

Empty Nest Syndrome Scale- Indian Form (ENS-IF)

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ABSTRACT

The feeling of grief and loneliness are profound in parents when their children become independent and leave the nest (house) making the parents feel 'empty' and 'blue'. Empty-Nest Syndrome seems to be a maladaptive reaction to this transition. To measure the level of Empty-Nest Syndrome experienced by the parents whose children left their homes for the pursuit of their careers, work, marriages, and other factors, the Empty-Nest Scale was developed in the study. The scale was responded to by 201 participants ranging in the age group of 45-70 years old. The item-total correlation and inter-item correlations were found with the help of Cronbach's alpha testing. Cronbach's alpha showed the scale reached acceptable reliability of 0.919. The aim is to study the aspects of emptiness and despairing among the Empty-Nesters. The study also explores the factors that are considered inevitable for the notion of Empty-nest or Empty-Nest Syndrome such as not being able to celebrate the festivities with their children, not being physically present to attend the achievements of their children, or not being able to spend the days of retirement with their children.

Keywords: *Empty Nest Syndrome, Middle-aged parents, nesting, emptiness, and despairing.*

Oxford dictionary explains empty nest syndrome as "sadness or emotional distress affecting parents whose children have grown up and left home." Due to cultural differences worldwide, this is particularly true in the Indian context. In India, culturally, parents are considered to have very high esteem as their children are expected to take care of them as they grow old.

American Psychological Association defines Empty-Nest as, "the family home after the children have reached maturity and left, often creating an emotional void (empty nest syndrome) in the lives of the parents (empty nesters)." Empty nest refers to children moving out of the home and empty nest syndrome refers to the loneliness, sadness, distress, and other complicated emotions experienced by parents when children move out of the home.

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Empty nest syndrome is a psychological phenomenon experienced by parents when children move out for education, work, marriage, or other purposes but it is not a clinical condition. The concept of empty nest syndrome was first introduced in 1914 by an American writer Dorothy Canfield Fisher though it was not popularized until the 1970s. The term empty nest syndrome was used to describe the emotions of parents when their youngest child moved out of home, especially mothers.

While ENS is expected to affect both parents equally, statistics have demonstrated that mothers usually take ENS with greater difficulty as compared to fathers as they are usually the primary caregiver who looks after and better understands the needs of the child. Researchers have also demonstrated that due to the physical factor of menopause attached to aging mothers, the intensity of ENS is far greater compared to the ENS effect on fathers. Psychological studies on reactions of different genders to the well-being of elderly parents living with and without children found that women's psychological health was negatively influenced by the home leaving of the child. Usually, mothers feel disheartened, lonely, hopeless, disoriented, and unsure of their identity, role, and future especially those whose primary identity was being a mother. Research has also shown that left-behind older parents had greater degrees of mental health issues, including depressive symptoms, loneliness, poor life satisfaction, and poor cognitive abilities.

The other areas of life like their social life, career, their daily routines, and activities are also affected. Extended families and others are affected initially when they deal with the absence of a child and adapt to it. There is a potential risk of adverse mental health resulting in depression, anxiety, and increased stress if the quality of life of empty nesters is low.

During the earlier times, more Indians lived in joint families, and even if a child went away for higher studies or a job another member of the family was providing all needed social and psychological support. Once the Indian population commence migrating to cities, thereby increasing the economic pressure on nuclear families, the need arose when both parents had to work to support the family needs. In turn, the race to educate their children in the best schools and colleges required more and more resources, for children to migrate to remote locations, within India or abroad, leaving behind their aging parents. As time went by families continue to become a smaller and smaller nuclei with their own growing needs and leaving behind very little in the name of parent support, generation after generation.

The other factors that can contribute to the extent of empty nest felt are financial status, physical health, prior diagnosis of mental illness, marital status, family structure, and others. Empty nesters or parents enter a different phase of life when children move out where they will have to face new challenges and adapt to this new phase.

