

# Review of: "Impact of Men's Labour Migration on Non-migrating Spouses' Health: A Systematic Review"

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**Potential competing interests:** No potential competing interests to declare.

This review is timely and captures the context of health-related effects of spousal migration on left-behind women in a systematic manner. Its specific focus on health component is unique and the efforts made in looking for literature across a wide range of databases is noteworthy.

I have identified a few things that the authors might want to reconsider.

**Abstract:** *internal migration is also very common, particularly in low- and middle- income countries (LMICs).* Internal migration is common in higher-income countries too. See for example: <https://t.ly/SB30> ; <https://tinyurl.com/8aj5d4ue> Therefore, I'd be cautious about using this sentence in the abstract.

It would have been helpful to see some distinction made between the effects of internal versus international migration on the left-behind spouses. That is because a significant body of knowledge exists in this area, particularly in the mainland Chinese context and most of those migrations are within the country. If the purpose was to only look at international migration, that should have been reflected clearly in the study title as well as the study selection criteria.

If the findings have revealed that the non-migration spouses are mostly women, probably a good idea then to revise the title and refer to the spouse as wife? **Impact of Men's Labour Migration on left-behind wives' Health: A Systematic Review**

It would also have been helpful to see the operational definition (and therefore its connection to the selection criteria) on labour (versus non-labour) migration.

The health effects would also have benefited from being presented in clearly distinguished positive and negative themes. Both adverse and positive effects are currently lumped together.

Table 1 could be updated to include a column that lists the outcome variable(s) that each article corresponded with.

Some visual depiction of the geographic spread of the articles would be helpful too to provide the readers with a sense of how widely spread the studies included in the review were.

If the primary author will be conducting primary data collection following this literature review to explore a country-specific context exploring effects of migration on left-behind wives, it will be helpful to cover the following issues:

- Is there any indication that a sense of expectation has begun to set in the potential left-behind wives about their male partners' migration after seeing that to be the new norm in their community? The authors have explained that migration is an established and expected phenomenon in countries like Iran and is therefore no longer likely to have adverse impacts on those left behind.
- Also helpful to explore the differences in the effects of migration between spouses living in the traditional big families versus nuclear families.
- Also interesting to explore how technology (ubiquity of mobile phones and internet even in relatively remote areas) might have potentially diminished the adverse effects of being left-behind.

Typo: PsycINFO vs PyschINFO