the psychological well-being of senior citizens, focusing on how physical separation from family members influences feelings of loneliness, life satisfaction, and overall mental health. Objectives: The study has the following primary objectives:

1. To examine the prevalence of loneliness among senior citizens whose children or close family members have migrated abroad.
2. To assess the impact of family migration on the psychological well-being of senior citizens, including stress, depression, and life satisfaction.
3. To identify coping mechanisms and social support systems utilized by senior citizens in mitigating feelings of loneliness.
4. To explore the role of communication technologies (e.g., video calls, social media) in maintaining family connections and their effect on mental health.
5. To provide policy recommendations for improving the quality of life and social integration of elderly individuals affected by family migration.

Significance of the Study:

This research holds significant social, psychological, and policy-oriented relevance. From a social perspective, understanding the emotional impact of family migration on seniors can shed light on an often-overlooked population segment. Psychologically, the study contributes to gerontology and mental health literature by linking family structure changes with well-being indicators, such as loneliness, depression, and life satisfaction. Policy-wise, findings can guide the development of support mechanisms, community interventions, and counselling programs tailored to the needs of older adults living without immediate family support. Moreover, in an era where international migration is increasing, the study addresses a timely issue with potential implications for public health strategies, social services, and community engagement programs aimed at older populations.

Methodology:

The research will adopt a mixed-methods approach to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the issue.

1. **Quantitative Component:** A structured questionnaire will be administered to 300 senior citizens aged 60 and above who are living in urban and semi-

urban areas. Standardized instruments, such as the UCLA Loneliness Scale, Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS), and WHO-5 Well-Being Index, will be used to assess loneliness and psychological well-being. Demographic characteristics, migration status of the family, frequency of communication, and level of social participation will also be documented.

2. **Qualitative Component:** As part of the final phase of the survey, in-depth interviews and findings from focus groups will be carried out with a subset of 30-40 respondents to obtain rich narratives and individual experiences. Themes to be explored include emotional problems, coping strategies, and perceptions of social support in the absence of family members.

Data analysis will involve statistical techniques such as correlation, regression, and ANOVA to examine relationships between variables, while qualitative data will be analyzed through thematic content analysis to identify recurring patterns and insights.

Expected Outcomes:

The study anticipates several key findings:

- Senior citizens whose family lives abroad are likely to report higher levels of loneliness and lower psychological well-being than those with family who live nearby.
- Digital communication's increasing role through various means helps reduce feelings of isolation but may hardly match physical presence.
- Resilience in the form of involvement in community-based groups, peer support, and leisure pursuits is likely to be important for the maintenance of mental health.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy implications include the possible necessity of organized social programs, counseling, and programs that promote social interaction among older adults. <p>Altogether, the study will also highlight the psychological and social issues of the left-behind senior citizens of family migration abroad, offering practical implications for mental health professionals and policy makers, as well as social service providers to increase the well-being and quality of life of those who have left their countries.</p>
Introduction, Theoretical Framework, Statement of the Problem and Scope of the Proposed Study (approx. 1000 words) (Outline theoretical foundations and the scope of the study in Indian context)	<p>In the contemporary globalized era, migration has become a defining phenomenon of social and economic mobility. India, and especially the various states of India, such as Punjab, have been among those countries where there has been a high export of working-age people to other foreign countries in search of jobs, studies, and improved standards of living. According to the Ministry of External Affairs, Punjab's head of state, the state has one of the highest percentages of households with at least one member in foreign countries, namely Canada, the United States, and the United Kingdom. While facilitating this migration has its own economic and social benefits for households, it has a devastating cost for the family members left behind, especially the elderly.</p> <p>The elderly is a vulnerable part of society. They encounter biological, social, and psychological complications when they grow old, and this may intensify their feeling of isolation and loneliness. Loneliness, the subject of which can be discussed as a subjective concept meaning subjective reaction to social isolation or the lack of significant relationships in the social circle of the aging population, is an allied factor in the risk of poor physical and mental condition in old age, which is evidenced. One of them is most evident, it has been related to depression, anxiety, cognitive disability, cardiovascular diseases, and decreased life satisfaction. In a Punjabi society, where an apparent joint family or extended family is the norm, the lack of young-generation individuals in such an environment due to its high outflux</p>

often subjects the seniors to questions about the social support network upon which they seem to be emotionally and practically dependent.

In parallel with the neck of the bow, Albuquerque's straightforward gauge of psychological well-being has an emotional, cognitive, and social element, and contains such spectroscopic measurements as life fulfillment, self-esteem, and resilience. Family bonds and social networks are perceived as helping the older person to maintain good mental health in old age, and in this respect, are considered a universal phenomenon. These relationships are in a phase of being firmly set up at the time of migration, which on one hand can lead to emotional pain on their side and loneliness and a decrease in the level of psychological health on your side. This is further worsened by the societal and cultural expectations in the state of Punjab, where elder care within families is inherently traditional.

This study is designed to discuss the correlation between migration out of the country and the psychological health of senior citizens of Punjab. By focusing on feelings of loneliness and coping strategies and their relationship to mental health outcomes, the research aims to shed light on the role of globalization and migration patterns on the elderly segment of the population in a culturally distinctive setting

Theoretical Framework

The research is grounded in **social and psychological theories** that explain human well-being, social interaction, and aging.

1. **Disengagement Theory:** This theory, proposed by Cumming and Henry (1961), says that aging can be understood as normal, uninvolved emotions coming out of social roles and relatedness. Disengagement is, for the most part, regarded as an adaptive procedure; however, forced disengagement with the migration of relatives of the senior citizen can exacerbate feelings of loneliness and social isolation.

2. **Activity Theory:** In contrast to the disengagement theory, activity theory argues that active participation in social, recreational, and family activities is necessary to remain satisfied with life in old age. Migration leads to a lack of family-related activities, and that can lower psychological well-being.
3. **Attachment Theory:** The key thing about Bowlby's attachment theory is that it focuses on something small and plays down the properties of the developing emotional relations. On the contrary, in the case of older adults, separation of the adult offspring can cause emotional upset, insecurity, and depression, and that makes family movements a possible risk factor for the shared precursor for psychological maladjustment.
4. **Socioemotional Selectivity Theory (SST):** Carstensen's socioemotional support theory (SST) is based on the belief that, while people place value on relationships, in old age, they are more likely to invest in emotionally close relationships and less likely to compromise their commitment to a large social network. Such important interactions could have even more altered displacement, for example, in the context of migration, possibly with implications for emotional regulation and psychological well-being.

