

Development and Psychometric Assessment of the Domestic Migration Stress Questionnaire (DMSQ): An Instrument with Potential for Global Application

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**Abstract**

*Background:*

Population migration is a global phenomenon driving by unevenly paced development and economic inequalities. Domestic migration is rapidly growing, underscoring the need for empirically based instruments to assess stresses associated with migration.

*Methods:*

Based on literature review and references to published instruments for assessing international migration related stresses, we developed the Domestic Migration Stress Questionnaire (DMSQ) with concept mapping method. The DMSQ is the first of such tools designed to measure domestic migration stress. It was subject to strict psychometric evaluation.

*Outcomes:*

The DMSQ consists of 16 items and organized into four subscales: 1) Separation from origin, 2) Rejection in the destination, 3) Lack of self-confidence and 4) Maladaptation. It was assessed with data collected among rural-to-urban migrants in China (mean age = 24.34, SD=5.85). Psychometric assessment indicated that the DMSQ has a clear four-factor structure, excellent

reliability (Cronbach alpha = 0.93), and adequate validity (significantly related to Perceived Global Stress Scale score, and predicted an array of stress-related mental health symptoms: depression, anxiety, somatization, hostility and obsessive-compulsive).

*Implications:*

The DMSQ provides an instrument much needed for researchers to assess levels of stress associated with domestic migration. In addition to China, the instrument may also be adapted for use in other countries/regions with large amount of domestic migrants.