How Does The Motive of Migration Impact Migrants? The Perspective of Subjective Well-Being

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Abstract

This study integrates expectancy-value theory and subjective well-being perspectives. It aims to explore variations in motivations for migration that typically result in diverse impacts on subjective well-being. This study employs the difference-in-differences method, using the Indonesian Family Life Survey (IFLS) panel data from 2007 and 2014. The results show that risk-coping migration makes migrants feel somewhat less optimistic about their future and find it challenging to fulfill their daily needs. However, they found meeting their children's needs easier and were happier at their destination. Migrants who moved because of investment initially felt optimistic about their future. However, they found it challenging to meet their living and family needs and did not feel happy at their destination. Conversely, migrants who moved for family reasons appeared more optimistic, able to meet their needs, and happier. These findings underscore the importance of understanding migration motives to better support migrant well-being.

Keywords

Happiness; migration impact; motives of migration; optimism; subjective well-being

Introduction

Migration, a global phenomenon, has grown increasingly complex over time (Gou et al., 2020). The development of migration has continued unchecked and in a complex fashion in response to the speed of societal changes (Noja et al., 2018; Podra et al., 2020). It is, therefore, essential to adopt effective strategies for its management from a strategic perspective (Low, 2024; Pécoud, 2021).

This same trend pattern has also been observed in Indonesia, where internal migration has been recognized as a complex process (Adamson & Tsourapas, 2020; Pu et al., 2019; Widaryoko et al., 2023). In Indonesia, internal migration has been a natural consequence of socioeconomic disparities and regional population growth and has contributed to increased migration prospects within Indonesia (Alabshar, 2020; Bryan & Morten, 2017). Numerous studies have similarly highlighted a consistent increase in internal migration within Indonesia over time (Bharati et al., 2024; Susilo et al., 2024).

While migration could offer benefits, the process often presents significant challenges that are emotionally charged. For the migrant, there is a need to adapt oftentimes to a different culture and language, as these are obstacles that need to be overcome over time. As a result, achieving all goals is not always possible (Alabshar et al., 2020). Despite the often-ambivalent correlation between migration benefits and the uncertainty of outcomes, the number of migrants has increased over time (Carballo & Nerukar, 2001; Castelli, 2018; Widaryoko et al., 2023).

The motivations for migration vary significantly from person to person (Bednaříková et al., 2016). Some migrate for work and education opportunities (Bartlett et al., 2018; Thomas et al., 2019), while others move as a risk-coping strategy (Démurger et al., 2023; Kleemans & Magruder, 2018), and some for family reasons (Clark & Maas, 2015; Kulu & Milewski, 2007; Thomas, 2019). Ravenstein (1885) argued early on that the main reason for migrating was economic. However, we may have been undervaluing the significance of other variables that might affect our understanding. Indeed, the motive for migrating represents the primary differentiating factor between migrants who then reside in the destination area (Giuntella et al., 2018; Ruiz & Vargas-Silva, 2018).

De Jong and Fawcett (1981) posited that the complexity and evolution of motifs deepened following the tenets of expectancy-value theory. These motives have expanded beyond the pursuit of economic progress, and they now cover a wide range of aspirations, such as the desire for a better standard of living, escape from political unrest, family reunification, the pursuit of education, or the fulfillment of personal identity. De Jong and Fawcett (1981) further elaborated that motivation is conceptualized explicitly as a function of the value attributed to a particular goal and the perceived likelihood that a specific behavior will achieve that goal. Different groups may assign varying levels of importance to distinct goals. Consequently, it is essential to examine diverse motives to understand the varying effects they may produce.

On the other hand, Diener et al. (1998) argued that the most appropriate measure is subjective well-being (SWB) to evaluate an individual's well-being. Supporting this view, Nima et al. (2020) and Stavrova and Haarmann (2020) maintained that SWB provides a more accurate assessment of an individual's overall well-being rather than a simple economic perspective. Well-being cannot be fully understood solely through economic indicators or the lens of capitalism, as Diener and Seligman (2004) argued. Although economic growth and higher

living standards are frequently considered well-being benchmarks within capitalist frameworks (Wagle, 2007; Yacoub & Mutiaradina, 2020), this perspective is limited. Much evidence indicates that true well-being is more intricately linked to emotional states and happiness levels (Aryogi & Wulansari, 2016; Kahneman & Krueger, 2006), suggesting that economic prosperity alone does not guarantee a high quality of life.

In addition, Diener et al. (1998) described SWB as an individual's life assessment. This assessment can be expressed in terms of cognitive states, taking in the level of satisfaction with their marriage, life, or career, and it can also be expressed in terms of ongoing effects, such as mood or happiness. Diener et al. (2018) later posited that personal or subjective well-being can be achieved through income, temperament, and the support of social relationships. Better SWB is linked to better physical health and social relationships; it promotes better work productivity and increases creativity. Considering that SWB is a key method recommended by researchers for assessing overall well-being (Voukelatou et al., 2021), it is crucial to focus on the SWB of migrants and to explore further the conditions that contribute to their happiness if the objective is to gain insight into the concept of well-being (Pan et al., 2021).

