Satisfaction in Old Age: Activity or Disengagement?

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Abstract

The aging process of human being is intertwined with two vital aspects of life experiences; work and retirement when elderly people face greater uncertainties than other age groups as they have to replace themselves in the newer environs with shifting roles. Thus, in this process, researchers have queries whether elderly disengage or withdraw, whether their disengagement or activity brings satisfactions and how is their attitude towards the functionality of disengagement. To measure these, disengagement and activity theories have been used with descriptive research design when respondents were selected purposively and interviewed Face-to-Face. Most of the elderly in Bangladesh believe themselves to be forced to retire. A significant portion of retired elderly answered that they wanted to be engaged instead retire but, in reality, most of them enjoy disengagement escaping from earlier activities that ensures their quality of life and satisfaction. After all, it is found that disengagement is functional as the sense that the elderly people give up their positions to the young as they are not able to defeat them in the activity level.

Keywords: activity, aging process, disengagement, elderly, elderly people, functionality of disengagement, work, retirement

1. Introduction

In the postmodern era, where the economy is primarily based on information and technology, the concern for the elderly has been rising. The young people with their up-to-date education and knowledge about technology are increasingly becoming demandable to the information-based economy which makes the knowledge of the elderly old and obsolete. The aged workers have to retire to replace them for the young generation. After retirement, they lose their statuses and vital roles in society and decrease their interaction with others that make them feel worthless (Whiteside, 1965). If the retired person does not get the opportunity to re-engage themselves, they often lose their self-esteem and become self-centred. The elderly are the vital parts of our society. After retirement, some of them want to be disengaged from activities and some want to remain active despite being old and many of them are actually forced to disengage by society. The study uses two significant theories of Aging-activity and disengagement theory to explore whether disengagement or activity brings satisfaction in old age and whether they disengage themselves from society or are forced to withdraw by the society.

Havighurst, Neugarten, and Tobin (1964), in their study, tested disengagement theory and their findings support the theory. They found that with the increase of age, people's interaction with others and psychological engagement as well as social engagement with others reduced. A similar finding of decreased social interaction with growing old was also found by Maddox (1964). In contrast, Somers' study (1977) did not support the disengagement theory and he found that instead of being disengaged the elderly tried to resist disengagement and kept them busy by continuing their activities. Zborowski's findings (1962) were also against the propositions of the disengagement theory that people disengage themselves from society as they grow old. His findings did not support the voluntary disengagement of the elderly.

A vast number of studies explored that the aged who are active tend to well-adjusted than those who are disengaged (Pressey and Simcoe, 1950; Albreght, 1951; Kleemeier, 1951; Lebo, 1953; Kutner et al., 1956; Tobin and Neugarten, 1961; Jeffers and Nichols, 1961; Zborowski, 1962; Zborowski and Eyde, 1962; Filer and O'Connell, 1962; Leveen and Priver, 1963; Desroches and Kaiman, 1964; Videbeck and Knox, 1965; Carp, 1966; Bell, 1967; Ludwig and Eichhorn, 1967; Tallmer, 1967; Youmans, 1967a; Havighurst, 1968; Kapnick, Goodman and Cornwell, 1968; Lipman and Smith, 1968 and Palmore, 1968).

1.1 Objectives of the Study

• To explore whether the elderly disengage themselves or withdrawn by the society forcefully

• To explore whether disengagement or activity ensures the quality of life of the elderly

• To examine the attitude of the elderly about the functionality of their disengagement

2. Literature Review and Theoretical Connections

Human being completes a cycle through physical maturation and the succession of

age-related roles: child, adolescent, adult, parent, senior etc. At each point, as the individual sheds the previous roles, copes with a new one. Being elderly, one has to involve with new institutions and circumstances. With the dramatic and revolutionary societal changes occurred in the last few decades by the process of rapid industrialization, modernization and urbanization, the attitudes of and toward elderly have been affected mainly with their waning of power, influence and prestige once they held in the social institutions in traditional societies. In the last seventy years the percentage of older has been increased by 5 to 7 percent (Lee, 2009). This percentage has a massive effect on the dependency ratio: the number of productively employed people to non-productive; young, disabled, and elderly (Bartram and Roe, 2005). The rapid social change brings about mixed blessings for the elderly; getting excellent health benefits and losing economic role.