This economic pressure eventually resulted in creating a large vacuum in families concerning social, emotional, and psychological needs. Thus, Empty Nest Syndrome (ENS) is thus caused by a situation whereby the parents, after the departure of the youngest child from the family, feel like they have been brought down from the 5th level (Self-actualization needs) of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs to almost the 1st (Physiological needs), 2nd (Safety needs) or 3rd (Love and belonging needs) level. The actual level of an individual family depends on the family's economic and social status. A well-to-do family which is not very socially active may find themselves being brought down to Maslow's 3rd level of Hierarchy of Needs. Yet another family where parents have spent all their life's earnings on the education of children by begging and borrowing might feel difficulty even to support

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themselves to meet their Physiological needs, the level 1 needs in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.

With growing times, even though ENS has become more prevalent during current times, and when extended families are becoming less common, the latest cyber technology, like WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, Video calls, etc. are helping greatly to support the families which may be starving at the 3rd level (Love and belonging needs) of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.

Despite such cyber support there still are many aspects of living a daily life that will remind parents, particularly in the Indian context, of being alone and left out. In the west, medical services and other social systems are relatively better organized to take care of essential services. In the west, such human needs (mainly Level 2 of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs) are just a phone call away. In the Indian context, while many improvements have been brought about and are being improved day by day, the current situation still is far from ready for the majority of families suffering from ENS.

In contrast to the above findings by psychological research, there also is research evidence where some parents have confirmed that after the departure of the youngest child from the family, parents have felt a reconnecting with each other which was sacrificed to take care of children. There also have been parents who feel joy and are proud of their children having become capable of embarking on a life of their own. Such parents feel psychologically very satisfied that they have successfully put their child on a successful path to adulthood. This is one of their major objectives of coming together as a family.

Further, there also is much research, which goes to demonstrate that the positive or negative effect of ENS depends on many other psychological, social, and economic factors present in the lives of parents and their emotional intelligence. Here below are a few examples of the negative and positive effects of ENS.

Negative effects of ENS and related causes	Depression, Alcoholism, Identity Crisis, loneliness, Isolation, Sadness
	Marital Conflict, Vulnerability is mainly due to the economic status of the family, Feeling rejected in absence of very poor social interaction, Excessive anxiety over the child's wellbeing, Loss of the feeling of motherhood, Feeling as if life is without any purpose.
Positive effects of ENS and related causes	Feeling of a mature relationship with children, Opportunity to re-connect and reunion with a life partner, Opportunity to improve quality of married life which was sacrificed due to domestic obligations, The opportunity to rekindle interest halted due to their parental duties towards their young ones. Opportunity to fulfill one's dream which didn't become possible being in favor of parental obligations.

Ever since globalization, modernization, and urbanization, more and more people are moving out for better opportunities and facilities in education and work. Research has found

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a few common features in parents who are more susceptible to empty nest syndrome than others, i.e., when,

- This new phase is seen from a stressful point of view instead of a challenge.
- They find moving out of home a difficult and emotional experience.
- Their marital life is unsatisfactory.
- They are too attached to their children that they found them going to school also painful.
- Their main identity is as a parent than an individual.
- They have never held a job other than being a parent.
- Parents think their children are not ready to take on adult responsibilities.

To cope with ENS, parents may plan to prepare themselves before their youngest child is about to leave the house, instead of worrying about empty nest syndrome. Working on a forward strategy where the parents can look positively to the new opportunities in their personal and professional life. The parents can plan to keep themselves occupied with different activities or plan to take on new tasks at work or at home to help alleviate the sense of loss. The parent can avoid taking big decisions until they come to terms with the new phase of life.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The objective of the study “Migration of adult children and mental health of older parents ‘left behind’: An integrative review” was to recognize the association, between feelings of empty nest and the subsequent mental health of the older adults. It also aimed to pinpoint the common risk factors for the deteriorating mental health among those left behind by their children. Online databases along with JBI Checklist for Analytical Cross-Sectional Studies were employed to determine the methodological quality of the articles included in the study. The study found out that left behind older adults showed more symptoms of poor mental health than those who are not left behind at home. Symptoms of depression, loneliness, lower life satisfaction, and poorer cognitive abilities were identified among those left behind. Risk factors such as living arrangements, age, gender, income, physical health status, family and social support, and frequency of child’s visit were identified. (Deependra Thapa, 2018)

