

## Spousal Relation in Post-Retirement Life

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### Letter to Editor

Marriage binds couples together in a spousal relation to form a family [1] and this transition includes moving in together, becoming a parent, children reaching adolescence, relocations, and job changes. It is a traditional norm of the society. It does not only renew the race. It is a system of continued existence of every society throughout the globe. Thus, life transitions later in marriage are determined by becoming grandparents, changing health, death of parents, retirement, and widowhood, etc. [2]. Both of the male and female as marital partners are co-dependence and co-supportive. It does not fulfill legitimate physiological desires. It fulfills also social, economical and cultural thrust of human being. This relation dynamic sustains generally in spite of different stress and strain in conjugal turmoil. But at post-retirement life this conjugal or spousal relation becomes truncated and loses its strong necessity. Consequently, it becomes a burden to the elderly spouses many times. A study was conducted to examine the spousal/conjugal relationship in post-retirement life and its effect in their last stage of life cycle [3].

For this study, researcher selected purposively 50 elderly couples/spouses who were within the age bracket of 60 years and above from a rural Bengali community of India to examine their social, economic as well as occupation condition, educational background, information about their offspring, their care-giving system and financial condition in post-retirement life, and of course, dynamics of their spousal relation at this stage of life.

Data revealed that wives were about 10 years (average) younger than their husband. So, these wives were physically more able than their husband. All of these wives were occupationally housewives in their whole life. About 90% of their parental families (wives parental families) were economically weak. Only 10% of them were from a financially strong family. But they did not claim any parental properties as per properties right act. Spousal educational background revealed that 80% of male elderly population had primary education and 6% of them had high school education (it was highest level of education among males) in the sample of this study) and rest of them was just lettered. In case of the female elderly informants, 78% of these females were illiterate, 10% of them were lettered and rest of them (12%) was primary and above education. They were basically agriculture labor of Hindu community. It was their main source of maintenance of their family i.e. food, shelter, children's education and so forth. There was no such income security/savings in their post-retirement life. Either they had to earn themselves at their retirement or they depended on their off-spring. Statistical information stated that about 81% of their offspring were daily wage earner, small vendors operating petty business in their locality or migrant semi-skilled (jewelry, carpentry, etc.) and unskilled labor because majority of them was either stopped their education at primary level or dropped out from school due to lack of support and guidance from their family. Their earning was also not so handsome to manage their family. These

offspring had no or little supports to their parents. On the other hand, 19% of their offspring was possessed better education and they were either in public or private sector jobs. Majority of them settled themselves in their work places (industrial town or city). These offspring (major portion) only supported financially to their parents. A few of them used to assist them during their illness or other any major problems of their parents. This economic situation was the prime cause of their involvement in earning process as domestic help or daily labor at their post retirement. It might be stated that usually official retirement in their life was impossible. But in terms of co-dependence and support spousal interaction was significant and their family transition was affecting their lifestyles, life chances and life quality of both spouses [4]. They were mostly in conflicting relational dynamics and there was a lack in their processes of renegotiation. Lack in balancing relationship, supporting partner interests, calibrating time together and resolving difficult issues were their prime obstacle of happiness in their elderly stage [5]. Poor finance, lack of offspring physical and financial support was prime causes of their conflicting relationship. Their post retirement life, they were arrogant to bear and care support with each other. Wives viewed that if they had finance they managed themselves with others help. So, wife used to ignore their counter part due to lack of earning or saving. Even, she lost her temperament of caring her husband during his illness. Importance and necessity of their relationship were deformed. Regular conflict in relation to their mutual support, assistance, adjustment and understanding caused unhappiness life and a hatred conjugal relation in their post retirement life.

The study questioned that only fulfillment of physiological desire and finance is the prime determinant of strong conjugal relation. There is need of regular counseling with reminiscence (a therapeutic technique which improve the mental health of elderly people) of their early younger life conjugal life (marriage and early marital relationship or bonding) which could rebuild their relationship towards a happy ending.

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