There have been greater cultural variations of caring for the elder worldwide. For example-(Yap, Thang, and Traphagan, 2005) in their book "Introduction: Aging in Asia- Perennial Concerns on support and Caring for the Old" gave attention on the demographics of population Aging in Asia in the epoch of globalization and discussed that in Asian society, a family is solely answerable to care the elders (Yap, Thang, and Traphagan, 2005) while in the most western societies, the elders are taken as independent and probable to tend to their personal maintenance. Nevertheless, it is common for family members to interfere voluntarily only if the elderly relative needs support in poor health condition. In North America, the young members care for the elders in the condition of having future returns such as legacy or, in some cases, the amount of care the elderly delivered to the caregiver in the past (Hashimoto, 1996).

In China, it is a great virtue to respect and care the elders and ancestors (Hamilton 1990 and Hsu, 1971). In Japan, the elderly always deserve support (Ogawa and Retherford, 1993). However, the dramatic changes in dominant social and economic institutions (like family and economy) created the call for community and government care (Raikhola and Kuroki, 2009). The people of North America feel elderly as a burden and most of the caregivers could not be able to support as they generally work outside the home. Another crucial fact is that many middle-class families cannot bear the financial burden of "outsourcing" professional health care (Bookman and Kimbrel, 2011). However, the Chinese Canadians are more supportive than the Caucasian Canadians (Funk, Chappell, and Liu, 2013). It is really interesting that different demographic groups treat elderly differently (Bookman and Kimbrel, 2011).

Globally, wealthy nations are equitably well prepared to support an exponentially growing elderly population while peripheral and semi-peripheral countries face similar increases but lack resources. Poverty among elder especially elderly women is a big concern. The feminization of the Aging poor is evident in peripheral nations because a lot of elderly women in those countries are single, illiterate, and not a part of the labour force (Mujahid, 2006).

Aging, a lifelong process happens in the changes of physical, psychological, and social levels (Railey, 1978). Age is also considered as hierarchal like race, class and gender and is valued differently. Though children want more independence, many young people view aging as negative (Packer and Chasteen, 2006). A complete distinct line might be drawn between the

old and the young at different levels like-the institutional, societal, and cultural (Hagestad and Uhlenberg, 2006). Elderly females are also seen in terms of negative stereotype considering less successful than older men (Bazzini, Mclntosh, Smith, Cook, and Harris, 1997). On the contrary, at the presence of other men, Aging men may lack prospects to proclaim the masculine identities (e.g., sports participation) (Drummond, Newton and Yemm, 1998). According to some social scientists, in the western world, aging male bodies are sometimes considered as genderless (Spector-Mersel, 2006). Widows (the living female wife of a dead male companion) and widowers (the living male wife of a dead female companion) lead their post-marital lives differently while men feeling loss of something are more likely to marry after the death of his partner, many women do not re-marry instead enjoy being alone (Davidson, 2002). Elderly people have to cope with new challenges with the lack of partial independence and physical ability. They have to face age discrimination. Some have self-sufficiency; others need more caring as they typically no longer hold jobs. Elderly people might be the target of abuse, mockery and stereotype. According to the functional view on elderly, it is observed that the aged who are equipped with more resources enjoy their post-retirement being active and adjust well with the new challenges (Crosnoe and Elder, 2002). As functionalist perspective disengagement theory denotes that shirking social roles is a regular fact of growing old. There are some salient facets of this theory. Firstly, everyone fears death and has a declination of physical and mental maturation with the passage of time which is an entirely natural process. For this reason, elderly withdraw themselves from others and society. Secondly, for their escaping social roles, they have to accept less reinforcement to adapt to social norms. Therefore, they become freer from the pressure to conform. Finally, Men and women experience this situation differently as men generally seek for giving attention to work and women in the marriage and family, at the time of their withdrawn might be hopeless and depressed unless the shift their accustomed roles which are compatible with the disengaged state (Cumming and Henry, 1961). The theory is also criticized as it is not accepted as a classic form. Criticisms stereotypically emphasis on that elders universally naturally withdraw from society with the process of Aging, and that it does not permit for a varied distinction in the approach people experience Aging (Hothschild, 1975).Cumming and Henry recognized (1961) the withdrawn of social roles and opined that elderly have to find the possible replacement of those roles that is addressed anew in activity theory. For the happiness and enjoyment of elderly, activity levels, social participation and connection are very rudimental (Havinghurst, 1961; Havinghurst, Neugarten, and Tobin, 1968; Neugarten, 1964). The happiness is entirely depending upon the active participation of the elderly. Critics of this theory mentioned that the access to social opportunities and activity are totally unevenly distributed. The theory recommends that activity is a resolution to the comfort of elders without being capable of maintaining the distribution of access to these social opportunities and activities reflects broader issues of power and inequality in society. Moreover, in the presence of others or participation in activities, everyone may not find fulfillment. Reformulations of this theory propose that involvement in comfortable events, such as hobbies, become more fruitful in later life satisfaction (Lemon, Bengtson, and Petersen, 1972).