Several studies have explored the welfare differences between migrants and non-migrants in Indonesia. Alabshar et al. (2023) reported that migrants perceived themselves as more capable of fulfilling their needs and achieving a higher economic status. Similarly, Marta et al. (2020) observed that migration driven by investment motives resulted in significant economic improvements compared to remaining non-migrants.

Previous research on the relationship between migration and SWB can generally be classified into several categories. The first group of studies identified a positive relationship between migration and SWB (Akay et al., 2014, 2017; Akdede & Giovanis, 2022; Alabshar et al., 2023; Muliansyah & Chotib, 2019). The second group highlighted the negative impacts of migration (Ivlevs & Veliziotis, 2018; Longhi, 2014). Lastly, some studies found no significant connection between migration and SWB (Giulietti & Yan, 2018; Papageorgiou, 2018; Pollenne & Vargas-Silva, 2024).

Factors influencing SWB can be categorized into two types: external factors, encompassing environmental influences, and internal factors, which are related to individual characteristics (Pan et al., 2021). The new environment encountered after migration external factors significantly impacted the SWB of migrants (Fan et al., 2011; Kent et al., 2017; Pan et al., 2021). However, it is also essential to consider the role of migration motives- an internal factor- that similarly affects the SWB of migrants.

Most migration studies in Indonesia have concentrated on economic factors or their other objective well-being (Alabshar et al., 2021; Marta et al., 2020; Muliansyah & Chotib, 2019). There is a scarcity of research examining the link between migrant status and subjective well-being (SWB) outcomes (Alabshar et al., 2023; Sollis et al., 2023). Furthermore, there has been a lack of thorough research into the impact of migration on migrants' SWB based on their motives.

This study integrates expectancy-value theory and perspectives on SWB. This approach introduces a novel dimension regarding the impact of migration on migrants' SWB. At the same time, numerous studies have previously concentrated primarily on the economic impact of migration. This study marks a significant shift in focus by examining the domain of SWB resulting from migration rather than the more commonly studied economic aspects. However, there is a possibility that we do not fully appreciate the importance of migration motives,

which may have consequences then for our comprehension. Since migration motives are evolving, it is essential not to neglect their diversity, as different motives can lead to other impacts. Therefore, this paper aims to bridge the research gap by examining variations in motivations for migration that result in diverse implications on SWB.

Research method

The Indonesian Family Life Survey (IFLS), in its fourth wave (2007) and fifth wave (2014), provides the longitudinal data used in this study. The IFLS has been conducted by the RAND Corporation five times since 1993. RAND (2025) collaborated with the Demographic Institute, Faculty of Economics, Universitas Indonesia in 1993 (Wave 1) and 1998 (Wave 2). The collaboration in 2000 (Wave 3) was with the Center for Population and Policy Studies, Universitas Gadjah Mada. For Wave 4 in 2007 and Wave 5 in 2014, RAND collaborated with the Center for Population and Policy Studies, Universitas Gadjah Mada, and Survey Meters. IFLS contains individual and household socioeconomic panel data.

The use of IFLS data is justified because the IFLS is a uniquely valuable longitudinal dataset in Indonesia, encompassing a large and nationally representative sample that covers 83% of the population. It features extensive socioeconomic panel data, with detailed and varied responses on migration motives, making it suitable for in-depth analysis of migration and its impacts. The first wave (1993) successfully interviewed 7,224 households, randomly selected from 321 enumeration areas, representing over 22,000 individuals. This quality was sustained through subsequent waves, with Wave 5 (2014) reaching 16,204 households and 50,148 individuals. The robustness of the IFLS data is demonstrated by the high follow-up rate, as 87.8% of IFLS1 dynasties were either interviewed across all five waves or accounted for due to natural attrition, such as death (Strauss et al., 2016). The unit of analysis in this study consisted of all individuals aged 15 years and older who were members of the selected sample households. Specifically, 21,434 participants were identified, with 2,061 having migrated across a district or city boundary between 2007 and 2014. When analyzing each variable separately, missing responses were dropped, resulting in different sample sizes based on missing data points.

The study analyzed two groups, the treatment group (the migrated group) and the comparison group (the non-migrated group), at two separate points in 2007 and 2014. The treatment group was divided into three groups based on predetermined motives. Furthermore, changes before and after migration were compared to explore changes in outcomes between migrants and non-migrants over time. This study defines the migration process as the trajectory of people who have moved across a district or city boundary, encompassing both internal and inbound international migration, between 2007 and 2014. This information can then be acquired from the sampling information in Book K, Section SC, of the IFLS questionnaire. In addition, Migration between districts or cities is identified by examining the differences in district or city codes recorded in 2007 and 2014.