Parents experience great loss, negativity, and feelings of grief when their children move out of the living arrangements earlier consisted of parents themselves and their children. The feeling of loss is characterized by many risk factors including cultural variation. The cultural setup in which one has been brought up impacts the attitudes and beliefs and in this case parents’ perception of parenting and that their children will forever remain dependent on them throughout their life span ignoring individuality and freedom of thought. Mansoor and Hasan focussed on exploring and investigating the relationship between empty nest syndrome and psychological wellbeing among middle-aged mothers and fathers. This study also determines the type of departure in terms of children leaving due to marriage or pursuance of a career that makes the parents encounter an empty nest. It also looks deeper into the educational qualification of the parents in undergoing the feelings of being left alone at home by their children. Four hypotheses were postulated- “there is an inverse relationship between empty nest syndrome and psychological well-being, “middle-aged mothers experience more empty nest syndrome and have low psychological wellbeing than middle-aged fathers”, “marriage of children will make parents experience a high level of empty nest syndrome than the departure of children from the family in pursuance of a career”, and “less

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and more educated parents differ in terms of experiencing an empty nest syndrome. A purposive sample consisting of 40 fathers and 41 mothers from different parts of Lahore was selected for the study. Their age range was between 40 to 55 years. Empty Nest Syndrome Questionnaire (ENS, consisting of 16 items and responses elicited on a five-point Likert scale developed by Mbaeze and Ukwandu (2011) was deployed to measure the empty nest syndrome in middle-aged adults. The Psychological Well-Being Scale developed by Ryff (1989), consisting of 84 items, was used to measure psychological wellbeing. The 6 dimensions of this scale measure autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, and purpose of life self-acceptance. For analysing the results obtained, the statistical tool of Pearson Product correlation was employed to study the relationship between psychological well-being and empty nest syndrome. Multivariate analysis of variance, one-way analysis, and t-tests were used to examine the effect of parents' gender is experiencing empty nest syndrome, parents with different educational qualifications, and feelings of empty nest and to determine the differences in experiencing empty nest because of the kind of departure; marriage or career of the children respectively. The results of the study showed that both mothers and fathers equally experienced the empty nest syndrome. The levels of education affect the level of empty nest syndrome in middle-aged adults. There exists no relationship between empty nest syndrome and psychological well-being and no significant effect on the type of departure and empty nest syndrome. (Ayesha Mansoor, 2019)

A cross-sectional study conducted among 488 elderly people, ages ranging from 60-92 years in Taiyuan, Shanxi Province, a medium-sized city in the north of China focussed on comparing the mental health and related factors impacting the empty-nest and the non-empty nest elderly and attain strategies to improve their quality of life. A demographic questionnaire along with SCL-90-R was used to obtain demographic variables and to assess mental health. The sample consisted of elderly males, married, high educational level, with high income, and residing in the urban areas. Multiple regression analysis revealed that the important risk factors relating to the poor mental health of the empty-nest elderly are gender and income and that for non-empty-nest elderly relate to chronic diseases. (Y.-q.Guo, 2016) Empty-nest syndrome is more like an emotional response of a parent that can be acute or severe. Emotional intelligence refers to the management of emotions maturely and it is also considered the feeling side of intelligence. Dependence proneness is response inhibition on the part of parents when faced with circumstances of their children leaving them home behind. A recent study deliberated to study the interactivity of emotional intelligence, dependence proneness, and gender among middle-aged adults. A random sample consisting of 480 middle-aged men and women (240 men and 240 female) hailing from the twin cities of Bhillai and Durg, India was drawn. Empty-Nest Scale was constructed and standardized before the survey. The Hindi version of the Emotional Intelligence Inventory adopted by Mishra (2000) and the Dependence Proneness scale constructed and standardized by Sinha (1975) was used in the study. Subjects with high emotional intelligence and low dependence proneness scored lower on the Empty-Nest Scale questionnaire than those with low emotional intelligence and high dependence proneness. The middle-aged male with high emotional intelligence scored low on the Empty-Nest Scale questionnaire than the middle-aged female with low emotional intelligence. The middle-aged female with low dependence proneness will not score significantly higher in the Empty-Nest Scale questionnaire than the middle-aged male with high dependence proneness. (Dubey, 2017)

The aim of the study done by Mitchell & Lovegreen (2009), "The Empty Nest Syndrome in Midlife Families", was to study parental health and well-being concerning the empty nest