2.1 Theoretical Connections

2.1.1 Disengagement Theory

Cumming and Henry (1961), the proponents of disengagement theory, explain the process of Aging from the functionalist perspective and use the term disengagement to describe a mutual process by which people inevitably tend to withdraw themselves from society, social roles and relationships as well as society reliefs them of many social responsibilities, makes them less obligatory to follow social norms, as they grow old and thereby provides them with greater freedom through mutual disengagement. As people gradually be older, they limit their social interaction as well as social relations and become self-centred (Cumming and Henry, 1961). Obligatory retirement is one of the processes by which society disengages the elderly, and a radical change occurs in an individual's life with retirement. The nature and type of social interaction as well as the number of people one communicates and the nature and types of activities one engages significantly alter after retirement (Whiteside, 1957). The process of retirement is not only functional for the aged but also for the younger generations as well and above all for the society as a whole. For the elderly, it brings an opportunity to pursue the desires that they were not able to fulfil before retirement by giving up their previous statuses, roles and responsibilities. The retirement of the aged creates job vacancy for the younger generations, and the young people with their full energy, up-to-date knowledge and technological skills replace the elderly, the overall innovation, creativity and productivity of the society significantly increase that bring change in every segment of society (Thompson, 2012). Men and women differently experience social withdrawal as men's primary focus is work, and women's main focus is family. In response to the withdrawal of old roles, if they don't take a new role their life will be miserable and meaningless (Cumming and Henry, 1961).

2.1.2 Activity Theory

On the contrary, the activity theory, developed by Havighurst (1961), states that the quality of life of the elderly largely depends on their involvement in significant social activity and society disengages itself from the elderly against their will. Benjamin, Edwards and Bharati (2005) found that those who remain active in old age are more likely to stay physically sound and to delay physical limitations of functioning than those who are not active. The activity theory, closely connected with symbolic interactionist perspective, contends that the statuses people occupy and the roles they perform together create a person's sense of self and social identity and therefore when they lose those, they also lose their sense of self and social identity that reduce their life satisfaction (Thompson, Zack, Krahn, Andresen, & Barile, 2012). In order to lead a satisfying life after retirement, the retiree must replace the lost social identities and roles and long-familiar habits, situations, roles, contacts, that they have to abandon forcefully (Whiteside, 1967), with new ones by adopting new statuses, roles and social identities, for example- pursuing hobbies remain unfulfilled before retirement, engaging in various social and religious organizations, doing various social welfare activities, travelling, grandparenting, forming new contacts with old friends/peers, gardening and religious activities etc.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design and Method

A descriptive quantitative research design has been chosen based on the objectives of the study. To collect data from the field, a Face-to-Face structured interview has been scheduled.

3.2 The Study Area and Unit of Analysis

Barisal city is selected as the study area. Retired government officials are considered as the unit of analysis.

3.3 Study Population

The elderly people of the city who are retired from government jobs are considered as the population of this study.

3.4 Sampling Technique and Sample Size

The study uses purposive sampling technique to draw the necessary sample from the target population. A total of 89 samples are selected who were retired government employees from various professions in Barisal city.

3.5 Data Collection Techniques, Tools and Ethical Considerations

In order to conduct the study, Face-to-Face Interview is used as the main data collection technique of this study. A structured questionnaire has been used as the tools for data collection. Data were coded, analyzed and processed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The frequency distributions of the study variables have been measured by descriptive analyses. Confidentiality and privacy of the respondents are highly ensured.