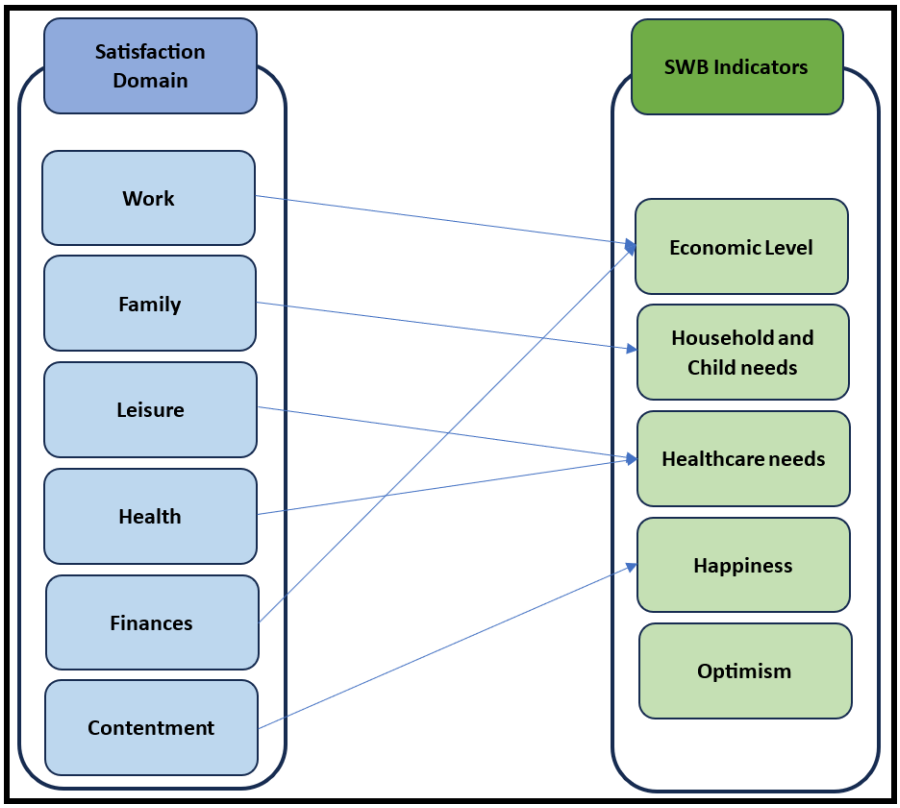
This study aimed to explore the impact of migration on the motives of those who have migrated compared to those who have not. Ravenstein (1885) said that economics is the main motive; however, recent developments suggest this may no longer be true. Thomas (2019) noted that the family motive has been growing steadily as a reason for migration. This is also supported by Gillespie and Mulder (2020), who argued that the investment motive for migration underestimates the family motive, which is now considered the primary motive.

However, risk-coping motives for migration are still under-researched and must be explored to develop policies and interventions for vulnerable migrants (Mak et al., 2021).

Based on these findings, we categorized the primary purposes of migration into three categories based on the responses provided by respondents in the IFLS Book 3A, Section MG. First is the risk-coping motive category or forced migration, which includes migration driven by compulsion, such as death or sickness of a spouse, political disturbance, eviction, drought, and natural disasters. Next is the investment motive category: migration due to education and work-related impulses. Lastly, the family motive category consists of moves due to family reasons, such as marriage, pregnancy, the desire to live closer to family, and other family considerations.

Diener et al. (1999) identified several satisfaction domains that form the components of SWB, including work, family, leisure, health, finances, contentment, and views of other people's lives. Building on this, we endeavored to provide a detailed description of SWB through this study. Nonetheless, due to restrictions in the IFLS dataset, not all the domains were included as SWB indicators. This study assessed the family domain by considering household and children's needs, while the leisure and health domains were appraised by addressing healthcare needs. The work and finances domains were evaluated based on economic level, and the contentment domain was gauged by measuring the happiness level. Since optimism is linked to SWB (Genecov & Seligman, 2023; Sagi et al., 2021; Zenger et al., 2013), we included optimism in this study to provide a more comprehensive analysis of SWB (Figure 1). Thus, in this study, SWB is defined as an individual's assessment of their economic status, ability to meet their and their children's needs, their level of happiness, and optimism for the future.

Figure 1: Establishment of SWB Indicators



Note: Adapted from Diener et al. (1999)

Stata 17 software was first used to shape, combine, clean, and process the IFLS data for our data analysis. We first merged all variables from IFLS 2007 (Phase 4) and IFLS 2014 (Phase 5) into the target dataset. We then checked for any updates to district and city codes. It is most important to note that there have been several updates to the location code within IFLS 2014, so to ensure that individuals who remain in an area are not considered to have moved simply due to a change in location code, it is necessary to change the new location code back to the original location code. The next step is to classify individuals with identical IFLS 2007 and IFLS 2014 location codes into the first control group and those with different codes into the treatment group. The last step is to categorize the treatment group according to the main reason for their move before evaluating the effect of migration using the difference-in-differences (DiD) approach separately.