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transition among 490 parents, who were a part of four different cultural groups taken into consideration (British, Southern European, Chinese, and Indo/East India), living in British Columbia, Canada. The data were collected both qualitatively and quantitatively. The results show a few factors in consideration of the dependent variables. They show that mothers are more likely to report having faced the Empty Nest Syndrome than fathers. Respondents from Indo/East India reported having this condition more than the other cultural groups taken. Lastly, it was noticed that those parents who worked half-time or were homemakers reported having faced the empty nest syndrome rather than those who had worked full-time. The study highlights that a few non-individualistic cultures felt this because they believed that their previous connections were now broken or cut off and they felt a huge loss due to the attachment. Some also found their identity of being a parent being questioned in the process while others found that their sole purpose in life was their child/children. Some parents expressing ENS said that it was because they were constantly worried about different aspects of their child living away. The study talks about how some of this can lead to clinical symptoms of depression and anxiety and it is a serious concern with children moving out of the family homes more frequently. (Mitchell & Lovegreen, 2009)

A study conducted by Thibodeau & Bouchard (2020), examined the effect of adult attachment on marital and parental satisfaction among 165 Caucasian heterosexual Canadian couples who were in their empty-nest stage of life. They used the Actor-Partner Interdependence Model which allowed the examination of the effect of each parent's attachment on their own or their partner's satisfaction (both marital and parental). Of the sample chosen, 94% of the participants were married and the rest were cohabiting. The average age of the women was 58 and the men, 60, with stable incomes. The results showed a positive correlation between the husbands' secure attachment and their parental satisfaction, but there was no significant correlation for the wives. The anxious attachment of both partners had a negative correlation with their own and their partner's marital satisfaction, though it was tested to be more for the wives than for the husbands. The same was true for avoidant attachment. This highlights the fact that those parents who are in their empty nest stage and have the aforementioned anxious and avoidant attachment have lesser satisfaction in their own marital lives. (Thibodeau & Bouchard, 2020).

“The exploration of the relationship between consumption and production as women enact their roles as mothers and reconstruct their sense of self during periods of major household change and role status transitions” was the aim of one study conducted by Hogg, Curasi & Maclaran (2007). The researchers used a mixed-method research design involving semi-structured interviews and online ethnography. The interviews had been conducted with well-educated, white, middle-class mothers. The netnography was conducted on the US-dominated sites and involved observation and participation of the researcher in the culture being studied. It was found that the role of enacting love and mothering as there was a shift from production to consumption-based activities proved to be highly stressful in terms of redefining one's self. These mothers missed being “needed” by them and doing activities with them which, in a way, created a void in them and made them feel the loss of the nurturing role. Many women felt the loss of doing family rituals together while some others felt deep insecurity about their role as they had a lot more time to themselves than before. They feel empty and often think of their kids and buy things for them to still enact the love. However, it was noted that this transition into the empty nest stage was seen to be easier for those women who worked out of their homes. It was also noticed that women now did not find a reason to not eat pre-cooked meals since cooking for fewer people was not worth it.

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Boundaries between the family and household were now separated and women had to rebuild their identity. (Hogg, Curasi, & Maclaran, 2004)

A study aimed at identifying common issues that married couples face during the transition into their empty nest stage was done by Nagy & Theiss (2013), mostly on those who had recently entered this stage in their lives. The sample consisted of 50 couples, both husband and wife, ranging from 39 to 78 years of age, with 74% being Caucasian, 9% African American, 7% Indian, 6% Asian/Pacific Islander, 1% Hispanic, and 3% from other areas. After being tested for their eligibility for the test, the participants were asked to answer a questionnaire on their relationship with their spouse since entering the empty-nest phase, independent of their partners. They were asked open-ended questions to understand the partner's interference, change in relationships, and relational uncertainty. It was found that most of the couples enjoyed having more time with their partners because before their time was spent doing routine activities such as running errands and such, whereas after their children left they had more time to communicate, they had more privacy and they enjoyed with each other. They also enjoyed this lack of routine as it gave them more freedom to pursue different goals they wanted to. However, it was also noticed that certain couples were worried about the change in their roles in their relationships after their child/children had left home. They were worried about the romance in the relationship, being bored, and if their relationships were really strong enough to survive in the absence of the primary role of taking care of their children. Partners also reported feeling guilty for not being there for their significant other and sometimes found themselves, especially husbands, forced into doing activities. All of this highlighted that the empty nest stage is a new phase in the life of parents and comes with a load of new experiences and difficulties, often either strengthening or weakening their relationship with their spouse. (Nagy & Theiss, 2013)