4. Results

4.1 Demographic Profile of the Respondents

The demographic traits of the respondents like sex, age and marital status have been presented in the below table. A significant portion of the respondents is male, estimating 83.1 percent. As the participants are all retired personnel, they are aged above 57. The highest representation of the age between 62-65, measuring 28.1 percent and the lowest is 87-91 (5.6 percent). In the case of marital status, 85.4 percent elderly are married, and the rest percentage consists of widows or widowers.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Participants

Demography	Details	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	83.1
	Female	16.9
Age	57-61	21.3
	62-66	28.1
	67-71	16.9
	72-76	13.50
	77-81	7.9
	82-86	6.7
	87-91	5.6
Marital Status	Married	85.4
	Widow/ Widower	14.6

Source: Field Data 2019, N=89

Table 2. The General Scenario of Disengagement

Disengagement	Percentage (%)	N
Unable to perform the job as you grow old	7.9	89
View about retirement		89
Forceful Disengagement by society	96.5	
As a rule, one should perceive it normally	4.5	
Forceful Disengagement by society through retirement	97.8	89
Feel still capable of work	92.1	89
Retirement should be based on one's own choice rather than forced by society	100.0	89
Retirement makes lower status in society	94.4	89
Retirement makes shrinking of roles in society	87.6	89
Feel as much as important like before/after retirement	3.4	89
Retire despite having the opportunity for work	19.1	89
Withdrawing thy-self from social roles as growing old	30.3	89
Withdrawing thy-self from social responsibilities as growing old	39.3	89
Greater freedom provided by retirement	100.0	89

Source: Field Data 2019, N=89

In table 2 the scenarios of disengagement have been depicted. Everyone believes in one thing that retirement gives greater freedom. Only 7.9 percent older people believe that they are unable to perform the job as they grow old and about 97 percent think that they have got forceful retirement while very few accept it normal or have to accept the reality of bearing forceful retirement while they consider that they have available power to continue their

performance. In the case of capability concern, 92.1 percent thinks that they still feel capable of working. All of the respondents think that there will be no boundary of retirement. If anyone wants a retirement, he may accept it right after whereas society must not poke its nose. In the question of status, 94.4 percent think that retirement causes their lowering status and shrinking role in 86.6 percent cases. Feeling of nothingness or unimportance is heavy in them, and they do not get that much opportunity for work. 30.3 percent indicates that they are withdrawing themselves from their roles, while 39.3 percent shirks social responsibilities as they grow old.

Table 3. Social Interaction of the Elderly

Social interaction	Percentage (%)	N
Prefer to participate in the social gathering	68.5	89
Form new contacts with peers	61.8	89
Enjoying having time to self	73.0	89
Like to associate with people of all ages	70.8	89
Preference to be mostly with older people	47.2	89
Decreased interaction with others as growing old	97.8	89
Decreased social engagement as growing old	100.0	89
Interacting with people contributing to life satisfaction	58.4	89

Source: Field Data 2019, N=89

Table 3 describes the percentage of the interaction of the elderly after retirement. They like to interact with others, but all have opined that their social engagement is on the decrease and 97.8 percent think that growing old forces them to decrease interaction. 70.8 percent like mingling with all ages while only 47.2 percent prefer their same-aged people. Around 70 percent prefers social gathering, making new friends and pursuing personal moments, respectively. Only 58.7 percent think that interaction contributes to life satisfaction.

Table 4 describes the activities of the elderly after retirement. Their activities mostly revolve around their family. The unfulfilled hobbies have been pursued by 57.3 percent. Around 87 percent has grandchildren staying at home and 94.8 percent like grandparenting. Very few; all cases are below 25 percent engage themselves with activities at home like cooking, daily shopping, grandparenting, gardening, religious activities, childcare. 27 percent think that they are to do some household chores imposed by others. In case of engagement or relief, they are at almost fifty-fifty positions. In social and religious events, around 40 percent respectively have interests while in economic, political, cultural, sports have below 6 percent respectively. About 40 percent engage themselves in social and religious organizations, respectively, on the other hand, 62.9 percent adds themselves with social welfare organizations. After all, 74.2 percent still feel themselves as a part of the broader community after retirement.

