



Times After Goodbye: Coping, Personal Growth and Effects of Social Support in Empty Nesters

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Abstract

This study investigates the psychological impacts of Empty Nest Syndrome (ENS) and compares the effectiveness of various coping mechanisms and social support systems for empty nesters. The sample size of 78 participants was used to collect the data for the study. The tools administered were the Empty Nest Syndrome Scale -Indian Form (Jhangiani et al., 2022), Brief COPE (Carver et al., 1989), Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (Zimed et al., 1988) and Personal Growth Initiative Scale (Robitschek, 1988). According to the findings, personal growth activities are strongly connected with lower sensations of emptiness, implying that personal development plays an important role in moderating the negative impacts among empty nesters.

Keywords: *Empty Nest Syndrome, Coping, Self-Growth, Social Support*

Introduction

Empty Nest Syndrome (ENS) presents a pivotal psychological adjustment for parents as they adapt to their children's absence from the home. Due to its significant impact on parental mental health, ENS has garnered considerable attention across various fields. Contributing factors to ENS include shifts in daily routines, alterations in identity and purpose, and feelings of loneliness and loss (Barrett & Turner, 2020). These factors, combined with societal expectations and cultural norms surrounding parenthood, underscore the complexities of ENS and necessitate extensive research.

ENS manifests with a spectrum of symptoms, including melancholy, grief, loneliness, heightened marital conflicts, and diminished life satisfaction (Russell & Crockett, 2020). Physiological symptoms such as disrupted sleep patterns, eating disturbances, and heightened stress levels are also prevalent among those experiencing ENS (Stanley & Markman, 2021). These manifestations underscore the widespread nature of ENS and highlight its profound impact on individuals' overall well-being.

Despite extensive research into the emotional ramifications of ENS, significant gaps persist regarding the efficacy of coping mechanisms and the role of social support in mitigating its effects (Mitchell & Lovegreen, 2009; Bouchard, 2014). Recent studies have shifted focus towards understanding the dual nature of ENS, recognizing both its challenges and opportunities for personal growth and self-discovery (Mount & Moas, 2015). Protective factors, such as enhanced personal and marital happiness, have been identified to alleviate the negative emotional consequences of children leaving home (Bouchard, 2014). However, the contradictory effects of social support and the specific coping strategies best suited for addressing the unique emotional landscape of ENS remain elusive.

Thus, investigating the intricate interplay between contributing factors, symptomatology, coping strategies, and social support networks is crucial for advancing our understanding of ENS and designing targeted interventions to aid individuals in navigating this transition. By comprehending the complexity of ENS, researchers and practitioners can collaborate to implement evidence-based interventions that promote resilience and well-being among parents undergoing this critical life stage transition.

Coping strategies serve as vital mechanisms for individuals to navigate and manage stressful situations, encompassing various behavioral and psychological efforts aimed at mastering, tolerating, or alleviating stressors (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Carver et al., 1989). Problem-focused coping entails actively addressing stresses directly, while emotion-focused coping centers on managing emotional responses to stress (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). In the context of ENS, these coping mechanisms may significantly influence individuals' adjustment to the transition. For instance, problem-focused coping may involve exploring new interests or engaging in activities to fill the void left by departing children, while emotion-focused coping may entail processing and expressing feelings of sadness or loss associated with the empty nest (Manne & Zautra, 1989).

Social support also emerges as a critical aspect of ENS, influencing individuals' potential for personal growth and resilience during the transition. However, the impact of social support on ENS adaptation varies depending on the source and type of support received. While friends and family can facilitate positive adjustment by providing companionship and encouragement, exploring additional sources of support, such as support groups or online communities, can offer alternative avenues of assistance (Manne & Zautra, 1989). Moreover, understanding the interplay between coping strategies and social support is crucial in shaping individuals' experiences of personal growth during the empty nest phase (Ryff & Singer, 2008; Ong et al., 2009).