One study done by Chen, Yang & Aagard (2012) was to understand and analyze the quality of life among the older American population living under empty-nest conditions. Two sets of participants were chosen; one set from universities with more than 10 working older adults and the other being the local senior center built for the older adults in the state. Thirty-five participants, the youngest being 57 and the oldest 93, completed the questionnaire which had three main sections: a) living conditions of the older population; b) their living satisfaction, and c) their demographic details. 73.8% of the sample believed that their relationships with their child influenced their lives and they were pleased to visit their children. 36.9% wished that their children could provide the care they needed when they were old but were aware of the fact that their children too had their own families to take care of first. However, most of the respondents believed that they can take care of themselves and that their friends were around them if any assistance was required. The findings state that participation in social activities helped the older population lead a happy and content life while being in the empty nest stage. It was also noted that older people did not wish to leave or vacate their family homes and preferred to receive help from social programs rather than be a burden to their children. (Chen, Yang, & Aagard, 2012)

In retrospect, a study conducted by Dennerstein in 2002 in Australia, showed a positive mood and an increase in well-being were scored after the children had left the house due to a reduction of household chores and their daily hassles which resulted in the reduction of negative emotions. This study concerned itself with only women who were at the baseline of not worrying much when their children are leaving home. (DENNERSTEIN et al., 2002).

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Curlee in his 1969 research, named 'Alcoholism and the 'Empty Nest'' stated that out of the sample of 100 women who were receiving treatment in an alcoholism treatment center, almost a quarter of middle-aged women their alcoholism was triggered by an identity crisis or the sudden changes or challenges they faced while transitioning to empty nesters. (J, 1969)

The Empty Nest, Employment, and Psychiatric Symptoms in College-Educated Women, research by Barbara Powell in 1977 furthering the research conducted by Powell and Reznikoff in 1976, tentatively concludes that career involvement has mental benefits during the time of middle age years when experiencing maternal role loss, as their younger-aged selves experienced conflicts during the time younger age self between career and family responsibilities which may have triggered the increased self-esteem they develop. (Powell, 1977).

METHODOLOGY

Objective-

To assess the extent of Empty Nest Syndrome among middle-aged parents whose children have emptied the nest because of their career obligations, independent pursuits or marriage.

Sample-

A purposive sample consisting of 201 middle-aged adults hailing from different states in India (94.09%), United States (2.57%), Germany (1.80%), Canada (0.51%), United Arab Emirates (0.51%), United Kingdom (0.26%), Australia (0.26%) was drawn. The age range was found to be

Sample inclusion criterion-

Middle-aged adults whose children have left their nest in pursuit of their careers or marriage.

Sample exclusion criterion-

Parents below the age of 40 and above the age of 70 years and whose children resided in the same nest were not a part of this study.

Data collection

To collect data, an online form, with a set of 50 items, was created and the link was circulated to the respective population that made up the sample via various social media channels such as Whatsapp, Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn respectively. The Empty Nest Syndrome Scale-Indian Form can be found in the Appendix

The empty nest syndrome scale

The 50 items of ENS-IF were formulated after doing extensive and elaborative review of the literature surmounting the Empty Nest syndrome. The ENS-IF was designed and developed on the pattern of the Likert Scale technique i.e., a six-point scale. The items were reviewed by experts in the field of counselling and education. The experts provided valuable judgments and the changes pointed out were incorporated. The items contained positive and negative statements and the scoring took place in the following manner.

Reliability

For the purpose of finding out the reliability of the scale, the developers of the Empty Nest Syndrome Scale-Indian Form, conducted a psychometric evaluation of the scale; item-total correlation and inter-item correlation. These were found with the help of Cronbach's alpha

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testing using IBM SPSS 16. The value of Cronbach's Alpha was found to be 0.919 indicating that the test has high reliability.