Table 4. Activities after Retirement

Activities after retirement	Percentage (%)	N
Pursuing own hobbies remain unfulfilled before retirement	57.3	89
Having grandchildren (passive)	86.5	89
Grandchildren stay at home	88.8	89
Enjoying grandparenting (passive)	94.8	79
Engaging/doing activities at home		89
Household activities	7.9	
Cooking	4.5	
Daily shopping	20.2	
Grandparenting	7.9	
Gardening	4.5	
Religious activities	19.1	
Childcare	24.7	
Doing any home activities imposed by others	27.0	89
Conditions of life bringing satisfaction in old age		89
To be engaged with some activities	52.8	
To be relieved of responsibilities	47.2	
Current interested events		89
Social	38.2	
Economic	4.5	
Political	5.6	
Cultural	3.4	
Sports	5.6	
Religious	42.7	
Currently engaging in social organization	39.3	89
Type of organizations		35
Social organization	62.9	
Religious organizations	37.1	
Still feel like a part of the broader community after retirement	74.2	89

Source: Field Data 2019, N=89

Table 5. Elderly's Consideration about the Best Thing at This Age

Best things about the age you are now	Percentage (%)
Can perform religious activities	41.6
Doing the thing that were unable to do before	18.0
Can direct family correctly for experience	5.6
Can give more time to family	4.5
Free from responsibilities	14.6
Nothing	15.7
Believing to be more useful if there were no age restrictions on employment	57.3

Source: Field Data 2019, N=89

Table 5 delineates the consideration of the best thing of the elderly. About 58 percent believes that it would be very convenient if there is no age restriction where 41.6 percent think that they can perform their religious activities being free. 18 percent can do the things which they could not be able to do. In the case of directing family (5.6 percent) and giving time to the family (4.5 percent), they are entirely unavailable. Some think that they are free from all responsibilities and some do nothing estimating 14.6 percent and 15.7 percent respectively.

Table 6. The Options about the Functionality of Disengagement

Opinions about functionality of disengagement	Percentage (%)
Retirement of the elderly creates a new job and other opportunities for the young generation	100.0
Elderly people are replaced through retirement by the new generation providing renewed interest and energy for productivity, innovation, creativity, and change	87.6
Feel free to participate in leisure activities of your choice as relieved of many of previous responsibilities, such as parenting, working, and other social and professional activities	60.7
Doing things that were unable to do due to your job or other responsibilities	52.8
The family still expects the same responsibility that you performed before retirement	53.9
Have nothing more to do in life as accomplishing all duties like parenting, job responsibilities, household responsibilities etc.	52.8
Still want to be active if they get a new opportunity	41.6

Source: Field Data 2019, N=89

In table 6, the options about the functionality of disengagement have been described. All respondents think that the retirement of the elderly creates new jobs and other opportunities

for the young generation. The second highest percent that is 87.6 percent think that elderly people are replaced through retirement by the new generation providing renewed interest and energy for productivity, innovation, creativity, and change. 60.7 percent feels free to participate in leisure activities of your choice as relieved of many of previous responsibilities, such as parenting, working, and other social and professional activities. They can do things that were unable to do due to their job or other responsibilities, their families still expect the same responsibility that they performed before retirement, some have nothing more to do in life as accomplishing all duties like parenting, job responsibilities, household responsibilities etc. estimating around 53 percent each. 41.6 percent still wants to be active if they get new opportunities.

5. Discussion and Findings

Elderly people encounter a new reality to face their family as well as society after their retirement as there happens a mutual withdrawal or disengagement between them and others in the social system. Therefore, Aging is entirely a give-and-take process where the process should literally be influenced by the features the individual and the society carry (Cumming, 1963, p. 377-8). From this point of argument, it is mentionable that the elderly of Bangladesh are a no longer anomaly of the fact of the aging process and retirement. After their retirement, there emerged a distinct two-way relationship where the elderly had to adjust with their surroundings. They have to mingle and reshape themselves for the sake of survival. In this process, the environment eases the way of successful Aging while the culture promotes it. On the contrary, the aging persons have to accept the challenges to make them fit to fulfil their functions within the familial or societal settings (Simmons, 1962, p. 40). In this respect, older people chose to be disengaged or active.