Acknowledging the potential limitations of coping mechanisms and social support adds depth to the discussion. Recognizing that the effectiveness of these methods varies among individuals or that certain coping mechanisms are not universally applicable underscores the complexity of ENS adaptation and underscores the need for personalized interventions (Manne & Zautra, 1989). Incorporating these elements enables researchers and practitioners to gain a better understanding of the multifaceted nature of ENS and develop more holistic approaches to supporting individuals throughout this critical life change.

The current study aims to fill existing gaps by evaluating the efficacy of various coping mechanisms, including problem-focused and emotion-focused approaches, and by investigating different forms of social support, such as friends and significant others, in the context of Empty Nest Syndrome (ENS). This study seeks to contribute to the development of targeted interventions designed to increase resilience and facilitate adjustment during this key life stage by providing a more comprehensive understanding of how individuals navigate the empty nest period. This aligns with the broader discourse on ENS and supports ongoing efforts to enhance our understanding of midlife transitions and their implications for adult development.

The previous research has heavily focused on Chinese citizens, but there has been a noticeable increase in the Indian population of empty nesters in recent years. Given this demographic shift, expanding the study's scope to include these additional dimensions not only diversifies the research focus, but also integrates it into a robust framework of existing studies. This comprehensive approach provides the backdrop for exploring the complexities of ENS and the multifaceted interventions that may assist individuals in navigating this transformative phase.

Review of Literature

Empty Nest Syndrome (ENS) refers to the emotional and psychological issues that parents face when their children leave home. This transitional period can cause feelings of despair, anxiety, and a loss of purpose in life. ENS has been studied in terms of coping methods, growth prospects, cultural perspectives, and the importance of social support.

The researchers investigated the emotional and psychological issues related to ENS. Depression, anxiety, role confusion, and stress are frequent issues for parents of all genders and ethnic backgrounds. The global significance of ENS emphasizes the necessity for tailored therapies (Zhai et al., 2015; Mahmoudpour et al., 2023).

Additionally, Mahmoudpour et al. (2023) investigated the efficacy of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) in dealing with ENS. Their findings show improvements in cognitive flexibility and emotional self-regulation. Similarly, Su et al. (2018) explored coping methods as mediators between personality traits and mental health. Personalized therapies based on coping methods can improve support for empty nesters.

Unlike traditional perceptions of ENS as stressful, Bouchard (2014) and Mount and Moas (2015) emphasized the opportunity for personal growth during the empty nest age. This phase allows for the redefinition of one's own identity as well as the improvement of personal relationships. Empty nesters may discover new elements of themselves and experience increased life satisfaction (Bouchard, 2014; Mount & Moas, 2015).

Song et al. (2023) studied how mental health knowledge and resilience influences positive coping methods among empty nesters. Increasing resilience can greatly enhance mental health outcomes. These factors should be taken into account when designing targeted interventions.

Randhawa and Kaur (2020) investigate the cultural influence of ENS, comparing experiences in Eastern and Western cultures. Culturally sensitive treatment techniques are required to address the distinct issues faced by empty nesters in various contexts. Additionally, Randhawa and Kaur (2021) compared Eastern and Western perspectives on ENS, delving deeper into cultural factors. Their research highlights the global aspect of this illness and the need to understand cultural differences when tackling ENS difficulties.

Wei and Xue (2022); Rahim (2020) underlined the significance of social support in minimizing ENS impacts. Strong family and social networks serve as a buffer against loneliness and despair. Strengthening these support structures is critical for empty nesters' psychological well-being.

Piper and Breckenridge-Jackson (2017); Zheng et al. (2022) found significant prevalence and intensity of ENS. Parents entering the empty nest era experience heightened depression symptoms and a sense of loss. Mental health interventions in this vital area are required.

Maurya and Kothari (2020) conducted comparative research on coping techniques used by elderly men and women. Their findings indicate gender differences in coping strategies, which might help guide focused therapy approaches. Darmayanthi and Lestari (2018) also highlighted the dynamic process of transitioning to the empty nest era among middle-aged women, underlining the need to understand gender-specific experiences throughout this life transition.