Coping and Resilience Frameworks: All these models have been interested in the coping strategies of the elderly demographic in a stressful context, such as the family break-up. It is possible to propose the mediational roles of the coping strategies (e.g., activity in the community setting, hobby, digital communication with relatives) on the effect of loneliness on mental health. By using an amalgamation of these theories, an effort is made to comprehend the interaction between migration, social interaction, emotional support, and mental health outcome among the senior population of Punjab

Statement of the Problem

International family migration has also been depicted as a cause of economic success, although the migration has significant psychological problems for the older or elderly members who are left to take care of relatives and are influenced by the departure of other family members. At the same time, the absence of grandchildren and children might upset familial bonds and cause emotions of abandonment, loneliness, and psychic suffering. In the province of Punjab, this phenomenon is especially significant because of the strong cultural orientation to the use of joint family systems and intergenerational care.

Furthermore, although the proportion of senior citizens living without close relatives is increasing, the research on their psychosocial well-being and mental health in the context of migration is rather weak. The issue of loneliness is also underreported in the older generation because it is perceived as a private or an underprivileged issue. In addition, psychological effects associated with separation in the family could also be exacerbated by other conditions like the deterioration of physical health, financial dependency, and absence of social interactions.

Existing studies indicate a correlation between loneliness and negative mental health outcomes, including depression, anxiety, cognitive decline, and even mortality. There are, however, research gaps in specifically exploring the Punjab scenario, where migration rates are high and cultural views of the need to care for the family are well instilled. There is also an additional problem of rapid technological change: though digital communication may partially address the gap caused by the lack of physical presence, it may not entirely mitigate the problem, which exposes senior citizens to the risk of social isolation.

Thus, the central research problem can be framed as: *How does the migration of family members abroad affect the loneliness and psychological well-being of senior citizens in Punjab, and what strategies or interventions can mitigate these effects?* Addressing this question is crucial for developing culturally sensitive policies and

community support systems that enhance the mental health and quality of life of the elderly population.

Scope of the Study

The scope of this study is both **geographical and thematic**. Geographically, the research focuses on senior citizens residing in Punjab, particularly in districts with high rates of international migration. The study targets individuals aged 60 and above, including both those living independently and those residing with other family members.

Thematically, the study examines:

1. **Loneliness and Social Isolation:** Assessing the subjective experiences of loneliness and frequency of social interaction.
2. **Psychological Well-being:** Measuring mental health parameters like depression, anxiety, satisfaction with life, and resiliency.
3. **Impact of Family Migration Abroad:** Understanding the effects of separation caused by adult children leaving and extended family, as it affects psychological and emotional well-being.
4. **Coping Mechanisms:** Discovering the actions senior citizens take in response to their emotional distress (outings, activities, networks of peers, and digital technologies).
5. **Policy and Social Implications:** The prevention of mental health among older migrants by means of inquiries, community, and healthcare programs stimulating actions.

The examination only briefly addresses the old citizens without family outside of the country or the ones with old care facilities, as these would fit in with the focus on the positive, psychosocial effects of family migration. It also does not aim at

	<p>measuring the economic aspects of migration but rather emphasizes emotional as well as psychological aspects.</p> <p>The findings of this study will provide policymakers, social service providers, and mental health practitioners with an understanding of the unique plight of elders in Punjab due to migration. It will also aim to provide suggestions on how social support, physical activity, and interventions focusing on mental health could all be optimized according to the needs of older adults.</p>
Critical Review of Key Research Works for the Proposed Study <u>(Avoid listing bibliographic references)</u> (approx. 800 words)	<p>The migration and aging are two phenomena that exhibit deep-seated consequences to the well-being of older adults. Studies are also carried out on a worldwide basis, and evidence is always strong in stating that when adult children immigrate, parents who are left behind are at increased risk of psychological distress and loneliness. Indicatively, an integrative review by Thapa et al. (2018) concluded that left-behind parents tend to experience greater depressive symptoms and loneliness but lower life satisfaction arguments compared with their counterparts with co-resident children. Similar results are reported in national surveys, indicating poorer results for those seniors whose children have emigrated. Indicatively, Adhikari et al. (2011) established that Thai elders who had migrant children were much more likely to display signs of an ill state of mind. In the same way, Dakua and Lhungdim (2025) document rural Indian households whose sons have migrating outcomes, showing that they are much more distressed and alienated in the backdrop of mental health compared to the common parents whose sons have stayed fixed and have not moved. Even in cases where migrants remit funds, these effects can be observed: Mandal and Paul (2024) reveal that, despite financial assistance provided by migrant children to their older parents to improve their physical health, the emotional importance of having children around has not been fully replaced. In brief, family separation because of migration is a persistent life stressor (Pearlin et al., 1981) that compromises the mental well-being of older adults unless mitigated by other support systems.</p> <p>The well-being of the elders revolves around the social support networks and loneliness. According to the Social Convoy Theory, people have a dynamic system of close relationships in their lives (Antonucci et al., 2014). The seniors lose the core convoy members when adult children leave them, making them weak. In Eastern cultures, this is severe: as stated by Tang and Xie (2023), in China, family is perceived as the closest group of the social convoy; therefore, filial relationships are essential. These bonds are weakened,</p>

and loneliness and depression are more likely to increase. The study by Tang et al. (2023) actually revealed that the correlation between the migration of children and the depressive symptoms of their parents was mediated by weaker family ties in rural Chinese elderly people. Similar to the Stress Process Model (Pearlin et al., 1981), which postulates that significant life transitions (such as family separation) result in stress, which impacts mental health contingent on the levels of coping resources. In reality, elders who have strong friend networks or communal affiliation are doing better: Dakua et al. (2023) note Indian parents who are discarded by migrant sons and who frequently participate in social activities or in maintaining contact with friends via telephone/email are much less prone to depression. During the period of migration, therefore, although migration is stressful, loneliness can be mediated by keeping social capital and involvement. The theory of attachment provides an additional understanding as well: developed with the focus on infant-adult bonds, the theory highlights the long-term emotional links between children and their parents. According to the literature, older parents have what is defined as an empty nest syndrome, which is the sadness and loss experienced after the child leaves the home (Hartanto et al., 2024). This is the emotional outcome of the loss of an attachment bond in adulthood. Overall, these frameworks indicate that the absence of family support in the immediate environment may severely affect psychological wellbeing in adulthood.