Validity

The Empty Nest Syndrome Scale-Indian Form obtained a construct validity. The validity of the scale was established from the reviews and opinions of four subject matter experts in the field of counselling and education. Some items were removed while others were reframed and improvised according to the suggestions of the subject matter experts. Thus, it can be understood that the inferences drawn from the scores of the scales is largely appropriate for measuring the extent of the Empty Nest Syndrome.

Norms

- The sum total of all the 50 items from the raw scores for the minimum and maximum score ranges from 24 and 173 respectively.
- The mean, and standard deviation are 103.99 and 30.9 respectively.
- For the purpose of scoring and interpreting the raw scores the following

Scoring:

Positive statements	2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 32, 34, 35, 36, 37, 39, 41, 42, 43, 44, 46, 47, 48, 49.	Always - 5 Very Frequently - 4 Often - 3 Sometimes - 2 Rarely - 1 Never - 0
Negative statements	1, 5, 9, 12, 18, 19, 23, 29, 31, 33, 38, 40, 45, 50. (reverse scoring)	Always - 0 Very Frequently - 1 Often - 2 Sometimes - 3 Rarely - 4 Never - 5

The responses were scored and the scores were added. The obtained raw scores were then interpreted accordingly to find the extent of the empty Nest Syndrome faced by the middle-aged parents.

Based on analysis using IBM SPSS, the interpretations are as follows-

- **High Score (167-250):** People who score high on the Empty Nest Syndrome Scale-Indian Form tend to be anxious most of the time, have a deeper sense of loss, and show disturbances in their daily routine after the child has left the nest (house). They are more likely to exhibit neurotic tendencies and seem to be attached to the child in an unhealthy manner.
- **Average (85-166):** People who score average on the Empty Nest Syndrome Scale-Indian Form tend to have a balanced relationship with their children. They experience a sense of loss and loneliness but they neither show neurotic traits nor detached traits. They have a more realistic sense of loss.
- **Low (0-84):** People who score low on the Empty Nest Syndrome Scale-Indian Form tend to be very satisfied after the departure of their child. They seem to have a good relationship with their child. However, this can be an indicator of a detached relationship with the child where the parents are too focused on their own life.

CONCLUSIONS

Change is inevitable and can be stressful. Changes observed in the period of parenthood can be significantly strenuous impacting lifestyles and major life decisions. Empty Nest is the phenomenon where the children of the house have reached maturity and have left creating emotional distress and a void in the lives of the parents. This void is often referred to as the Empty Nest Syndrome, which is accompanied by feelings of loneliness, distress, sadness, and other complicated emotions experienced by parents when their children move out of the house. Parents who identify themselves with their children on major domains of self and well-being face the emptiness more profoundly. Parents continue parenting even after their children have reached independence and maturity in life.

The Indian culture focuses on collectivism and harmony in society as well as within the family. This leads to parents nurturing and taking care of their kids even after they stand on their own feet and are independent. It is then expected of the children to take care of their aging parents/guardians. These feelings of attachment bring about feelings of loneliness, sadness, and distress when parents are separated from their children. This is the primary reason why the Empty Nest Syndrome Scale-Indian Form is relevant to all collective cultures, especially the Indian population. Thus, this scale can be administered to an Indian population and it effectively assesses the extent of the Empty Nest Syndrome among empty nesters.

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Empty Nest Syndrome Scale- Indian Form (ENS-IF)

Conflict of Interest

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APPENDIX 1

EMPTY NEST SYNDROME SCALE (ENS)

Instructions:

"This booklet contains statements regarding the way you have been thinking, feeling and acting after your child/children have left home to live elsewhere. For each statement, please select the option that best describes your thinking, feeling and actions by marking (✓), on any one of the five response points, 'Always', 'Very Frequently', 'Often', 'Sometimes', 'Rarely' and 'Never'. There are no right or wrong answers and there are no trick questions. Work quickly and do not think too long about the exact meaning of the question. Give your first response. Do not leave any question unanswered."

Disclaimer: Please note that while answering this scale you might have to revisit some memories of your child who has left home which might be uncomfortable and could be upsetting. If at any point you feel discomfort of any sort you can stop answering.