Kaur and Sinha (2023) present a nuanced picture of the impact of child emigration on left-behind parents in Punjab, India, considering cultural and demographic factors. They discuss the distinct socio-cultural features of ENS in South Asian cultures. Cultural background

has a substantial impact on the ENS experience, underscoring the importance of culturally sensitive techniques.

Wang's (2023) study examined how family health, social support, and well-being affect Chinese empty-nest youngsters. Strong family and social networks protect empty nesters from loneliness, sadness, and other mental health issues.

Kristensen et al. (2021); Yao et al. (2019) investigated the factors that influence resilience and mental health in empty nesters. Variables such as self-care capacity, social connections, and personal health practices have important roles in buffering against depressive symptoms and loneliness, suggesting routes for improving life quality in later years.

Methodology

Aim

The aim is to study coping, personal growth, and effects of social support in empty nesters.

Research Objectives

- To assess the impact of different coping strategies on personal growth and symptoms of empty nest syndrome.
- To study the Impact of Social Support on Personal Growth and Emotional Well-Being.
- To investigate the Effects of Hobbies and Mindfulness Activities on Self-Discovery, Well-Being, and Life Satisfaction
- To learn how a combination of social support and individual resilience factors affect coping effectiveness and overall adjustment to empty nest syndrome.

Hypothesis

- H1: There will be a significant relationship between coping tactics and personal growth.
- H2: There will be a significant relationship between coping tactics and empty nest syndrome.
- H3: There will be a positive significant relationship between perceived social support and personal growth.
- H4: There will be a negative significant relationship between perceived social support and empty nest syndrome.

Sample

Participants were chosen using a combination of convenience and purposeful sampling strategies to ensure a diverse representation of empty nesters by age, gender, and cultural background. The final sample included 78 participants, all of whom had at least one child who had left the household over the previous five years. This interval was chosen to guarantee that the emotional alterations associated with ENS remained relevant for the participants.

Measures

- *The Empty Nest Syndrome Scale- Indian Form (Jhangiani et al., 2022)*: A meticulously prepared measure with 50 items formatted on a six-point Likert scale. The measure, which was improved with feedback from therapy and education professionals, has a balanced mix of positive and negative words. The ENS-IF's reliability, as measured by Cronbach's alpha, was found to be 0.919, suggesting strong internal consistency. Furthermore, professional evaluations were conducted to ensure the scale's validity, which resulted in changes to item content to improve its accuracy in measuring the amount of Empty Nest Syndrome. This scientific approach to scale development

has established that the ENS-IF is a trustworthy and valid tool for comprehending this psychological phenomenon, particularly in the Indian setting.

- ***Personal Growth Initiative Scale (Robitschek, 1988):*** The PGIS is a psychometric test that assesses an individual's proactive involvement in personal development activities. It is distinguished by high scores, indicating increased initiative in personal development. The PGIS's reliability is evidenced by its consistently high Cronbach's alpha coefficients, which frequently exceed 0.80 across multiple studies and populations, demonstrating good internal consistency. In terms of validity, the PGIS has significant construct validity, as indicated by its connection with related domains such as life satisfaction and well-being, indicating that it measures what it is designed to measure. The scale's applicability across demographic contexts demonstrates its strong psychometric qualities, making it a dependable and useful tool for evaluating personal growth initiatives.
- ***The Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (Zimed, et al., 1988):*** It measures perceived social support from family, friends, and significant others. It has shown excellent psychometric qualities in various investigations. The scale's reliability is frequently demonstrated by high Cronbach's alpha values, which are usually greater than 85 for each of its subscales, showing excellent internal consistency. The MSPSS has strong construct and convergent validity. The scale correlates positively with measures of psychological adjustment and adversely with measures of sadness and anxiety, indicating that it accurately evaluates the perceived supportiveness of social interactions. It has been verified across cultural and demographic groups, demonstrating its usefulness and accuracy in evaluating perceived social support in a variety of circumstances.

