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Remitting Care: Video Calls and Elder Support across the Bangladesh-Italy Corridor

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Abstract

Transnational elder care involves coordinating attention and practical help as well as sending money. This study examines care arrangements linking Bangladeshi migrants in Italy with older relatives in Bangladesh. Researchers conducted paired interviews with members of 31 families, collected four-week communication diaries, and followed twelve families through a second interview round after six months. Analysis traced how video calls, remittances, and assistance from nearby relatives were combined during routine care and health-related disruptions. Frequent calls helped migrants monitor changes in wellbeing but sometimes generated disagreements over how local caregivers should organise daily tasks. Money transfers were most effective when families had an agreed person responsible for purchasing medicines and arranging appointments. Older relatives selectively shared difficulties to avoid causing anxiety abroad. The findings show that digital contact can redistribute authority without replacing local care work.
Participating families had reliable internet access and may differ from less connected households. Transnational support initiatives should recognise local caregivers' responsibilities and older people's preferences alongside the contributions of relatives living overseas.

Keywords: transnational care, Bangladeshi diaspora, video calls, elder support, Italy

1. Introduction

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2. Methods

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