Table 1: Dependent and Independent Variables

Variable	Categories
Independent Variable	
Migration	1: Yes 2: No
Dependent Variable	
Optimism	
Opinions about the economic level in the next five years (economic optimism)	1–6 1: Poorest 6: Richest
Opinions about the fulfillment standard of living in the next five years (fulfillment optimism)	1–4 1: Very unlikely 4: Very likely
Economic opinion	
Opinions about the current economic level	1–6 1: Poorest 6: Richest
Personal and household needs	
Opinions about the fulfillment of a household's standard of living Opinions about the fulfillment of personal's standard of living Opinions about the fulfillment of personal consumption Opinions about the fulfillment of personal healthcare	1: Less than adequate 2: Adequate 3: More than adequate
Children's needs	
Opinions about the fulfillment of children's standard of living Opinions about the fulfillment of children's consumption Opinions about the fulfillment of children's healthcare Opinions about the fulfillment of children's education	1: Less than adequate 2: Adequate 3: More than adequate
Happiness level	
Happiness	1–4 1: Very unhappy 4: Very happy

Table 1 presents the variables utilized in this study. Migration is the independent variable, while SWB is the dependent variable, measured through various indicators, including optimism, economic opinion, personal and household needs, children's needs, and happiness level. The SWB indicators are assessed using a Likert scale, where the lowest value represents the least favorable assessment, and the highest value indicates the most favorable. These

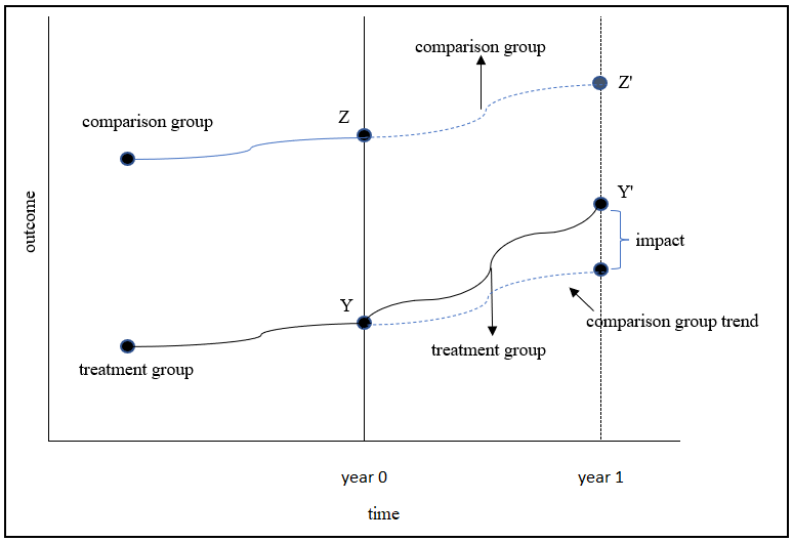
values are derived from responses to the IFLS questionnaire in Book 3A, Section SW (well-being). Since SWB reflects respondents' opinions, the IFLS framework employs a Likert scale where the assessment definition from lowest to highest is left to the respondents how to interpret.

This study used the DiD impact evaluation method, which helps remove individual-level effects. Furthermore, it eliminates the impact of unobservable characteristics, essential for addressing potential bias and confounding variables (Gertler et al., 2011; Goodman-Bacon, 2021). The DiD method was chosen based on the assumptions we made about the longitudinal data of the treatment and comparison groups for the treatment impact evaluation (Gertler et al., 2011). The DiD method effectively controls time-invariant factors by differencing outcomes for treatment and control groups, thereby eliminating the influence of unobserved characteristics that remain constant across periods. This process relies on the validity of the parallel trend assumption, which posits that the outcomes for both groups would follow a similar trajectory in the absence of the intervention. By leveraging this assumption, DiD isolates the causal effect of the intervention, as any observed deviation from parallel trends can be attributed to the program's impact rather than time-invariant confounders (Khandker et al., 2010). Thus, the parallel trend assumption substantiates the capacity of DiD to account for constant unobserved heterogeneity, thereby ensuring an unbiased estimation of the time intervention's effect.

In this study, the use of covariates is deferred to emphasize the focus discussion of estimating intervention impacts, particularly by employing an approach that initially excludes covariates. Postponing the inclusion of covariates in a DiD framework simplifies the analysis and facilitates a clearer understanding of DiD methodology before introducing more complex elements (Graves et al., 2022). Although covariates are instrumental in reinforcing counterfactual assumptions, DiD, as Gertler et al. (2011) noted, inherently accounts for potential biases in the counterfactual. Therefore, it can be argued that excluding covariates is a viable approach when the objective is to focus on the fundamental impact of the intervention.