- **Brief COPE (Carver et al., 1989):** The Brief COPE is an instrument that assesses several coping techniques utilized by individuals, such as problem-focused, emotion-focused, and avoidant coping methods. It is recognized for its dependable psychometric qualities. The Brief COPE's reliability is demonstrated by adequate Cronbach's alpha coefficients for its subscales, which typically range from 50 to 90, indicating acceptable to outstanding internal consistency depending on the coping technique evaluated. Its validity is determined by both construct and criterion validity. The Brief COPE correlates strongly with other recognized measures of coping and psychological resilience, indicating its validity. Furthermore, its capacity to distinguish between coping styles in connection to various psychological outcomes illustrates its utility as a diagnostic tool for examining coping processes in a variety of psychological contexts.

Data Collection

Data were collected using offline surveys and online survey platforms, which enabled the quick distribution and completion of questionnaires while ensuring the participants' confidentiality and anonymity. Each participant gave informed consent after being told about the study's objectives, the voluntary nature of their participation, and the confidentiality of their data.

Data analysis

The data were examined with SPSS software. Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation) were employed to summarize the data. Pearson correlation coefficients were used to investigate the links among coping techniques, social support, personal progress, and emotions of emptiness. Multiple regression analysis was used to examine the predictive value of coping techniques and social support for personal growth and symptoms of emptiness. Pearson correlation and multiple regression were chosen to better comprehend the strength and

direction of correlations between continuous variables, as well as the influence of numerous independent variables on a single dependent variable.

Results

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics

	Personal Growth Initiative Scale	Significant Others	Freedom	Problem Focused	Emotional Focused	Avoidant	Empty nest
N	78	78	78	78	78	78	78
Mean	41.17	5.88	5.74	21.17	24.82	15.22	115.42
Std. Deviation	8.338	1.289	1.194	4.274	5.453	4.445	30.903

N= 78 (empty nesters)

The mean scores for coping methods (Problem-Focused, Emotional-Focused, and Avoidant) on the Personal Growth Initiative Scale vary significantly. Problem-focused coping has a mean score of 21.17, whereas emotional-focused coping has a mean score of 24.82. Avoidant coping has a mean score of 15.22.

Table 2

Tests of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Personal Growth Initiative Scale	.083	78	.200*	.956	78	.009
Significant Others	.255	78	.000	.811	78	.000

Friend	.166	78	.000	.883	78	.000
Problem Focused	.102	78	.044	.977	78	.165
Emotional Focused	.077	78	.200*	.966	78	.035
Avoidant	.148	78	.000	.940	78	.001
Emptiness	.067	78	.200*	.988	78	.650
*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.						
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction						

Table 2 shows the results of normality tests with the Kolmogorov-Smirnova and Shapiro-Wilk tests. Most variables have p-values less than 0.05, indicating that the data deviates significantly from the normal distribution. However, the p-values for the Personal Growth Initiative Scale, Emotional Focused Coping, and Emptiness are greater than 0.05, implying that these variables may have a normal distribution.

Table 3

Correlation matrix between coping strategies and empty nest syndrome

		Problem Focused	Emotional Focused	Avoidant	Emptiness
Problem Focused	Pearson Correlation	1	.663**	.467**	.047
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.000	.000	.341
	N	78	78	78	78
Emotional Focused	Pearson Correlation	.663**	1	.660**	.150
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000		.000	.096
	N	78	78	78	78
Avoidant	Pearson Correlation	.467**	.660**	1	.136
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	.000		.118
	N	78	78	78	78

Emptiness	Pearson Correlation	.047	.150	.136	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.341	.096	.118	
	N	78	78	78	78

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

Table 3 depicts the correlations between several coping techniques (problem-focused, emotional-focused, avoidant) and feelings of empty nest. There is a strong positive correlation between Problem Focused coping and Emotional Focused coping ($r = 0.663$, $p < 0.01$) and between Emotional Focused coping and Avoidant coping ($r = 0.660$, $p < 0.01$). Furthermore, there is a moderate positive association between problem-focused and Avoidant coping ($r = 0.467$, $p < 0.01$). However, there are modest, nonsignificant connections between sensations of emptiness and coping techniques.