The digital forms of communication, as well as transnational practices of care, are becoming a significant factor. The studies of transnational families indicate that physical presence can be replaced by modern communication technologies (phone, video call, social media) to a certain degree (Wilding & Baldassar, 2018). As an example, in 2020 in India, frequent phone/email contact is explained as one of the basic forms of transnational family good care (Ahlin, 2020). Dakua et al. (2023) conducted an empirical study that indicated that left-behind parents significantly lessened their depression through networking with friends through telephone or email. However, daily support is not usually substituted with technological contact, even though technological contact tends to supplement it. The migration remittances also assist in meeting the bills, yet reports such as Mandal and Paul (2024) suggest that money never replaces the parenting duties of their children. At this point, social policies and community programs are now significant; nonetheless, clear policy implications are outside the literature review; we are here theorizing and providing evidence.

There are a number of theoretical frameworks guiding this literature. Besides the Social Convoy and Stress Process models, researchers also consider the case of role loss vs. role strain relief during the empty-nest transition (Hartanto et al., 2024). According to that review, cultural context has a pivotal influence: when societal norms of intergenerational co-residence are strong, parents usually perceive a grown child as a loss of role (making the latter lonely), when societal norms of empty-nesting are weak, empty-nesting can alleviate caregiving burden. Within the Indian environment of filial piety and extended families, parents often require at least one child to stay at home. Therefore, role loss is a common experience among Punjabi elders: according to Hartanto et al. (2024), even in South Asian tradition, the so-called nest remains un-empty, and parents are often attended to by a son and a daughter-in-law. When this trend is disrupted through migration, the theory explains an increase in distress. The accumulated evidence indicates that migration breaks core support (convoy) and puts strain on them, particularly the culturally enmeshed aged.

These themes are supported by national surveys and regional studies conducted in India. The LASI data that have been analyzed indicate that approximately 13 percent of Indian seniors experience frequent loneliness, with smaller social networks having a strong association with it. In left-behind parents, Dakua et al. (2023) discovered that engagement in any social activity and a friend network significantly reduces the chances of depression. Migration and health effects are also recorded in Indian studies: Dakua and Lhungdim (2025) found that almost 70 percent of parents who have a migrant man background develop chronic conditions (compared to 57 percent in families without migration), and the parents have higher loneliness scores. Equally, in a BMC Geriatrics study on rural West Bengal, the psychological disturbance (0.29) and loneliness (0.82) of older adults of migrants and non-migrants were significantly different. Remittances have small scales, as confirmed by large-sample studies: Mandal and Paul (2024) reveal that financial support partially counters the negative effects of migrants: it enhances self-rated health (by probably 35 points) but is unable to cover the loss of children entirely.

The context of Punjab is unique but not well-researched. To a large extent, Punjab provides a large number of international migrants, and as such, there are numerous rural elders who rely on long-distance children. The literature available in the nation (including many unpublished sources) points to the remarkable fact that elderly Punjabis are predominantly rural, non-high-income, and dependent. Kaur and Parihar (2024) stress the fact that out-

	<p>migration in Punjab has diminished the potential carers, making the remaining ones even more strained. One of the most important concerns is financial security: they claim that income is mainly based on pensions, savings, or family; income-free individuals resort to old-age housing and experience social alienation. There is a decline in the cultural determinants of a joint family, and some older people see themselves as neglected or even abused (Bahadur, 2018, as cited in Kaur and Parihar). Similar field reports (e.g., Kaur, 2021; Singh, 2023) also hint at the fact that a great number of Punjabi parents feel abandoned when their children leave the country. Nonetheless, survey data in relation to loneliness or well-being of migrant elders in Punjab is low-quality and rigorous survey data. According to the national trends (e.g. Srivastava and Srivastava 2023), the older adults in Punjab probably have the same correlates of loneliness- particularly when they are no longer with their children- although this has not been clearly recorded.</p>
<p>Identification of Research Gaps <u>(Clearly identify the gaps in the existing research literature, unexplored areas, and explain how your proposed study addresses these gaps)</u></p> <p>(approx. 500 words)</p>	<p>The phenomenon of family migration abroad has become increasingly prevalent in India, particularly in states like Punjab, where international migration has historically been high due to economic and employment opportunities overseas. While global and national studies have examined the effects of aging, social isolation, and psychological well-being among senior citizens, several critical research gaps persist in understanding the specific impact of family migration on older adults in the Punjabi context.</p> <p>Research Gaps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Limited Regional Focus: Most studies on loneliness and psychological well-being among seniors are conducted at the national or global level, often neglecting the unique socio-cultural and economic dynamics of specific regions such as Punjab. The state has distinct familial structures, social norms, and migration patterns, which may uniquely influence the psychological experiences of older adults left behind. Existing literature does not adequately capture these region-specific nuances. Scarcity of Data on Family Migration Effects: While numerous studies address aging and loneliness, very few explicitly examine the impact of children or close family members migrating abroad. Most research focuses

on general social isolation associated with aging, retirement, or widowhood, without distinguishing between seniors living with family nearby and those whose family has moved overseas. The direct linkage between family migration and psychological outcomes remains underexplored.

3. **Insufficient Mixed-Methods Research:** A majority of existing studies rely on quantitative surveys, providing statistical correlations but often missing the in-depth, lived experiences of senior citizens. Qualitative insights, such as personal narratives of coping, emotional adjustment, and social support mechanisms, are limited, leaving a gap in understanding the contextual and subjective dimensions of loneliness.
4. **Limited Focus on Coping Mechanisms and Digital Communication:** The role of modern communication technologies (e.g., video calls, social media) in mitigating loneliness for seniors with family abroad has not been thoroughly studied in the Punjabi context. Most research assumes physical proximity as the primary factor for well-being, underestimating the potential of virtual interactions to influence mental health outcomes.
5. **Policy and Intervention Gaps:** Although loneliness among senior citizens is recognized as a public health issue, few studies provide actionable recommendations for local policymakers or social organizations to support older adults affected by family migration. There is a lack of evidence-based strategies tailored to culturally specific settings like Punjab.