Figure 2 shows the DiD method, where the group enrolled in the program becomes the treatment group, and another group not enrolled in the program becomes the comparison group. The outcome variables SWB for the treatment group ranged from Y (pre-intervention) to Y' (post-intervention), while the outcome variables for the control group ranged from Z to Z.' To estimate the impact using DiD, we then calculated the difference in the change in SWB between the treatment group (Y'–Y) and then the comparison group (Z'–Z).

Figure 2: Overview of Difference in Difference Method



Note: Adapted from Gertler et al. (2011)

Khandker et al. (2010) defined DiD as the ordinary least squares estimator in a panel data set-up as the following regression:

$$\text{DiD} = E[Y_i \ (1) \mid T_i = 1] - E[Y_i \ (1) \mid T_i = 0]$$

Therefore, based on the regression, the impact of migration in this study can be expressed as follows:

$$\text{DiD} = E[Y^T_{2014} - Y^T_{2007} \mid T_{2014} = 1] - E[Y^C_{2014} - Y^C_{2007} \mid T_{2014} = 0]$$

Where Y^T_{2014} presents the outcome for migrants in 2014; Y^T_{2007} presents the outcome for migrants in 2007; Y^C_{2014} presents the outcome for non-migrants in 2014; Y^C_{2007} presents the outcome for non-migrants in 2007, and T indicates a treatment dummy, where $T = 1$ for migration and $T = 0$ for not migration.

The study employed the DiD method to compare the impact differences between the two groups, with migrants acting as the treatment group and non-migrants as the comparison group. The DiD method analyzed SWB among these migrants before and after migration, in 2007 and 2014, respectively, and then compared them with those of individuals who did not migrate (non-migrants), also for 2007 and 2014. The study's outcome variable is migrants' SWB based on their reasons for migrating in the first place. This will allow the study to compare the impact of different migration motives from the perspective of SWB.

Results and discussion

Descriptive

Table 2 shows the characteristics of Indonesian migrants based on their motives. The table indicates that male migrants migrate for risk-coping and investment reasons, while female migrants are more likely to migrate for family reasons. When we compared these results to

previous research, we found that investment and risk-coping migration were also dominated by men (Marta et al., 2020). Zlotnik (1995) obtained similar results that aligned with this study and stated that women had dominated family migration due to their proximity to family needs rather than economic activities.

Table 2: Characteristics of Indonesian Migrants Based on Migration Motive

Characteristic	Non-Migrant (%)	Migration Motive			
		Risk-coping (%)	Investment (%)	Family (%)	Total (%)
Gender					
Male	48.88	57.14	65.19	41.67	48.59
Female	51.12	42.86	34.81	58.33	51.41
Age					
15–29	27.98	14.29	51.11	36.72	38.20
30–44	33.45	40.82	36.30	41.14	39.97
45–64	28.09	34.69	12.59	18.23	18.31
65+	10.48	10.20	0	3.91	3.52
Relationship to Household head					
Head of Household	20.09	53.06	35.55	27.86	31.86
Husband/wife	16.60	30.61	8.89	25.52	22.01
Child	32.66	12.25	37.78	30.73	30.81
Other member	30.64	4.08	17.78	15.89	15.32
Marital status					
Single	36.90	6.12	41.35	20.83	24.38
Married	53.11	79.59	57.14	71.62	68.91
Divorced/widow(er)	9.99	14.29	1.51	7.55	6.71
Education					
No/Uncompleted Elementary school	34.36	12.24	6.02	9.69	9.04
Elementary school	21.92	16.33	9.77	17.54	15.60
Junior high school	15.34	22.45	14.28	21.20	19.68
Senior high school	21.24	42.86	51.13	39.53	42.56
Higher education	7.14	6.12	18.80	12.04	13.12
Destination of migration					
Urban	57.78	67.35	65.93	67.19	66.90
Rural	42.22	32.65	34.07	32.81	33.10

Note: Author's calculations from 2014 IFLS data

Migration motives correlate closely with the age structure (Malamassam, 2023). Based on the data presented in Table 2, investment migration is predominantly carried out by individuals within the productive age group of 15–44 years. A closer examination reveals that over 50% of these migrants are from the younger segment of this group, specifically those aged 15–29 years. This indicates that migration for investment tended to be carried out by young people who were still enthusiastic and ambitious in their search for new opportunities and had a better capacity to learn and adapt (Bernard & Kalemba, 2022; Heckert, 2015; Shaw, 1991).

In migration with a risk-coping motive present, the head of the household tended to dominate due to their responsibility for meeting the family's needs and ensuring their safety (Tang, 2020). Conversely, investment migration is primarily driven by children and heads of households who relocate for work and school-related reasons. In addition, many migrants

moved as singles in investment migration. This was believed to be the reason for their move, as further education was dominated by students who intended to delay their marriage (Thornton, 2020).