Table 4

Correlation matrix between Personal Growth and perceived social support

		Personal Growth Initiative Scale	Empty nest	Friend	Significant Others
Personal Growth Initiative Scale	Pearson Correlation	1	-.276**	.301**	.198*
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.007	.004	.041
	N	78	78	78	78
Emptiness	Pearson Correlation	-.276**	1	.020	.250*
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.007		.431	.014
	N	78	78	78	78

Friend	Pearson Correlation	.301**	.020	1	.480**
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.004	.431		.000
	N	78	78	78	78
Significant Others	Pearson Correlation	.198*	.250*	.480**	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.041	.014	.000	
	N	78	78	78	78
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).					
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).					

Table 4 shows a link between the Personal Growth Initiative Scale (PGIS) and feelings of emptiness, as well as perceived social support from friends and significant others. There is a substantial negative association ($r = -0.276$, $p < 0.01$) between PGIS and Emptiness. Furthermore, PGIS has a substantial positive link with perceived social support from Friends ($r = 0.301$, $p < 0.01$) and substantial Others ($r = 0.198$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that persons who actively engage in personal development initiatives experience stronger support from these sources. Emptiness correlates positively with perceived social support from Significant Others ($r = 0.250$, $p < 0.05$), but has no significant association with support from Friends.

Table 5*Model Summary*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.531 ^a	.282	.221	7.358
a. Predictors: (Constant), Avoidant, Friend, Significant Others, Problem Focused, Emotional Focused				

Table 5 indicates that the predictors collectively account for a significant proportion of the variance in the outcome variable. The multiple regression model, including Avoidant coping, perceived social support from Friends and Significant Others, Problem-Focused coping, support, and Emotional-Focused coping, explains approximately 28.2% of the variance in the outcome variable ($R^2 = 0.282$). The adjusted R^2 , which adjusts for the number of predictors in the model, is 0.221, suggesting that about 22.1% of the variance is accounted for by the predictors after adjusting for the number of predictors. The standard error of the estimate is 7.358, indicating the average discrepancy between the observed and predicted values of the dependent variable. Overall, the model demonstrates a moderate level of explanatory power in predicting the outcome variable based on the selected predictors.

Table 6

<i>Coefficients</i>						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
a.	(Constant)	14.898	8.011		1.860	.067
	Significant Others	-.340	.790	-.053	-.431	.668
	Friend	.240	.914	.034	.262	.794
	Problem Focused	.683	.284	.350	2.402	.019
	Emotional Focused	-.330	.244	-.216	-1.353	.180
	Avoidant	-.116	.274	-.062	-.424	.673
a. Dependent Variable: Personal Growth Initiative Scale						

Table 6 of the multiple regression analysis shows the links between the predictor factors and the Personal Growth Initiative Scale (dependent variable). Similarly, problem-focused

coping shows a positive connection, implying that people who utilize problem-focused coping strategies are more likely to take initiative in their personal development. None of the other indicators (significant others, friends, emotional focus, avoidant coping) have a statistically significant relationship with personal growth initiative. The constant term ($B = 14.898$, $p = .067$) is not statistically significant, implying that if all predictor variables are zero, the expected value of the dependent variable (personal growth initiative) is also zero.

Table 7

<i>Model Summary</i>				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.389 ^a	.151	.079	29.653
a. Predictors: (Constant), Avoidant, Friend, Significant Others, Problem Focused, Emotional Focused				

Table 7 for the regression analysis shows that the predictors jointly account for a large amount of the variance in the dependent variable. The model's overall fit is moderate, as evidenced by an R-squared value of 0.151, indicating that the predictor variables explain roughly 15.1% of the variance in the dependent variable (Personal Growth Initiative Scale). The adjusted R-squared value, which considers the number of predictors and sample size, is 0.079.