How the Proposed Study Addresses These Gaps:

The proposed study, "*Loneliness and Psychological Well-being of Senior Citizens in Punjab: Impact of Family Migration Abroad*," is designed to directly address these gaps.

1. **Regional Specificity:** By focusing on Punjab, the research captures region-specific social norms, cultural values, and migration trends, providing nuanced insights that national-level studies cannot offer.

	<p>2. Explicit Link to Family Migration: The study directly examines the impact of children or close relatives moving abroad on seniors' loneliness, life satisfaction, and psychological well-being, filling the gap of studies that generalize social isolation without considering migration-related separation.</p> <p>3. Mixed-Methods Approach: Combining quantitative surveys (using standardized scales like the UCLA Loneliness Scale and WHO-5 Well-Being Index) with qualitative interviews ensures both statistical rigor and a rich, in-depth understanding of seniors' lived experiences.</p> <p>4. Exploring Coping Mechanisms and Digital Connectivity: The research investigates how seniors use technology, social networks, and community engagement to cope with loneliness, offering insights into interventions that leverage modern communication tools.</p> <p>5. Policy-Relevant Outcomes: The study aims to generate actionable recommendations for community programs, counseling initiatives, and social support policies tailored to senior citizens left behind by migrating family members, bridging the gap between research and practical application.</p> <p>In conclusion, this research fills critical gaps by focusing on a culturally specific region, examining the direct impact of family migration, integrating qualitative and quantitative methods, and providing policy-relevant insights to improve the psychological well-being of senior citizens in Punjab.</p>
Uniqueness and Originality of the Study (approx. 300 words)	The current proposed research, " <i>Loneliness and Psychological Well-being of Senior Citizens in Punjab: Impact of Family Migration Abroad</i> ," possesses a unique and original quality in several ways. Although aging, loneliness, and mental health research have become the topic of attention all over the world, there exists an acute deficiency in terms of comprehending the socio-emotional effect of emigrants on the elderly in the Indian context, especially in the state of Punjab, which has had a long history of international migration. The vast majority of available studies have either been about the elderly in general or the economic

	<p>consequences of migration, and left the psychological and social experience of senior citizens relatively untouched. This research is distinctive in its integration of the phenomenon of transnational family dynamics with that of geriatric mental health research, as it places the study on the crossroads between sociology, psychology, and migration studies.</p> <p>The specificity of the research is that it considers the private life of the elderly citizen whose children or kin have emigrated to foreign countries. The combination of quantitative measures of loneliness, depression, and life satisfaction with qualitative reports of coping strategies and emotional burdens provides the study with the conceptualization of the ways in which international migration redefines the psychological welfare of the elderly in a multifaceted way. Moreover, the study presents the contribution of the utilization of the latest means of communication (remote consultation via videoconference or social networks) to maintain family bonds, which represents one of the most recent aspects that should be identified in gerontological research over time.</p> <p>Further, the regional focus of the research methodology on Punjab is specific, providing region-culturally specific evidence on the nature of family structures, the rules of society, and the resources for social support relevant for this context and valuable in informing context-specific programmatic responses. Since the migration phenomenon is being equated with personal and affective life of older adults, this study is anticipated not only to address the research gap by offering a possible series of evidence-based strategies, which will promote mental health, social inclusion, and well-being among older adults, but also to bring those strategies into practice. Overall, the study's contextual sensitivity, multidimensionality, and practicality comprise its novelty as an approach to a new social predicament.</p>
	<p>Objectives of the Proposed Study (approx. 300 words)</p> <p>Main Objectives:</p>

<p><u>(List main and specific objectives of the research)</u></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To investigate the level and type of loneliness among senior citizens in Punjab whose relatives have emigrated to foreign countries. 2. To determine whether migration of families affects the psychological well-being of geriatric individuals, both in terms of emotional, social, and mental conditions. 3. To determine strategies and social formations the elderly use to cope, and the importance of social structures in supporting the well-being of elderly people, because of the migration of their families. 4. To recommend policies and programs that are evidence-based to enhance the quality of life and mental well-being of the elderly people in Punjab. <p>Specific Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. To assess the frequency and intensity of loneliness of senior citizens using standardized testing tools such as the UCLA Loneliness Scale. 6. To measure psychological well-being measures such as depression, anxiety, life satisfaction, and general health using instruments such as the Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS) and WHO-5 Well-Being Index. 7. To examine how the frequency and quality of communication with migrated family members are related to levels of loneliness and psychological well-being. 8. To access the role of social participation, community involvement, and peer support in reducing feelings of loneliness among senior citizens. 9. To analyze demographic variables (age, gender, education, economic status) that might determine the psychological well-being of older migrant family affected migrants. 10. To gather qualitative understanding about the lived experiences, emotional struggles, and coping strategies of senior citizens (who have been left behind because of the migration of their family members abroad).
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	<p>11. To develop recommendations for specific interventions, such as counseling, social interventions, and digital communication interventions, to strengthen the mental and social connectedness of the elderly population in Punjab.</p> <p>These objectives together provide an overall comprehension of the influence of family migration abroad on loneliness and psychological well-being among senior citizens in the province of Punjab for both academic research and policy implications.</p>
Research Questions /Hypotheses (if Applicable) (approx. 300–400 words)	<p>Research Questions:</p> <p>The study seeks to answer the following key research questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the prevalence of loneliness among senior citizens in Punjab whose children or close family members have migrated abroad? 2. How does the migration of family members affect the psychological well-being of senior citizens, including indicators such as life satisfaction, stress, and depression? 3. To what extent does the frequency and mode of communication with family members abroad influence feelings of loneliness and psychological well-being? 4. What coping strategies and social support systems are utilized by senior citizens to manage loneliness in the absence of family members? 5. Are there differences in the impact of family migration on psychological well-being based on demographic variables such as age, gender, educational level, and socio-economic status? 6. What interventions or policy measures can be proposed to enhance the social and emotional well-being of senior citizens affected by family migration?

Hypotheses:

Based on the literature and the objectives of the study, the following hypotheses will be tested:

1. **H1:** Senior citizens whose children or family members have migrated abroad report higher levels of loneliness compared to those living with nearby family members.
2. **H2:** Family migration abroad has a significant negative impact on the overall psychological well-being of senior citizens in Punjab.
3. **H3:** Frequent communication with family members through digital means (video calls, social media, messaging) is negatively associated with feelings of loneliness among senior citizens.
4. **H4:** Engagement in social activities, community participation, and peer support moderates the relationship between family migration and psychological well-being, reducing negative effects.
5. **H5:** Demographic factors such as age, gender, and socio-economic status significantly influence the extent to which family migration affects loneliness and mental health.
6. **H6:** Senior citizens who have higher access to social support networks (friends, neighbors, community organizations) show better psychological resilience despite family migration abroad.