Finally, it is also worth noting that higher education was the dominant factor in migration to all destinations, particularly in investment migration, which attracted almost 70% of highly educated migrants. Investment migration appears to be mainly pursued by highly educated individuals to achieve better economic outcomes (Uprety, 2020; Wang et al., 2020). But, in contrast, risk-coping migration appeared to be more common among those with lower levels of education and personal capital (Démurger et al., 2023; Hidayati, 2021). This was also confirmed by this study, which showed that low education was the most common characteristic of risk-coping migration.

The impact of the motive for migration on SWB

Subjective well-being

The results of a study on the impact of migration motives on the SWB of migrants are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Impact of Migration on Subjective Well-Being Based on Migration Motives

Subjective Well-Being	Motive		
	Risk-coping	Investment	Family
Optimism			
Opinions about the economic level in the next five years	-0.057	0.075	-0.010
Opinions about the fulfillment of living standards in the next five years	-0.201	0.203**	0.320
Economic opinion			
Opinions about the current economic level	0.112	0.214**	0.060
Personal and household needs			
Opinions about the fulfillment of a household's standard of living	-0.007	-0.050	0.129**
Opinions about the fulfillment of personal's standard of living	-0.064	0.001	0.114**
Opinions about the fulfillment of personal consumption	0.054	-0.088	0.093*
Opinions about the fulfillment of personal healthcare	-0.119	-0.058	0.069
Children's needs			
Opinions about the fulfillment of children's standard of living	0.118	-0.133	0.027
Opinions about the fulfillment of children's consumption	0.161	-0.154	0.046
Opinions about the fulfillment of children's healthcare	0.217	-0.122	0.019
Opinions about the fulfillment of children's education	-0.352	-0.218	0.214*
Happiness level			
Happiness	0.073	-0.024	0.020

*Note: Author's calculations from 2007 and 2014 IFLS data; Significance: * p < .1, ** p < .05, *** p < .001*

Table 3 presents the outcomes of an analysis examining how various migration motives impact the SWB of migrants. A positive outcome implies that migrants experience an increase

in SWB related to that specific motive compared to non-migrants. Conversely, a negative result indicates a decline in SWB relative to non-migrants.

Optimism

Table 3 shows interesting results on the impact of the actual migration process on migrants' optimism. Migrants who moved primarily for risk-coping reasons were pessimistic about their economic prospects in the next five years, even though they felt their economic status had improved since migration. Conversely, those migrants who had moved for investment purposes were optimistic about their economic prospects and were significantly more optimistic about meeting their future living needs. Those migrants who moved for family reasons were pessimistic about their economic future but optimistic about meeting their family's needs. This was likely due to a support system within the family that helped them meet their needs.

The results in Table 3 also suggest that migration causes families to be pessimistic about their future economic situation, yet they remain optimistic about their ability to meet their future needs. Investment migration, on the other hand, appears optimistic about future economic prospects and is even significantly more confident about meeting future needs. Migration for investment or family reasons could lead to optimism (Lim, 2018; Phongsiri et al., 2023), as individuals might have chosen to move to gain better opportunities (Helms & Leblang, 2019; Schaeffer, 1988). Migrants with an investment motive felt they could overcome obstacles after migrating, making them optimistic regardless of their ability (Bartlett et al., 2018; Muslimah & Prihatsanti, 2022).

Despite uncertainty about the future economy, migrants with family motives also expressed optimism that their needs would be met. Family support seemed to be a significant factor in meeting their needs (Dumon, 1989; Henly et al., 2005). It is essential to understand that people migrate for various reasons, whether for a better standard of living, better living conditions, or career progression. This choice is usually influenced by individual personal objectives and ambitions, leading to a positive future perspective (Lim, 2018).

Conversely, migration prompted by risk-coping mechanisms was shown to engender a sense of pessimism among migrants (Table 3). Here, migration occurred in response to compulsory factors, whereby individuals were forced to leave their homes due to unfavorable conditions, which could then lead to uncertainty and a sense of hopelessness. In line with this view, Horst (2018) and Mak et al. (2021) have stated that forced migration often arises due to challenging circumstances, which can weaken confidence and put a bright future at risk. Meanwhile, Castles (2003) argued that forced migration, such as fleeing conflict, economic hardship, or environmental challenges, can lead to anxiety and less optimism. Based on the findings above, it could be reasonably concluded that risk-coping migration had the potential to reduce personal optimism levels.

In summary, the differences in optimism lay in the nature of the reasons behind the migration. Optimism somewhat prevailed when the migration was motivated by positive factors, such as family reunification or investment opportunities. However, optimism tended to decline when migration was a personal response to a challenging and unavoidable situation.