Table 8*Coefficients*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		

1	(Constant)	81.635	32.284		2.529	.014
	Significant Others	9.877	3.184	.412	3.102	.003
	Friend	-.700	3.683	-.027	-.190	.850
	Problem Focused	-.543	1.146	-.075	-.473	.637
	Emotional Focused	.956	.982	.169	.973	.334
	Avoidant	.757	1.106	.109	.685	.496
a. Dependent Variable: Emptiness						

Table 8 provides information about the correlations between predictor factors and the dependent variable (emptiness). The constant term means that when all predictor variables are zero, the predicted Emptiness score is 81.635. The coefficient for Significant Others is the sole predictor variable that is statistically significant ($p = 0.003$), with a positive standardized coefficient of 0.412. Other predictor variables, such as Friend, Problem Focused, Emotional Focused, and Avoidant Coping Strategies, do not have statistically significant associations with emptiness.

On the Personal Growth Initiative Scale (PGIS), participants reported an average score of 41.17, with an 8.338 standard deviation. This shows that individuals are moderately engaged in personal growth activities, demonstrating that, despite the emotional obstacles of the empty nest phase, many are actively seeking personal development chances.

In terms of social support, the results show nuanced disparities in how people perceive assistance from different sources. The mean scores for perceived support from significant others, and friends were 5.88 ($SD = 1.289$), and 5.74 ($SD = 1.194$), respectively.

Participants' coping techniques indicate a clear preference for emotionally focused coping, with an average score of 24.82 ($SD = 5.453$). This suggests that people are more likely to moderate their emotional responses than to engage directly with the situation (problem-focused coping scored 21.17, $SD = 4.274$) or avoid the issue (avoidant coping scored 15.22, $SD = 4.445$). The

usage of avoidant coping mechanisms is decreasing, which is a good indicator because avoidance can lead to more psychological suffering over time. However, the comparatively low usage of problem-solving skills indicates a possible gap in effectively dealing with practical aspects of life changes during the empty nest phase.

Significantly, the Emptiness scale results show a high mean of 115.42 and a standard deviation of 30.903, indicating a significant level of emotional emptiness among the study participants. This high level of emptiness shows the severe emotional issues experienced during the empty nest phase, emphasizing the importance of specific psychological interventions. These could include expanded counselling services, support groups, and community participation activities aimed at filling the hole left by children who leave.

These thorough findings emphasize the complicated interplay of personal development, social support, and coping methods in dealing with the emotional challenges of empty nest syndrome. Improving support systems and encouraging more effective coping skills could considerably improve empty nesters' well-being, reducing feelings of emptiness and fostering a more meaningful post-parenting life phase.

Discussion

The findings of this study on empty nesters are discussed within the larger framework of previous research on Empty Nest Syndrome (ENS) and its psychological effects. Participants displayed fairly high engagement in personal improvement activities, according to their Personal Improvement Initiative Scale (PGIS) ratings. This is consistent with earlier studies indicating that big life transitions, such as experiencing ENS, can be chances for personal development and progress (Mount & Moas, 2015). These findings lend credence to the concept that adaptive coping techniques, such as participating in personal growth activities, can help alleviate ENS symptoms such as loneliness, grief, and identity loss.

The perceived social support of friends and significant others was determined to be moderate. This conclusion is significant since social support is well-known as a protective factor against the psychological suffering associated with life transitions (Wei & Xue, 2022; Rahim, 2020). However, the fairly moderate levels of felt support indicate a possible area where interventions could be improved. This aspect of the findings supports the notion that substantial social support is related to better personal growth and fewer ENS symptoms, but it also implies that existing support may not be optimal.

In terms of coping methods, the preference for emotional-focused coping over problem-focused and avoidant strategies shows that empty nesters could benefit from interventions to improve emotional resilience and management. This choice may represent the coping skills required to deal with the emotional and psychological obstacles identified by writers such as Bouchard (2014), who reported the prevalence of depression and anxiety among persons experiencing ENS. The reliance on emotional coping is consistent with the premise that different coping strategies will have varying effects on the psychological well-being of those experiencing ENS.

Interestingly, the high Emptiness Scale scores highlight ENS's significant emotional impact. This finding is consistent with previous research showing that empty nest transitions can cause severe emotional distress and identity crises (Mitchell & Lovegreen, 2009). The significant sensations of emptiness observed may be connected to limited coping methods and social support, emphasizing the importance of focused psychological therapies.