These research questions and hypotheses aim to systematically explore the psychological, social, and emotional consequences of family migration on senior citizens in Punjab, providing both empirical insights and practical implications for interventions targeting this vulnerable population.

<p>Proposed Methodology, Sampling Design, and Research Design (approx. 1000 words)</p>	<p>Proposed Methodology</p> <p>The study seeks to examine the psychological and social consequences of family migration abroad on senior citizens residing in Punjab. Having a sound methodological approach is crucial to acquire reliable, accurate, and informative data, all the more so when dealing with a sensitive group with multiple comorbidities, such as the elderly. A mixed-methods approach will be taken, given the multifaceted nature of loneliness and psychological well-being - including the measures of objective states and the descriptions of subjective experiences.. This will enable the integration of quantitative data for statistical analysis with qualitative narratives that provide a nuanced understanding of individual experiences.</p> <p>1. Research Approach:</p> <p>The research will use a convergent parallel mixed-methods format, in which quantitative and qualitative data will be collected at the same time but will be analyzed separately, and where integration between the two types of data will occur in an interpretive stage. This approach enables the study to capture both neurodevelopmental breadth as well as the depth of the phenomenon:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantitative Approach: A structured survey will be designed to measure the levels of loneliness, psychological well-being, and social support among senior citizens. Standardized scales will be used for reliability and validity. • Qualitative Approach: In-depth interviews and focus group discussions will provide detailed insights into emotional experiences, coping strategies, and perceptions regarding the absence of family members due to migration abroad. <p>2. Data Collection Methods:</p>
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a) Quantitative Data Collection:

- **Instruments:**
 - **UCLA Loneliness Scale (Version 3):** To evaluate the subjective aspects of loneliness.
 - **Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS):**
To assess depressive symptoms and the mental health status.
 - **WHO-5 Well-Being Index:** An approach for the measurement of general psychological health.
 - **Demographic and Migration Questionnaire:** They cover such categories as age, sex, education, income, marital status, number of children, migration status of the household, communication asserting wedge, and social involvement.
- **Mode of Administration:** Trained field researchers will administer the survey face-to-face at participants' residences or community centers to ensure clarity and accuracy in responses.

b) Qualitative Data Collection:

- **In-depth Interviews (IDIs):** Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with selected participants to explore personal experiences, emotional challenges, coping strategies, and perceptions of social support.
- **Focus Group Discussions (FGDs):** Conducted with small groups (6–8 participants per group) to understand collective experiences, social interaction patterns, and community-based coping mechanisms.
- **Interview Guide:** The guide will include open-ended questions addressing participants' feelings of loneliness, psychological challenges, social engagement, and communication with family abroad.

3. Data Analysis Techniques:

Quantitative Analysis:

- Descriptive statistics (mean, median, standard deviation) to summarize participant demographics and responses.
- Inferential statistics:
 - **Correlation analysis** to investigate relationships among loneliness, psychological well-being, and variables related to migration.
 - **Regression analysis** of predictors of the psychological well-being among senior citizens.
 - **ANOVA** in comparing the psychological outcomes of groups (e.g. seniors with family abroad vs. seniors without).

Qualitative Analysis:

- Thematic analysis will be used to identify recurring patterns and emergent themes.
 - Coding will be done using both inductive and deductive approaches to capture anticipated and novel themes.
 - Triangulation with quantitative data will strengthen the validity of the findings.
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Research Design

The research is conducted with cum descriptive-explanatory research design, which is considered suitable for studying the relationships between family migration and psychological well-being, and also to find the underlying causes and mechanisms.

1. Descriptive Component:

- This aspect aims to provide a snapshot of the prevalence of loneliness, depression, and psychological well-being among senior citizens in Punjab.

- It will describe demographic characteristics, family structures, migration status of children, frequency of contact, and social participation levels.

2. Explanatory Component:

- This section seeks to correct ignorance by explaining reasons why and how the act of moving abroad as a family member impacts the mental well-being and health of the elderly.
- The study will use correlation and regression analysis to determine the significant variables used to predict psychological outcomes, such as communication from parental homeland and frequency of contact with children in homeland, availability of social support, and participation in community activities.

Rationale for Research Design:

- In particular, with the help of the descriptive-explanatory design, it is possible not only to measure the magnitude of loneliness and mental health issues, but also to understand causal relationships or influencing factors related to family migration.
 - Mixed methods enhance the credibility and richness of the findings by combining numerical trends with in-depth personal narratives.
-

Sampling Design

1. Target Population:

The target population for this study consists of senior citizens (aged 60 years and above) residing in Punjab whose children or close family members have migrated abroad, as well as a comparative group of seniors with non-migrant families.

2. Sampling Frame:

- The sampling frame will be constructed using local directories, community center membership lists, and Panchayat/municipality records to identify potential participants.
- Special focus will be given to areas with high rates of international migration, such as Malwa and Majha regions, based on migration statistics from the Punjab Government and Non-Resident Indian (NRI) databases.

3. Sampling Technique:

A **multistage stratified purposive sampling technique** will be employed:

- **Stage 1: Geographical Stratification:** Punjab will be divided into major regions (Majha, Malwa, Doaba) to ensure geographic diversity.
- **Stage 2: Community Selection:** Within each region, urban and semi-urban communities with a higher prevalence of migration will be identified.
- **Stage 3: Participant Selection:**
 - Seniors with children or close family members abroad will form the primary study group.
 - Seniors with family residing locally will serve as a comparative group to understand differential impacts.
 - Purposive sampling ensures the selection of participants who meet the inclusion criteria while maintaining variability in age, gender, education, and socio-economic status.

4. Sample Size:

- Quantitative Component: Approximately **300 senior citizens** will be surveyed. This size allows sufficient statistical power for regression and correlation analyses.
- Qualitative Component: Around **30–40 participants** will be selected for in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, ensuring saturation of themes.

5. Inclusion Criteria:

- Age 60 years or above.
- Permanent resident of Punjab.
- Either has at least one family member migrated abroad or has all family members residing locally (for comparative analysis).
- Willing to provide informed consent for participation.