Economic opinion

The analysis in Table 3 shows that migration positively impacts economic reasons for all migration motives. In particular, an investment motive shows significant positive changes. This indicates that all migrants experienced a perceived elevation in their economic status after migrating.

Studies revealed that migration increases income significantly (Muliansyah & Chotib, 2019). This study supported the notion that migration positively impacted economic opinion despite being divided into different motives. Recent studies have similarly suggested that migrants consistently reported economic improvements and went on to express confidence in a brighter economic future (Alabshar et al., 2023). These collective insights then reinforced the notion that migration, regardless of its impetus, tended to be associated with favorable economic outcomes and thus contributed to the prosperity of migrants as a group. However, in the context of forced migration, Finney and Marshall (2018) presented contrasting evidence, indicating that individuals who experience forced migration tend to have lower welfare levels than non-migrants.

Personal and household needs

The analysis results related to personal and household needs in Table 3 show that risk-coping migration and investment migration have a marked negative effect on addressing personal and household needs; this was reflected in the negative values for almost all personal and household needs.

Challenging conditions at the place of origin, such as conflict, an economic crisis, or natural disasters, often trigger migration underpinned by risk-coping strategies. However, even after displacement, migrants might not always have fulfilled their needs better due to the risk-taking involved in moving. According to Becker and Ferrara (2019) and Ruiz and Vargas-Silva (2013), forced migration could have serious consequences for migrants, such as reduced consumption or economic output. As a result, it could have been challenging to address the needs of life due to economic or financial pressures.

Considering the reasons for investment migration, it often requires some significant up-front capital, which could make it difficult for individuals to meet their day-to-day needs successfully. The migration process involved moving to a new region, perhaps for investment purposes, brought financial challenges, including moving costs, capital investment, and other expenses (Lichter, 1983). These financial constraints could have been an additional burden that affected a person's ability to meet daily needs, such as housing, food, and transportation. Apart from that, investment migration also tended to lack social support (Brandt & Hagge, 2020; Rotas & Cahapay, 2020), and losing existing social networks harmed emotional and mental well-being, which in turn made it harder to meet basic needs (Webster et al., 2020).

However, the impact on personal and household needs is positive and significant in the case of family-based migration (Table 3). This meant that individuals who migrated for family reasons could better meet their personal and household needs regarding daily food and healthcare needs. The support system provided by family members was likely, once again, to have accounted for this phenomenon.

Dumon (1989) argued that family migration often provided a feeling of being more able to meet needs because social and emotional support is available from family members. The decision to move for family reasons might have been based on improving the quality of life, sharing family responsibilities, or creating a more stable environment (Clark & Onaka, 1983). In this context, social support could help overcome the financial challenges that might have arisen during migration (Henly et al., 2005).

Thus, feelings of difficulty or ability to meet needs after migration were often related to factors such as reasons for migration (Shymanska et al., 2017). Risk-coping and investment migration have brought their economic challenges, while family migration was often accompanied by social support that could provide greater economic security in the longer term.

Children's needs

Recently, studies on children's well-being in Indonesia have increased (Borualogo & Casas, 2022). For those with children, Table 3 shows that individuals who migrated with risk-coping and family motives then subjectively felt more able to fulfill the needs of their children, such as food and healthcare, compared to those who migrated with an investment motive, who had a negative result. This outcome indicated that migrants who moved for risk-coping and family reasons found it easier to meet their children's needs than if they had not migrated. In contrast, those migrants who moved for investment reasons found it more challenging to meet their children's needs than if they had stayed in their area of origin.

Family migration might have exhibited similar patterns in addressing personal and children's needs; however, these patterns differed from those associated with risk-coping migration. This study discovered noteworthy results on risk-coping migrants' opinions regarding meeting their children's needs. It was observed that risk-coping migrant parents appeared to feel more emotionally driven to provide a better life for their children, even if that meant they had to face hardships. This could have created extra motivation to meet the child's needs. Forced migration often involves family solidarity, where family members support each other (Amelina & Bause, 2020; Dryjanska & Zlotnick, 2018). Furthermore, government assistance, such as healthcare programs for children, which might have been unavailable in their origin, could have facilitated fulfilling children's basic needs (Wald, 2017). This could have created a more supportive environment for displaced people to fulfill their children's needs.

Regarding meeting children's needs, investment migration did not have the same mindset as risk-coping migration. Investment migration was considered to meet children's needs less quickly. This is thought to be because although migration for investment could open up financial opportunities, families might have experienced financial uncertainty initially (Lichter, 1983), and these changes could have impacted a family's ability to meet children's daily needs. Meanwhile, concerning parents who perceived themselves as responsible for the well-being of their children (De Carvalho et al., 2023), it appears that migrants who moved due to investment enhanced the standard of living of their children, thereby creating a situation in which it became increasingly challenging for them to achieve the fulfillment of their needs (Crivello, 2011).