[Items: (N) Negative Items, mentioned only for experts' review]

Items	Always	Very Frequently	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
1. Ever since my child/children left home I feel that I am satisfied in my life (N).						
2. Ever since my child/children left home I often tend to experience a sense of emptiness.						
3. Ever since my child /children left home I feel bitter when I see other parents with their children.						
4. I don't like the fact that my child had to leave the house for work/studies/marriage.						
5. My routine has been the same since my child/children have left home. (N)						
6. Ever since my child/children left home I find myself looking back on memories.						
7. Delay in/unable to contact my child/children causes a lot of stress and anxiety.						

Empty Nest Syndrome Scale- Indian Form (ENS-IF)

Items	Always	Very Frequently	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
8. Ever since my child/children left home, I have thoughts of not being able to see him/her/them for one last time when I fall ill.						
9. Ever since my child/children left home there have been lesser conflicts (N).						
10. I need to constantly check on my child/children to assure myself that they are okay.						
11. I do not feel like eating the food I make on special occasions knowing that I cannot share it with my child/children.						
12. Ever since my child /children left home I feel like I have more time on my hands to do the things I enjoy (N).						
13. I feel sad when I am not able to celebrate my child/children's accomplishments with them in person.						
14. Ever since my child/children left home I feel more irritable than before.						
15. Ever since my child /children left home I constantly worry about my child's/children's safety.						
16. Ever since my child/children left home I feel aches/pains in my body that do not seem to go away no matter what I try.						
17. Ever since my child/children left home I often feel sad for no apparent reason.						
18. I feel okay about my child moving away from home(N).						
19. My child moving away has not affected me emotionally (N).						
20. Ever since my child/children left home I lack the energy to do my work daily.						

Empty Nest Syndrome Scale- Indian Form (ENS-IF)

Items	Always	Very Frequently	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
21. I have lost my appetite ever since my child/children left home.						
22. Ever since my child/children left home I find myself with more free time these days and do not know how to occupy myself.						
23. Ever since my child/children left home I find myself in a good mood most of the time (N).						
24. When my child is unwell, I worry and feel helpless for not being able to take care of them.						
25. I don't like that my child/children don't talk to me enough and that we're growing apart.						
26. Ever since my child/children left home I feel abandoned by my child.						
27. I worry that I might be disturbing my child/children when I call them.						
28. Ever since my child/children left home I feel anxious when I am unaware of their routine.						
29. Moving away from home is a good opportunity for my child/children to become independent and grow (N).						
30. There has been an increase in the amount of work I do around the house after my child has left home.						
31. I have not constantly thought about my child/children since they have left home(N).						
32. When my child is facing difficulties, I feel guilty for not being physically present with them.						
33. Ever since my child/children left home I can take care of my health, wellness, and appearance better (N).						

Empty Nest Syndrome Scale- Indian Form (ENS-IF)

Items	Always	Very Frequently	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
34. Ever since my child/children left home I feel like I have lost my friend.						
35. Ever since my child/children left home I do not find joy in activities that previously interested me.						
36. I don't feel like attending any family occasions/gatherings/ any fun event without my child/children.						
37. I tend to use my phone a lot to distract myself ever since my child/children have left home.						
38. Ever since my child/children left home I feel that I can focus more on what I usually do and its demands (N).						
39. I tend to talk about my feelings of sadness with family and friends after my child/children left home.						
40. I can enjoy festivities and special occasions despite not having my child/children around (N).						
41. I do not feel safe and secure without my child/children in the house.						
42. I am unable to communicate as much as I'd like with my child/children because I lack technological knowledge.						
43. I feel I have lost a major part of my identity because I no longer can get involved with my child/children's life events.						
44. Ever since my child/children left home my sleep cycle is disturbed because of a constant worry.						
45. Ever since my child/children left home I enjoy spending more time with my friends now (N).						
46. Ever since my child/children left home I feel like I have nobody to talk to in my daily life.						

Empty Nest Syndrome Scale- Indian Form (ENS-IF)

Items	Always	Very Frequently	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
47. I feel that my child/children leaving has negatively impacted my marriage/relationship with my spouse.						
48. Ever since my child/children left home I find myself interacting more with children around me.						
49. I prepare for my child's visit and plan a lot way before they come home.						
50. Ever since my child/children left home I feel positive about my family's future (N).						