Disengagement might be the release and freedom of the individual from engrossing ties, involvements, and relationships while activity denotes the opposite proposing that successful Aging is tied up with activity and feeling useful. In the activity, a person must undergo steady expansion throughout life. As frequent contacts, roles, and situations are removed, the Aging individual must establish new interests to substitute for those they are forced to give up. This issue draws the attention of the researchers to frame the questions whether the retired in Bangladesh disengaged or accepts activity.

5.1 Whether the Elderly Disengage Themselves or Withdrawn by the Society Forcefully

In the question of whether the elderly disengage themselves or are withdrawn by society forcefully, it is found that only about 8 percent believe that they are not able to be part of other jobs soon after their retirement. On the issue of their retirement, 96 percent call it a forceful disengagement by society when they were totally unwilling to accept it generally as it is a rule.

The elderly of Bangladesh opined that retirement should be based on one's own choice rather than forced by society. They have the feeling of losing status after their retirement by delimiting their previous multifarious roles and responsibilities played for the sake of family

and society. Only a few older people feel unique and essential as before after retirement. Stephen J. Miller (1965) states that occupational retirement is "possibly the most crucial life change requiring a major adjustment on the part of the older person" (p. 78). Individual's identity crisis begins with the forced retirement because, as Miller continues: "Work not only provides the individual with a meaningful group and a social interaction." Streib and Schneider (197l) found the same as retirement as a form of disengagement narrowing the life processes.

It is an exciting finding that about 21 percent retired though they had the opportunity to continue their job. Around 40 percent willingly withdrawn themselves from social roles and responsibilities as they think they grew old. At the same time, the retired assume themselves having greater freedom shirking their job roles and responsibilities. It is clear that a large portion of the elderly do not want to retire at the same time they want to limit their familial and social activities.

5.2 Whether Disengagement or Activity Ensures the Quality of Life of the Elderly

In the process of disengagement, Aging people being disengaged reduce themselves from the number of active roles he holds; such as- a friend, neighbor, worker, churchgoer, club member, etc. Strong evidence exists to show that the aged in Bethnal Green reduced the number of roles they held. Over half of the men were retired, sixty-one per cent of those studied were not interested in belonging to older people's clubs, and the role of neighbor was communicative but not an intimate one. Also, these older people rarely, if ever went to church. They gave up part-time occupations, visits to the cinema, shopping, cleaning and washing services for neighbors and associations with them, friendships outside the family, holidays and weekends with relatives, the care of grandchildren, the provision of meals for children, and finally their own cooking and budgeting. . . (Townsend 1957, p. 55.) By comparing with Townsend's finding, more significant similarities have been found here that the elderly people largely remain inactive during their post-retirement period. They have very minimal participation in household activities (about 7.9 percent), Cooking (4.5 percent), Daily shopping (20.2 percent), Grand parenting (7.9 percent), gardening (4.5 percent), Religious activities (19.1 percent), Child care (24.7 percent).

About 50 percent try to pursue their hobbies which were unfulfilled. It is also found that over 85 percent elderly have their grandchildren whom they live with and 94 percent elderly enjoy their grandparenting. For example- strong evidence exists to show that the Hopi loses roles as he grows older even though he continues to work at whatever tasks he can perform. Cumming and Henry (1961) state that the close, indulgent grandparent's role can be assumed only after they give up the mother or father role. Dennis (1940) and Titiey (1944) state that warmth of attachment exists between grandparents and grandchildren. The Hopi child does not tease his true grandfathers. The old grandparents spend much of their time teaching Hopi songs and legends and the Hopi way of life to the young and for as a man grows older, he learns more concerning the conventional forms and his knowledge of songs, ritual, and traditions may become greater and more significant (Dennis, 1940, p. 86). Streib and Schneider (1971), modified the view of disengagement and spoke of "differential

disengagement," and conclude that "disengagement in one sphere, such as retirement, does not signal withdrawal and retrenchment in all spheres" (p. 180) and it matches the disengagement process of elderly in Bangladesh.

