

Sleep Divorce: A New Emerging Trend Among Present Generation – An Analysis

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Abstract:

India has always been recognised as peace loving and relation caring nation wherein there is no space for hate. Being Hindu majority country, the Hindu culture and history has always recognised marriage as matching of souls promoting not only physical and sexual interaction but bonding of two souls based on love, affection and sharing along with caring of emotions. In Hindu culture marriage is bonding not only for this birth but we commit to live together for next seven births to follow. Indian culture does not recognised divorce at all. But, with the globalization of economy and interaction with different religious groups, of late cases of divorce and separation are on high, and Hindus are also not spared of this changing culture. Today we live in an era of live-in relationship, people becoming intolerable and giving divorce or being separated even on pity issues. Apart from it a new concept has emerged in the so-called advanced economy, which is called as sleep-divorce, and this is gaining popularity in India too. The paper tries to understand the concept of Sleep-divorce, reasons for its emergence along with merits and demerits of this new concept. The paper is based on secondary source of information based on articles, news and other material available in electronic form.

Keywords- Hindu culture, divorce, sleep-divorce, culture.

I. INTRODUCTION

In India, marriages are considered to be made in heaven and so sacred that a person has to stay in a marital bond with their spouse till death parts them apart. Marriage in Hinduism is very sacred.

In Hindu religion marriage is a pious relation between two souls not only humans. In Sanatan dharma the couple takes saptaphedas (seven rounds/circle) around agni (fire) as a prime witness and takes seven vows together, promising to be each other's forever. In the journey of life, they promise to be like wheels of a chariot always equal and together. In not only this life but all the next seven lives too, the logic behind this is that fire is considered to one of five main elements in formation of the world. It exemplifies spiritual wisdom and purity. Also, one round/circle=360° and from numbers 1 to 10; 7 is the only number

which cannot divide 360 i.e. indivisible, the bond hence is unbreakable.

Thus, as per Sanatan dharma there is no scope for separation and thus no evidence of divorce exists in our ancient literature and Vedas.

II. ORIGINATION OF DIVORCE SYSTEM

The concept of divorce was out of question under ancient Hindu law.

In India, the concept of divorce, or "talaq" in the Muslim community, originates from Islamic law, specifically the practice of "talaq-e-biddat" (instant triple talaq) which allows a Muslim man to divorce his wife by verbally saying "talaq" three times in one sitting.

However, the practice of divorce within India was codified and legally recognized during the British

Raj, primarily for Christian couples through the Indian Divorce Act of 1869.

A. Divorce Practice in Hindu Religion

It is well established that Indian society has historically been characterized by a multitude of religions, including both Abrahamic and non-Abrahamic religions like Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Sikhism that originated in the region alongside religions like Christianity and Islam that arrived in India as a result of India's history of foreign invasions. Irrespective of how they originate, all of these religious groups have significantly grown, expanded and modified themselves in the region, adapting with Indian socio-cultural norms of caste and ethnicity and have now emerged to form distinct Indianized versions of the religion. Keeping in mind such changes, the political and legal system in India have embraced and incorporated these differences and created a legal framework that represents this diversity. For the same reason, an inquiry into the divorce rules of India also undergone changes and recognised Divorce practice in Hindu religion as well. Accordingly, after independence, the Hindu Marriage Act of 1955 brought divorce rights to Hindus by codifying grounds for divorce like cruelty, desertion, and adultery.

B. Growth and Development of Economy and Changing Society

India being considered as one of the fastest growing economies and is fifth largest economy in world. With the introduction of liberalised policies and promotion of globalization there has been emergence for big middle class which is eager to uplift its living standard. To meet the high financial goals and investments and be recognised financially sound in society now couple has to be working and not the case wherein only male member owes the responsibility of bread earning and female use to take care of household activities. Since both are now working, they carry office responsibility as well as home management resulting in rift in relations and spur in separation and divorce.

Apart from the above cited situation, both male and female want to enjoy independent life and to fulfil their sexual urge they have started living in live-in where they do not find themselves emotionally connected or have any social obligation. They live together and fulfil their sexual and physical needs if they feel comfortable else depart, without incurring any social obligations.

Wherever, the couples are bonded as family and are enjoying a happy married life a new term and style has emerged in the name of sleeping-divorce, and is becoming popularise very fast, even India has not been spared of this new trend.

III. OBJECTIVES OF PAPER

1. To understand the concept of sleeping-divorce.
2. To get an understanding regarding history of sleeping-divorce.
3. To get insight the merits and demerits of sleeping-divorce.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The paper is a result of curiosity regarding the new emerging term and concept of sleeping-divorce and thus is exploratory in nature. The paper is based on secondary source of information gathered through material, articles and other information available on electronic media.

V. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Kanchan Shukla (2023) examined that sleep divorce refers to couples mutually agreeing to sleep separately. This arrangement is generally intended to help partners sleep more soundly. It's important to note that this is not the same as divorce, and it does not inherently suggest problems in a relationship. Sleep problems and relationship problems co-occur, yet there has been little systematic study of the association between close relationships and sleep. The basic principle of sleep hygiene is simple to understand: Eliminate distractions, optimize comfort, and strive for consistency. Sleep is imperative to our physical and mental health. Sleep deprivation and poor sleep quality are important predictors of just about any

health outcomes you can think of while good sleep health improves, lowers stress, mood, improve relationships and improves work outcomes. Sleep appears to be essentials to our ability to cope with emotional stress in everyday life. Emotional events during waking hours affect sleep influences the way we react to these events impacting our general well-being. There are many common problems in married life and many of them can be avoided, fixed or resolved using many different, methods and techniques. However, sleep-divorce is considered one of the remedies to promote sound sleep. Sleep divorce isn't always the best solution for couples, some people in conflict-laden relationships may resort to this option to increase their distance. Possible downside of a sleep divorce include - decreased amount of quality time, avoidance of intimacy issues, loneliness in one or more partners and resentment. Sleep divorce or sleep separation is an arrangement where a couple sleeps in separate beds within one room or in separate rooms from one another.

American Academy of Sleep Medicine Survey (2024) reveals that sleep is a vital component of our health and well-being, yet many bed partners find themselves struggling to get a good night's rest, due to incompatible sleep habits. A 2024 survey from the American Academy of Sleep Medicine reveals that 29% of Americans have opted to sleep in another bed in the same bedroom or in another space in the home to accommodate a bed partner. In 2023, respondents admitted to sleeping in another room on occasion (20%) or consistently (15%) to accommodate a bed partner. "The concept of 'sleep divorce' simply means sleeping in separate beds or bedrooms and is an option for couples seeking better sleep quality," said AASM spokesperson Dr. Seema Khosla. "The term might sound alarming, but it's not about ending a relationship — it's about prioritizing sleep health and addressing the sleep issues that may be eroding a relationship, such as snoring, tossing and turning, or differing sleep schedules. A sleep divorce is not a sign of a relationship in trouble – it allows for honest conversation about disruptive habits and allows

each person to enjoy uninterrupted, restorative sleep."

According to Hilton's 2025 Trends report, nearly two-thirds of travellers, or 63%, admit that they sleep better when they are alone. "In fact, 37% of travellers prefer to sleep in a separate bed from their partner when traveling, and most of those traveling with children (3 in 4) think it's best to sleep apart from their kids while traveling," the report said. Though the name 'sleep divorce' is misleading, studies suggest that this trend could benefit relationships, especially between married couples, if they are struggling to get quality sleep regardless of whether they are on a holiday.

There may be some resentment toward the person causing the sleep disruption which can negatively impact relationships. Getting a good night's sleep is important for both health and happiness, so it's no surprise that some couples choose to sleep apart for their overall well-being," Dr. Seema Khosla, pulmonologist and spokesperson for the American Academy of Sleep Medicine (AASM) says. A sleep divorce is not a sign of a relationship in trouble, Khosla reassures, Sleeping divorce allows for an honest conversation about disruptive habits and enables each person to enjoy uninterrupted, restorative sleep.

Editorial (2025), the concept of sleep divorce isn't new, but it's becoming more common, particularly among millennials Sleep divorce is a practice where couples choose to sleep in separate rooms. While this may seem like an unconventional approach, it's gaining popularity among couples looking for better sleep quality and personal space. According to Dr Swati Bansal, a Relationship Counsellor based in New Delhi, "Sleep divorce doesn't necessarily mean that the relationship is struggling; rather, it's about finding ways to improve individual sleep quality, which can ultimately benefit the relationship."

VI. ORIGIN OF WORD SLEEP DIVORCE

The phrase sleep divorce includes the word divorce, which usually refers to the breakup of a marriage or to married partners separating from each other. In sleep divorce, the word divorce is

used figuratively to refer to a couple physically separating from each other to sleep in different places.

The situation of couples sleeping in separate places predates the term sleep divorce. The exact origin of the phrase sleep divorce is unknown, but one of the earliest uses of the phrase appeared in a 2013 news article cited by an article on Huffington Post that repeated the phrase.

Since 2013, the phrase sleep divorce has repeatedly appeared in mainstream media articles about sleep research and the effect that a lack of sleep can have on relationships.

VII. PREFERENCE FOR SINGLE BED OVER DOUBLE BED TO SLEEP

The Guardian reports that for almost a century, between the 1850s and 1950s, separate beds were seen as a healthier, more modern option for couples than the double, with Victorian doctors warning that sharing a bed would allow the weaker sleeper to drain the vitality of the stronger.

In her new book, *A Cultural History of Twin Beds*, Hinds details how doctors warned of the dire consequences of bed-sharing. In 1861, doctor, minister and health campaigner William Whitty Hall's book *Sleep: Or the Hygiene of the Night*, advised that each sleeper "should have a single bed in a large, clean, light room, so as to pass all the hours of sleep in a pure fresh air, and that those who fail in this, will in the end fail in health and strength of limb and brain, and will die while yet their days are not all told".