6. Exclusion Criteria:

- Senior citizens with severe cognitive impairments or diagnosed psychiatric disorders that prevent participation.
- Those currently residing in institutional care (unless part of a separate subgroup analysis).

7. Ethical Considerations:

- Participants' consent will be obtained through written forms after explaining the objectives and procedures of the study.
- Anonymity and confidentiality will be ensured.
- Participants will have the right to withdraw at any stage without any consequences.

Summary

In essence, this study integrates a **mixed-methods approach**, a **descriptive-cum-explanatory research design**, and a **stratified purposive sampling strategy** to provide a comprehensive understanding of how family migration abroad impacts loneliness and psychological well-being among senior citizens in Punjab. The quantitative data will measure prevalence and relationships among key variables, while qualitative insights will enrich the interpretation of personal experiences and

	coping mechanisms. By combining these approaches, the study aims to produce actionable insights for policymakers, mental health practitioners, and community organizations dedicated to improving the quality of life of senior citizens.
Innovation/path-breaking aspects of the Proposed Research (500 words)	<p>Innovation and Path-Breaking Aspects of the Proposed Research</p> <p>The proposed research, "<i>Loneliness and Psychological Well-being of Senior Citizens in Punjab: Impact of Family Migration Abroad</i>," addresses an emerging and critical societal issue at the intersection of globalization, gerontology, and mental health. While studies on loneliness and elderly well-being exist, most research has focused on urban populations in developed countries or generalized elderly populations without specifically considering the impact of international family migration. This study is innovative and path-breaking in several ways:</p> <p>1. Context-Specific Focus on Punjab:</p> <p>Punjab is unique among Indian states due to its high rate of international migration, particularly to countries such as Canada, the United States, and Europe. The phenomenon of entire families or primary earners migrating abroad leaves elderly parents behind, often in rural or semi-urban settings. This study situates itself in the cultural, social, and economic context of Punjab, capturing region-specific factors such as kinship structures, joint family traditions, and local community dynamics that influence the experience of loneliness. By doing so, it generates insights that are not only academically novel but also regionally relevant for policymakers, social workers, and local governance structures.</p> <p>2. Integration of Psychological Well-Being and Loneliness Metrics:</p> <p>Most prior studies have either focused exclusively on loneliness as a social phenomenon or on psychological well-being in isolation. This research combines both, examining how loneliness due to family migration directly and indirectly</p>

affects psychological outcomes such as depression, anxiety, life satisfaction, and overall mental health. Using validated measurement tools like the UCLA Loneliness Scale, Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS), and WHO-5 Well-Being Index in a single integrated framework provides a holistic understanding of elderly well-being, which is both innovative and methodologically robust.

3. Examination of Technological Mediation in Family Connections:

An important and emerging aspect of this research is the investigation of digital communication as a mitigating factor. With the proliferation of smartphones, social media, and video-calling platforms, the elderly have unprecedented opportunities to maintain virtual contact with distant family members. The study explores how these digital interactions influence loneliness and psychological health, offering cutting-edge insights into how technology can serve as a social support mechanism in the Indian elderly context—a topic that has received limited attention in existing literature.

4. Mixed-Methods Approach for Rich Insights:

While quantitative surveys provide statistical generalizability, qualitative methods, such as in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, enable the capture of lived experiences, cultural nuances, and personal coping strategies. This mix enables the research not only to quantify the problem but also to relate subjective realities of senior citizens, raising valuable and actionable insights for intervention design.

5. Policy and Intervention-Oriented Focus:

The study is aimed at practical implications. By identifying important predictors of loneliness and social and technological intervention contributions, the study will guide government response through community interventions, counseling interventions, and governmental schemes aimed at enhancing the psychological health and social integration of stay-behind family members among the elderly

	<p>migrants. This aspect of translating the research into actionable policy separates this from pure academic research.</p> <p>6. Contribution to Global and Comparative Gerontology:</p> <p>Finally, through its focus on the impact of international migration on older adult well-being in an increasingly globalized region, the research makes a significant contribution to comparative gerontology research. The research results can provide a template for other areas with high rates of population migration, lessons on social supports, cultural capital, and mental health interventions.</p> <p>In conclusion, the proposed research is innovative due to its positioning at the intersection of migration studies, gerontology, mental health, and technology adoption in a culturally-specific context. It offers methodological rigor and contextual relevance, but equally provides actionable insights that might prove valuable to inform both academia and humanitarian response with various interventions for the aging population of the Punjab province and similar other global regions of high emigration.</p>
Expected Contribution of the Research Project to the Knowledge Repository (approx. 500 words)	<p>The proposed research, “Loneliness and Psychological Well-being of Senior Citizens in Punjab: Impact of Family Migration Abroad,” is expected to introduce valuable insights into scholarly output, policy development, and social intervention with respect to the mental health and social well-being of older adults. Along with an increase in globalization and international migration of labor, especially those who leave Punjab, a state with high rates of overseas migration, the socio-psychological issues older individuals are abandoned with are becoming more conspicuous. The field that this study is covering is under-researched, but once it is finished, it will be added to the body of interdisciplinary knowledge encompassing such fields as gerontology, psychology, sociology, and migration studies.</p> <p>1. Contribution to Academic Knowledge:</p>

From an academic perspective, the study will expand the understanding of the relationship between family migration and psychological well-being among senior citizens in Punjab. While existing literature acknowledges loneliness as a widespread phenomenon in older adults, few studies have specifically examined its linkage with cross-border family migration in the Indian context. By integrating quantitative and qualitative methods, the research will provide empirical evidence regarding the prevalence of loneliness, depression, and life satisfaction among senior citizens impacted by family migration. Furthermore, it will identify factors that exacerbate or mitigate these psychological outcomes, such as frequency of communication, social support systems, and engagement in community activities. The study's findings will thus enrich theoretical frameworks in gerontology, social psychology, and migration studies by highlighting context-specific socio-emotional dynamics in Punjab, offering comparative insights for other regions with high migration rates.

2. Methodological Contribution:

The mixed-methods approach adopted in this research contributes methodologically by combining statistical measurement of mental health indicators with qualitative narratives capturing lived experiences. Such an integration enhances the validity of the findings, besides offering a subtle risk of comprehending their perceptions of and responses to the loss of family members within the household. Additionally, as scales were standardized and interviews were placed in a sociocultural setting, the research bridged the gap in international best practices in gerontological assessment and the local sociocultural reality, and will provide a form of example in future research of that type.