In some cases, elderly people are imposed by others to do household chores. There have been fifty-fifty positions of their opinion on engagement or relief of responsibilities. Actually, they have doubt in it as they do not have much interest in activities in reality. They have little interest rated below 10 percent in economic, political, sports. At the same time, only around 40 percent have an interest in social and religious events and engage themselves in social organizations. In this way, 74.5 percent still feel that they are part of the broader community after retirement. This finding may support Streib and Schneider's (197l) concept of "activity within disengagement" (pp.180-182).

In the case of older people of Bangladesh, growing old makes elderly bound to shrink their interactions with others although 70 percent elderly people prefer to participate in social gathering and about 60 percent form new contact with peers most of them were at same personality. 73 percent enjoy their own time being secluded from others and make their own choice of passing the time. About 59 percent opine that interacting with others contributed to their life satisfaction.

5.3 Elderly's Consideration about the Best Thing at This Age

The best thing in the post retirement period for the elderly that they can perform religious activities and half of them believe that it would be convenient if there is no age restriction of retirement. However, most of them want to be in passive mode as well as not to be engaged themselves with anything. In a comparison between normal aged subjects and young normal groups, Laken and Eisdorfer (1960) state that at first glance they disagreed with the disengagement theory but upon closer examination it went along with it.

5.4 The Attitude of the Elderly about the Functionality of Their Disengagement

There are lucid emblems of the functionality of disengagement. Young skillful generation can occupy posts which were emptied by the retirement of elders. Evidence of disengagement was also found by Maddox (1964) in the Duke Geriatrics Project research. In the subjects over the age of 60, he found a tendency for decreased social interaction and for decreased contact with the environment as age increases. In a comparison between normal aged subjects and young normal groups, Laken and Eisdorfer (1960) state that the aged subjects were exceeded by the younger group in a number of affective descriptions and in activity level. With this replacement, the young generation may bring forth more considerable developments with their renewed interest, energy for productivity, innovation, creativity and change. About 60 percent elderly feel free to participate in leisure activities of their choice as they are relieved of many of previous responsibilities, such as parenting, working, and other social and professional activities. Over 50 percent elderly do things that were unable to do before due to their job or other responsibilities, their family still expects the same responsibility that you performed before retirement and they have nothing more to do in life as accomplishing all duties like parenting, job responsibilities, household responsibilities etc.

respectively. In the case of the functionality of disengagement, Cumming and Henry's views can be compared with. They are thought to be the pioneer sociologists who viewed Aging theory from the psychosocial viewpoint and the concepts of disengagement theory (Growing Old, 1961), was widely discussed when hastily extoled by some, as hastily condemned by others (Kastenbaum, 1969). Accepting Cumming and Henry's theory, Parsons (1963) sought for adding his version; consummatory phase: a harvesting period when an individual gathers fruits for his previous instrumental commitments, (p. 53). Streib (1968) supported the theory and felt that "there is abundant evidence to support the proposition that disengagement is universal," although personality and situational variables may influence its incident (p. 70). Streib and Schneider point to flaws in both activity and disengagement theories and propose a third approach of "activity within disengagement" which would make available to the aged new roles in the areas of leisure and citizenship service (pp. 180-182). Thus, it proves the functionality of disengagement of the elderly and to some extent it may be called 'activity within disengagement'.

6. Conclusion

Industrialization, modernization and information capitalism bring forth new socio-spatial changes apparently lowering the power, influence, and prestige of the elderly once held that carry not only numerous blessings but also utter sufferings for them as they merely cope with new technologies and new production system. In Bangladesh, elderly have to retain themselves from a job at a certain age which creates opportunities for the young. After their retirement, they were asked whether they accept the reality of disengagement. A significant portion of them answered that they would like to be engaged rather than retire. However, in the end, when they were asked about their life after retirement, it is found that most of them enjoy disengagement escaping from earlier activities. After retirement, being disengaged, elderly shift their active roles to passive roles like enjoying grandparenting. A significant portion of them believes that disengagement ensures the quality of life as they have more time to interact with the same personality and more importantly, they can give more time and attention to themselves. The best thing they get in this time is that they can perform their religious and social activities. Disengagement is functional as the sense that elderly give up their position to the young as they are not able to defeat them in the activity level. Retirement is not entirely the negation of activities of the elderly, it is also an opportunity of 'being active within disengagement' to give special service to family and society.

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