VIII. RISING TREND OF SLEEP DIVORCE IN INDIA

As awareness about the importance of quality sleep grows, a global sleep study has highlighted a silent sleep crisis, revealing that over 70% of Indian couples are opting for sleep divorce - choosing to sleep separately to improve rest quality.

According to ResMed's 2025 Global Sleep Survey, India leads in sleep divorce, with 78% of couples adopting the practice, followed by China (67%) and South Korea (65%). The study, which surveyed over 30,000 individuals across 13 markets, found a

widespread global sleep crisis, with couples in the United Kingdom and the United States evenly split - 50% always sleeping together and 50% occasionally sleeping apart.

IX. REASONS FOR PREFERENCE OF SLEEP DIVORCE

- 1) **Snoring:** For some couples, snoring is the culprit. One may sound like a bear in hibernation, while the other lies there with a pillow over their head, counting sheep, and trying to ignore the noise.
- 2) **Different sleep schedules:** Others may have different sleeping schedules due to work, hobbies, or other obligations. One may prefer to stay up late while the other is an early bird. Having different sleep schedules can lead to disturbance in each other's sleep, leaving them feeling exhausted and grumpy the next day. A sleep divorce can help them maintain their sanity and get the rest they need.
- 3) **Temperature difference:** Some like it hot, some like it cold. She piles on the blankets while he tosses them off. It's a never-ending battle that can make for some uncomfortable sleeping conditions. Eventually, they might decide that separate beds with their own individual thermostats are the only solution.

X. BENEFITS OF SLEEP DIVORCE

- 1) **Increased comfort:** When couples sleep in separate rooms, they are able to control the temperature and environment of their own sleeping area, which can lead to greater overall comfort while getting a good night's rest.
- 2) **Less sleep disruption:** If one partner snores or has different sleep patterns than the other, sleeping in separate beds or rooms can help reduce disturbances during sleep cycles. Uninterrupted sleep is important because it allows our bodies to rest and recharge, giving us the energy and focus we need to tackle the day. A good-quality sleep can boost the immune system and lower risk of certain diseases.
- 3) **Improved mental health:** Restful sleep is linked with better mental health outcomes, reduced stress and improved moods. When a couple gets adequate amounts of uninterrupted restful sleep, it's easier for them to feel connected emotionally as well as physically.
- 4) **Enhanced intimacy:** Sleeping in separate beds does not have to adversely affect the intimacy between partners. In fact, sleep divorce could make couples feel more intimate by allowing each person individual space and freedom while still supporting one another. But clear

communication is essential to ensure that both parties understand the reasons and goals behind the decision to sleep separately and to maintain a strong emotional and physical connection.

XI. NEGATIVE IMPACT OF SLEEP DIVORCE

We all are of the view that normally togetherness, sharing emotions and bonding, physical relationship and sharing of bed and bed mischief enhances marital connect and happiness and therefore sleep divorce is not seen as good by many and following drawbacks of sleep divorce are generally cited:

- 1) **Emotional distance:** Sleeping separately from partner may create emotional distance between partners, particularly if physical intimacy is affected. Maintaining open communication, finding alternative ways to foster emotional connection, and prioritizing quality time together therefore becomes crucial.
- 2) **Perception of stressed marital relationship:** Sleep divorce i.e. sleeping on separate beds by couple is not seen good in society and many see it as a problem in marital relationship. Sometimes unnecessary gossips in terms of personal issue may result in stressed relations among partners.
- 3) **Reduced opportunities for communication:** Sharing a bed provides a natural opportunity for partners to communicate and connect before and after sleep. By sleeping separately, those valuable moments of communication may decrease. This reduced interaction could hinder resolving conflicts, addressing concerns, or sharing daily experiences, leading to detachment or isolation within the relationship.
- 4) **Impact on sexual intimacy:** Sleep and sexual intimacy often share the same physical space, and separating the two may impact sexual intimacy. The spontaneity and ease of engaging in intimate moments may diminish when partners sleep separately. It requires deliberate planning and coordination, potentially affecting the natural flow of physical intimacy and reducing the frequency of sexual encounters. Regular communication, shared activities, and intimacy-building exercises can strengthen the bond in such cases.
- 5) **Potential disruption of family dynamics:** Sleeping apart can have implications beyond the couple. For couples with children, sleep divorce may disrupt established family routines or create confusion for children accustomed to seeing their parents share a bed. Parents must navigate how to explain and normalize the situation to ensure that

children understand and feel secure in their family dynamics.

XII. CONCLUSION

Sleep divorce is a practice that allows individuals to prioritize their sleep needs while maintaining their relationship. It can improve sleep quality, reduce disruptions, enhance personal well-being, and increase relationship satisfaction. However, it is essential to navigate the potential drawbacks, such as emotional distance and impacts on intimacy, through open communication and alternative ways of connecting. Each couple must find a balance that aligns with their unique needs, values, and goals to ensure a healthy and fulfilling relationship. Ultimately, the decision to pursue sleep divorce is based on individual circumstances, preferences, and the relationship's overall health.

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