3. Policy and Practice-Oriented Contribution:

The implications of the study to policy and practice are of a very significant nature. The work can inform policies of older people, social welfare providers, and community groups on how to frame interventions around incapacity to loneliness

	<p>and psychological health with methodical documentation of the pain points experienced by older family migrants in Punjab. These might include community-based contacts with the programs and making the seniors interact with far-off family members via the digital literacy projects, counseling programs, or social support services, etc. The research has consequently assisted in the development of evidence-based policy to address the dire policy gap in social welfare policy to the yesteryear population in highly populated areas of migrant concentration.</p> <p>4. Societal and Cultural Insights:</p> <p>Lastly, the study is included in a broader conception of the multicultural and familial life of Punjab with a focus on the social consequences of migrants to family relations. The perspectives of resilience and resourcefulness in the senior citizen sections are promulgated by viewing coping processes and adaptive strategies of senior citizens taken and cross-fed to social work and grassroots interventions taken to support the well-being of senior citizens.</p> <p>This study speaks to the body of knowledge by producing empirical evidence, a methodological novelty, information that is policy relevant, and culturally specific to the changes and effects of family migration on the psychosocial mental well-being and social functioning of the elderly in the short term. It lays the deterrence of new investigations and efforts in achieving the conclusive state of social integration and psychological strength of the older populace among the state people of Punjab, as well as on similar platforms and in other regions, owing to aggressive migration.</p>
	<p>Expected Output (400 words)</p> <p>Expected Outcomes:</p> <p>The study on “<i>Loneliness and Psychological Well-being of Senior Citizens in Punjab: Impact of Family Migration Abroad</i>” is expected to yield significant insights into the emotional and mental health challenges faced by older adults in the region due to family migration. One of the primary anticipated outcomes is a clear quantification of loneliness among senior citizens whose children or close</p>

relatives have moved abroad. It is assumed that the identified persons will have reported more loneliness, social isolation, and emotional distress than seniors who live with family members or as near to them as possible.

When there is a lack of family support, then a person's sense of life satisfaction, their emotional stability, and their mental health in general are going to be weakened. This study could reveal a greater stress level, anxiety, and mild-moderate depressive expression among seniors who have been separated from their children for a longer period of time. However, the results are also likely to underscore that the level of impact depends on a variety of variables, such as age, gender, socioeconomic status, conditions, and social networks of the individuals. Overall, results suggest that older adults who are actively participating in their community or who have meaningful relationships with friends have greater psychological resilience, for example, in families where relatives are in the diaspora.

A further key finding is the projected utilization of digital communication technologies (e.g., videoconferencing, social networking platforms, instant messaging) in alleviating feelings of social isolation. Although these devices offer an emotional window into the family unit and a level of involvement with family life, they are unlikely to completely eliminate the absence of a physical presence--and seniors might still experience a pinching at the emotional starving post, which has negative effects on their wellbeing.

In addition, the study shall be expected to bring to light some of the coping measures of the old people in the State of Punjab as they relate to religious practices, hobbies, association of peers or communities. The information about these mechanisms will contribute to useful insights into the protective factors to enhance the psychosocial well-being of elderly family migrants.

From a policy and social perspective, the research outputs are likely to inform the development of targeted interventions and community programs to support older

	<p>people. Potentially, this includes creating senior support groups, counseling, and digital literacy training to better support virtual contact between families and social activity and community life initiatives.</p> <p>In the end, this study will offer an overall idea of the way trauma reactions of senior persons connected to their family migration and psychological health in Punjab. The anticipated deliverables are not only providing some observation of an emotional issue on the part of this population but also portending some tools to mental health practitioners, policy makers, and local establishments to improve the quality of life and adaptive capacity of the mental health of the elderly who have migrated.</p>
Relevance of the proposed study for policy making (approx. 500 words)	<p>The relevance of the proposed research, titled Loneliness and Psychological Well-being of the Senior Citizens in Punjab: Impact of family migration abroad, is of significant relevance in terms of policy making and particularly with regard to demographic transition, social welfare, and health planning of the population in India. Being a state characterized by a high rate of international immigration, Punjab offers a singular setting to investigate the social and mental impacts of the internationalization of family members abroad. Although migration might lead to economic gains due to reliance on remittances, this coincides with the destruction of the social and emotional qualities of life of elderly individuals who had to remain. To achieve successful and wise policy actions pertaining to the well-being and progress of older citizens, it is of paramount importance to comprehend these dynamics.</p> <h2>2. Informing Social Welfare Programs</h2> <p>Punjab senior citizens whose kids have gone to foreign countries might become more vulnerable to loneliness, social isolation, and depression. Such issues can lead to the deterioration of both mental and physical conditions, the inability to be satisfied with life, and reliance on the health care system unless addressed. Insights from this study will allow policymakers to design targeted social welfare programs that address these vulnerabilities. For instance, findings can inform the development of community centers, recreational clubs, and senior citizen support</p>

groups that actively engage the elderly in social, cultural, and skill-based activities, thereby reducing feelings of isolation.

3. Guiding Mental Health Policies

Mental health is an often-neglected aspect of elderly care in India. By providing empirical evidence on the psychological impact of family migration, the study can influence mental health policies aimed at the elderly. Policymakers could use the findings to integrate counseling services, helplines, and tele-therapy options specifically for senior citizens affected by long-term family separation. Additionally, awareness campaigns can be developed to educate families and communities on recognizing signs of loneliness and depression among older adults.

4. Strengthening Community and Family Support Mechanisms

The research can also inform policy interventions that encourage the strengthening of local community and family support networks. Policymakers could design incentives for local volunteers, NGOs, and panchayats to participate in programs that provide emotional and social support to older adults. Moreover, findings on the role of digital communication in mitigating loneliness may inform initiatives promoting digital literacy among seniors, enabling them to maintain meaningful connections with their migrated family members.

5. Integrating Findings into Migration and Economic Policies

While international migration brings economic benefits, the social costs to senior citizens cannot be ignored. This study will provide a balanced understanding of both economic and social impacts, helping policymakers draft comprehensive migration-related policies. Such policies could include provisions for social security, health insurance, or community engagement programs specifically tailored for households with migrant family members.