Overall, the findings of this study add to the current literature by supporting the importance of personal development activities and social support in addressing the challenges of ENS. They also point out the prevalence of emotional-focused coping mechanisms among empty nesters, indicating a promising field for future research and intervention development. These findings validate the investigated hypotheses and highlight the complexities of emotional dynamics in

empty nesters, emphasizing the significance of a diverse strategy to assist this demographic through their changes.

Limitations

This study, while providing interesting insights into the experiences of empty nesters, has several limitations that may impair the findings' generalizability. First, the limited sample size makes it difficult to extrapolate these findings to a larger population. Small sample sizes can result in lower statistical power and, consequently, overestimation or underestimation of genuine effects. Furthermore, the study concentrated on a specific demographic segment within a small geographic area, which may not accurately reflect the varying experiences of empty nesters in various cultural or socioeconomic circumstances.

Furthermore, the study relied mostly on self-reported measures, which, while useful for gaining subjective insights, are susceptible to biases such as social desirability and recall biases. This reliance on self-reporting may distort the results, especially for the emotional and psychological characteristics being examined.

Suggestions for Future Research

Given the constraints indicated above, various areas of future investigation are advised. First, increasing the sample size and integrating people from diverse origins and regions will strengthen the data and provide a more thorough knowledge of the empty nest syndrome in various circumstances. Future research could also benefit from longitudinal designs that track changes over time, providing further insight into the dynamic nature of empty nest experiences as well as the long-term consequences of this life shift.

Incorporating a broader range of factors may help improve the research. For example, investigating additional psychological elements, like as resilience and life satisfaction, and how they interact with personal growth and social support, could provide a more nuanced picture of empty nesters' coping techniques. Furthermore, qualitative methods such as interviews or focus groups could be used to supplement quantitative findings by providing fuller, more thorough portrayals of empty nesters' personal and emotional experiences.

Finally, future studies might look into the effectiveness of specific programs aimed at helping empty nesters. Investigating the influence of various treatments, like cognitive-behavioural therapy or group counselling, on the well-being of empty nesters might provide useful insights that may be used to shape support services and programs for this demographic. This line of research could also look into the influence of community-based support networks and online resources in reducing the psychological effects of empty nest syndrome.

By addressing these issues, future research can expand on the current study's findings, providing broader insights into the empty nest syndrome as well as evidence-based advice for helping people navigate this difficult life stage.

Conclusion

Finally, the study's findings shed insight into the varied nature of emptiness experienced by empty nesters, as well as the many influences on it. While personal development activities show promise in reducing feelings of emptiness, the role of social support and coping techniques appears to be more complicated. The contradictory association between support from significant people and increasing feelings of emptiness calls for a closer look at the quality and form of the support provided. Furthermore, the difference in the influence of assistance from family versus friends emphasizes the necessity of taking into account the complexities of interpersonal connections while resolving feelings of emptiness.

Furthermore, the study's investigation of coping techniques highlights the limitations of traditional problem- and emotion-focused approaches to dealing with the existential nature of emptiness. Existential and acceptance-based therapies could be used in future interventions to help empty nesters reclaim their sense of self and purpose outside of the parenting role.

Future research should dive more into the qualitative components of social support connections, as well as the cultural influences that influence empty nesters' experiences of emptiness. Longitudinal research may provide useful insights into how personal growth, social support, and coping techniques vary over time and how they affect people's adjustment to the empty nest phase. Future research should dive more into the qualitative components of social support connections, as well as the cultural influences that influence empty nesters' experiences of emptiness. Longitudinal research may provide useful insights into how personal growth, social support, and coping techniques vary over time and how they affect people's adjustment to the empty nest phase.

In essence, by recognizing the potential for personal growth amidst the challenges of the empty nest phase and adopting more holistic approaches that take into account individual differences, cultural context, and the quality of interpersonal relationships, interventions can better support empty nesters in navigating this significant life transition, ultimately promoting their psychological well-being and overall quality of life.

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