Happiness

Some unexpected results emerged from the correlation between migration and attendant happiness levels. The results in Table 3 suggest a positive correlation between happiness and

migration status concerning risk-coping and family motives, but not the case of investment motives.

Migration undertaken due to risk-coping and family might have been related to more profound social and emotional needs in areas such as family support, security, or the well-being of children. The domain of family life represented a particularly sensitive area in the pursuit of happiness (Holumyong & Punpuing, 2015) due to its susceptibility to emotional factors. When controlling for other variables, family life positively correlated with increased levels of happiness (Badri et al., 2022; Hendriks & Bartram, 2019; Koroļeva, 2022). Strong familial connections and regular contact with one's family increase happiness (Huang et al., 2024). Consequently, it was posited that migration with greater proximity resulted in greater happiness. While risk-coping migration could have created challenges, a focus on protection and security could have provided a sense of happiness that arose from meeting basic needs (Popovych & Barshatska, 2019). It did appear that discrepancies in the extent to which basic needs were being met following migration played a significant role in enhancing the subsequent happiness of risk-coping migrants (Alabshar et al., 2023).

However, migration for investment was generally undertaken with strong economic goals (Durand et al., 1996), and a primary focus on achieving financial goals could often have come at the expense of the emotional and social aspects found to be related to happiness (Mak et al., 2021; Nesse, 2004). If there was uncertainty regarding the sustainability of an investment or the expected results did not materialize immediately, this could have caused worry and unhappiness in the long term (Ainsaar, 2023; Hendriks & Bartram, 2019; Lee & Kawachi, 2019; Popovych & Barshatska, 2019). Such circumstances elicited a range of negative emotional states, including distress, annoyance, and a sense of unease. The aforementioned negative emotions deleteriously affected overall SWB (Churchman et al., 2024). This then renders it more challenging for those who migrated for investment purposes to achieve a sense of happiness in their new environment.

This study's findings indicated that the happiness experienced after migrating would vary greatly depending on the motives for migrating. However, it was necessary to note that perceptions of happiness could also have been influenced by personal, family, social environment, and other situational factors (Zhou & Chi, 2024). This was because migration could not guarantee the fulfillment of all desired expectations or long-term happiness (Knight & Gunatilaka, 2012; Nowok et al., 2013; Stillman et al., 2015). Additionally, the results are supported by the expectancy-value theory proposed by De Jong and Fawcett (1981), which explains that migration motives extend beyond economic reasons to encompass a range of aspirations. Achieving these diverse goals can lead to happiness when expectations are met, underscoring the complexity of motives as outlined by the theory.

Some intriguing findings emerge when comparing happiness with optimism (as shown in Table 3). Forced migrants, despite being pessimistic about their future, still experience happiness at their migration destination. Conversely, those migrating for investment purposes are optimistic about the future but do not report feeling happy. In the case of family migration, migrants are pessimistic about their economic prospects, optimistic about meeting their needs, and report happiness at their destination. These findings contradict previous research, suggesting optimism positively correlates with happiness and life satisfaction (Carver & Scheier, 2017; Daukantaitė & Zukauskiene, 2012; Sagi et al., 2021). The results indicate that other factors influence the relationship between optimism and happiness. Once again, migration motives play a significant role in migration research.

Conclusion

Individuals are increasingly mobile, traveling farther and more frequently for various reasons. This phenomenon of migration can affect migrants' subjective perceptions based on their motivations and personal, physical, and economic circumstances. This study explores the correlation between personal SWB and migration motivations.

Although migration provides an economic improvement, economic optimism still seems somewhat influenced by migration motives. Migration offers a sense of optimism toward investment and family migration, while people undertaking risk-coping migration are more pessimistic about their economic future.

Those who migrate for investment reasons are likely to be expected to achieve high standards, making it difficult for them to consistently meet their own needs and those of their children. However, those migrating for family reasons feel supported by their families and environment, which enables them to meet these needs. Risk-coping migrants, however, struggle to meet their personal needs but find it easier to meet the needs of their children.

On the other hand, in terms of happiness, risk-coping migrants and family migrants find happiness in their destination because of the emotional connection and social support they receive and because their basic needs are met. On the other hand, investment migrants tend to be unhappy due to a lack of social support and unachieved goals.

Through this study, we illuminated the connections between migration motivations and individual SWB. Our research findings indicate that a detailed description of SWB reveals significant differences in migration motives. We strived to pave the way for interventions and policies grounded in evidence that foster positive SWB outcomes for migrants. In addition, this research plays a role in the development of population science, particularly in understanding the motives behind migration and its impact on SWB.

This study is not without limitations. Other factors in migration can affect a person's SWB, as well as motives. Future research can explore the role of other significant factors, such as migration duration or the relationship with the head of household, in their impact on SWB. To gain a better understanding of the impact of migration on the future well-being of migrants, comprehensive research is needed going forward.

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