	<p>6. Evidence-Based Resource Allocation</p> <p>By identifying the severity and patterns of loneliness and psychological distress among the elderly, the study will aid in evidence-based allocation of resources. State governments and local authorities can prioritize regions or communities with a higher prevalence of vulnerable seniors and implement focused interventions to improve their quality of life.</p> <p>Conclusion</p> <p>In essence, this study is highly relevant for policy-making as it bridges the gap between demographic shifts due to migration and the social-psychological well-being of senior citizens in Punjab. The findings will provide a data-driven foundation for designing holistic social, mental health, and community policies, ensuring that economic gains from migration do not come at the cost of the emotional and psychological health of the elderly. By highlighting actionable insights, the study has the potential to influence both state and local policy frameworks aimed at promoting a socially inclusive and mentally healthy aging population.</p>
Total Grant Amount expected for this study	<p>Amount (in figures): _____ 30,00000 _____ (in ₹)</p> <p>Amount (in words): _Thirty Lacs_____</p>
Head-wise Justification for the Expected Grant (approx. 400 words) (Manpower, travel, fieldwork, equipment, contingency, etc.)	<p>1. Manpower (₹12,00,000):</p> <p>A significant portion of the grant is allocated to manpower, as trained personnel are critical for the successful execution of this research. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Assistants (2): Responsible for data collection, conducting interviews, and survey administration across urban and semi-urban districts of Punjab.

- **Data Analyst (1):** For cleaning through coding and analyzing quantitative and qualitative data with trustworthy statistical and thematic analysis software.

Project Coordinator (1): Managing project logistics, schedules, and field operations to deliver a smooth delivery.

Salaries are calculated in accordance with prevailing norms for social science research projects in India.

2. Travel and Fieldwork (₹5,00,000):

Fieldwork across Punjab will involve multiple visits to districts, towns, and villages to reach senior citizens whose families have migrated abroad.

- **Local Travel:** Hiring vehicles for transportation of the research team.
- **Accommodation and Food:** For field teams during multi-day trips.
- **Miscellaneous Travel Expenses:** Including fuel, tolls, and local conveyance for participants' accessibility.

Travel is essential to ensure representative sampling and coverage of both urban and rural areas.

3. Equipment (₹3,50,000):

Modern research tools and equipment are required for data collection and analysis:

- **Tablets/Laptops (5 units):** For digital surveys and real-time data entry.
- **Audio Recorders (4 units):** For in-depth interviews and focus group discussions.
- **Software Licenses:** SPSS, NVivo, and other qualitative analysis tools for data processing and interpretation.

	<p>4. Contingency (₹1,50,000):</p> <p>Reserved for unforeseen expenses such as additional field visits, participant incentives, or minor equipment repairs. This ensures the research can continue smoothly without financial interruptions.</p> <p>5. Stationery, Printing, and Communication (₹1,00,000):</p> <p>Covers costs of printing questionnaires, consent forms, informational pamphlets for participants, and communication charges for coordinating fieldwork and follow-ups.</p> <p>7. Workshops and Dissemination (₹7,00,000):</p> <p>Includes organizing stakeholder workshops, community meetings, and dissemination of findings through reports and presentations. This ensures engagement with policymakers, NGOs, and community leaders to maximize impact.</p> <p>Total Grant Requested: ₹30,00,000</p> <p>Conclusion:</p> <p>The budget has been meticulously planned to cover essential components while maintaining cost efficiency. Manpower, travel, and equipment form the core of the project, with contingency and dissemination ensuring sustainability and impact. This allocation will allow a comprehensive investigation of the psychological well-being and loneliness of senior citizens in Punjab, providing evidence-based insights for policy and social interventions.</p>								
	<table> <thead> <tr> <th>Head</th> <th>Description</th> <th>Amount ₹</th> <th>Percentage of Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Manpower</td> <td>Research Assistants (2), Data Analyst (1), Project Coordinator (1)</td> <td>12,00,000</td> <td>40%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Head	Description	Amount ₹	Percentage of Total	Manpower	Research Assistants (2), Data Analyst (1), Project Coordinator (1)	12,00,000	40%
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	Total	30,00,000 100%												
	Milestones set for	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Timelines</th> <th>Milestone</th> <th>Key activities</th> <th>Deliverables</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>0-6 Months</td> <td>Project Setup & Pilot Data Completion</td> <td> Finalize research design and tools (scales, questionnaires, interview schedule) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Obtain ethical clearance - Conduct literature review and framework development - Identify sample districts of Punjab (e.g., Doaba, Majha, Malwa) - Draft sampling plan and field schedule - Pilot survey and revise tools </td> <td> Research proposal & literature review chapter <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ethical approval documents 2. Finalized data collection tools (e.g., UCLA Loneliness Scale, WHO-5 Well-being Index) 3. Pilot study report </td> </tr> <tr> <td>6-12 Months</td> <td>Quantitative & Partial</td> <td>Execute large-scale field data collection across (200–400</td> <td>Raw survey data</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Timelines	Milestone	Key activities	Deliverables	0-6 Months	Project Setup & Pilot Data Completion	Finalize research design and tools (scales, questionnaires, interview schedule) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Obtain ethical clearance - Conduct literature review and framework development - Identify sample districts of Punjab (e.g., Doaba, Majha, Malwa) - Draft sampling plan and field schedule - Pilot survey and revise tools 	Research proposal & literature review chapter <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ethical approval documents 2. Finalized data collection tools (e.g., UCLA Loneliness Scale, WHO-5 Well-being Index) 3. Pilot study report 	6-12 Months	Quantitative & Partial	Execute large-scale field data collection across (200–400	Raw survey data
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		Qualitative Data Collected	<p>selected districts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) with senior citizens, NGOs, and elderly homes - Maintain field notes and transcription - Begin data entry (SPSS/Excel) and coding (NVivo for qualitative) 	respondents)
12-24 Months	Final Report, Policy Suggestions & Dissemination	<p>Complete statistical analysis (correlation, regression, ANOVA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete qualitative thematic analysis - Compare groups (e.g., living alone vs with spouse vs with relatives) - Write findings, conclusion, and recommendations - Submit final research report - Disseminate results (seminar, journal paper, policy brief) 	<p>Final thesis/report with chapters</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Journal publication / conference paper 2. Policy recommendations for social workers & government bodies 3. Final presentation and evaluation 	